

INSPECTION REPORT

CHANTLERS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bury, Lancashire

LEA area: Bury

Unique reference number: 105291

Headteacher: Mr J R Pashley

Lead inspector: Mr C Smith

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st April 2005

Inspection number: 266585

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 –11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 237

School address: Foulds Avenue
Bury
Lancashire
Postcode: BL8 2SF

Telephone number: 0161 7611074
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr N Hirst

Date of previous inspection: November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Chantlers is an average size primary school on the northern edge of the town of Bury in South Lancashire. Two hundred and thirty seven children attend the school full time, 124 boys and 113 girls. Most of the children are of white British heritage but there are 20 children with non-British family histories. However, only one child speaks English as an additional language. There are no refugee families but there are three children in public care. The number of pupils on roll is much the same as it was at the time of the last inspection. The number of children entitled to free school meals is 1.2 per cent, which is well below the national average. Nineteen children have special educational needs (eight per cent), which is below average. Their needs are mainly related to learning and emotional difficulties, although a small number of children have speech or physical needs. Three children have statements of special educational need. The school has been granted 'Investors in People' status, for the way in which all staff are involved and work together. The community served by the school has changed to some extent since the last inspection and now includes a less privileged area nearer to the town centre. Prior to 2001, children's attainment on entry was higher than expected for their age. Since 2001, the picture has changed and children are now entering school with attainment that is typical for their age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--|
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| | | | Physical education |
| 1136 8 | Mrs Kate Lee | Lay inspector | |
| 2388 7 | Mr Peter Nettleship | Team inspector | English |
| | | | Art and design |
| | | | Design and technology |
| | | | Music |
| | | | Special educational needs |
| | | | English as an additional language |
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Chantlers is an effective primary school that provides good value for money. Pupils achieve well overall and reach high standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by the end of their primary school years. Teaching is good in most classes and pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave very well. The school is well lead and managed.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), music and art and design.
- Pupils' personal development is very good and the care and welfare provision is excellent.
- Good teaching in infant and upper junior classes enables pupils to learn successfully.
- Pupils' progress slows in Years 3 and 4 because of weaknesses in teaching.

Satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection. Good leadership and management and effective teaching has enabled pupils to continue to achieve well overall. High standards in the core subjects have been maintained. Since the last inspection, the provision for ICT has improved and the standards have risen. Similarly, the curriculum for children in the reception class is better than it was because children now have more creative opportunities to explore and learn for themselves. However, some of the weaknesses in teaching and learning in lower junior classes are still present.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | All schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2004 |
| English | A | A | A | A |
| Mathematics | B | B | A | B |
| Science | B | B | A | 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 good. Children's knowledge and skills are broadly typical for their age when they enter school. They make satisfactory progress in the reception class and achieve the learning goals expected in their language, mathematical, physical, creative and personal and social development. Reception children's achievement in knowledge and understanding of the world is good and they exceed the learning goals expected. Results by the end of Year 2 have been falling over recent years because children's attainment on entering school is lower than it was. The most recent results in 2004 were average in reading, above average in writing and below average in mathematics, but only by a small margin. Results were lower than in similar schools. However, the current Year 1 and 2 pupils are achieving well and attaining standards higher than expected for their age in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make very good progress. As a chart above illustrates, results have been rising well in Year 6 and standards are higher than in similar schools in mathematics and science and much higher in English. In most classes, more able pupils and pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 made satisfactory progress in

reading, mathematics and science. However, their progress in writing is unsatisfactory because they spend too much time completing worksheets at the expense of improving their creative writing. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in ICT, and art and design and reach standards that are higher than the levels expected. Music has a high profile and pupils achieve very well and reach high standards in this subject.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness develop very successfully. Pupils enjoy school, have good attitudes to learning and behave very well. Attendance is well above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good and teaching is effective overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the reception class. Interesting activities are provided and children's literacy and numeracy skills develop securely. However, reception staff do not intervene sufficiently in children's structured play and opportunities to move their learning on are missed. Teaching is often very good and sometimes excellent in infant and upper junior classes where the atmosphere for learning is good and pupils are very well managed. The level of challenge is high and the work provided is closely matched to pupils' different learning needs. Teaching methods are effective and flexible, offering pupils good opportunities to investigate and solve problems. These factors enable pupils of all abilities to learn successfully. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is more dependent on the use of worksheets. These are not always used selectively to suit pupils' different levels of understanding and are not marked constructively to help pupils to know how they can improve. As a result, the learning of the more able pupils is not always extended sufficiently and the less able pupils sometimes struggle to complete the task.

A satisfactory curriculum is provided, which is rich in interest and variety, particularly in the infant and upper junior classes. The headteacher ensures that all pupils are fully included in all activities and their talents are nurtured well through the good range of out of school sporting and musical activities. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and receive very good levels of support from well-trained classroom assistants. The school's commitment to ensuring pupils' safety and well being is outstanding. Pupils' views and feelings matter greatly and they are encouraged to contribute to school decision making. Very good relationships between staff and parents ensure that pupils make the most of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is an effective leader and the driving force behind pupils' very good personal development and overall good achievement. Communications, organisation and administration are of a very high standard. Senior staff and subject leaders understand their responsibilities well and carry them out purposefully. Governance of the school is good and all statutory requirements are met in full. The school's performance and pupils' progress are effectively measured and checked. Whenever pupils' performance falters, decisive action is taken to enable them to recover. Training and support for teachers have been plentiful over recent years and most teachers have gone from strength to strength. However, these measures have had only limited impact in Years 3 and 4.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think very highly of the school and greatly value the education provided. Pupils have positive views of the school and particularly enjoy the practical and creative activities provided.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 and evaluate improvements forthrightly.
- Provide a secure outdoor learning area for children in the reception class and intervene in their group activities to develop their spoken language and extend their understanding.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well overall. Reception children's achievement is satisfactory. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and very well in Years 5 and 6 where they reach standards that are well above average and higher than similar schools in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' achievement slows in Years 3 and 4.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Infant pupils achieve well in the core subjects, particularly in the Year 1 and 2 class and in Year 2.
- Junior age pupils achieve particularly well in the core subjects in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils' achievement in Years 3 and 4 is unsatisfactory in writing.
- Reception children achieve well in the area of knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

