

INSPECTION REPORT

BROADOAK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ashton-under-Lyne

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106224

Headteacher: Ms K Allen

Lead inspector: Mrs E Linley

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th February 2005

Inspection number: 266497

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: 295

School address: Norman Road
Ashton-under-Lyne
Lancashire

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Telephone number: 0161 3303105
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr S Ogborn

Date of previous inspection: 14th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Broad oak Primary School is situated in Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside. The school serves an area of high unemployment and an above average percentage (47 per cent) of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Children enter the reception class in the September prior to their fifth birthday. Most children have attended the school's nursery before starting school. When children start in the nursery, their attainment is generally well below what might be expected nationally, and their language skills in particular are limited. The school is also subject to higher than average mobility of pupils who join the school in different year groups and this has a significant impact on standards achieved in national tests by pupils aged 11. 269 girls and boys attend the school, plus 26 part-time nursery children. There are two pupils whose first language is believed not to be English, however, they are no longer at the early stages of English language acquisition and this is because of the school's very good provision for their needs. The school has 94 pupils on its list of special educational need and this is above the national average. Of these, five have a formal statement of special educational need. Broad oak Primary School works effectively with Sure Start to aid children's creative development in the Foundation Stage; the school is also a significant partner in a local Network Learning Community. Broad oak Primary received a school achievement award in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2728 1	Mrs E Linley	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage
			Religious education
			Music
			Art and design
			Design and technology
1944 3	Mrs N Walker	Lay inspector	
1151 0	Mr K Oglesby	Team inspector	Mathematics
			Science
			Information and communication technology
			Physical education
			Special educational needs
2521 1	Mr C Smith	Team inspector	English
			History
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The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a highly effective and inclusive school. As a result of very good leadership and management and good teaching overall, pupils achieve very well over time. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve very well over time.
- The quality and accuracy of standards in pupils' handwriting, spelling, punctuation and presentation are inconsistent.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good and she is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and key members of staff.
- Governance is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The quality of care, welfare, health and safety is very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.

The school has improved well since its last inspection in 1999. The key issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been addressed. Of particular importance are the improvements made in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) by the age of 11, pupils now attain standards that are in line with national expectations. Since the last inspection a new nursery has been built which is now attached to the main school building and provides well for nursery aged children. Other achievements include the improvements and developments made in other areas of the school's work, for example, in school development planning and in improving the work place for both pupils and staff through workforce reform.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Pupils' achievement is very good during their time in school. Attainment on entry to nursery is well below what might be expected nationally and children's language skills are particularly limited. Children make a good start in nursery and they achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage. As a result, standards by the end of reception have improved though they are likely to be below the expected levels in the six areas of learning, for: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. Pupils achieve well overall in relation to their capability in Years 1 and 2, although pupils' progress is currently uneven in Year 1. This is because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. By the age of seven, standards are below average in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and ICT. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 – 6 is aided by reduced class sizes in the mornings by employing additional

staff. In addition, consistently high quality teaching in Year 6 means that by the age of 11, the majority of pupils are attaining standards that are average in mathematics and science and meeting national expectations in ICT. Standards achieved in religious education match those prescribed by the syllabus in local schools and are in line with expectations in history throughout school. This equates to very good achievement over time. Pupils who have special educational needs similarly achieve very well. This is because of the very good quality of provision that is in place for their needs. Although, pupils achieve well in reading and satisfactorily in writing, further development is required to improve the accuracy and consistency of spelling, punctuation, handwriting and in the presentation of their work. As a result, standards are below average in English. Standards achieved in English, however, are adversely affected by a larger than average percentage of pupils, with low skills in literacy, who join the school during Years 3 to 6. This was reflected in the 2004 national tests for pupils aged 11, when achievement at the higher levels was below that achieved in other subjects. In comparison to similar schools, however, and in relation to pupils' prior attainment, standards were average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science. In addition, the improvement in the school's results at age seven and 11 were above the national trend of the last four years.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' personal development is good and as a result, they have positive attitudes towards learning and their behaviour is good. Attendance and punctuality is satisfactory overall.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall although a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. All teachers make very good use of teaching assistants who in turn make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Assessment is good overall. Teachers use an effective range of assessment strategies to track pupils' progress and this is a key factor in meeting the needs effectively of those pupils who join the school late in their primary school years. In the majority of cases it is used well to meet the needs of pupils, however, where unsatisfactory teaching was observed, this, plus management of pupils' behaviour, was a key area for development. The school provides a good curriculum that is enriched well to develop pupils' learning. The accommodation and resources that support the school's provision are good. The school provides a very good level of care for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. Links with parents are good overall, and the work of the 'learning mentor' in developing these links is of very high quality. Links and partnerships with colleges and with other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and she is supported very well by the deputy headteacher and other key staff. Management of the school is very good. The school uses the evidence it gains from self-evaluation to inform its strategic planning very well. Governance is very good. The governors are led very well by the chair and all governors are actively involved in the school. As a result, they have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met. Governors and leaders in school are purposefully engaged in workforce reform and have made many positive strides forward in this initiative.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents expressed positive views about Broadoak Primary School; they particularly value the high expectations that staff have of their children to work hard. Some parents felt that

issues of 'bullying' were not always dealt with well enough. However, inspection evidence indicates that the school deals with individual incidents effectively. Pupils hold very positive views about their school and enjoy the opportunities that are made available for them, especially the history theme days.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the accuracy and consistency of pupils' handwriting, spelling, punctuation and presentation.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards achieved are very good over time. From a low starting point children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Very good achievement is secured by the age of 11 and pupils attain average standards overall; this is because of the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- From a low start children achieve very well.
- By the time children leave school at age 11 they attain standards in mathematics, science and ICT that are in line with national expectations.
- Pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation and handwriting are not consistently accurate enough.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.

Commentary

1 The school's results in the national tests for seven year olds in 2004 showed that overall standards were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, pupils' performance was well above average in reading, above average in writing and below average in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.4 (15.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.1 (14.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.0 (14.5)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (26.1)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.7 (26.7)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.1 (27.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2 The school's results in the 2004 national tests for 11 year olds, showed that standards in English were well below average; they were average in mathematics and below average in science. The English results were affected by the issue of pupils joining school later in their schooling than normal. A quarter of the pupils tested in 2004 had been taught in other schools. Most of them entered Broadoak late in their junior years with very low levels of achievement in literacy and this impacted significantly on the results attained in the national tests for English. Nonetheless, in comparison with similar schools, and in

relation to pupils' prior attainment, it is shown that pupils achieved very well over time as standards were average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science. In addition, the trends of improvement over the last four years have been above the national average in national tests for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6.

3 This very good achievement is exemplified by the fact that when children start school in nursery they have skills that are well below what is typical for their age. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage enables children to achieve well. As a result, by the end of reception, standards have improved but are likely to be below the expected levels in the six areas of learning. Pupils maintain their achievement as they move through Years 1 and 2. However, their progress is uneven in Year 1 as a result of inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning in this year group. Inspection findings are that pupils in Year 2 attain standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT that are below those expected for their age. Standards meet expectations in history and they match expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education.

