

INSPECTION REPORT

Beever Community Primary School

Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105627

Headteacher: Mr. G. Oates

Lead inspector: Mr. Graham Martin

Dates of inspection: 13-15 June 2005

Inspection number: 266401

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary and nursery
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll; 198

School address: Moorby Street
Oldham
Greater Manchester

Postcode: OL1 3QU

Telephone number: 0161 624 3740
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs. Angela Leach

Date of previous inspection: 7th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Beever Community School is close to the centre of the town of Oldham. It is smaller in size than most primary schools with 198 pupils, including 34 full time children in a 45-place nursery. The school is increasingly popular and has a rising roll, although it is currently undersubscribed. The movement of pupils in and out of the school is very high. The immediate neighbourhood that the school serves is considerably disadvantaged economically. More than three quarters of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is well above average. Nearly half the pupils have special educational needs, which is also well above the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or behavioural and emotional difficulties. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is one per cent, which is below average. Overall, children's attainments on entry to the Foundation Stage are very low. When they go into Year 1, pupils are still well below average and many still have very low attainments in language skills. There are very few pupils with above average attainments. The school includes some children from Traveller families and from families who are seeking asylum. The percentage of pupils whose first language is not English is well above average at nearly sixteen per cent. There has been a decline in the school's contextual circumstances since it was last inspected.

The school achieved a Department for Education and Skills School's Achievement Award in 2001. It is involved in a number of initiatives to support its development, including Excellence in Cities, the Leadership Development Strategy and the Central Oldham Federation. The school is designated as a high priority site for one of the area's first Sure Start Children's Centres, to be built in the near future.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21563	Graham Martin	Lead inspector	English, design and technology, music, physical education, religious education, personal, social and health education and citizenship, modern foreign language (French), the Foundation Stage.
12536	Sylvia Bullerwell	Lay inspector	
7994	Pamela Weston	Team inspector	Science, art and design, geography, special educational needs.
18842	Gill Peet	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, history.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. The headteacher's leadership is good and teaching is good overall. Pupils' make satisfactory achievement and there is good capacity to raise standards further. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well in the nursery, reception and infant classes and satisfactorily in the junior classes. Vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
- The headteacher's good leadership and management has a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Standards are below national averages. While teaching is good, assessment is not used as well as it could be to raise standards.
- The school is inclusive for all pupils and they are very well cared for. Pupils are well supported with good advice and guidance.
- There are good relationships within the school. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and their moral and social development is good.
- There are good features in the curriculum although it is limited in some areas and does not provide enough opportunities to broaden pupils' learning.
- The pupils' attendance is below average and according to the school information the involvement of some parents in their children's learning is at a low level.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in 1999. The key issues identified in the last inspection have either been resolved or are still being tackled. Although standards remain low because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, better management has improved teaching and learning. Consequently, assessments show rising standards from 2004, especially in Years 2 and 6, and the ethos of the school has improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The majority of children start with very low levels of attainment and basic skills on entry to the nursery are poor. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children achieve very well in language and in the development of their social skills. By the time the children reach the end of the reception year the majority are still only working towards the nationally expected goals for children of their age. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests and assessments for Year 2 pupils, standards were low in reading and mathematics and very low in writing compared with all schools. The pupils currently in Year 2 are achieving better standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science though they are still below the national averages. This represents an improvement from last year.

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	E*	E*	E	C
Mathematics	E*	E*	E	B
Science	E*	E*	E	D

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.

In 2004, results of National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils show that, compared with all pupils nationally, pupils attained low standards, among the bottom ten per cent. Compared with schools in similar circumstances, however, the pupils achieved average standards in tests in English, above average standards in mathematics and below average standards in science. Although current standards overall are below the national average in English, mathematics, science and ICT, there is

an improvement from 2004. Standards in religious education are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve well. Below average attendance, high levels of pupils moving in and out of school and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs have a negative impact on pupils' attainment in Years 1 to 6.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are **satisfactory**. Their moral and social development is **good** and their spiritual and cultural development is **satisfactory**. Most pupils behave as expected and there are good relationships throughout the school. Despite the good efforts of the school to improve attendance, it is unsatisfactory because a few pupils have very poor attendance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall, but opportunities for learning in some curriculum areas are limited. In the nursery and reception classes teaching is good, especially in communication, language and social skills. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in years 3 to 6. Where it is satisfactory, assessment is not used well enough to set high challenges for pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well towards their set targets. The quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory** and the school recognises the need to broaden learning opportunities, especially in years 3 to 6. However, there is good enrichment of learning in the range of extra-curricular activities and visits to the local area. The school takes very good pastoral care of the pupils but individual learning targets shared with pupils are at an early stage of development. There is a **good** partnership with parents and beneficial links with the community, other schools and colleges.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **good** leadership of the headteacher is having a visible impact on the school's improvement. Management is **good** and there is **satisfactory** leadership by key staff. The governors have a sound overall understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and their work is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met. The governors, headteacher and other staff work well together. The headteacher shows a clear vision for the school as a caring community. He has developed good procedures to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem and to help pupils overcome barriers to learning. The senior management of the school have successfully accessed outside support to help with improving the curriculum and to set targets for improvement in English and mathematics. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning has risen and resulted in raising pupils' achievement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are **good**. They are comfortable approaching the school with concerns. **Pupils'** views of the school are **very positive**. They say they feel well cared for and enjoy lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards further in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
- Continue to improve pupils' attendance and parents' involvement in their children's learning.
- Provide a rich and relevant curriculum that promotes pupils' interest in learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. Children in the Foundation Stage¹ and pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress and some higher attaining pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and from minority ethnic groups achieve well. Standards are below average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) and in line with national expectations in religious education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 achieve well, though standards by Year 2 remain below average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Although pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, their learning has been inconsistent this year due to high levels of staff turnover.
- Some higher attaining pupils achieve well and attain standards above national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs, from minority ethnic backgrounds and with English as their second language achieve well.