1 Results in Year 2 have declined over recent years. This is entirely related to the changing intake of pupils rather than to any deterioration in teaching. The school's assessments show that prior to 2001, children entered the school with significantly higher attainment than the Local Education Authority average. Since 2001, the results have been in line with Local Education Authority average. The 2004 results were lower than in any previous years but only by one or two decimal points. Although the results were classified as being above average in writing, average in reading and below average in mathematics, the true picture is that standards were on the fringe of being satisfactory in mathematics and good in reading and writing. In addition, the 2004 Year 2 group had an unusually high number of pupils with learning and social difficulties. Priority was given to improving pupils' literacy skills, which was regarded as more important to pupils' later achievement across all subjects. The current Year 2 group is more typical. Teacher assessments, confirmed by inspection evidence, indicate that standards in Year 2 are higher than expected for their age in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The current Year 2 pupils started school with attainment at the levels expected for their age. Therefore in reaching above average levels by the end of Year 2, their achievement is good. On the whole, teaching is strong in the infant classes. Pupils' different learning needs are well catered for, particularly in the mixed Year 1 and 2 and the Year 2 classes. Consequently, more able, less able and pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress. Infant pupils also achieve well and reach levels higher than expected for their age in art and design and music. In Year 2, standards in religious education and ICT are at the levels expected.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading | 16.3 (17.0) | 15.8 (15.7) |
| Writing | 15.8 (15.7) | 14.6 (14.6) |
| Mathematics | 15.8 (17.4) | 16.2 (16.3) |

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2 The current Year 5 and 6 pupils started school with attainment above that expected for their age. During their lifetime in school, they have achieved well to reach high standards in Year 6. Pupils' progress accelerates rapidly in Years 5 and 6 where the teaching is often very good. Trends in Year 6 test results are rising more quickly than they are nationally. Year 6 pupils reach high standards in English, mathematics and science partly because they have acquired good literacy and numeracy skills. However, the additional time devoted to teaching them how to apply their skills to read for information, write for different purposes, solve mathematical problems and investigate aspects of science, significantly boosts their reasoning skills. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also achieve well in other subjects. Consequently, standards in ICT and art and design are higher than expected in Years 5 and 6 and high standards are achieved in music. Boys and girls, more and less able pupils and those with special educational needs achieve equally well in Years 5 and 6. This is because the work set for them is particularly well adapted to their different learning needs.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 29.5 (29.2) | 26.9 (26.8) |
| Mathematics | 29.1 (28.3) | 27.0 (26.8) |
| Science | 30.5 (29.9) | 28.6 (28.6) |

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3 Pupils' progress slows in Years 3 and 4. Their achievement in reading, mathematics and science is adequate largely because they learn the basic skills well enough during the whole class teaching part of the lesson. However, the activities provided to enable them to practice and improve their skills are not sufficiently well matched to their different learning needs. Consequently, their achievement is limited, particularly that of the more and less able pupils. Progress in writing in these classes is unsatisfactory, largely because pupils are given worksheets to complete, which require single word or sentence answers. In other classes, pupils are encouraged and taught how to write interesting accounts and imaginative stories. Teachers then mark the work constructively to bring about improvement. This process is not developed sufficiently in Years 3 and 4.

4 The achievement of children in the reception class is satisfactory. When the children are taught together, they learn at a good rate. Consequently, their literacy and numeracy skills develop securely. However, children do not always progress as quickly when they are engaged in activities they have chosen for themselves. This is because adults do not intervene sufficiently to encourage children to extend their learning by talking about it. Overall, children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to reach the learning goals expected in their language, mathematical, creative, physical and personal development by the end of the reception year. Many interesting and worthwhile activities are provided which stir their curiosity and fire their imagination. As a result, they achieve well and exceed the goals expected in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are good and behaviour is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is well above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' interests, racial awareness and self-esteem are fostered very well.

- Pupils' enthusiasm for school stimulates their learning in most instances.

Commentary

5 Pupils develop a very good understanding of their own feelings and are sensitive towards those of others. This is because the school's provision for spiritual development is very good and the aims of the mission statement play a meaningful part in school life. The ethos of valuing happiness, respect, equality and pride in achievements is fostered very well in most classes. Pupils love singing and playing instruments because their enjoyment of music is nurtured from an early age. Pupils' spiritual responses are frequently invoked. In a Year 5 science lesson, for example, pupils' sense of wonder was tangible as they examined parts of flowers using an Intel microscope. Assembly and religious education themes promote an understanding of other cultures well. Pupils' moral and social development is equally well catered for. The effectiveness of the school's racial equality policy is reflected in pupils' success in winning a competition entitled 'Show Racism the Red Card'. Pupils follow adults' example in treating others with respect. Consequently, they are polite, friendly and very willing to help others. They responded compassionately in response to the Asian Tsunami appeal.

6 Pupils try hard and so make good progress in their learning. Most pupils are very interested in their work. This is because most teachers provide a very good atmosphere for learning and present lessons in a challenging and enjoyable way. In the reception class, the children so enjoyed the story of "Dora's Eggs" that they sat enthralled and at the end thanked their teacher for reading it to them. However, there are occasions in Years 3 and 4 when pupils' interest is not always engaged and they sometimes do not concentrate on the task. Throughout the school pupils' behaviour is very good and there have been no exclusions. The rate of attendance is well above the national average, an indication that pupils are keen to come to school. Parents play their part, recognising that regular attendance is essential to enable their children to achieve well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (96.7%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 3.3 | School data | 0.0 |
| 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.

Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll |
|---|----------------------|
| White – British | 185 |
| White – any other White background | 6 |
| Mixed - White and Asian | 6 |
| Asian or Asian British – Pakistani | 4 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 3 |
| Mixed – White and Black African | 1 |
| Chinese | 1 |

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is good. Pupils benefit from good teaching, a well-planned curriculum and good levels of personal support. Very effective links with parents enable pupils to make the best of the many worthwhile opportunities provided.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and has remained so since the last inspection. The use of assessment to measure how well pupils are learning is also good in most classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' learning accelerates significantly in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 where the teaching is good.
- Reception children learn more successfully during whole class teaching sessions than in some of the group sessions.
- The assessment of pupils' learning is used effectively in planning future lessons in most classes, although there are weaknesses in this respect in Years 3 and 4.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 2 (5%) | 7 (18%) | 17 (42%) | 12 (30%) | 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.