4 Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is aided by the decision to reduce class sizes in the mornings by employing additional staff. As pupils move through the junior classes this makes a significant difference to their overall achievement. This is further aided by the consistently high quality of teaching in Year 6 and so by the age of 11, the majority of pupils are attaining standards in mathematics, science and ICT that meet expectations. From a low starting point therefore, pupils achieve very well over time. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language similarly achieve very well. This is because of the very good quality of provision that is in place for their needs. Parents particularly value the quality of provision in place that enables their children to achieve as well as they do.

5 The exception to this picture of very good achievement is in English as standards are below average by the end of Year 6. However, good achievement is still evident as pupils achieve well in reading and in speaking and listening. The school has quite rightly focussed strongly on removing barriers to learning by exploring different methods to inspire pupils in their writing. Very good leadership coupled with excellent teaching in Year 6 is beginning to make a difference. Pupils' satisfactory achievement in writing is attributed to improvements needed in the technical aspects of pupils' written work, such as accuracy in spelling, punctuation and handwriting, which are still not good enough.

6 A similar picture of very good leadership impacting on standards is seen in the case of mathematics. The co-ordinator responded quickly to the outcome of the results of the 2004 national tests for seven year olds. A clear structure of action to aid pupils' achievement was put in place, which is starting to pay dividends, and inspection evidence shows that standards by the age of seven are beginning to improve.

7 The picture of improvement in ICT is significant given that it was a key issue at the time of the last inspection. Very good leadership again has contributed to the school's success. Resources and provision have improved and so standards are rising, with pupils aged 11 achieving in line with national expectations. In religious education, pupils attain standards in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and in history standards also meet expectations. Art and design, design and technology, geography, music and physical education were sampled during the inspection and so no overall judgements have been made on provision and standards in these subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development is good and is supported effectively by the school's good provision overall for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although the school has had to impose a number of fixed term exclusions for pupils who have problems with maintaining appropriate behaviour, pupils' attitudes to school life and their behaviour overall are good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships underpin a purposeful and positive working environment.
- Pupils take very seriously their role of living in the school community.
- The learning mentor plays a key role in the promotion of pupils' good behaviour.
- Pupils value each others' differences and are keen to learn from each other.
- The school works very hard to promote pupils' punctuality.

Commentary

8 The school provides a positive environment for learning where all pupils and their work are valued. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and their attitudes to learning are good. Staff work very hard to ensure that pupils are mindful of the needs of others and they consistently demonstrate their very high expectations for pupils to behave well and to try their best. On occasions when, teaching was observed to be unsatisfactory, the management of pupils' behaviour was not as good as it should be. However, relationships between all members of the school community are very good and pupils respond well overall to the guidance that adults give them.

9 The work of the learning mentor is vitally important and the very positive way in which she works with those pupils who have particular behavioural and emotional needs, is significant to the school's success. The impact of these high quality relationships is that pupils understand the importance of taking care of and a pride in their surroundings. For example, pupils are very proud of their school hall and the wonderful friezes on the walls that typifies their school community. They enjoyed working with an artist to contribute to their completion. Parents are very pleased with their children's attitudes to learning and the high expectations overall that staff have for their children to try their best.

10 Teachers are increasingly encouraging pupils to become stakeholders in their own school and work together to make improvements. School, class and environmental councils have been established. Consequently, pupils understand how people are elected to represent their community and they are beginning to grasp how collective decisions are made. They are being well prepared to become future citizens. These councils are very effective in gathering pupils' views and agreeing on projects.

11 Pupils' personal development is promoted well. Pupils are beginning to be encouraged to explore and take responsibility for their own way of learning. This initiative is enhanced by the work that the school does in history, for example, where pupils, joined by their parents, experience theme days on the Tudors and Aztecs. Many pupils show initiative and enjoy the opportunity to complete research in their lessons, for example, in Year 6, where pupils' research has complemented their work in religious education on Islam. Another strong factor of the school's provision is the value placed on all pupils' life experiences and what they can bring as individuals to each other's learning. This is demonstrated well as pupils are keen to learn of other religions and each other's faiths and as in Year 6 when they were in awe of their friend who read from the Qur'an in fluent Arabic. Such is the school's very good commitment to inclusion, pupils consistently demonstrate their ability to work together no matter what their different beliefs or learning and physical needs.

Attendance

12 Attendance is satisfactory and reflects the school's very good action to encourage and promote good attendance of all pupils. Although punctuality is satisfactory, the school consistently employs very effective strategies to encourage pupils to be punctual. All staff, including administrative staff, are involved and take this matter very seriously.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95%)

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data	5.0
National data	5.1

School data	0.0
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	223	5	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	4	0	0
Any other ethnic group	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	5	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 is good overall. Strengths include good teaching and learning, the positive partnerships established with parents, the very effective links established with other schools and colleges and the school's very good care for pupils' health, welfare and safety.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. Assessment is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan activities that are exciting and motivate pupils to achieve very well.
- Teaching is full of pace and fun in Year 6 and is often very good or excellent.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory when discipline is ineffective and work fails to challenge pupils.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching, particularly of pupils who have special educational needs.
- The strategy of deploying staff to classes in Year 3 to 6 each morning is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	5 (13%)	17 (45%)	13 (34%)	2 (5%)	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 Teaching throughout the school is good overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage because teachers are well prepared and staff work well as a team to meet children's needs. Teaching is of a particularly high standard in Year 6, where the deputy headteacher consistently demonstrates very good and excellent teaching. Other Year 6 staff demonstrate similar high quality skills to aid pupils' learning. This has a significant impact on pupils' achievement by the age of 11 which is very good overall. Where teaching is very good and excellent, lessons are exciting, imaginative and move at great pace and so learning is fun. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher had very high expectations of pupils to explain their thinking and so they determined why their answers were correct or not. As a result of very good subject knowledge and excellent explanations, pupils were soon able to work out the patterns that a series of numbers made and could predict the next number to be used very well. Most importantly though was that pupils had fun and this aided their understanding.

14 Good and very good teaching and learning were seen elsewhere in school and similar very good qualities were observed; for example, in a mixed Year 1 and 2 mathematics lesson, where the use of ICT was a key strength of the lesson. This is not always the case, however. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and this was largely attributed to unsatisfactory management of pupils' behaviour and to the teacher not matching activities well enough to pupils' needs. It is such considerations that account for uneven progress of pupils in Year 1. In the main, however, teachers employ very good strategies to encourage pupils to behave well and lessons are characterised by very good relationships that are underpinned by teachers' encouragement of pupils to try their best. For example, in discussion during lessons, teachers ensure very effectively that pupils are helped to understand what they are learning. As a result, pupils' confidence and self-esteem is good because they know that even if they answer a question incorrectly their contribution will be valued.

