

INSPECTION REPORT

CHORLEY NEW ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Horwich

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105178

Headteacher: Mr P Charnock

Lead inspector: Mr E Jackson

Dates of inspection: 22 – 24 November 2004

Inspection number: 266609

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:	277
School address:	Chorley New Road Norwich Bolton Lancashire
Postcode:	BL6 6EW
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Chris Harrison
Date of previous:	November 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Chorley New Road Primary is larger than most schools of its type, with 277 pupils on roll, including the children in the nursery. There are significantly more boys than girls in some age groups. Socio-economic circumstances locally are generally below average, although the number of pupils in receipt of free school meals is about average. There is a small number of pupils of mixed and Asian heritage. No pupils learn English as an additional language currently. The number of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average, and their needs include mainly moderate learning difficulties, speech and language difficulties, and emotional, social and behavioural needs. There is also a small number of pupils in public care. The number of pupils who leave or join the school outside the usual times is broadly average. Attainment on entry to the school is generally below average, but varies year-on-year. The school received an Achievement Award for its results in Year 6 national tests in 2001, and also achieved Investors in People in that year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9952	L Brock	Lay inspector	
22644	B Hill	Team inspector	Special educational needs Geography History Religious education
17767	S Power	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school has made satisfactory improvements from the serious weaknesses in its last inspection, and is now **satisfactory**. There are areas for further improvement, but the school has the capacity to make further progress. Teaching and learning are much better, and were good during the inspection. Management, leadership and governance have also improved to be satisfactory now, although they are still not focused sharply enough on raising achievement. Children achieve well in the reception and nursery classes, and satisfactorily from Years 1 to 5. However, achievement is unsatisfactory in Year 6, particularly in science, due mainly to weak teaching in the past. There are maintained strengths in the quality of relationships and inclusion, leading to pupils behaving well and having good attitudes to learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good teaching in the nursery and reception leads to good progress in children's learning.
- The standards achieved by Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are not high enough.
- Teaching and learning were good during the inspection, and provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils behave well, develop their personal qualities well, and clearly enjoy their work.
- The staff establish high quality working relationships that help pupils feel secure and valued.
- Governors now have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- There is still insufficient focus on raising pupils' achievement in development planning.
- Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is good, and pupils continue to achieve well, as they do in history and religious education (RE), and in music sessions led by the local authority music service.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall, and good in the nursery and reception classes. Children's attainment is generally below average when they start in the nursery, and currently the children in the reception class achieve well. They are on track to reach the goals expected in all the areas of learning by the end of the school year. Over three years, Year 2 pupils have reached broadly average levels in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics, rising in line with the national trend. This represents good achievement from entry to the school. Results in reading have improved well to be above average in 2004, but results in mathematics and writing fell to just below average levels. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 have varied from average to well below average in recent years, improving slightly in 2004 to be below average in English and mathematics, but remaining well below average in science, a weakness at the last inspection. As the table shows, these results were also below those achieved in similar schools overall. Currently, achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 5, but unsatisfactory in Year 6. Boys achieve similar levels to girls in Year 6 national tests.

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

mathematics	C	E	D	D
science	D	E	E	E

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

Children with special educational needs achieve well across the school towards the targets set for them. Those few pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve similar levels to their peers. Standards in Year 2 this year are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics, but Year 6 pupils currently achieve well below average levels in English, mathematics and science. The current Year 6 pupils achieved well below average results in reading, writing and mathematics when they were in Year 2. Their progress and achievement have also been adversely affected by weak teaching in the past. Pupils achieve well currently in ICT across the school, in science in Years 1 and 2, and in history and music in Years 3 to 6. Year 6 pupils achieve above average levels in ICT. **Pupils' personal development is good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Pupils behave well, and have good attitudes to their learning. Attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall from nursery to Year 6, improved since the last inspection. Progress in learning is good across the school. However, the effects of previous weak teaching for some classes has limited their progress in the past, particularly in science from Years 3 to 6, although achievement overall is satisfactory. Excellent lessons in music led by staff from the local authority music service inspired all the pupils in Year 3, playing as a full strings orchestra, and Year 4, as an ensemble of choir, tuned percussion, piano and violins. Consistently good teaching shared by the staff in the nursery and reception classes provides a good range of learning opportunities for the children. This includes a good balance between adult-led and child-chosen activity. The quality of ICT teaching in the computer suite is consistently good, led by the subject leader and a skilled teaching assistant. The curriculum is satisfactory, enriched well by a good range of visits and visitors to the school, very good links with the community and good links with other schools. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**, improved well since the last inspection. This is a crucial factor in the judgement that the school no longer has serious weaknesses. The leadership team work together in a satisfactory but developing role. Joint training for this team with a skilled mentor is proving very helpful, although further work is still needed to sharpen self-evaluation skills. There has also been good improvement in the governance of the school, which is now satisfactory.