Commentary

1. Most children start in the Nursery with very low language, communication and social skills. The children in the Nursery and Reception class achieve well overall. There are very few higher attaining children. The majority of children are still working towards the goals that are set nationally in the areas of learning by the end of Reception, except in personal, social and emotional development where they achieve very well to reach the Early Learning Goals.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.0 (13.3)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	11.5 (13.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.2 (13.4)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Standards in the national tests in 2004 for pupils at the end of Year 2, in comparison with all schools, were below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. In comparison with schools with similar numbers of free school meals, standards were below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Few pupils attained the higher Level 3. An average of 36 per cent of pupils attained standards below the expected levels. More than half of these pupils had special educational needs, relating to learning and language difficulties. There is an improvement in standards from 2004 in the present Year 2, though most of these pupils are still attaining below the national averages in reading, writing, and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.6 (21.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.5 (23.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	25.9 (24.4)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The results in the national tests in 2004 show that, at the end of Year 6, pupils attained standards that were well below average in English, science and mathematics when

¹ The Foundation Stage refers to children of the nursery and reception classes.

compared with all schools nationally. When compared with the results of pupils who had similar levels of attainment in Year 2, standards were above average in mathematics, average in English and below average in science. An average of 36 per cent attained below the expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science. Approximately 71 per cent of these pupils had special educational needs, with difficulties relating to learning and language or behavioural and emotional problems. However, standards have improved in Year 6 in the current school year and more pupils are attaining at higher levels than in 2004. Although pupils currently in Year 6, considering their very low starting points, are attaining below average standards in English, mathematics and science. Achievement overall is satisfactory. Conclusions about standards, based on percentage test results, should be treated with caution as the small numbers of tested pupils in each year group unfavourably skews statistics.

4. Several factors negatively affect standards and pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 more than in Years 1 and 2. For example, between Years 3 to 6 there is high mobility. Pupils joining the school generally enter with low attainments. The pupils needing most help, because of special educational needs requirements, are in Years 3 to 6. The poor attendance of a minority has an adverse effect on their achievement. The overall results fluctuate between the year groups because of the differing ability of the pupils taking the tests and the skewing of results according to the number of pupils in the cohort. As pupils become older, gaps in their knowledge and understanding have an increasingly negative impact on their achievement. For instance, because learning skills are below average, pupils find it difficult to apply knowledge and understanding to solve problems in mathematics and science. They are hindered by a lack of literacy skills as they work out word problems in mathematics and science. Comprehension skills are weak in English, which restricts pupils' achievement in reading and writing. Pupils with special educational needs receive good additional help from teaching assistants in class. The extra help enables pupils to make progress at a good rate towards their targets, although their standards of work are well below national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Those pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and whose first language is not English achieve as well and sometimes better than most other pupils. The staff are sensitive to their needs and their work is structured to meet these needs.
5. Overall there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in 1999. Standards were lower then in English, mathematics and science and the school's social context has worsened. Since 1999, although the trend of improvement has been below the national trend as shown by the 2004 PANDA report, improvement in the school's performance against schools with similar numbers of free school meals has been satisfactory. Pupils in 2001 won a national Achievement Award because standards were improving. Challenging targets are set for improvement this year and the evidence from the inspection shows that the school's expectation to meet these targets is realistic.
6. The school has not kept pace with rapid change in information and communication technology (ICT). Improvement in standards in ICT has been limited by the lack of resources, by the hindrance of progress due to the open-plan accommodation and by a lack of staff expertise. In ICT, pupils are working below the nationally expected standards by Years 2 and 6. There are at present insufficient learning opportunities and resources for pupils to achieve better standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **satisfactory** overall. The rate of attendance remains **unsatisfactory**, even though it is improving. The punctuality of a significant number of pupils is poor. Relationships are **good**. There were 24 fixed term exclusions last year. Provision for pupils' personal development is **good** overall. Spiritual and cultural development is **satisfactory** and social and moral development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall level of attendance is below average and limits the achievement of some pupils.
- Punctuality of a significant number of pupils is poor.
- The school has very good systems to improve attendance.
- Relationships in school are good.
- The learning mentor works very effectively with pupils whose attitudes and behaviour would otherwise stop them from learning.

Commentary

7. The school's rate of attendance is well below the national average for primary schools and has been for the last three years. However, this is not a true reflection of pupils' enthusiasm for school. Analysis shows that almost all Traveller families, refugees and minority ethnic groups have good attendance levels. Last year almost half of all pupils had an attendance rate below 80 per cent and often family groups were absent at the same time. This year only 33 per cent of pupils have an attendance rate below this figure. However, the school did not achieve the target set for attendance this year due to pupils who left school during the course of the year, but remained on the school's register, which affected the unauthorised absence rate by over two per cent.
8. The school is working hard to reduce absence and improve punctuality. Records show some children regularly come to school up to an hour late. The school works with the education welfare service on a weekly basis and the community social worker is based in school one morning each week to support families who are having difficulties. Good attendance is linked to a consistent reward system to encourage pupils. The school recognises that some parents had a poor experience of education themselves it is striving to promote what can be achieved by children who attend regularly and on time.
9. Most pupils like being at school with their friends and teachers, confirming parents' views. Relationships are promoted very well and pupils know staff will deal effectively with any poor behaviour. In the Nursery and Reception classes children achieve very well in their personal and social education. From the very low level of social development on entry they learn to play together and share equipment sensibly. They learn to behave well and listen to their teachers.
10. The learning mentor works well with identified pupils of all ages on a one-to-one basis, in small groups and in class, to help them improve their behaviour, attitude to learning, social skills and self esteem. She liases with teachers, parents, the community social worker and other outside agencies to build relationships and provide support for pupils and their families to overcome negative external influences that affect pupils' ability to learn effectively. The majority of pupils referred to her are white British boys, which reflects the standards attained by these pupils.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.1	School data :	2.1
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.

11. The level of attendance at 92.8% is below the national average, and has been improving in recent years. This is mainly due to the high level of absence by a minority of pupils, some of whom take holidays in term time. The levels of attendance have improved in recent years because the school is taking positive action to promote good attendance and most pupils have attended well. The importance of pupils not missing lessons is highlighted in the school

brochure and newsletters. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer to target families in need of support, regularly talk to parents and praise pupils for good attendance.

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	123	16	0
White – Irish	12	6	0
White – any other White background	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	2	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	5	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

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

12. In the year prior to the inspection there were 24 incidents of fixed period exclusion relating to thirteen boys and one girl. Exclusion is only used where all other procedures to deal with inappropriate behaviour have been exhausted.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** education for its pupils. Teaching and learning is **good** overall. Assessment is **unsatisfactory**. Although the curriculum is **satisfactory**, bearing in mind that not all subjects are covered in sufficient depth in Years 3 to 6, there are strengths in the **good** opportunities for pupils to learn from activities outside the normal school curriculum. The accommodation is **good** because it has improved and is well used. Resources are **satisfactory** overall. The school provides a **very good** standard of care for its pupils and links with parents are **good**.

Teaching and learning

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. In mathematics in Years 1 and 2 it is very good.