15 A significant contribution to pupils' learning in Years 3 to 6 is the decision to reduce class sizes in the morning by employing additional staff. Pupils benefit from working in smaller groups than is normal and the focussed teaching and learning in English and mathematics, and science in Year 6, aid pupils' learning and achievement. This initiative is of particular importance given the number of pupils who join the school during Years 3 to 6. It is a feature of teaching that parents like.

16 The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is very good. This is because teachers and teaching assistants work together very well to maintain full and accurate detail of each pupil's progress, and also to use that information to match challenge and support precisely to individual need. Well-trained and skilful teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning. For example, in reception, a child with specific physical needs was aided very effectively as children considered how best to operate a remote controlled car. All teaching assistants in school give focused and very effective support, both within and outside lessons.

17 The use of assessment is good overall. Pupils' achievement and progress is very carefully tracked and recorded and is generally used well to plan for pupils' learning. Very good examples of this are evident in English and mathematics where subject leaders have high expectations of teachers to ensure that work is carefully matched to meet pupils' needs in lessons. Where teaching was observed to be unsatisfactory, however, the use of assessment to aid learning was not effective.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum, successfully enriched by a wide range of additional activities. Pupils' learning benefits from the good accommodation and plentiful supply of resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs.

- Innovations in writing, ICT and outdoor provision for nursery and reception children have significantly strengthened the curriculum.
- The good range of activities outside normal lessons and the well-conceived PSHCE programme, enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' personal development.

Commentary

18 Staff support pupils with special educational needs very well. Individual education plans are well constructed. They provide good guidance for staff and focus clearly on the targets pupils need to aim for to improve. The school has recently admitted a small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The local Education Authority support team has quickly assessed their language and learning needs and provided good support. Teachers and support staff have concentrated well on their language development. Consequently, these pupils are now able to speak fluent English and are making good progress with reading and writing. There is a strong commitment towards including all pupils in all activities. Pupils of all abilities are equally well catered for, when teachers plan their lessons, and this is a major contributor to their good achievement. Gifted and talented pupils have been identified by using assessment results and by consulting staff and parents. A positive start has been made in providing additional activities, designed to extend their gifts and talents, but the provision is at an early stage of development and staff acknowledge that there is still more to do.

19 The school has taken initiative in trying out new approaches, particularly with regard to increasing pupils' interest in learning and developing their creative skills. At the meeting before the inspection, parents commented very positively about this new approach to the curriculum. At the time of the last inspection, pupils often completed worksheets in religious education, science and history. This restricted opportunities for them to develop their writing skills in other subjects. One of the most fruitful innovations has been to offer pupils opportunities to choose how to record and express their learning in their own way. This is proving successful in developing their creative talents and stimulating their desire to learn, particularly the boys. Pupils often choose to write accounts and stories to accompany their paintings and models. As a result, they now write for many different purposes, using a variety of styles. This has significantly improved the content and structure of their writing, although there is more to do to improve accuracy and presentation. The good curriculum provided at the time of the last inspection has been extended further. Planning for all aspects of ICT has improved and standards are now at the levels expected. The recently constructed outdoor play area has significantly enhanced the good provision for children in the Foundation Stage.

20 Pupils' personal development has a high profile throughout the school. A successful programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education helps pupils to understand themselves, develop respect for others and learn to make rational decisions. A good range of well attended after school activities offers pupils new experiences and helps to develop their sporting and musical talents. Other activities cater well for pupils' diverse interests, such as the ICT club and the drop in homework sessions, for pupils who work better at school than at home.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure pupils' care, health and safety are very good. Pupils are very well supported, advised and guided. The school involves pupils very well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school governors take a strong lead in ensuring care and safety.
- Procedures for child protection are very good.

- The learning mentor makes a very good contribution to the quality of care and support.
- Pupils' views and opinions are taken very seriously and acted upon by teachers.

Commentary

21 There are extremely thorough arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare and safety, including the child protection procedures. Governors bring their own expertise and commitment to this, for example in the regular risk assessments that they carry out both in and out of school. There are comprehensive procedures for child protection. The quality of training and communication is very high and all staff understand their own role. When necessary, the school works hard to co-operate with other agencies and parents. The learning mentor is a very effective part of this process. For example, at a coffee afternoon organised by the bursar and learning mentor, parents spoke highly of the care and guidance shown to their children and to themselves when they and their children had suffered from a bereavement.

22 Very good teamwork and relationships are evident in all parts of the school. Adults have a very clear picture of pupils' achievements and needs. This comes both from very good assessment systems and friendly, open and encouraging day-to-day communication around the school. This is of particular importance for those pupils who join the school later than most pupils. Consequently, pupils benefit from relevant advice and know who to turn to when things go wrong.

23 Pupils know that their ideas are listened to and taken seriously. This is obvious, informally around the school, and more formally through the busy class and school councils. All pupils have a chance to contribute to these meetings. They like this and do their best to make them work. In a class meeting in a Year 3 and 4 class, for example, two pupils led the meeting like veterans. They gave feedback, kept minutes, kept the debate open and gave summaries of what had been decided. As a result, the meeting ran smoothly and everyone had a chance to play a part in making decisions and offering opinions.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are good. Links with the community, other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The learning mentor is pivotal to the school's success in forging positive relationships with parents.
- Effective links have been established with the community police to aid pupils' learning about citizenship.
- The school's partnership in the Network Learning Community and the very good links established with local schools, is paying dividends in raising self-esteem.
- Reports on pupils' progress are better overall for English than in other subjects.

Commentary

24 Broadoak Primary School is proactive in ensuring that an 'open door' policy is practiced and every opportunity is taken to foster good relationships with parents. School includes and involves its parents very well through easy to access information and invitations to many events including assemblies and lessons during themed weeks. At a

meeting before the inspection, parents expressed their appreciation of such events and said how much they enjoyed taking part in the Tudor and Aztec days.

25 As a result of the school's action, parents feel able and welcome to approach staff. The exchange of information and views is effective and there is a mutual understanding and respect for one another. Consequently, most parents support the school's general policies and expectations well, for example, with regard to attendance, punctuality, uniform and behaviour. The role of the learning mentor is pivotal to the school's success in forging positive relationships with parents. Parents clearly value her work with them, for example, in managing incidents with their children that involve emotional and behavioural problems.

26 Some parents expressed concerns about 'bullying' and how it was dealt with, whilst some felt that they were not informed well enough about the progress of their children. Inspection evidence shows that the school deals with any incidents of bullying on an individual basis and works hard to deal with any case with sensitivity and efficiency. In respect to reporting on pupils' progress, parents have opportunities to discuss their children's achievements and needs at three parents' evenings during the year. School reports are satisfactory, however, they contain better information in respect to pupils' progress in English than in other subjects. This is because there is often more of a focus on what work pupils have completed rather than what has been learnt, which might well be different for different pupils.

27 Very good links have been established with members of the community to benefit pupils' personal and academic development. For example, in the school's current work with a community police officer who is supporting the school's efforts to promote good citizenship. Similarly, senior citizens are welcomed into school who work with pupils as part of a planned programme, to support strategies that aid pupils' reading.