7 Good teaching in infant and very good in upper junior classes enables pupils of all abilities to learn successfully and achieve well. In these classes, the climate for learning is very good and pupils give of their best. Lessons are interesting because teachers employ a wide variety of effective methods, which include investigations, discussions and games. These imaginative approaches appeal to pupils' different learning styles; boys, in particular, thrive on the competitive elements. In a Year 5 science lesson, for example, pupils' participation in a team game considerably improved their understanding of seed dispersal. In infant and upper junior classes the level of challenge is invariably high because teachers have good knowledge of the subjects and their pupils. Difficult ideas, such as devising a formula to calculate costs on a spreadsheet, are explained clearly. Highly effective use is made of questioning to encourage pupils to predict and explain what might happen in a story or an experiment or how a mathematical problem might be solved. As a result, pupils' thinking skills improve, along with their spoken language and self-confidence. When teachers are sure that pupils understand what they are expected to learn, purposeful tasks are provided to enable them to practice and improve new skills. In these classes, activities are adapted well to suit pupils' different learning needs. This enables more and less able pupils learn successfully.

8 Teaching and learning in the reception class is satisfactory. Good teaching is a common feature during the whole class teaching part of the lesson. On these occasions, children's learning of new skills, particularly related to language and mathematics, develops at a good rate. Interesting and worthwhile activities are provided, which stimulate children's curiosity and significantly improve their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, in some group activities children are left on their own for too long. Teachers and support staff do not intervene sufficiently in free choice activities and opportunities to extend children's learning are missed.

9 The assessment co-ordinator has devised very sophisticated and effective systems to assess how well pupils are learning. Clear targets are set to enable pupils to know what they need to do to reach the next level. The results of assessments are carefully analysed. Pupils whose achievement has in any way faltered are identified and their progress is carefully monitored henceforth. Any arising special educational needs are identified early and effective learning programmes are designed to meet their particular needs. In infant and upper junior classes, the information acquired from assessing pupils' learning is used well to set tasks at just the right level, according to their different learning needs. In Years 3 and 4, there are weaknesses in this aspect of teaching. Textbooks and worksheets are not used selectively enough. On occasions, pupils are given very similar tasks, irrespective of their different needs. More able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently and finish the activities quickly and less able pupils can become bogged down in trying to work their way through the printed questions. When their work is finished, it is not always marked helpfully. Consequently, their progress slows, particularly in writing.

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum and pupils' learning and personal development is enriched well through the wide range of additional activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum meets all pupils' needs and interests well in the infant and upper junior classes.
- Pupils' personal, social, and health education is very effective. Pupils' musical and sporting talents are fostered well during out of school activities.

Commentary

10 Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. The co-ordinator has devised comprehensive systems to support their development. No time is wasted in assessing their needs and very well written individual education programmes are provided to guide their learning. The curriculum is carefully adapted to meet their particular learning needs, particularly in infant and upper junior classes. These very good features are mitigated in a minority of lessons when the activities provided are not sufficiently adapted to their needs. Despite the school having very few pupils with English as an additional language, good provision is made for them. A concentrated effort is made on helping them to understand and speak English. Then their reading and writing skills are targeted. School records show that pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, academically and personally, and become fully engaged in all school activities.

11 Resources for ICT have improved significantly since the last inspection. The new hardware and software, accompanied by effective training, has resulted in more confident teaching and higher standards. Links between the different subjects are better developed in the infant classes and Year 5. For example, in a Year 2 religious education lesson linked to the theme of water, pupils listened to 'Fingal's Cave' after acting out the story of Moses in the bulrushes. The use of drama and music significantly boosted their understanding and enjoyment. The curriculum provided in Years 3 and 4 is adequate but lacks creativity because many of the activities involve completing worksheets, which are not always used selectively. On these occasions, the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently, unlike the infant and upper junior classes where the level of challenge for them is good.

12 The provision for personal, social and health education is very good. All the related aspects of drug awareness, sex education and personal development are catered for very well. For example, in Year 2, the importance of healthy eating and the knowledge of dangerous substances are fully integrated into science lessons. In a Year 5 religious education lesson, values such as respect, trust, hope and friendship were recognised as being important in school and within the family. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and members of the School Council take their role very seriously.

13 Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have good opportunities to take part in all that the school offers. The very good range of out of school activities develops pupils' talents and skills in sport and music very effectively. For example, many pupils become very proficient in singing and playing musical instruments and take part in impressive concerts, in and out of school. These activities make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development by refining their performance skills and establishing the value of teamwork. The wide range of visits and the flow of visitors, who share their experiences with the pupils, enrich the curriculum well.

14 The Foundation Stage curriculum provided for reception children is satisfactory. Many stimulating activities are provided but having no outdoor play area restricts their physical development.

Care, guidance and support

The procedures for the care and welfare of pupils are excellent. The school provides a good level of support and effective guidance, which enable pupils to make good progress. There are very good systems to gather and act upon pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Promoting the care and welfare of all pupils is a high priority.
- Very good relationships enhance pupils' welfare and their personal development.
- Pupils' views play an important part in school developments.
- Target setting to guide pupils on how to improve is very effective, although the marking of pupils' written work is more helpful in some classes than others.

Commentary

15 There are very comprehensive routines to ensure pupils' health and safety. Risk assessments are carried out prior to all new ventures, reviewed carefully in the light of the outcomes and adhered to rigorously. Pupils talk convincingly about their feeling of safety and well being in school. Child protection procedures operate highly effectively. Pupils in care are extremely well supported in school. Their specific learning and social needs are assessed immediately on arrival. Programmes are devised, high quality support is provided and very good liaison is maintained with the families and social services. As a result, these pupils have settled well, formed friendships and are making good academic progress. The school has a renowned reputation for welcoming children with learning or social problems and succeeding in helping them to recover.

16 Pupils feel that the best thing about school is that their teachers are friendly and always 'there for them.' Pupils are confident that they can talk to any member of staff if they have a problem or worry and know that they, and everyone else, will be treated fairly. Parents greatly value the way in which teachers and support staff care for their children.

17 Pupils are encouraged to play a central part in making decisions about how the school operates. Their views and opinions are regularly gathered through questionnaires and fully acted upon. For example, pupils are delighted with the improvements to the toilets in response to their earlier concerns. They share in formulating class and school codes of behaviour, which make the rules more meaningful. Teachers have always been responsive to pupils' views and ideas. However, the process has received a significant boost through the establishment of a School Council.