- Relationships between pupils and teachers are good throughout the school but teachers sometimes find pupils' behaviour challenging and this can affect the quality of the lesson and pupils' learning.
- Teaching assistants give good support to teachers and pupils.
- Teachers do not use ICT sufficiently to support learning across the curriculum.
- Assessment is still at the early stages of development in the school and is not yet used well enough to match teaching to the learning needs of all pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	6	6	0	0	0

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

13. Across the school the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This was the judgement at the time of the last inspection. All the very good teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2. In these lessons planning was very good and ensured that work was well matched to the learning needs of all pupils. Expectations were very clearly explained to the pupils and sometimes modelled as an example. This was seen in a Year 1 science lesson where the teacher described to the class what items she could feel before asking the pupils to also feel and describe materials. In these lessons a range of activities were presented to the pupils so that all learning styles could be catered for and the interest of all pupils maintained.
14. Good relationships are evident throughout the school and pupils feel secure in class. However, in the older classes pupil behaviour is sometimes challenging and less experienced teachers are too tolerant of disruption. Although there is a behaviour policy setting out a system of warnings and sanctions this was not applied in some of the lessons seen during the inspection. As a result, the pace of lessons was sometimes slower than intended and pupils' learning was adversely affected.
15. Throughout the school teaching assistants and the learning mentor make significant contributions to the quality of teaching and learning. They work well with the teachers, who make their expectations of how teaching assistants can help very clear. As a result of this, and the very good relationships teaching assistants and the learning mentor have with the pupils, they are able to offer a very high level of support to pupils. As a result pupils learn well in lessons. The support given to minority ethnic pupils by the Minority Ethnic Achievement Team, with their full inclusion in lessons, ensures that they quickly develop good language skills and achieve well across the curriculum.
16. Teachers are not secure in the use of ICT. Although they manage to keep ahead of the pupils in ICT lessons some lack the confidence to use it as an integral part of their teaching in other subjects of the curriculum.
17. Assessment is still at the early stages of development in the school. It is not yet used well enough across the school to match teaching to the learning needs of the pupils. The school is aware of the need to develop assessment further and has already embarked on training to do this. Yearly assessments are carried out regularly but the systems for recording the information are not yet fully accessible to teachers and so do not yet have an impact on teaching and learning. To improve day-to-day assessment, the school has recognised the need to match assessment criteria to learning targets and to involve pupils more closely in understanding better how they can improve. To this end, teachers share the learning objectives and success criteria with the older pupils and in the younger classes use the acronyms W.A.L.T. (What we Are Learning Today) and W.I.L.F. (What I am Looking For) to involve pupils more and enable them to understand the learning objectives and expectations of success. This technique is not used consistently well to ensure that there is a common system for pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work. Marking is satisfactory and is generally up to date but its quality in helping pupils identify and resolve mistakes and weaknesses varies between classes.

The curriculum

Although there is **good** provision for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, the overall quality of the curriculum is only **satisfactory** because not all subjects are covered in sufficient depth in Years 3 to 6. The requirements of the local agreed syllabus for religious education are met. The curriculum is enriched well through a **good** range of visits, visitors and after school activities. The breadth of opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Overall, accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The emphasis on teaching the basic skills has resulted in a narrow curriculum that is not sufficiently broad and balanced for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school values each individual and makes good arrangements to promote equal opportunities in all areas of school life.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good and underpins the general ethos of all the school's activities.
- Extra curriculum clubs, visits and a range of visitors make a good contribution to the planned opportunities for learning during and outside the school day.

Commentary

18. In the Nursery and Reception classes the curriculum provides a wide range of planned and structured activities which engage children's interests well and gives the youngest children a good start to school across all the recommended areas of learning but in particular, personal, social and language development. Although the children in the Reception class do not have direct access to an outside learning area, they use an internal courtyard and the main school hall for physical development. There are good plans to further develop the courtyard area for Reception class use. Nursery children have a useful covered outside play area that is used well for good opportunities for learning across the curriculum.
19. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is effectively organised. However, in Years 3 to 6 it is only satisfactory. The present planning of the curriculum does not allow sufficient time to successfully deliver all subjects well. This is due in part to the high priority that the school rightly places on teaching basic skills, which is successfully helping to raise standards in these areas of the curriculum. The school is aware of this shortcoming in the curriculum. The co-ordinator has plans to revisit the long term planning so that subjects such as history, geography, design technology, information communication technology and personal health and social education, can be taught through topics such as 'The Egyptians'.
20. The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been soundly introduced. A particular strength is seen in the daily session of guided reading, when teachers work with small groups of children. This has led to standards improving in reading. Both of these strategies have been adapted well to meet the needs of those pupils who have special educational needs. The school has a well-managed ICT suite and this is beginning to be used to develop the pupils' skills. French has been successfully introduced for older pupils and there are plans to extend this to other classes. Year 6 pupils study special units of work in the second half of the summer term, which helps them to prepare for learning in the secondary school.
21. Provision for the inclusion of all pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, permeates throughout the school's organisation. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is illustrated by the good quality of its support for all pupils with special educational needs. The school is committed to ensuring these pupils have full access to the

curriculum and this is very beneficial for the pupils. They have detailed individual education plans, which provide good guidance for staff to enable them to provide targeted support.

22. Personal, health and social education is good. Drugs and health education policies are in place and there is a scheme of work, which is successfully incorporated into the long term planning of the curriculum. The learning mentor's knowledge and understanding of the needs of the pupils plays a significant part in supporting the development of this area of the curriculum.
23. Visits to places of interest enrich the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 3 and 4 visited the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry during the inspection. Classes from Year 2 upwards visit the Castleshaw activities centre annually. Year 6 pupils also spend 5 days there, when they are able to participate in a wide range of sporting and academic activities. The school provides a good range of activities outside normal school hours. There are clubs for sports such as football, netball and short tennis, plus dance, art and cookery. The School Council is consulted when planning after school activities to ensure that the pupils are fully involved in decision-making. Their work has resulted in positive changes to the school, including improving the ways that pupils play together at break times.
24. There is a good provision of teachers for the number of pupils in school. The support staff are well informed and efficiently deployed. The good quality resources are used well to support learning activities in all lessons, although resources for ICT are limited. Good use is made of the school's links with the secondary school. This enables specialist secondary staff to add a different dimension to the curriculum in, for example, physical education, drama, art and music. This link is beginning to make a significant contribution to learning in all age groups. Since the last inspection the school accommodation has greatly improved with much of the open plan arrangement made into separate classrooms, helping teachers to manage teaching and learning better. There are plans to further develop the learning areas to provide better learning spaces for pupils, in particular Years 3, 4, and 5.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is **good**. Pupils' involvement through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **satisfactory**, with a strength in the developing involvement of the School Council.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The arrangements for supporting children and pupils as they start at the school are very good.
- The staff know the pupils well and provide a very caring environment.
- A learning mentor provides very good support for vulnerable pupils.
- The introduction of a School Council provides a good opportunity for pupils to have a greater voice within the school and take additional responsibility.