28 A real strength of the school's work is in the Network Learning Community that has been established with five other local schools. This approach to working is making a very positive impact on the school's own practice. Together they are focussing on 'self esteem' for pupils staff and parents. The initiative is providing a vehicle for staff training and is already beginning to make an impact on pupils' self esteem and that of the staff.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The school is dealing well with identified aids and barriers to achievement. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and she is supported very well in the leadership demonstrated by the deputy headteacher and the leadership team. Governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's expectation of others to lead and to be accountable ensures that leaders in school carry out their roles very well.
- Staff training is an important factor in planning for school improvement.
- Governors are confident to ask challenging questions as a critical friend and are very supportive of the school in its quest to raise standards.
- The bursar takes her role very seriously and makes a very positive contribution in ensuring that the link between governors and school administration is managed very well.

Commentary

29 The headteacher demonstrates very good leadership. Her vision for the school is clear and in working towards this end she is supported very well by all staff on the leadership team. A key figure on this team is her deputy headteacher. She works tremendously hard to lead by example, both in her curriculum leadership and in the very good and excellent quality of her teaching. The headteacher expects the same commitment from all her senior managers and other staff. A mark of her success as a leader is that she gets it. Central to the headteacher's style of leadership is the empowerment of others to lead and to be accountable. The success of this style is seen in the very good leadership of subject co-ordinators, and of the co-ordinator for special educational needs, who are constantly evaluating performance of pupils and staff to make sure that everyone is focussed on aiding achievement and so raising standards.

30 Delegation works very well in Broadoak Primary School because those to whom tasks are delegated are held accountable through the review and evaluation of teachers' performance and other reviews. Self-evaluation is thoroughly embedded in the school and is often grounded in very good procedures for monitoring and evaluation and for tracking the work of individual pupils and providing them with the programmes of work they need to aid their learning. In this way the headteacher and deputy are well aware of areas for development and where action is needed to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

31 The school's close attention to training staff supports very effectively the school's commitment to meeting the needs of both staff and pupils. In this way the school works hard to aid learning particularly in respect to removing barriers that are associated with difficulties with language. The member of staff whose responsibility it is to lead on this very important area is very clear about the importance of staff training to aid school improvement. It is clearly linked to priorities for development. Significant to this work is the school's involvement in the Network Learning Community where like minded schools work together to challenge and support; to facilitate and coach. All staff benefit from their chance to become leaders in their own field of expertise. Similarly, the school has made significant strides towards reforming the way people work in school. This work has been recognised by the local education authority and requested to share their good practice on a wider platform so that other schools can, if they choose, follow this good example.

32 The leaders in school are very ably supported by a knowledgeable and committed governing body. Governors are well aware of the school's main strengths and of its continuing priorities for development. Members demonstrate this knowledge when they cite specific examples of improvement and how this is being brought about; for example, in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. The governing body keeps itself well informed about the work of the school through reports to its committees and to the full governing body, through meetings with members of staff and through regular visits by governors to the school to watch it at work. Governors take very seriously the need to keep themselves fully updated about their responsibilities, as a result they regularly attend local training sessions and forums. The governing body is always ready to ask challenging questions of senior managers, while also supporting them in driving the school forward. In addition, the process for evaluating the performance of staff is kept under close scrutiny. The governing body fulfils all its statutory obligations, for example, in monitoring the implementation of the school's Race Relations Policy, but goes beyond this in ably assisting and shaping the work of the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	776,060	Balance from previous year	108,403
Total expenditure	770,850	Balance carried forward to the next	113,613
Expenditure per pupil	2527		

33 The governing body and key staff manage the school's finances prudently whilst ensuring that staff get the resources they need to aid teaching and learning effectively. The governors' finance committee is well informed and ensures that the budget set reflects the school's educational priorities. A good example of this is demonstrated by the decision to reduce class sizes in the mornings in Years 3 – 6 by employing additional staff. This is seen as an essential factor to aid achievement, particularly given the issue that the school faces in relation to mobility.

34 Budget monitoring is thorough and spending is monitored very carefully to ensure best value. The bursar is very committed to her role and ensures that the link between governors and school administration is a secure and most useful one. Day-to-day administration itself is very good, underpinning the governors' broader financial management most successfully.

35 A larger than average surplus had been maintained to aid significant projects for which the school had planned. Most of these have been completed during the current financial year; the surplus is therefore now much lower than detailed above. The cost of educating pupils at the school is broadly average. However, given pupils' low starting point when they begin school and their subsequent very good achievement overall, the school provides very good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

36 Provision in the Foundation Stage is good overall and benefits from a purpose built nursery attached to school and this in itself is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Reception aged children have the opportunity to use the nursery accommodation during the afternoon and this is something they particularly enjoy. The nursery and reception class are well organised and provide stimulating and high quality environments in which children begin their school life. Good links are established with parents with a range of information that is available to support children's positive induction into school. Assessments of children's progress are very well recorded and used effectively overall to plan activities that meet children's needs overall. An area for development is to meet the needs of nursery children more effectively at the end of the morning session to ensure that children are not sitting for too long. However, overall, the provision available for children is good and aids their achievement well. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well across all the areas of learning.
- They work and play together well.
- Children learn from the very good role models of the Foundation Stage staff to be caring and thoughtful of the needs of others.

Commentary

37 The very good relationships that exist in the Foundation Stage provide children with a secure environment and ensure that children settle into school life well. Children are happy to come to school and enjoy the many opportunities that they have to play and work together. The adults who work with children in the Foundation Stage provide good role models and aid them well in the development of their personal skills and levels of independence. This is seen in the work of staff to develop a lending library scheme where parents join their children to select books to borrow. When they are ready to change their book, children in reception say what they liked about it and whether or not they would recommend it to a friend. Teaching is good overall. Staff know the children very well and are sensitive to their needs. This sensitivity is learnt very well by children, for example, in their thoughtfulness and caring of the needs of their friend in a wheelchair. Staff have very high expectations of the children to behave well and the majority in return respond well showing good attitudes to learning and good behaviour. Most children take turns and share resources and help when it is ready to tidy up although some still find it difficult to share. The children's confidence is boosted effectively by the praise and encouragement that is given to each child to try to achieve their best and, as a result, all children, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well. In spite of their good achievement, few children attain the early learning goals by the end of reception, reflecting their low starting point in nursery.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage team prepare a good range of practical activities that develop children's language skills effectively.
- Children in nursery lose concentration when the activity at the end of the session is too long for them to be in one large group.
- Provision to develop children's skills in reading makes learning fun.