Statutory requirements are generally met, except for some minor aspects of information for parents.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are generally very supportive of the school. Parents are pleased that their children like school, and make good progress because the teaching is good. They welcome the school's openness, but a few parents would like more information about their children's progress. Many pupils say that they would change nothing about the school, as they like it as it is, particularly the staff, ICT and trips out. Some would like changes to the playground, and more playground equipment for playtimes.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 to at least the levels achieved in similar schools.
- Use the data from monitoring the school's work more effectively to evaluate clearly and precisely its strengths and weaknesses.
- Use the evidence from evaluation to determine priorities for improvement that focus sharply on raising pupils' achievement, and on measurable progress in their quality of education.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that information for parents meets all statutory requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is satisfactory overall. It is good for the nursery and reception children, but unsatisfactory for the current Year 6 due to past weaknesses in teaching. Standards attained in national tests are broadly average by the end of Year 2, and good in reading in 2004. They are below average by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics, and well below average in science. However, there are signs of improvement from Years 1 to 5.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have not attained well enough by the end of Year 6 in the core subjects in recent national tests.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress.
- From Years 1 to 5, achievement is currently satisfactory, and has improved since the last inspection.
- Achievement in ICT, history and RE is good across the school.
- Reading was above average in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and achieve well.

Commentary

1. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. During the inspection, progress in most lessons was good because the staff planned good lessons. This is a good response by the staff of the school to the criticisms in the last report, when one in ten lessons were judged unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and achieve well. This is because the provision made for them is very well planned and highly inclusive in providing for all pupils with learning difficulties and behaviour problems.
2. Children begin their school education here with generally below average skills, although this varies year-on-year, and between individuals. They achieve well in the nursery and reception classes because the teaching and activities are interesting and challenging, helping the children to develop their skills in all the areas of learning. This maintains a strength recognised in the last inspection, so that most children reach the goals expected in all the areas of learning by the end of reception.

3. In the combined nursery and reception classes, the staff concentrate well on the basic skills of speaking and listening, early reading and writing, activities in number and shape, and the social skills needed to work with other children in school. This leads to good progress in children's all-round understanding, so that they learn letter sounds effectively, and learn to count well for their age.
4. Standards attained in the national tests for Year 2 pupils in 2004 were above average in reading, and improved well on results in 2003. These results compared equivalently with those in similar schools. These pupils are now in Year 3 and building well on these good skills. Standards in writing fell from the good level the year before, largely because the boys attained well below the girls, and well below boys nationally. This has led to an increased management focus on boys' achievement, following the school's analysis of test results. The trend in the school's results at Year 2 is broadly in line with the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.7 (16.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.0 (15.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.8 (15.6)	16.2 (16.3)

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

5. Standards attained in the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2004 were below average in English and mathematics, and well below average in science. These results compared equivalently with results in similar schools. Both the English and science results fell slightly from 2003, but the maths results improved well to be only just below the national average. However, the trend in the school's results at Year 6 is lower than the national trend. It should be borne in mind in considering these results for Year 6 that the percentage of pupils who joined the school after Year 2 in this group was well above the national average. This may have affected the overall level of achievement for the group adversely.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (26.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.6 (25.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.8 (26.8)	28.6 (28.6)

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

6. The current Year 2 pupils achieve levels close to those expected for their age in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This represents good progress from entry to the school. From Years 3 to 5 most pupils also achieve levels close to those expected for their age. However, the current Year 6 pupils' achievement has been unsatisfactory in English, mathematics and science due to the weaknesses in teaching described in the previous inspection. They made satisfactory progress during the inspection in response to satisfactory and occasionally good teaching, but appear to have too much ground to make up to attain the expected levels in national tests towards the end of the year. However, achievement in science has improved as far as Year 5 since the last inspection.
7. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in ICT across the school, continuing to improve since the last inspection. This is because the staff's skills have improved through effective training, and those staff who teach in the ICT suite ensure that the pupils are pushed on to develop their skills. Year 6 pupils achieve above expected levels in ICT. Achievement in music and religious education (RE) has also improved since the last inspection in response to support from the local authority staff, and subject developments. Standards in these subjects are broadly average by Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and other personal qualities are good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is above the national average, and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy their work, and behave well, most of them growing in confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils arrive on time, and rewards and celebrations in assembly promote good attendance.
- The staff provide a good range of learning experiences to strengthen pupils' personal development, and to stimulate their awareness of beauty and diversity in the world.
- The school promotes good relationships and racial harmony well.