Commentary

25. Induction procedures for pupils entering the Foundation Stage are very good and include home visits in addition to the normal opportunities for pupils and parents to visit the school. The induction arrangements for new pupils into the school help pupils settle in quickly and build good relationships with the parents. The younger children are gradually introduced into Nursery and Reception classes. The staff visit the children and parents at home and parents are invited to visit the school. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher plays an active role in showing parents and pupils around the school and on the first day introducing new starters to their new class.
26. All the staff in the school know the pupils well, including any social, personal or medical needs. In the classroom, teachers adopt an inclusive approach to ensure that all pupils take

an active part and their achievements are recognised. This has resulted in a trusting relationship between staff and pupils. The support staff also demonstrate a caring approach in the dining room and the playground. The school provides lessons in order to inform pupils about a range of lifestyle issues including the dangers of drugs and alcohol and there are visits from the school nurse to discuss personal hygiene. Pupils have a trusting relationship with their teachers and if they have any problems will discuss them with the teacher. The school maintains good links with outside agencies when necessary to support the pupils with special educational needs.

27. The very good work of a learning mentor helps vulnerable pupils to develop positive attitudes and achieve well. The school is attempting to develop healthy eating options for the pupils. The general procedures for ensuring pupils welfare are good. A Health and Safety Policy is in place, the few accidents are properly recorded and acted upon, and teachers have a good understanding of the individual needs of pupils. For example, good care is taken with securing and dispensing of medicines. Risk assessments to promote pupils' safety are carried out formally, fully documented and filed for easy reference. The school takes its responsibilities for child protection very seriously and the good policy supports effective practice in child protection procedures. The 'Playground Pals' system, where nominated pupils act as playground monitors and supporters, was seen to be working well during the inspection and younger pupils felt secure and reassured by their presence. Overall, the provision for care and support is very good thanks to the vigilance of the headteacher and the efforts of individual staff members.
28. The school listens to the views of the pupils through the introduction of the School Council. This provides a good, structured approach and an opportunity for pupils to work together as a team, building self-confidence and taking additional responsibility.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents, the local community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents think the school does a good job for their children.
- Information is good but targets in annual written reports are too general.
- The school works hard to involve parents in children's learning.
- The support given by some parents, in ensuring pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time, could be better.
- Links with other schools and the community enhance pupils' learning.

Commentary

29. Most parents are very happy with the aims and values the school promotes and the way each child's individual needs are met. They attribute a lot of the improvements in school to the leadership of the headteacher. He ensures he is available in the playground each morning to greet parents and children and to answer any queries they may have. Parents feel that their children are well taught, work hard and try to do their best in school. They value the improved communications between home and school and have been formally consulted by a questionnaire. Parents are encouraged and welcomed into school to discuss problems.
30. Parents receive a good range of regular information to keep them informed about what is happening in school. For example, each term they receive curriculum information that tells them what is being taught in each subject, and how they can help their children at home. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about events in the school calendar, building developments, fund raising activities and pupils' achievements. Parents attend special assemblies. They discuss their child's progress at formal parents' meetings with the teacher. The quality of the annual written reports is good in telling parents what children

know and can do but the targets set are not specific enough to tell parents what the child needs to do next to raise their attainment further.

31. Through the 'Lifelong Learning' initiative the school introduced family literacy sessions to enable parents to support their children with basic literacy skills. Parents and pupils have benefited by working together in school and this year it has led to four parents preparing for external accreditation for adult literacy and numeracy Level 1. The school would like more parents to be involved in children's learning at home and at school. The school is trying hard to improve attendance levels as some pupils miss out on large sections of their learning due to sporadic absence. They will need continuing support from all parents to ensure children only stay at home if they are ill.
32. Visits arranged to Castleshaw activities centre gives pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 first hand experiences of geography-based activities. Links with a City Learning College gives pupils access to specialist equipment and staff to support their learning in science, design and technology and ICT. The physical education programme is supported by inter schools tournaments in soccer, indoor athletics and the fun swimming gala. Artists come into school to work with pupils, such as the week spent learning about aboriginal designs and artwork. A visit linked to science and history led to Year 3 and 4 doing workshop activities at a museum in Manchester. All of these activities bring the curriculum to life and are often what pupils learn from and remember best.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher's leadership is **good** and the school is **well managed**. The school is **satisfactorily** governed. The leadership and management of the key staff who support the headteacher are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's clear vision for the school is shared well with all staff. He is strongly committed to the needs of pupils and their families. He has the support of the parents and the community and has set clear direction to improve standards further.
- The leadership of key staff is at an early stage of development.
- The school development plan is clearly focused on raising standards but the school recognises that it has more work to do to improve assessment and raise achievement.
- There is good financial management that helps the school to achieve priorities.

Commentary

33. The commitment of the headteacher to the needs of the pupils and their families is unquestionably strong. He has a clear vision and sense of direction for the school and its improvement but has been hampered by staffing difficulties. However, he has worked very hard to improve the school building and to provide an environment for learning that staff and pupils alike can value. This is seen in the way in which the work of staff in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is having a positive effect on the attitudes and learning of pupils of this age. Further plans to improve the accommodation are in hand to benefit pupils and staff in the older classes. Changes to the leadership structure of the school mean that the leadership of key staff is at an early stage of development in the school so overall it is satisfactory. The very recent appointment of a deputy headteacher who shares the headteacher's vision crucially strengthens the school's leadership.
34. The headteacher has good support from governors, senior managers and subject leaders. The governors freely give their time to support the school. They are committed to including all pupils in the work and life of the school. The governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school from the information provided by the headteacher and from the school development plan. They are suitably involved in helping

the headteacher to plan for improvement and help the school to meet the challenges of the future. Even though governors have a satisfactory overview of the work of the school, they do not have sufficiently detailed knowledge about the curriculum. This limits their capacity to make informed decisions about how well the curriculum meets pupils' needs.