Commentary

38 When children begin nursery a significant number have very limited language skills and they are well below what might be expected of children of this age. The Foundation Stage staff, therefore, plan effectively to meet children's needs by providing as many opportunities as possible to develop their speaking and listening skills across all the areas of learning. This is seen in the staff's interaction with children in role-play, for example, in the 'Broadoak café' in the reception class and in the 'Post office' in nursery. This reflects the good teaching overall that takes place. Children are encouraged from an early age to develop a love of books. Where very good teaching was observed in guided reading, the teacher selected text to engage the interest of the boys who she was working with. Opportunities were provided for the children to act out what they read together, for example, 'Dad was fierce'. Children were encouraged to use the pictures to help them 'guess' the word on the page and to predict what might come next. In this lesson, learning was fun and as a result, children achieved very well. In nursery, the teacher worked very hard to engage all the children as she read 'A letter to Amy'. Together they wrote a letter to Amy and the teacher's modelling in this context was good. However, this session at the end of the morning was too long for all the children especially given their age and many lost their concentration. The Foundation Stage provides opportunities for children to make marks and have a go at writing as they move from one activity to another. In reception, children are beginning to sequence stories in pictures to show there is a beginning, middle and an end. Some are beginning to use their knowledge of sounds to write simple words and write their own name. Children who are more able work hard to make a list for party food. The range of practical activities that are prepared for children across the curriculum to extend children's language skills is of a good quality and this maintains children's interest. Despite achieving well, the majority are unlikely to reach the early goals expected by the end of the reception class because of their low starting point.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's understanding of number is promoted well.
- Teachers plan a good range of practical activities to cover all aspects of mathematical development.

Commentary

39 Every opportunity is taken for staff to promote children's understanding of number and this exemplifies the good teaching that takes place in the Foundation Stage. In reception, the whole class counted up to 30. Children who are more able are invited to share their expertise, for example one child counted in tens from 10 up to 100. Children used the interactive whiteboard well in their task to order some numbers but found it difficult to complete the task because the number sequence did not begin with 1. Early counting begins in nursery with singing rhymes such as 'Five Little Monkeys' and identifying the numbers one to five on cards. One of the aspects of good teaching is that teachers plan a good range of practical activities that cover all aspects of mathematical development. For example, in reception, children become familiar with a cube and many remember from their previous work that it has six sides and eight corners. One child even remembered that these were called 'vertices'! Few children are set to attain the early learning goals by the end of

reception. However, children achieve well overall, given their low skills when they start nursery, and this is because learning is fun.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers promote cross-curricular links well to aid children's achievement.
- The good range of practical activities used to stimulate children's curiosity make learning fun.

Commentary

40 The Foundation Stage classrooms provide purposeful and exciting environments in which children are encouraged to investigate and learn. Opportunities for them to use the computer are readily available and many children are confident using the mouse. Teaching is good and the use of the interactive whiteboard is used well to promote positive links across the other areas of learning. For example, children in reception considered the direction the arrow needed to point on the 'smartboard': forward, backwards, left or right, in order to move the car on the screen. They counted how many squares the car should move and then, sometimes with assistance, entered this information on the screen. Children also enjoyed working with remote controlled cars and others turned a tape recorder on and off with confidence. In nursery, children have been reading 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and have planted beans to watch them growing in their classroom. All these activities help to develop children's curiosity well. Reception aged children enjoy activities in the nursery during the afternoon, for example, when they cut and prepare fruit for a fruit salad and most children remember the names of the fruit. The teacher carefully promoted safety and hygiene during this activity. The curriculum is also enhanced by children learning about people who help them, such as the headteacher, caretaker, secretary, school nurse and cook. Children learn about moral issues through stories and songs. For example, when reception children joined older pupils for assembly and together they read 'Lucy's Picture' and built up the picture of what it might look like. Time for reflection aided children's thinking about what it might be like to be blind; children demonstrated sensitivity in their responses. Although the majority of children are unlikely to meet the early goals for knowledge and understanding by the end of reception, they achieve well because children enjoy the activities which are fun for them to do.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for children who have special educational needs is very good.
- Children need more time to cool down at the end of lessons for physical development in the hall.

Commentary

41 Children develop their manipulative skills well through the good opportunities that are provided for them to use pencils, pens, crayons, paintbrushes, scissors and small construction equipment. All children are involved in all activities no matter what their special educational needs might be. An example of the school's very good commitment to inclusion is the way that all children are integrated in physical activities in the hall. For example, in reception, the support assistant and teacher ensured that a child with physical disabilities was fully involved as she explored the space around her on the floor and moved in different directions. The majority of children are aware of their own and each other's space. In reception, children noticed that their heart beats faster when they moved about the hall quickly. However, more time was needed to cool down after the lesson in the hall so that children could see how their bodies reacted to change. In nursery, children enjoyed

exploring the outdoor play area in the snow. Well wrapped against the elements, children dug in the snow and raked it. Normally they would use wheeled toys, but at the time of the inspection, this was not possible. Children enjoy the good opportunities that are available for them and as a result of good teaching they achieve well and many attain standards that are only just below that expected for their age by the time they leave reception.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The integration of imaginative topics into the curriculum provides opportunities for creativity.
- Role-play aids children's achievement across all the areas of learning.
- Very good links established with the Sure Start project enhances children's creative skills.

Commentary

42 This area of learning is taught well. Role-play is integral to provision for creative development in the nursery and reception classes and this enables children to develop imagination as well as their social skills. In the 'Broadoak Café' and the nursery's 'Post office' children are encouraged to develop language and this is achieved by the staff becoming active participants in the activity. Role-play promotes children's learning across the curriculum; for example, children in reception learn about the Chinese New Year and enjoy using chopsticks and eating 'noodles' in the role-play area. Children's creativity is developed well through opportunities they have to play in sand and water; to cut and stick and use play dough, for example, to make a cake which they decorated with straws for a birthday. A significant contribution to provision is the very good link established with Sure Start who provide a focussed musical activity in a nearby location. Nursery children clearly enjoy this opportunity. They concentrated hard as they sang songs with numbers and rhymes and tried hard to follow the teacher and clap to the rhythm. The majority of children will achieve standards that are below expectations for their age overall when they leave reception, however, this represents good progress. Although children achieve well, their low starting point in nursery means that few are set to attain the early goals by the end of reception.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities to discuss ideas significantly improve pupils' spoken language.
- Good teaching of reading ensures that pupils achieve well in this aspect of English.
- The content and structure of pupils' writing is improving rapidly, but their completed work is often let down by weaknesses in spelling, punctuation and handwriting.

Commentary

43 Teaching is good overall. Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well in speaking and listening. Standards are below the levels expected by the age of seven but most pupils have gained the skills to listen attentively and speak clearly. This represents good progress in relation to very limited use of language many children had when they started school. Purposeful class discussions and debates enable most junior pupils to reach the levels expected by the age of 11. They have developed into good listeners and confident speakers. The very few pupils with English as an additional language have responded enthusiastically to the very good support provided. Six months ago they could speak very little English. Now they converse fluently and are making good progress in reading and writing tasks. In literacy lessons, reading and written tasks are preceded by very valuable discussions, during which pupils explore the meaning of texts and plan written pieces together. As a result, pupils are better prepared to comprehend what they read and they write with greater imagination and fluency.