18 The school has a sophisticated system of target setting for individual pupils. This allows class teachers to guide pupils towards improving their learning. In infant and upper junior classes, the marking of pupils' work is rigorous and constructive. Its is exemplary in Year 5 in celebrating success and pointing the way towards greater achievement. In the lower junior classes, pupils' work is marked accurately but not always helpfully.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established very good partnerships with parents, the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school involves parents very well in its work and benefits from their support.
- Strong links with local schools and the community enhances pupils' learning.

Commentary

19 The school's very good partnership with parents exerts a strong influence over pupils' learning and personal development. Parents feel at ease in approaching the headteacher and staff because their opinions and ideas are valued. Consequently, the school's complaints procedures file is empty! The good provision now made for out of school care was a direct response to a request from parents. Parents make a very good contribution to the work of the school. Through the Parent Teacher Association, parents are very active supporters, successfully raising funds to provide a wide range of resources from goal posts to computers. The school keeps parents very well informed of their children's progress. The annual reports give parents a clear insight into what their children can do and the progress that they have made. They also share in devising targets to bring about further improvement. Parents receive very comprehensive information on what their children are expected to learn over the year. This includes details of every subject. The prospectus is written in a welcoming friendly style. The 'Chantlers News' provides parents with a pupil's eye view of what is happening in school.

20 The school's very good links with community and other schools enrich pupils' learning and personal development. Many projects and out of school visits are planned, which enrich the curriculum and stimulate pupils' learning. For example, pupils raise funds for local charities and are involved in many local competitions. Younger pupils had their artwork highly commended in a Healthy Education competition. The strong links with other schools provides very good opportunities to nurture pupils sporting and musical talents. A successful 'Passport to High School' programme prepares pupils very effectively for moving on to secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed. Governance of the school is good. The strong features of leadership have been maintained since the last inspection. The headteacher is an effective leader and senior key members of staff make a good contribution to the school. The school capitalises well on its strengths, such as parental support and there are no significant barriers to pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's Mission Statement pervades school life and creates the very good ethos.
- The administration and financial management are highly effective.
- Although the strengths and weaknesses of the school are well understood, weaknesses in teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4 remain.

Commentary

21 The headteacher has guided the school well since the last inspection. Teaching has remained good overall, pupils have continued to achieve well and reach high standards by the end of their primary years. Pupils' well being and personal development are very strong features of the school's work. The organisation and day-to-day management of the school are of a high order. Highly productive relationships have been established between

governors, parents, pupils and staff who all appreciate the very good communications within school. The headteacher has a clear vision and ambitious plans for the school's future, backed up by policies and plans that provide very clear guidance for staff.

22 Governors are fully committed to the school's best interests, centrally involved in strategic planning and fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They have a firm belief that a good education is synonymous with supporting pupils' personal development and ensuring that those with educational or emotional needs are well provided for. They take justifiable pride in the school and its many achievements. Governors receive a regular flow of valuable information. Senior managers and subject leaders explain school developments to keep them informed, which helps them to make the right decisions. Governors have a very good grasp of school finances and ensure that resources are used to achieve best value. They make visits to check the work of the school, although they do not record their observations formally. Consequently, they are not fully aware of the differences in the quality of teaching across the school.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Total income | 621115 | Balance from previous year | 23742 |
| Total expenditure | 609757 | Balance carried forward to the next | 35100 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2520 | | |

23 The senior management team provides good leadership and management. This has empowered individuals and strengthened collective decision-making. These principles are reflected in the school's 'Investors in People' status. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides highly effective leadership, not least in creating a strong team of very effective support assistants. The assessment co-ordinator has provided a very good system for checking pupils' learning and her analysis of outcomes is exemplary. This has led to the very effective setting of individual targets to show pupils what they need to do to improve. Subject leaders in English, mathematics, science, ICT, art and design and music also provide good leadership and management. In these subjects, even though there are inconsistencies in teaching and learning, pupils achieve good standards overall. Coherent systems have been devised to check the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. On the basis of these evaluations, development targets are set for both teachers and pupils. Regular training is provided for teachers, a good example is in ICT where standards have improved. These measures have had a positive impact on the work of most teachers and on the contribution made by classroom assistants. However, despite the headteacher's best efforts, some weaknesses in teaching in Years 3 and 4 have lingered since the last inspection. It is time for a more robust approach to remedy these weaknesses.

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

24 Reception children are taught in one class all starting in the September of the school year in which they are five. Induction arrangements are good with visits for both children and parents. Evidence from school and Local Education Authority assessments show that children's attainment on entry to school has changed over recent years. At the last inspection their attainment on entry was above the levels expected for their age. Now it is in line with that of other schools nationally.

25 The provision made for children in the reception class is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Leadership and management are satisfactory and improvements to the Foundation Stage curriculum have been made. The curriculum is less formal than it was and more suited to young children's needs. For example, children have more opportunities to explore and find out for themselves and their creative development has a much higher profile. By the end of the reception year the majority of children attain the goals expected in all areas of learning. Observations of children's learning in the classroom and the school's own assessments confirm that children's achievement is satisfactory overall but that their knowledge and understanding of the world is good for their age.

26 The assessment of children's learning over the year is satisfactory. Careful observations are made to gather evidence in each area of learning. The curriculum is suitably planned to enable children to build on the skills they have learnt earlier. Reception children do not have an enclosed outside play area. This makes it harder for staff to extend their physical development and aspects of their personal development. To compensate for this, the use of the hall and playground are time tabled, but the provision is acceptable. There are imminent plans to provide a secure play area.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weakness

- Children learn from adults' good example of how people treat each other.
- Stories are used well to reinforce children's moral development and social behaviour.
- Adults do not intervene sufficiently in free choice activities to move children's learning on.

Commentary

27 Children's achievement is satisfactory in this area of learning. Teaching is satisfactory overall but good during whole class sessions. On these occasions, children are taught effectively to listen carefully while others answer questions. They respond confidently when it is their turn to speak. They are polite to visitors and keen to talk about their work. Children's understanding of care and consideration is developed very effectively. For example, as part of a story, the teacher deliberately planted a model of a 'large egg.' Children created a cosy nest while treating the egg gently and keeping it warm in the hope it would 'hatch'. When children chose their own activities they are not always able to sustain their interest. Without adult support and their learning is sometimes limited. When adults join in, children co-operate well together to play games, taking turns and

keeping to rules. School routines are quickly learnt and reception children are confident and happy learners.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's language skills develop well during whole class activities.
- Reading skills are taught well.
- Children are not encouraged enough to talk about their role-play.