35. The headteacher has the good support of the parents and the community and the school is well placed to make further improvements. The aspirations and personal development of younger pupils are the major factors in helping the school to achieve its aims to make pupils better learners to achieve as well as they should. The introduction of guided reading time, for example, sets high expectations of pupils and is raising standards in reading. Further examples are seen in the successful strategies to promote good behaviour and provide behaviour and learning support, such as through the very good work of the learning mentor. The headteacher values the good support provided through a network of colleagues, advisers and consultants through the Excellence in Cities and Central Oldham Federation programmes. The useful links established support the school's progress towards the headteacher's clear educational vision to raise standards further.
36. The good school development plan correctly prioritises raising standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Key appointments have been made by the headteacher to improve the school's performance. The recently appointed deputy headteacher takes a leading role in the school as a teacher and in leading some of the key aspects of the curriculum. There is a well-appointed senior management team. Subject leaders have worked hard to develop action plans and provide support to other staff. The action plans for subjects are detailed and relevant. Consequently there are good strategies to challenge pupils in their learning, which is evident in the rising standards. However, although there are procedures in place, the use of assessment to improve learning has not yet been checked carefully enough to ensure that there is consistently good practice across the school.
37. The school's budget is well managed. The efficient work of the school clerk enhances the good management of the school. Resources are used well to maintain a good level of staff to support the work of teachers and to improve the building and learning resources. The school is well cared for by a caretaker who takes a great interest in matters of health and safety. The governors ensure that money is spent wisely so that best value is gained from expenditure. The school makes good use of its available resources, including those designated for special educational needs. The larger than average carry forward is earmarked for further much needed improvements to the school building. Procedures for day-to-day financial control and administration are good. The school has implemented the recommendations from the most recent financial audit report and it provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	695,024	Balance from previous year	45,014
Total expenditure	596,902	Balance carried forward to the next	143,136
Expenditure per pupil	3,014		

The effects of any particular aids or barriers to raising achievement

38. The low socio-economic background of many pupils and their poor level of basic skills on entry to the school.
39. The school's involvement in projects with other schools, through Excellence in Cities and through the Central Oldham Federation, is raising expectations and awareness of the impact of focused work, such as guided reading, on pupils' literacy skills.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes) is **good**. There are strengths in the provision for personal and social development and in the provision for communication, language and literacy. There is **good** improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

40. Children enter the Nursery at the age of three and all children attend full-time. The Nursery provides places for up to 45 children and currently there are 34 children attending full time.
41. The average attainment on starting Nursery is poor in language and literacy and in personal and social development. In mathematical understanding, creative and physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, the children's attainment is well below average. Nursery and Reception class staff work well together to provide rich opportunities for learning and the Foundation Stage benefits from good leadership and management. The team of staff work very well together, basing their planning on careful early assessments of the children and emphasising teaching and learning in the key areas of personal and social development and language development. So, there is a strong emphasis on social play and on developing speaking and listening skills to meet the children's early learning needs. Information collected when the nursery-aged children enter the school indicates that a significant number are identified as having speech and language difficulties. Apart from a very few children, the Reception children in the Foundation Stage are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the time they go into Year 1. However, they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment on entry to school because teaching and learning is good in all of the areas of learning for children of this age.
42. The school uses the national guidance to develop assessment profiles on all children and these show the progress each child makes. A few children have been identified as having special educational needs and a number of children are in the process of having specific needs assessed with respect to speech and language difficulties. All children receive a good level of support for their needs. Resources for learning are satisfactory in all areas and the staff provide rich learning opportunities by filling both classrooms with stimulating displays.
43. Judgements have been made about the provision and achievements of the children in the Nursery and Reception classes in their personal and social development, in communication language and literacy and mathematical development and work has been sampled in the other areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well and most are likely to attain the expected Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year.
- Well-established routines help the children to achieve very well and to develop good attitudes to each other.
- Good, caring relationships strengthen the bonds of trust between children and adults. The staff establish good relationships with children and their parents.
- Teaching is very good and adults support children's learning well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and the children develop positive attitudes to learning.

Commentary

44. Children achieve very well in the development of their personal and social skills and in their emotional development. Despite their poor levels on entry to school, the majority of children reach the expected levels by the end of Reception because of the very strong emphasis given to this aspect of their development. Adults take every opportunity to promote the development of personal and social skills. The children's emotional development is well supported through the quality of care shown to them by adults. Good, sociable behaviour was seen during the inspection and this is because all adults have high expectations of the children co-operating with each other. As a result, the children are confident and get on well with each other and with adults. Teaching is very good because good use is made of routines to give the children confidence and security. Relationships are good because the teachers and other staff value the children's learning. As a result, the children's attitudes to learning are good. This is because the dedicated team of adults who work with them values everything they say and do. From an early age, they are expected to work well together in pairs and small groups and begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently.
45. On entry to the Nursery, many children have poor personal and social skills and some also have emotional insecurities. Very good teaching, based on secure pastoral care and effective organisation of routines, allows the children to learn and achieve very well. The teachers and support staff have established good care and support routines to help the children to grow in confidence. Whole-class teaching time at the start of the day develops bonds of trust between the children and staff and positive relationships amongst the children. Snack and lunch times are orderly and the children learn to be polite and helpful. Some of the children help to give snacks out and the children readily say thank you. They chat happily as they eat, sitting in sociable groups where they learn good social skills.
46. The staff in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy good, productive relationships with children and their parents. This means that they establish a secure partnership between home and school to benefit the children. The children are confident and relaxed in their surroundings and consequently learning is effective. Parents are welcomed into the classrooms at the beginning and the end of sessions and so there are many opportunities for informal discussions. Communications with parents are good, so the staff know the children's home circumstances well.
47. The children work happily together. In the Nursery some of the children find it difficult to settle to tasks, whilst others find it a lot easier. The staff encourage the children well and work alongside them to help them develop this skill. In the Reception class the children happily choose activities and their own tasks and persevere well. They play games together, wait patiently for their own turn and they sustain this activity for some time. The children grow in confidence and develop positive attitudes to work and learning as they become older.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because learning activities are well planned and interesting.
- Speaking and listening skills are promoted well in everything the children do. ICT is used well to support learning.
- There is a good partnership between teachers and support staff, which results in good teaching.

Commentary

48. A few children are on course to reach the expected learning goals by the end of their reception year. Limited language skills on entry to Nursery affect the levels many of the children reach. However, all children achieve well and some children achieve very well. This is because the teaching of language and literacy skills is a priority. Good, carefully structured teaching enables the children to achieve well in their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
49. The children enjoy stories and rhymes. Good use of story books and other resources enables the teachers to promote the important skills of speaking and listening. The children listen well to the stories of the three little pigs and the 'Gingerbread Man'. They talked accurately about what they could remember of the stories. The children enjoy practising writing their names on a whiteboard, some trying over and over again to improve the formation of their letters. Writing is displayed in all areas of both classes and this is effective in encouraging the children to attempt writing. In the Reception class some of the children write their own simple sentences. Writing skills are taught carefully and systematically and it is clear that by the end of the Reception year some, though not all, of the children are able to write simple sentences with clear meaning. The teachers and support staff work effectively together to encourage writing with small groups of children, giving them very individual focused help. Staff make careful records of the children's understanding. Computers are used well to help the children to learn basic reading and writing skills.
50. The assessments of children's achievements are good. An evaluation of the assessment profiles for the children in the reception class shows that they have been assessed accurately along the 'stepping stones' that teachers use to assess their skills, helping teachers to plan well for each child's learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of children will not reach the expected goals, but they achieve well from a low starting level because teaching is good.
- Good practical teaching allows the children to make good gains in their learning.
- Good links are made with children's life experiences to make learning real and purposeful.
- Staff make good use of mathematical vocabulary.