44 Pupils achieve well in reading. Standards are below average throughout school; however, the teaching of reading is effective in almost all classes. Infant pupils receive a firm grounding in phonics (sounding out letters to make words). These skills are taught very well in the Year 2 classes. However, the management of pupils in one of the Year 1 classes is less effective and time is lost gaining their attention, consequently they do not progress as quickly as they should. Achievement in reading is good in the junior classes. The school's records show that the vast majority of junior age pupils achieve more than the two levels expected between Years 3 and 6. This reflects the good teaching of reading comprehension. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 plan, organise and manage their lessons well. The tasks provided are interesting, challenging and well matched to pupils' different learning needs. Consequently, pupils are able to work well independently or collaboratively, while the class teacher gives 'quality time' to assessing and guiding a small group. During the group sessions, there is a high concentration on improving pupils' strategies for reading difficult words, predicting what is likely to happen next and finding evidence in the text to substantiate their opinions. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by classroom assistants and make very good progress in all aspects of English. The assessment of reading and writing is very good. Pupils' individual weaknesses are well understood and promptly acted upon.

45 Standards are below average in writing and overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily. The gap between pupils' achievement in reading and in writing is closing rapidly. In 2004, for example, a third of the pupils, when tested in Year 6, had not made the progress expected during their time in the junior classes. This sent alarm signals around the school.

Very swift and decisive action was taken to ensure that all pupils fulfilled their potential. Intensive training on the teaching of writing was provided. Strong and effective leadership ensured that the new methods and techniques were first tried out in selected classes and then extended to others. Teaching, learning and children's achievements have been monitored carefully to ensure that a whole school approach to improvement was taking place. The excellent teaching of writing in Year 6 is now beginning to influence teachers in other classes. A strong emphasis is placed on pupils examining different writing styles to identify the features that make the writing interesting, persuasive and meaningful. Pupils know, for example, that a crisp lively opening engages in the reader's attention. Pupils now spend valuable time redrafting and improving their written work. In terms of the content and structure of writing, standards from Year 2 to the end of Year 6 are at least at the levels expected. However, the technical aspects of pupils' written work, such as accuracy in spelling, punctuation and handwriting are still not good enough. This is unfortunate because the appearance of pupils' written work often does not do justice to the good content. In Year 2 and in Year 6 pupils try hard to present their work carefully and accurately. However, teachers in Year 3, 4 and 5 are not as successful in improving the accuracy and overall presentation of pupils' written work. This is an issue to improve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46 Pupils make very good use of their language and literacy skills in other subjects. Pupils hone their reading skills well by searching for information from books and the Internet for other subjects, such as geography. Genuine purposes for writing arise through topic work. In history, for example, pupils have learnt to write with feeling and sensitivity about the plight of children evacuated to the countryside during the Second World War. These opportunities are significantly extending pupils' achievement in English.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subject leadership is very good.
- There is a very effective support team. Pupils who need extra help are achieving very well.
- Teachers are using interactive whiteboards well to help pupils understand new ideas.
- Mental and oral work is usually taught well, but in a small number of lessons it lacks pace and rigour.
- There are very good systems for tracking pupils' progress.
- Teachers work hard to boost pupil' self-esteem; this is helping pupils to become confident mathematicians.

Commentary

47 Pupils achieve very well in mathematics and by the age of 11 standards match the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well over time, despite many of them entering the school with weak mathematical skills. They are building up a range of strategies for oral and mental calculation, have a good recall of important number facts and are learning to solve problems logically. The main reasons for this positive picture are the interesting and well planned lessons, keen pupils who listen and work hard, and very good

leadership and management from a subject leader who keeps a close eye on the quality of teaching and learning.

48 By the age of seven, standards are below average. Overall, pupils make some good progress in the youngest classes, from a low starting point. However weaknesses remain in their understanding and use of numbers and their ability to write or explain calculations accurately. The teaching in Year 2 has several strengths. Relationships are very good, lessons are carefully planned and the pupils encouraged, supported and praised. Nevertheless, the teaching here has not always been demanding enough to raise standards further.

49 A strength in the teaching is the good teamwork and sharing of expertise. All teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy confidently and plan together. Consequently pupils do not have to waste time adjusting to different styles as they move up the school. Teachers explain and demonstrate ideas clearly, often making good use of the interactive whiteboards. For example, in a very good lesson in a mixed Year 1 and 2, the teacher moved pupils from random guesswork to systematic problem solving by modelling solutions on the screen. The use of additional teachers to work with smaller groups is helping to raise standards. Pupils want to be involved, show what they can do and earn some praise. This is often evident in the mental and oral work. In Year 3, for example, the teacher kept everyone on their toes through gentle teasing, increasing the pace and difficulty steadily and making everyone feel they were wonderful.

50 Teaching is good overall and is often very good. Teaching assistants work very well with the teachers. They offer flexible and unobtrusive support and are respected and trusted by the pupils. They make a good contribution to learning. Teachers place a good emphasis on solving problems and reasoning. This is helping pupils' understanding and confidence, as well as adding to the enjoyment. In Year 6, for example, the teacher helped pupils to tackle some formidable problems using excellent examples and probing questions. By the end of the lesson they were able to spot the best strategies, make generalisations and predict what might happen next. However there are some weaknesses, even in otherwise effective lessons. One of these is a tendency for some teachers to over-explain and talk for too long. When this happens pupils lose concentration and it also leaves insufficient time for pupils to complete their written work. Another weakness, in a very small number of lessons, is that teachers accept untidy and disorganised written work. However, mental work at the start of lessons is nearly always a lively and enjoyable session. Pupils not only make gains in skills and understanding but move on to the next part alert and motivated.

51 Leadership and management in mathematics are very good. She makes a thorough analysis of strengths and weaknesses, for example through test results and looking at samples of work. This is used well to adjust the curriculum or teaching. Lessons are watched regularly and points for improvement shared with teachers. All staff have regular training to keep up to date. There are good assessment systems; the school keeps a very careful eye on each pupil's progress and makes sure that help or extra challenge is available where needed. Very good leadership, combined with teamwork and a strong commitment to improve, puts the school in a good position to continue to do well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52 Pupils make good use of their mathematical knowledge in other subjects. For example, they use graphs and tables to record data on geography and science. Increasingly, technology is used to enhance this work, as when electronic sensors record

light or sound. However pupils' numeracy skills are not always used fully. Results in science, for example, are often presented clearly but not examined closely to see if any patterns or rogue results appear.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good curriculum, based on national guidelines. However, in a small number of lessons, learning is prevented from being faster because teachers do not adapt the ideas to suit the needs of the class and the time available.
- Most teachers expect pupils to record their own results and conclusions.
- There are plenty of chances for pupils to learn through investigations.
- Teaching is often good, and sometimes very good in Year 6. However, there are some weaknesses that affect progress.

Commentary

53 Standards match those expected by the end of Year 6. Since the last inspection the school has kept pace with the improvement seen in other schools, particularly in the number of pupils achieving above average levels. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are achieving very well because they listen and work hard. Teaching is good overall and in Year 6 it is very good. As a result, pupils are gaining a good store of knowledge and sound skills in experimental work. However, the quality of teaching in science has not yet had the sort of rigorous scrutiny that has brought improvement in some other subjects.