Commentary

28 The quality of teaching and children's achievement are satisfactory overall. The teaching of language skills to the whole class or groups of children is often good. For example, the teacher played 'I spy', which was successful in helping children to recognise different letters. Variations of such activities enable children to acquire good knowledge of letter sounds. More able children are beginning to write independently and are able to spell simple words accurately. Less able children understand what writing is and write strings of letters and letter like shapes but, as yet, they are unable to read-back what they have written. Effective group activities are planned. These include children re-telling stories to help them to sequence events correctly and making marks on paper as a preface to learning to write. Children are encouraged to practise writing their own name as they 'write letters' and draw pictures for each other. However, when involved in role-play children need more support from adults to extend their thinking and develop their spoken language further.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher's imaginative use of resources engages children's interest.
- Skills in counting, adding and acquiring the correct vocabulary are effectively taught.
- Children do not have enough opportunities to reinforce their learning.

Commentary

29 Teaching and children's achievement are satisfactory. New ideas and skills are often taught well to the whole class. For example, the use of dice and domino games stimulated children's interest in numbers and helped them to count and add numbers. Good links were made between the number names and written numbers and symbols. Mathematical language is carefully taught and children are learning successfully how to record numbers. For example, children counted the spots on the domino to find out how many there were altogether. Following this they recorded what they had done orally using the correct mathematical language and by writing the sum. However, follow-up activities do not reinforce the successful learning that has taken place in the whole class session sufficiently. For example, following the dice game, teaching addition, only the group taken by the teacher and children using the water tray took part in a number activity.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good range of interesting activities provided promotes learning well in this area.
- Incidental opportunities are seized on to increase children's interest in the world around them.

Commentary

30 Children's achievement is good and many children go beyond the goals expected in this area of learning. Teaching is good and the carefully planned activities nurture children's curiosity well. For example, when the 'strange egg' was found in the classroom children eagerly suggested a list of possible animals that could be inside, all of which were creatures that lay eggs. Once the creature 'hatches' it is planned that it will visit children's homes so that its travels and experiences can be traced. Similarly, the 'garden centre' stimulated children's interests and promoted conversation successfully about what plants needed to grow. Children work confidently at the computer using the mouse to move icons around the screen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular physical development sessions are provided in the hall and playground.
- No enclosed outdoor play area is available to the reception class.

Commentary

31 Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the absence of a secure outdoor play area, the school hall and playground are used adequately to provide for children's physical development. These sessions are well planned and carefully supervised. Children use the space well and are skilful in riding a variety of vehicles, using the lines on the playground as a guide and 'parking' in numbered spaces. Fine motor skills are taught well in the classroom. Children have good opportunities to learn correct pencil grip and handle brushes and scissors correctly. However, because there is no secure outdoor area, spontaneous opportunities for physical development are not available. Children's achievement in physical, social and imaginative play, although satisfactory, is restricted.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Creative activities are used well to support learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- Staff do not intervene sufficiently in children's play to promote their creative development.

Commentary

32 Children's creative development has improved since the last inspection because the curriculum has broadened. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. An interesting range of creative activities is provided and children are now encouraged to choose which they would like to do. Such activities include, making pictures with paint and collage materials, building models and becoming involved in role-play. That said, more could be done to intervene when children are working or playing to extend their spoken language. Large construction toys, wet and dry sand and water are suitably structured to provide further creative opportunities. During the outdoor session, large cardboard boxes were used effectively to build a den complete with communication tube for both oral and written messages.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is often very good in the infant and upper junior classes.
- The teaching of writing is unsatisfactory in the two lower junior classes.
- Assessing pupils' learning thoroughly enables teachers to set clear targets for improvement.

Commentary

33 The 2004 results in Year 2 were average in reading and above average in writing. The 2004 results in Year 6 were well above average in English. Currently, standards in Year 2 are above average in reading and writing and Year 6 pupils are working at well above average levels in English. The results are similar to those at the previous inspection. On balance, pupils achieve well through the school. Although pupils' progress slows in Years 3 and 4, the rapid progress made in Year 5 and maintained through Year 6 compensates well.

34 Teaching is good overall. However, lower junior pupils do not learn as effectively as in other classes. This is because the worksheets provided do not take sufficient account of their different learning needs. Consequently, the more able pupils are not challenged enough and less able pupils sometimes struggle to understand and keep up. In other classes, the work provided is more varied and interesting and much better matched to pupils' levels of understanding. Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for, particularly when they are withdrawn in small groups to work on their individual education programmes. The high quality support provided by classroom assistants enables many of these pupils to achieve very well and reach the levels expected for their age before moving on to secondary school. Pupils' work is thoroughly assessed and their progress is carefully tracked. Well-conceived 'catch up' programmes are provided for pupils whose progress has faltered. Many initiatives have been introduced to raise achievement in reading and writing, such as the spelling programme. However, not enough attention has been given to identifying and removing the inconsistencies in pupils' written work.

35 Standards in speaking and listening are good. Teachers are aware that some pupils are reluctant to express their views. 'Talking partners' are being introduced in some classes and this is proving effective. These paired discussions enable pupils to clarify their thoughts and plan ahead. Drama and debates are increasingly being used to raise pupils' confidence in speaking to an audience.

36 Pupils achieve well in reading overall. Good standards are reached in Year 2 and standards are very good by Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, receive a good grounding in sounding out the letters of unknown words in order to read them. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress in reading because effective group reading sessions are provided each day and pupils are encouraged to improve their reading at home. However, some of this momentum is lost in Year 4, where reading is less frequent and pupils' reading records are fragmented. Libraries are well stocked, allowing pupils to select books, both for pleasure and for information.

37 Infant and upper junior pupils achieve well in writing. They are taught effectively how to plan stories and accounts and to choose words and phrases for effect. As a result, standards in writing are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6.