Commentary

51. Children have well below expected levels of mathematical knowledge and understanding on entry to the Nursery and the majority will not meet the expected level by the end of Reception. However, achievement is good because assessment is effective and teaching is well matched to the children's learning needs. There is systematic and structured teaching which always provides practical opportunities for children to learn by doing and finding out for themselves, allowing the children to grasp the concepts well. Good teaching was seen in both classes, such as when the Nursery children match shapes and talk about their properties and when the Reception children learn the mathematical language of position. In both lessons, the teachers used resources well, so that the mathematical language was reinforced with visual prompts. The staff make good use of a wide range of activities to promote the children's learning and because their activities are at the correct level of demand the children achieve well and their learning is good. The assessment of mathematical skills in the Reception class is good and, using these assessments, teachers respond very well to each child's learning needs.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

52. Work in this area of learning was sampled and so no judgements have been made about teaching and learning. The children have good opportunities to find out about the life cycle of butterflies and the parts of plants. They learn how to mix icing sugar to the right consistency for coating a biscuit and, in the 'pet shop' they learn to buy and sell the right foods for different pets that need looking after, such as the resident goldfish Nemo and Goldie. The teachers make good use of the local community to develop the children's understanding of their place in the world. The children grow and watch plants and small creatures to learn about changes in living things. They learn about a variety of materials, and are able to select tools and techniques when they make models, using recyclable materials or construction toys. Good links are established with writing and creative development when they describe a worm and make pictures. It is clear that the teachers plan a wide range of enjoyable activities to ensure the children are engaged and want to learn. Children use computers and are confident using the mouse to click and drag objects, giving them a good start in the development of ICT skills. A wide range of practical activities supports learning well. However, because of the weakness in their language skills, most children attain standards that are below expected levels by the time they join Year 1.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

53. Work in this area was sampled and so no judgements have been made about teaching, learning and standards. Children are given good opportunities to work with equipment to develop their skills of co-ordination. The outside area is used well so that children have good opportunities to develop skills of co-ordination and to be aware of others when moving around. They use the outdoor area to climb and balance and they work with bicycles and other play resources well. There have been recent improvements to this area, and the teachers are looking forward to further developing the use of the outdoor environment. It is clear that this area is used appropriately and pictures of the children energetically playing and hunting for bears shows they have great fun. The children use small equipment with increasing control. Most manipulate construction materials well and enjoy working with the play-dough.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

54. Work in this area of learning was sampled and so no judgements have been made about teaching, learning and standards. There are many good opportunities to take part in role-play, to paint, to sing and to design and make objects using a range of materials. Children enjoy a good range of well-planned art and design experiences to stimulate their imagination. Their work is displayed well by the teachers, showing how much it is valued and giving the children confidence from their success. They enjoy working in the 'pet shop' or in the quiet area and happily act out different roles, such as when playing the different characters in the story of the gingerbread man. The children are beginning to relate well to each other when playing and sharing imaginative ideas.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE (FRENCH)

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weakness

- Although standards are below national averages achievement is satisfactory overall and good in Years 1 and 2.
- High expectations are set for behaviour and pupils are keen to learn.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2.
- There are not enough opportunities planned for pupils to practise and develop their literacy skills in other subjects.
- The subject leader has responded to the challenge of raising standards well.

Commentary

55. Throughout the school standards are below national averages in reading, writing speaking and listening, mirroring recent national test results. Standards were similar at the time of the last inspection. When considering their very low starting point this represents satisfactory achievement over time, although achievement is better in Years 1 and 2. However, standards are rising. Standards in speaking and listening and in reading are slightly better by the end of Year 6 since the last inspection, but are still below what is expected. Support for pupils who find learning difficult, including additional literacy support and 'booster' classes in Year 5 and 6 are used well to raise pupils' achievement. Teachers relate well to pupils and are sensitive to their needs while having high expectations for their behaviour and attitudes to work. Most pupils respond well and are keen to learn. They are particularly motivated to write following first hand experiences, such as accounts of visits.
56. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with good and occasionally very good teaching seen in Years 1, 2 and 6. There is a consistent approach to teaching across the school as a result of high expectations set for behaviour. The planning follows the National Literacy Strategy and there is a strong emphasis on teaching basic skills through this strategy. The school recognises that there is work to be done to make pupils keener to learn by making lessons relevant to direct and interesting experiences.
57. In the majority of lessons seen, teachers have a clear understanding of the subject and the National Literacy Strategy, and how to teach the basic skills. Work is marked regularly with lots of praise, although there is little evidence of teachers giving clear instructions about the next steps for improvement. A good development has been the introduction of 'guided' reading time where direct support for reading skills is helping to raise standards in reading.
58. Teachers are beginning to have a clearer understanding of what pupils should be able to do. Group targets are clearly displayed on pupils' workbooks. As a result most pupils know which target level they are working at. However, teachers do not always respond to these targets effectively in their teaching, which lowers expectations and reduces the achievement of pupils. There are a good number of additional adults in each class, some of whom have had special training and are well able to support small groups of pupils alongside the rest of the class. As a result pupils needing most help take full part in learning and achieve well.
59. In the good and very good lessons, 'talking partners' have been used to promote speaking and listening skills. A large number of pupils begin the school with speech and language difficulties. As a result their speech has a bad effect on all their work, especially spelling where they have difficulty sounding out the letters in order to spell them correctly. It is

envisaged that in the near future, with the development of a Children's Centre on the school site, early language development will improve.

60. The subject leader has responded well to the challenge of raising standards. She has received good support and training to implement guided reading successfully. As a result she now has a good understanding of what is needed in order for pupils to make better progress. She has correctly identified improving speaking and listening as a way to develop better writing skills and this is the current focus for attention.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. The emphasis on teaching reading and writing skills through the literacy strategy has narrowed the curriculum so that little is seen of the effective use of literacy skills in other subjects. The school now recognises the need to do make the use of literacy skills more relevant to pupils' experiences by making learning more exciting in other subjects. The use of ICT for learning across the school is limited by a lack of resources, although there is a strong commitment by staff to the use of ICT as a teaching and learning tool. Some teachers identify opportunities to link subjects together in their planning but this is inconsistently done across the school. Good practice was seen in the Year 1 class where children based good writing on the class storybook. The resulting quality of writing was good for pupils of this age because the pupils were clear about the expectations of the task and were given very good prompts to support their learning, such as a classroom 'storyboard' display to help with their writing vocabulary.