54 Standards by the end of Year 2 are below average. This nevertheless represents steady progress, because many enter school with low levels of knowledge and understanding of the world. However, achievement is not better than this because teaching in infant classes is inconsistent in quality. For example, in one lesson in Year 1, the pupils did not learn much because the teacher's organisation and management of behaviour were not good enough. Teachers' expectations are sometimes too low, for example, in work on '*forces*', pupils in the Year 1 and 2 class were tackling much more difficult ideas than the older pupils in the Year 2 class.

55 Teachers plan carefully, explain clearly and so pupils know exactly what to do. In the best lessons, there is a sense of purpose and a demanding pace that makes the time fly. In Year 6, for example, the classes made great strides in their understanding of animal classification and identification keys. These teachers motivated the pupils by providing lots of challenging tasks and skilfully sharing their own good knowledge. In contrast, in a small number of lessons, pupils have to listen for too long. The teachers are over-anxious to make sure everyone understands, so there is not enough time left for pupils to explore and collect evidence. Similarly, although all teachers use questions well to make pupils think, and check learning, some tend to prolong the activity. Presentations occasionally turn into an overlong quiz, so the pace of learning drops.

56 Another weakness, in some of the teachers' planning, is the over-rigid use of the advice in the national scheme of work for science. This scheme is used well to develop skills and knowledge logically and to promote the correct use of scientific vocabulary. However, in choosing from the range of suggested activities, teachers do not always consider what will work best for their own class, or what resources are easily available. For example, in one lesson the teacher spent a long time on some of the recommended first steps, which mostly involved talking and thinking. When she realised that interest was flagging and the class was ready to move on, she moved to a busy practical session. The class found this much more satisfying, worked very well and produced some accurate data on temperature changes.

57 A strong feature of teaching is the emphasis placed on practical testing and experiments. This is the part that pupils find exciting and it helps them to think scientifically. Good investigations begin in the youngest classes, for example when pupils in Year 1 study the effects of friction on toy vehicles. By Year 3 they know how to plan a fair test and make predictions when they test the strength and stretchiness of materials. Pupils in Year 5 take increasing responsibility for choosing equipment and presenting their results, for example in some interesting tests on sound insulation. By Year 6, pupils move up a notch when they suggest their own questions to investigate after making some electrical circuits. They are able to plan their own test, record what happened and draw general conclusions. One reason for this achievement is that all teachers insist on pupils recording in their own words and presenting their discoveries clearly in charts and diagrams. In just a few pieces of work, teachers have not given enough time or guidance for this, so the recording does not help pupils to understand or remember. Pupils in Year 2 use too many undemanding worksheets, and so do not have enough opportunities to record in their own words. However they show that they are capable of this, for example in the work on '*changes*'.

58 The leadership of the subject is good, as the co-ordinator has a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses and ways to improve further. This comes from a thorough analysis of pupils' answers in the national tests, and regular checks on teachers' planning and pupils' work. However the management of science is satisfactory overall. This is because regular monitoring of teaching has not yet begun, although there are firm plans to do this. The school keeps good records of how well pupils are learning. Teachers are

increasingly using technology to help learning in science. The electronic boards are already helping to make teachers' explanations clearer and shorter and the co-ordinator is introducing more software to continue this.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for computers, software and training is much better than it was at the last inspection. The weaknesses seen then have been put right.
- There is regular use of ICT in many other subjects.
- The new interactive screens are helping to raise standards.
- Provision is enhanced by the services of a full time technician, as well as valued support from the advisory service.
- Systems for saving pupils' work are over-complicated.

Commentary

59 The school has made great improvements to the quality of provision since the last inspection. There is now a good suite of computers, which is used regularly by all classes. Computers have been updated and there is a good supply of software. Effective technical support helps to make the most of all this. Crucially the school has also made good quality training, and laptop machines, available to all staff. Consequently, the gaps in the curriculum have been filled and standards in Year 6 are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. These pupils are well on course to meet expectations for their age. This represents very good achievement. The pupils agree and said, '*we can do loads of things now without help*'. Standards in Year 2 are also rising, but these pupils have not yet had the breadth of experience to achieve the expected standard.

60 Only one full class computer lesson was seen during the inspection. In this, pupils in Year 6 worked in pairs on a multimedia presentation linked to their history topic on World War II. Teaching was good, the teacher gave a confident demonstration and so pupils were keen to get going and made good progress. In another lesson, in a Year 1 and 2 class, the teacher exploited the space available by organising a related pencil and paper activity. This allowed half the class to have a computer without sharing, which meant that more accurate assessment was possible.

61 Teaching is good. From lessons observed, the quality of pupils' saved work, and the part-lessons seen, it is evident that teachers are making good use of the electronic screens to demonstrate skills and techniques. This saves repeating advice and helps pupils to get started quickly. However, in a few cases, teachers are getting carried away by this technology and talking for too long. When the newness wears off, the screens should allow shorter and sharper explanations. This will give pupils more time to practise new skills and complete tasks. Nevertheless, pupils are becoming confident learners by Year 6, familiar with a range of programmes including spreadsheets, databases, search engines and controlling devices. This is because the curriculum is well organised, pupils want to learn, and teachers expect them to think for themselves. As a result, standards by the end of Year 6 meet expectations.

62 Subject leadership is very good; this is the main reason for the many improvements in provision since the last inspection. There is very good support from the advisory service, for example training has included demonstration lessons in school. There are three popular lunchtime clubs. One area for improvement is in the way pupils' work is saved on computers. The present system is complicated and overloaded. Pupils sometimes find it

difficult to return to a piece of work in order to improve it, or to see evidence of their progress from year to year.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63 Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in other subjects. In history, for example, pupils make some attractive newspapers, reporting evacuation stories. They use the Internet sensibly and arrange photographs and text well. Pupils like using the art programmes, particularly making pictures in the style of well-known artists. In Year 1 the pupils bring their work on 'homes' to life by taking digital photographs around the school and then adding labels with a writing programme. There are good links with science, for example in the use of noise sensors when Years 5 and 6 study sound. The good use of laptop machines is giving teachers more possibilities across the curriculum. For example, groups of pupils in Year 6 were able to work independently on programmes that extended their mathematics and science lessons.

HUMANITIES

64 In **geography**, careful planning ensures that pupils become familiar with the features of their own locality. This knowledge is then used well as a basis to help pupils to identify similarities and differences with places further afield. Teachers make very effective use of digital photography. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2, made a visit into the immediate area and took photographs of houses. Back in the classroom, pupils sorted the pictures of flats, bungalows and detached and terraced houses. This activity significantly enhanced their understanding of classifying housing types. Good links are made between learning geography and history. For example pupils' work about the Aztec and Ancient Egyptian civilisations was supplemented well by studying the life of a family in a Mexican village and considering the importance of the river Nile today. Good use is made of ICT to research information and mathematics to interpret climatic charts and graphs. However, untidy handwriting often spoils the presentation of pupils' completed work.