However, pupils' progress in writing is unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4. A diet of worksheets, with relatively few opportunities to write creatively, holds back pupils' progress. The marking of pupils' completed work is also much more helpful in infant and upper junior classes than in Years 3 and 4. The leadership and management of English are good. The subject leader sets a very good example of how to teach English and her marking of pupils' work is excellent. Her influence on standards is evident in spelling, for example, following a major push last year. The use of re-drafting to improve pupils' written work is helping to raise standards further and empowering pupils to take responsibility for their own improvement in Years 5 and 6. In the best lessons, pupils have many opportunities to express their own ideas in print. They are set challenges that fire their imaginations and creativity. Writing becomes vital and exciting as the following extract illustrates.

Example of outstanding practice

In an excellent Year 1 and 2 literacy lesson, pupils produced a class book of 'Pet Animals'. In the opening discussion, pupils were desperate to answer the teachers' sensitive and probing questions.

The more able Year 2 pupils were inspired to approach the task of researching areas for the book imaginatively. They responded with some wonderful questions such as, 'Why do snakes never blink?' and 'When do dogs stop growing?' Another group worked avidly selecting and reading books together and even test one another's memory of the content. More able Year 1 pupils worked impressively in pairs finding out about pet animals of their choice. Some elected to use books; others chose CD ROM to glean information. Having located it, they printed it, then, unprompted highlighted the sections of most interest to them. Throughout, there was an air of total concentration and earnest endeavour. The teacher circulated with her 'listening ear' to support the learning and assess the progress being made. The final discussion became a genuine celebration. This was a superb mix of independent learning and very skilled teaching.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

38 The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is good. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are extended well in class discussions, particularly in mathematics. Similarly, pupils' reading skills improve by researching information from books and CD ROM in subjects such as history. For example, Year 5 pupils were inspired to act as Tudor ladies and gentlemen before researching for interesting facts on Queen Elizabeth I. This made the learning both seamless and relevant. Pupils' writing skills improve significantly in infant and upper junior classes where they write accounts of scientific experiments and word process their final scripts. However, the extensive use of worksheets in Years 3 and 4 hold back the development of pupils' writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching overall has led to good achievement and high standards.
- Pupils with special educational needs and the more able ones achieve equally well overall.
- The whole class teaching part of the lesson is successful, however the teaching of groups and individuals is more effective in some classes than others.

Commentary

39 The school's Year 2 test results in 2004 were not in keeping with previous years. Although results were below the national average and well below similar schools, a third of the pupils in the year group had experienced learning difficulties from starting school. For these pupils, improving their reading and writing was a priority hence results in mathematics were not as strong. The current Year 2 pupils are more typical. They are attaining above average standards and achieving well. Results in Year 6, over recent years, have

fluctuated between above and well above average levels. The trend is upward. The 2004 Year 6 results were well above average and the current Year 6 pupils are attaining similarly high standards. The picture was similar at the time of the last inspection.

40 Teaching is mainly good in Years 1 and 6 and very good in Years 2 and 5. In all of these classes, pupils respond well to the high level of challenge. Extension activities for the more able pupils move their learning on successfully and they invariably reach the higher levels of which they are capable. For example, when pupils in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class were learning to use coins to make 15p, the more able ones responded to the challenge to make 45p by calculating mentally. Pupils' learning is very accurately assessed and the results are thoroughly analysed. Pupils are then given demanding targets to aim for. Pupils who experience difficulties in learning are identified early. Good levels of support are provided and they make good progress, including those with special educational needs. Pupils whose progress is less than expected are placed in special groups. During lessons, teachers pay particular attention to their learning to ensure their progress improves.

41 Teaching is particularly effective during the first part of mathematics lessons when all of the pupils are taught together. Pupils enjoy the of mental agility sessions when teachers fire questions to encourage them to calculate quickly and accurately. A strong emphasis is placed on developing pupils' thinking skills. For example, when learning how to double numbers, the Year 2 teacher encouraged pupils to look for patterns. Before long, one pupil remarked, "Answers to any doubles always have to be even." Such approaches are successful in helping pupils to understand that there are different and equally effective ways to add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers. This knowledge enables them to use their skills flexibly to solve mathematical problems.

42 When new ideas have been explained, pupils are given tasks to reinforce their learning. Where teaching is most successful, in upper infant and upper junior classes, the work provided is adapted well to match pupils' different levels of understanding. Workbooks and worksheets are used selectively in setting tasks. In Years 3 and 4, and to a lesser extent in the Year 1 class, pupils tend to work their way through workbooks and worksheets individually. This approach is less successful. Pupils sometimes find difficulty in understanding the question. On other occasions they finish the page quickly. Whichever, the class teacher is hard pressed to attend to all of the arising individual needs. Consequently, pupils sometimes have to wait in a queue or spend too long trying to understand the written instructions. This is what caused a mathematics lesson to be unsatisfactory during the inspection. Under these circumstances, pupils do not find mathematics as interesting or as satisfying. The subject leader leads by example and promotes the subject well. She, along with other senior managers, is well aware of the differences in approach being used. Training and encouragement for teachers to use more flexible methods has been successful in most classes but has had only limited impact in the Years 3 and 4.

Mathematics across the curriculum

43 Overall, skills in mathematics are reinforced and extended well in other subjects. Investigations and surveys are conducted, for example, where pupils' food preferences are compared and converted into charts and graphs, using ICT. Discussing different ways to solve numeracy problems enhances pupils' speaking and listening skills well.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High standards have continued since the last inspection because of good teaching.
- Strong development of investigation skills strengthens pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Weaknesses in teaching in Years 3 and 4 are noticeable in pupils' written work.

Commentary

44 Teacher assessments and national test results in 2004 show that standards in science are above the levels expected in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. Standards are at the same levels this year and are continuing to rise because teaching is largely good and very good in Year 5.

45 The school has a successful tradition of teaching the skills of investigation. Subject leadership is effective because of the good example set and the strong promotion of developing pupils' skills of investigation. Pupils are enthusiastic about science largely because of the practical activities. Their investigations and observations stimulate their imagination, excitement and sense of wonder. For example, Year 1 pupils' fascination grew as they watched water poured over a little teddy bear protected by, first, a sheet of paper, then a piece of fabric and finally a plastic bag, which kept him completely dry! At this early age, pupils are eager to predict what might happen and are beginning to understand why a scientific test must be fair. A similar eagerness and success in learning was evident in Year 2 where pupils were encouraged to experiment with bulbs, wires and batteries to make electric circuits. This lesson typically illustrates how successfully investigations extend the learning of the more able pupils. For example, a capable Year 2 pupil persevered until he succeeded in incorporating a buzzer and a switch into his electric circuit. Classroom assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. In an inspiring Year 5 lesson, the task of dissecting flowers and closely examining the organs made a significant contribution to pupils' learning and enabled those with special educational needs to understand the rudiments of life cycles. Sustained opportunities to investigate, observe, record results and draw conclusions enable Year 6 pupils to follow the scientific method skilfully and understand why the results of any one experiment need to be repeated to guarantee accuracy.