FRENCH

No judgement on provision is made, as only one short lesson was seen.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is effective and learning is good. As a result the pupils' achievement is good.

Commentary

62. The teaching of French has been introduced since the last inspection. The subject has a clear rationale, that of creating positive attitudes to learning a new language. A French-speaking teacher from a local High School teaches the lessons. Only one lesson was seen. The strong emphasis on conversation, asking and responding to questions, resulted in good learning for all pupils in this lesson. The teaching of a modern foreign language has clear aims:

- To build a basic French vocabulary of frequently used words, suitable to primary pupils.
- To understand and use simple French vocabulary.
- To pronounce words as accurately as possible.
- To learn aspects of French culture, geography and history as background to learning the language.
- To have positive attitudes to speaking another language.

63. The school is achieving its aims successfully. An experienced teacher teaches French effectively. A successful feature of the teaching is that the whole of the lesson is conducted in French. Because the lessons are challenging but fun, all pupils are confident to take part and show the enthusiasm for the subject that the school aims to develop.

64. There is appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and the development of an enthusiasm for speaking the language. The pupils also have appropriate opportunities in lessons to read common French words and phrases. Learning is rapid and

the pupils have achieved very good progress in their ability to understand spoken French and to respond orally.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards throughout the school are below the national average but overall pupils achieve well.
- Teaching and learning in Year 1 and 2 are very good.
- Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is underdeveloped and as a result work in the older classes is not well matched to individual pupil needs.
- Pupils in the same year group in different mixed age classes do not experience the same curriculum.
- Teachers do not make sufficient use of information and communication technology to develop mathematical skills.
- The subject leader is new to the role and has not yet had the opportunity to establish thorough checking and evaluating procedures.

Commentary

65. In the end of Year 2 tests in 2004 pupils' results were well below that of other schools nationally but were in line with those of similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level was well above that of similar schools. In the end of Year 6 tests in 2004 pupils' results were well below the national average but above that of similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level was in line with that of similar schools. Inspection evidence finds that pupils come into school with attainment in mathematical skills well below that expected and achieve well throughout the school to reach standards that are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
66. Teaching and learning are very good in Years 1 and 2. This gives pupils a good start in mathematics and they achieve well. In these classes teachers use the mental and oral starter time well to revisit and reinforce previously learnt concepts. Planning incorporates a range of teaching styles to appeal to the needs of different learners and especially use a practical demonstration when possible. This was seen in one class where pupils were asked to make a symmetrical shape with their bodies. The teachers know their pupils well and give pupils different work to meet their needs. The pace of lessons is good and pupils are kept busy. Mathematical language is well practised. Teaching assistants and other adult help is very well used.
67. Assessment strategies for mathematics are still in the early stages of development and as a result teachers do not yet have all the information they need in order to match work well to individual needs. During the inspection the lessons observed in the older classes involved all the pupils working at the same tasks.
68. The work in pupils' books indicates that the pupils of the same age in different age classes do not follow the same curriculum. Pupils can be working at a level higher or lower than that expected for their age. There is little evidence that teachers plan together to ensure all pupils receive their entitlement.
69. Information and communication technology is rarely used in mathematics lessons. Many teachers still lack the confidence to plan this routinely into mathematics lessons and so opportunities to develop ICT skills as part of mathematics lessons are limited.

70. The subject leader has only recently joined the staff of the school and has not yet had sufficient time to establish her role. At present there are insufficient procedures to check on teaching and evaluate learning and the curriculum. As a result assessment procedures to inform teachers' planning are underdeveloped and teaching is inconsistent throughout the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

71. Mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. It is planned well into some subjects but there is little use of mathematics across the whole curriculum. There are, however, some examples of good practice. The younger pupils, for instance, use measuring skills in geography and design and technology. Older pupils draw tables and graphs in science to record their work and some make repeating patterns in art and design.

SCIENCE

Only two lessons were observed during the inspection due to timetable arrangements. Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good. All pupils, including higher attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils from ethnic backgrounds are encouraged to achieve as well as they can.
- Teaching and learning is very good in Years 1 and 2 with a developing emphasis on the teaching of scientific observation and enquiry. Support staff play a full part in this success.
- Pupils usually have good attitudes to learning and display enthusiasm in their investigation.
- Leadership of the subject is good.

Commentary

72. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average. However, this is a long way on from the very low starting point in attainment for those who started in the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school pupils' achievement in science is improving and is good. This is the result of good teaching and the positive attitudes most pupils show to their learning. In 2004, national assessments in science at Year 6 showed that standards in comparison with all pupils nationally were well below expectations but, compared with attainment by pupils in similar schools, was above average. This is set against the background of the school which has to support a large number of pupils with special educational needs, a growing number of asylum seekers and many pupils who start school well into their school career. The trend within the school is of improving achievement. Higher attaining pupils are challenged and achieve well.

73. The quality of teaching and learning in science is good overall. In the most successful lesson the pupils were fully involved in observing and identifying properties of materials. The teacher encouraged a range of language to describe the materials. Pupils listened and behaved well because they wanted to take part in the activities. The lesson was very well planned to fully involve pupils and resulted in very good learning. In the less successful lesson, although the lesson was very well planned to interest and extend the pupils learning, the introductory teaching session was too long. As a result pupils became fidgety and their concentration slipped. Teachers generally plan their lessons well and cater for the range of pupils' needs within the classes. This is helped by the very effective work of classroom assistants and the learning mentor. The good use of scientific language is a common feature throughout the school. Science supports pupils' literacy development well, however incorrectly spelt words usually go unchallenged.

74. There has been good improvement in the increased levels of scientific investigations the pupils carry out and this is having a positive effect on the achievement of the pupils. This

has contributed to good improvement in the subject since the last inspection. The pupils are beginning to be increasingly competent in carrying out a fair test and looking carefully at the results of their investigations to form conclusions. The subject leader has been in place since September 2003 and has led and managed improvements in provision very well. She has a very clear view of what is going well and what needs to be done. She is keen to drive up standards further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT are below national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Despite teachers' lack of confidence in ICT they work hard to overcome this and teaching and learning is satisfactory.
- Pupils have insufficient experiences of using ICT to develop the skills they need. The computer suite is very underused.
- The hardware resources are now satisfactory although the school still needs to obtain more software. The technician is a significant support to teachers.