History

Provision in history is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching enables pupils to acquire a good knowledge and understanding of historical periods and events.
- Pupils' creativity and enjoyment of history is greatly enhanced by encouragement to select their own methods of recording and expressing their ideas.

Commentary

65 Many children begin school with very little knowledge and understanding of the world around them. However, in response to stimulating and effective teaching, pupils achieve well in history and reach the levels expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. These good features have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils' interest is quickly captured because the colourful presentations, using large illustrations, ICT and video clips and artefacts, enable them to visualise life in different historical periods. Teachers' skilful questioning makes pupils think and probes their understanding well. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher astutely questioned pupils about the contents of

wartime rationing books. This enabled them to compare and contrast the food eaten during wartime years with the modern day diet. Through encouragement to explain and account for what they see and hear, pupils' skills of enquiry are nurtured effectively and their knowledge is deepened. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils lucidly explained the burial rituals of the ancient Egyptians and how this related to beliefs about the afterlife. This experience also extended their spiritual development as they considered fundamental questions about a life hereafter.

66 Once pupils have gained insights and understanding into historical events and periods, teachers encourage them to express what they have learned through a wide choice of materials and activities. This new approach is still being trialled. The practical sessions are well prepared and organised, therefore no time is lost in gathering materials. Pupils of all abilities greatly value the creative opportunities to paint, make models, use textiles, explore the use of ICT and produce booklets. The extent to which these activities reinforce their understanding is reflected in the discussion sessions at the end of the lesson, when pupils explain very precisely what the teacher had intended them to learn. However, there can be as many as six different activities taking place at the same time. This makes it harder for the teacher to intervene when pupils are working and, in some cases, the quality of the paintings, models and particularly the written work produced, is not as good as when the specific skills required are taught in advance.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Where teaching is good, teachers make lessons interesting and relevant. This promotes good attitudes to religious belief.
- Teachers are making increasing use of ICT and the Internet to help learning.
- Religious education makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

Commentary

67 Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage as they begin to learn about the world in which they live. Their good achievement is continued through school from Year 1 to Year 6. An analysis of pupils' work shows that teachers ensure a basic knowledge of the main world religions. In discussion with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, they demonstrated a satisfactory understanding of Christian festivals, Bible stories and different religions such as Hinduism and Islam. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

68 Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils' work and discussion with pupils shows that in some classes, activities in lessons focus more on developing pupils' skills in art and design than in religious education and opportunities are missed to develop pupils' writing skills through religious education. A new approach to the curriculum, however, has placed a strong emphasis on discussion in lessons. Where teaching was seen to be good, pupils were observed to gain understanding from some stimulating and thoughtful discussions that took place in the lesson. For example, in Year 6, the teacher made effective use of a pupil's personal knowledge and understanding of Islam. Pupils said that they enjoyed the opportunity to learn from one another in this way. In this lesson, pupils listened well and their involvement in the direct teaching and learning experience aided their achievement. The increased profile of ICT in the school is also aiding teaching and learning. Pupils in Year 6 used technology well in their independent research on Islam.

69 The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. For example, in Year 6, the teacher demonstrated her respect for the Koran as she washed her hands carefully before unwrapping it. A pupil then read from it in Arabic and her classmates listened very well and in admiration. In discussion, pupils spoke well about the use of artefacts in lessons that make learning interesting and that clearly aid their understanding and achievement. The subject leader is currently absent from school and religious education is being managed satisfactorily in her absence.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70 In art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, lack of evidence, particularly of teaching, rules out the possibility of firm overall judgements on provision and standards.

71 In **art and design**, inspectors have taken into account displays of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and with the art and design co-ordinator. It is evident from the striking displays in the entrance corridor and classrooms that art and design has a high profile and enhances the learning environment well. Teachers effectively use art and design as a vehicle to enhance work in other subjects such as in history and science. For example, in a part lesson observed in a Year 1 and 2 class, pupils were enjoying the opportunity to explore texture, shape and colour in line with their science project on materials. Older pupils have investigated how artists use different materials to create

different effects having visited Ashton Art Gallery. Pupils in Year 5 and staff have attended workshops on 'Colour Scapes' in the local library, and at the time of the inspection, pupils were about to have their work exhibited in the local gallery. Pupils clearly take pride in their work, which is equally highly valued by school as it is very well framed and displayed. The art and design co-ordinator has a clear vision for the art and design and works hard to maintain the subject's high profile in school. Through effective self-evaluation, she has identified the need to further develop pupils' skills in observational drawing.

72 No lessons were observed in **design and technology** and insufficient evidence was available during the time of the inspection to enable purposeful comment on the subject.

73 One lesson in **music** was observed during the inspection and pupils were also seen taking part in extra-curricular music activities and performing during assembly. This evidence does not form a basis for overall judgements on provision across the school and standards, however, it is clear that pupils enjoy making music. Pupils have the opportunity to join groups, such as for recorder and some are eager to attend their drum lessons at 07.45am. A specialist teacher teaches pupils during this session, but the teacher with responsibility for extra curricular activities supports pupils at lunchtime to practice and refine their skills in drumming. In the lesson observed, pupils had the opportunity to use instruments to make music and in assembly pupils clearly showed how much they enjoyed singing. Pupils interest in music is started very early in their school life. A visit by nursery children to the Sure Start music provision was very successful and everyone including parent helpers had a most enjoyable experience.

74 **Physical education** is a popular subject with both girls and boys. All the required parts of the National Curriculum are taught. Pupils enjoy their visits to the swimming pool and think they have made a lot of progress. From the small parts of lessons seen during the inspection, pupils work together safely and listen carefully. They show a typical range of ability in games and gymnastic skills. There are weekly clubs for football and rugby where both boys and girls are welcome. The rugby team plays matches against other schools. These regular clubs are augmented by opportunities to have free coaching in various sports through the local high school. There are good links with Oldham F C. Players visit the school several times each year. The school has good facilities, both indoor and out, and there is plenty of well-maintained equipment.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

75 Too few lessons specifically in personal, social and health education were observed to make a judgement about provision and so the subject has been sampled. A scrutiny of information available reveals that the school has a clear focus on the development of **PSHE and citizenship**. From the moment children start school, their growing self-confidence is carefully nurtured. This helps them to cope with any challenges they may encounter. The work of the school, class and environmental councils is crucially important as pupils begin to grasp how collective decisions are made. They are being well prepared to become future citizens.

76 Pupils have good opportunities to share and refine their ideas about subjects, such as the importance of caring for others. In discussion times pupils learn to listen and respect the opinions of each other. In one lesson, pupils were encouraged to consider suitable presents for elderly or disabled people. This enabled them to develop a mature understanding how people might feel if they were disabled or strangers in an unfamiliar community. Discussion times provide an atmosphere in which pupils can express their

feelings and anxieties in the knowledge that the teacher and other children will be sympathetic and constructive listeners. This significantly raises their self-esteem

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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