46 Good procedures have been established to enable teachers to assess how well pupils are learning. Where teaching is most successful, the information gathered is used well to plan future activities, taking into account pupils' different levels of understanding. In this respect, teaching in Years 3 and 4 is not as effective as it is elsewhere in the school. In Years 3 and 4, there are occasions when pupils copy notes, fill in the missing words in passages or answer lists of questions on worksheets. Pupils do not find these activities stimulating or particularly helpful since they are not always suitably matched to their learning needs. Investigations do form part of the curriculum in these classes and pupils enjoy them. However, their written accounts are often superficially marked with little constructive comment or expression of praise. Consequently, pupils' handwriting, presentation and pride in work all suffer and start to slip.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improved resources and effective staff training have raised standards since the last inspection.
- Teaching is good overall and excellent in Year 5.
- ICT is increasingly being used in the learning of other subjects.

Commentary

47 Standards had slipped slightly at the last inspection because the computers and software available had not kept up with national developments. Since then leadership and management of the subject have been good and a determined effort has been made to upgrade the computer suite, provide Internet access and more computers in classrooms. This has been accompanied by effective training in the use of new software. These improvements reflect the good ICT support provided by the Local Education Authority and the effective management of the process by the subject leader. Teaching has improved. Pupils are now achieving well and by Year 6 their competence in all strands of ICT is good in relation to the levels expected for their age. ICT is a favourite subject and Year 6 pupils talk knowledgeably about Internet searches, analysing scientific data, the use of spreadsheets and multimedia presentations.

48 Teaching is good. The ICT suite is used effectively and skills are taught systematically. Year 1 pupils benefit from a good start in using graphics programs to create pictures and adding text. They also gather information, for example, about favourite fruits, and enter it into a simple database to produce pictographs. In Year 2 they learn successfully how to edit their work, using a word processor, and search CD-ROM encyclopaedias for information. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach the levels expected comfortably. Pupils make exceptional progress in Year 5 where the teaching of ICT is excellent. In one lesson, for example, Year 5 pupils were expertly taught how to devise a formula to amend the information held on a spreadsheet. Pupils made rapid progress because the teacher projected images onto a large screen to enable them to complete the same procedures on their desktop computers. In Year 5 and in Year 6, pupils work in the suite in small groups. This is very successful because the teachers have time to support pupils who find learning difficult, including those with special educational needs. At the same time, teachers encourage the more able pupils to move on and tackle stiff challenges, such as devising complex instructions to enable Year 6 pupils to control the operation of a burglar alarm. What made the Year 5 lesson outstanding was not limited to the teacher's work in the suite. Whilst this took place, more than half the pupils worked in the classroom supervised very skilfully by a classroom assistant. Their concentration and application was highly impressive as they used computers to research information about Tudors.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

49 On the whole, satisfactory use is made of ICT in learning other subjects. However, greater use is made of classroom computers in some year groups than others. In Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 lessons in English, mathematics and science were often supported by activities involving pupils using computers. In these instances, the use of ICT improved their literacy and numeracy skills, enabled them to search for additional information and sharpened their observations, using computer-linked microscopes. In some classes, teachers keep checklists of which pupils complete the ICT activities, which provides a helpful record of their progress. The school has ambitious plans to extend the use of ICT. Fifteen laptop computers have already been purchased to enable pupils to use computers more widely in the classroom.

HUMANITIES

50 Only one history and one geography lesson was observed, and insufficient written work was seen to make a judgement on the quality of provision. In religious education there was much to see and talk about from which judgements in provision have been made. In addition, teachers' planning and examples of pupils' work were examined and discussions were held with pupils in all subjects.

51 Pupils' work in **history and geography** is similar to what it was at the time of the last inspection. Both subjects are well supported by a good range of outside visits and by visitors. Pupils enjoy both subjects but their understanding of what history is, is more secure than that of geography. This is evident in the way they explain what they have learnt in physical geography about rivers and the water cycle but do not immediately identify these topics as being part of geography. Pupils' knowledge of Ancient Egypt is good and they have learnt an important historical principle that the picture of history that emerges is based on primary sources of evidence. They are clearly fascinated by archaeological finds. Pupils in Year 4 were spellbound by a legendary story of the Aztecs settling in Mexico. However, there are weaknesses in Years 3 and 4 in relation to develop pupils' thinking and understanding through writing. Most of the recorded work in these classes is restricted to worksheets that require only one or two word answers.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Effective approaches are used to help pupils to understand feelings and actions.
- The marking of pupils' written work is better in some classes than others.

Commentary

52 As at the time of the previous inspection, standards are at the levels expected by the end of Years 2 and 6 as outlined in the syllabus for schools in Bury. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although they achieve well in Years 1, 2 and 5 and maintain their progress in Year 6. Subject leadership is satisfactory and has been successful in establishing the links between religious education and pupils' personal development. Consequently, teachers recognise the personal nature of sharing pupils' beliefs and values as a basis for understanding others. Sensitive teaching, characterised by good opportunities for pupils to reflect and discuss ideas, makes a strong contribution to pupil's spiritual and personal development. This, in turn, adds to the very good ethos of the school.

53 Teaching is satisfactory overall and some of the teaching is good. In a Year 2 lesson, the story of Moses in the Bulrushes was read expressively paying particular attention to the motives and feelings of the people in the story. Pupils were able to understand the events that took place and empathise with the characters. Drama was used well to deepen their understanding. Through good teaching, pupils were able to demonstrate their awareness of how people's beliefs can influence their decisions and actions. In Year 5, the teacher effectively used the 'five pillars of Islam' as a starting point for discussion on what values pupils considered important in their families. These values were linked effectively to the values promoted in the school's mission statement. This improved pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Islamic faith but also contributed to their personal development. Respect for other people's beliefs is developing well. For

example, learning about the Jewish festival of Hanukah helped Year 6 pupils to understand why holy days are revered.