Commentary

75. Standards and provision in ICT are unsatisfactory and there has been little improvement since the last inspection. The standards of work seen in ICT in lessons observed were below those expected of pupils of that age. Pupils in Year 2 are able to turn on the computers independently and log on. Many need help in finding the appropriate program but are able to use the mouse with confidence. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are not fully familiar with the keyboard and have some difficulty typing. A significant number need help in changing the colour, style and size of the font.
76. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and in both lessons the teachers acknowledged a lack of confidence in teaching ICT. Nevertheless they were well prepared. The teaching was satisfactory overall, skills were taught clearly and systematically, resulting in a satisfactory level of learning.
77. Overall pupils still have insufficient experience of using ICT to enable them to acquire the skills expected. All pupils have one ICT lesson a week but sometimes this is used to reinforce learning in another curriculum area and does not itself develop and build on previously learnt ICT skills. Use of the computer suite is timetabled but for only 4 half days a week. Although teachers are free to use it at other times this did not happen during the inspection. The suite lies idle for much of the school day, thus restricting pupils' opportunities to learn and achieve the required standards.
78. The quality and quantity of computer hardware in the school has recently been improved and the school is now in a position to develop the subject further. It still needs to extend the software available, for example for data logging. The technician employed on a part time basis in the school is a significant support to teachers when teaching ICT.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

79. The use of ICT across the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**, largely restricted by the lack of resources. Although there are occasions when the time dedicated to improving ICT skills is used to support learning in other areas of the curriculum, there were no occasions observed during the inspection when computers were used as an additional aid in lessons relating to other subjects.

HUMANITIES

80. No lessons were observed in **history** to form an overall judgement.
81. It was not possible to make judgements about provision in **geography** because not enough lessons were seen to make a firm judgement. One lesson was sampled which, together with examination of teachers' planning and discussion with the subject coordinator, shows that:
- The subject is enhanced by well-organised visits, which enables the pupils to develop their geographical skills, particularly in Year 6, when the residential visits to Castleshaw activities centre provide very good opportunities for achievement.
 - Planning over Years 3 to 6 does not cover the full breadth of study for the subject.
82. Geography makes an important contribution to the school curriculum. Displays are attractive and informative. In the one Year 6 lesson observed in geography, teaching and learning were good and the pupils showed a good knowledge of their local environment. They used a local street map to plot various routes into the town. In this lesson the pupils listened carefully, followed instructions and worked well in pairs.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links between religious education and pupils' personal and social education.
- There are few links with faith communities.

Commentary

83. Through their study of major world faiths and reflection on their values and beliefs, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards match the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. In lessons pupils learn about religious celebrations of the major world faiths such as Christmas and Eid and hear stories from the Bible. Pupils find out about Islam and write accounts of the story of Muhammad. By Year 6, pupils have a more mature understanding of the similarities and differences between their beliefs and those of others in the major world faiths. For instance, they make comparisons about the similarities and differences between for instance, places of worship, special food and clothes of Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Hinduism.
84. Pupils respect that different groups of people have different beliefs, traditions and interests. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' moral, spiritual and cultural development. Moral values such as taking responsibilities for actions are taught suitably through stories, assemblies and 'circle times'. A visiting speaker from the Bible Encounter Trust gives pupils good opportunities to learn about the Christian faith from Bible stories but there are few other links with faith communities to extend pupils' understanding of the spiritual dimension of many people's lives.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

85. No judgements on provision are made in **art and design, design and technology, music or physical education** as too few lessons were observed in these subjects. These subjects

were sampled during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils.

86. **Art and design** was not part of the inspection focus. However, examples of work in art and design point to curriculum provision that is fully in place and meets national requirements. Displays are attractive and play an important part in the general ethos of the school. In the one lesson seen in Year 1, standards were similar to those expected for pupils of this age. Pupils made good progress and achieved well. Challenge was realistic and the pupils were very productive as they concentrated and tried hard to paint in the style of Georges Seurat, which resulted in a very pleasing class picture.
87. In **design and technology** the work sampled across the school meets the expected national standards. Pupils make labelled drawings of their design intentions, and use a range of materials to make models, evaluating and improving their designs as they work.
88. **Music** plays an important part in the life of the school and from the work seen, pupils meet the nationally expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. The subject has a clear scheme of work, which gives helpful guidance to the teachers and has been a good aid to the teaching of music. The pupils in discussion talk positively about their music lessons. They talk with affection about the concerts and the music that they have experienced in school and the benefits that these events bring to their learning.
89. In **physical education**, schemes of work follow national guidance and the medium term plans indicate that a suitable range of experiences and activities are offered including a sports day and competitions with other local schools. Resources are satisfactory with a good-sized outdoor area. The school has a good collection of resources for physical education. Pupils attain the nationally expected standards in swimming. The extra-curricular clubs for sport enrich the curriculum and make a good contribution to the pupils' social development. Pupils make good progress in swimming after only one term of tuition.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good emphasis is placed on pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship.
- All staff work hard to promote the pupil's personal and social development. Parents welcome and value the school's approach to supporting their children's personal and social development.
- The pupils' social awareness is developed well through their involvement in extra-curricular and community activities and through the work of the School Council.
- Health and personal safety awareness issues are dealt with well. There are some good opportunities for pupils to understand their citizenship responsibilities but further development is needed.

Commentary

90. A strong and necessary emphasis is placed on personal, social, health and emotional education. This enhances considerably pupils' learning and attitudes to work. Suitable policies and schemes of work are in place. Older pupils are given sex education lessons in line with the governor's agreed policy and they are made aware of the harmful effects of substance misuse. Statutory requirements for sex education and drugs awareness are met.
91. Good relationships with pupils give effective support to their personal, moral, and social development. Adults in the school provide the pupils with valuable opportunities to share their experiences and express their feelings on topics such as bullying, playground rules and how to be a good friend. Support staff are used well to ensure that children have the

opportunity to discuss personal and social issues in small groups. Parents and carers are pleased that the school gives their children good personal, social and emotional support.

92. Some good extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport, contribute significantly to the pupils' personal and social development. These activities and the contact with other schools give the pupils a sense of belonging to their school and pride in its place in their community. All pupils help to fund raise for charities, which heightens the pupils' awareness of the needs of others and makes an important contribution towards their development as world citizens. Visiting speakers, such as health professionals, charity workers, leaders of worship communities and police officers, increase the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the role they may play in helping to create a positive and supportive local community.
93. The school has a strong focus on healthy eating and health awareness. Staff set a good example for pupils to become aware of the need for a healthy balanced diet. Good community links help pupils to appreciate their responsibilities as citizens. When asked about their relationships with others, Year 6 pupils had mature attitudes relating to their respect for people from different cultures and social backgrounds. The leadership team actively promotes the work of the School Council, giving it a significant voice to further pupils' involvement in school improvement and development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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