54 From work in books and on display pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Much of pupils' written work is well presented and reflects the value that is given to the subject. However, the marking of pupils' written work in Years 3 and 4 is superficial and does not encourage them to strive for high standards of care and presentation.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

55 No design and technology lessons were seen and only two physical education lessons were observed, which is not enough to judge the quality of provision in these subjects. However, three music lessons and two art and design lessons were observed, along with part lessons and a full scrutiny of pupils' work, in order to evaluate the provision in these subjects. In addition, teachers' planning and records of pupils' progress were examined and discussions were held with pupils in all subjects.

56 In **design and technology**, pupils work with a suitably wide range of materials, tools and techniques. As a result, they have gained knowledge and skills in all areas of the subject, apart from designing and making powered objects. Examples of designs and written evaluations in the infant classes and Year 5 show that these pupils have a good understanding of the whole design and technology process and approach their work creatively. Infant pupils always have an exciting end product as a reward for their labours, such as a sandwich, a mobile or a Mother's Day card! However, planning books are not used in the other years. Consequently, pupils are unable to reflect on their previous learning to guide them in improving their work on future projects.

57 Pupils very much enjoy **physical education** and the school's impressive trophy cabinet and winners' certificates reflect pupils' good sporting achievement in athletics, badminton, swimming, football and netball. The very good range of out of school sporting activities nurtures pupils' talents very well. Swimming records show that standards of swimming are high. All Year 5 pupils achieve the national standard in swimming 25 metres and well over half of them achieve distance and survival awards. In lessons observed, teachers and pupils show a heightened sense of awareness of safety. For example, when Year 4 pupils were practising sequences of movements with a partner, they were very careful not to begin until a clear space became available. This is very important since class sizes are large and the space in the hall is limited. Overall, pupils are learning successfully to add variety and originality to their performance. However, the same degree of attention is not always extended to improving the quality of movement, for example, by stretching all parts of the body when balancing.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils use a wide range of media to develop their two and three-dimensional work.
- Work in the subject is well linked to pupils' studies in other areas of learning.
- Sketchbooks are not used sufficiently to investigate and develop ideas.

Commentary

58 Standards in the subject are good and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Infant pupils produce lovely collages on a large scale. Block prints in paint are very carefully built up in Year 3. Good cross-curricular links are made, such as with science in Year 4. Iron-filings, dropped on card over a magnet, are glued down and given a coat of clear gloss to produce beautiful swirling patterns. There are high levels of intellectual challenge in Year 5, where pupils work in the styles of different artists. Good multi-cultural studies in Year 6 are based on a number of extremely striking masks, collected by the teacher on his worldwide travels.

59 Leadership in the subject is good. The subject leader has put together a very thorough portfolio of samples of pupils' work from every class. This has been very effective in sharing good practice and has helped to drive up standards. The best work is seen in the infants and in Year 5. In these classes, there is a greater emphasis on the development of skills, especially through the use of sketchbooks. Computers are also used much more to generate designs.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Instrumental tuition is of a very high quality and benefits many pupils.
- Skills of the staff are exploited well to develop singing in both the infants and juniors.
- The spiritual and cultural life of the school is much enhanced by the subject.

Commentary

60 Standards are well above the levels expected, particularly in the quality of the instrumental playing. Almost 50 pupils receive specialist coaching on 11 different kinds of instruments. These pupils gain sufficient confidence to perform regularly in concerts. Some of these are performed in conjunction with other schools and with other conductors, thus broadening the pupils' experiences. A compact disc of last year's school concert contains a superb cornet solo as well as pieces for woodwind, strings, guitar and recorder ensembles.

61 Standards of singing are good. There is a good emphasis on posture and breathing to improve singing in lessons and hymn practices. Assemblies are enriched by pupils' spiritually uplifting singing of lively songs and rounds.

62 The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teaching in lessons is good and this is very strongly backed up by high quality coaching, provided by the Local Education Authority music support team. Equal and rich opportunities are provided for pupils to learn to play instruments or sing in the choir. A high number of pupils take part in concerts. Leadership in music is good. The subject leader ensures that all pupils are taught the basics of musical notation through recorder playing to a good standard. She also plays a key role in the many concerts that enrich the pupils' experiences. Pupils perform in and out of school and give concerts in the local community. They have even played at the renowned Bridgewater Hall in Manchester. Pupils' cultural experiences are greatly enriched through music. Visiting musicians include African drummers and players. They bring traditional instruments from around the world for pupils to see, hear and play.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

Insufficient evidence was gathered to judge the provision in **Citizenship**. However the evidence seen suggests that Citizenship education has a strong impact on pupils' learning. They are taught to accept responsibilities from their earliest days in the school. There are good opportunities to discuss issues that matter to them, such as the Tsunami appeal. Improvements have been made to the building and ICT facilities as a result of School Council discussions.

Personal, social and health education

The provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very well thought out programme of work significantly influences pupils' learning.
- Healthy living, personal safety and rational decision making are very strongly promoted.

Commentary

63 The headteacher has provided a detailed scheme programme of work and woven the objectives into each of the class topics for every class. Consequently, teachers and pupils have a very good understanding of what is to be learned and why. This is reinforced very well in subjects such as science where pupils learn in depth about healthy eating and drug awareness. Weekly discussion sessions (Circle Time) are provided for pupils to consider important themes such as relationships. Through these experiences, pupils develop a mature understanding of living and working together harmoniously and making informed choices on dilemmas, which they are already beginning to meet. This is very good preparation for their teenage years.

64 Personal, social and health education has developed well since the last inspection and is now very good. Pupils are helped to gain in confidence from their earliest times at school and their self-esteem is nurtured very well. Group and team activities are effectively provided, which enable pupils to acquire very good social skills. They naturally help and support one another. Through class and school discussions, pupils clearly know that their views are valued.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 3 |
| How inclusive the school is | 3 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 4 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 3 |
| Overall standards achieved | 3 |
| Pupils' achievement | 3 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 2 |
| Attendance | 2 |
| Attitudes | 3 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 2 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 3 |
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| How well pupils learn | 3 |
| The quality of assessment | 3 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 4 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 4 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 1 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 2 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 3 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 3 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 3 |
| The effectiveness of management | 3 |

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