Commentary

8. Attendance this year is above the national average, but was average last year, as shown in the table below. Almost all pupils arrive in good time to start school. Attendance registers are appropriately maintained and registration periods provide a structured start to the day. There are effective procedures to monitor attendance and good attendance is encouraged effectively through rewards, and by celebrations in school assemblies. The education welfare officer liaises closely with the school and provides support where appropriate.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	0.2
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.

9. Pupils arrive at school smiling. They have pleasant, positive attitudes that are sustained throughout the day. They also display good levels of self-discipline and tolerance, so that pupils from all ethnic backgrounds get on well together, and are fully included in all the school's work. These good attitudes were seen in an art lesson for pupils in Year 5 as they held a mature and sensible discussion about surrealist paintings, for example. Pupils in Year 2 also demonstrated very positive attitudes to reading when they eagerly discussed the characters in the stories. Around the school, both boys and girls of all ages take on responsibilities for holding open doors, managing the reception desk at lunch time and tidying the classrooms. The school council also gives pupils a voice in the school. Children in the Foundation years are on target to meet the Early Learning Goals in personal and social education.
10. Pupils with special educational needs take a full and active part in lessons and other activities. They are happy and secure, and enjoy school life in an atmosphere where all are highly valued. For many, their targets for improvement relate to aspects of their personal development, including behaviour, as well as academic progress. With very effective support from teachers and classroom assistants, they increase their confidence and self-esteem well.

11. The good provision for pupils' moral development is closely linked with the school's emphasis on teaching pupils to recognise right from wrong, and to show consideration for others. Pupils are expected to persevere when things become difficult and the school recognises and rewards effort and achievement in various ways. Pupils' good and sometimes very good behaviour contributes well to the quality of their learning, although there are a few pupils who find it difficult to behave well all the time. For example, pupils' behaviour was very good in an active science lesson for pupils in the mixed Year 2/3 class as they made good progress in conducting a fair test. Around the school, in the playground and in assemblies, pupils' behaviour is generally good and there is no evidence of harassment or racial tension.
12. The staff promote very good working relationships and these contribute well to pupils' social development. Pupils confirm that they are happy in school. They are healthily competitive and yet willing to work collaboratively with other pupils and teachers. There is a caring sense of responsibility amongst older pupils who in turn act as role models for younger pupils. Pupils' spiritual development is good, and they are willing to share their thoughts and feelings with others in the knowledge that their views will be respected. For example, pupils of all ages explored the meaning of citizenship in personal and social education lessons where they learned how to reflect on the issues raised. Acts of collective worship and school assemblies contribute well to both spiritual and cultural development, as seen when the school choir were presented with their badges. Music also raises pupils' spirits very effectively. For example, Year 3 pupils delight in learning to play as a strings orchestra, using violin, viola, cello and bass, led by staff from the local authority music service.
13. Pupils learn about the Christian faith and culture but also learn to appreciate and respect the teachings of other faiths in religious education. Through a carefully nurtured link, pupils support and correspond with pupils in a school in Africa. They learn about their own history and culture in 'Lynde Place', the Victorian heritage centre created by the headteacher, staff and governors in the school's cellar. Pupils experience the drama of Shakespeare in school productions and write sensitive poetry on a variety of themes. All these good features have been maintained since the previous inspection.
14. There have been no exclusions this school year. Those shown in the table involved one pupil who has since left the school.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
287	3	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	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 is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good overall from the nursery to Year 6, and have improved since the last inspection. Assessment and marking are satisfactory, but good in some classes. The curriculum is satisfactory, enriched well by a good range of visits and visitors to the school, and links with the community and other schools. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

Teaching and learning

Progress in learning currently is good across the school because the teaching is good. It is consistently good in the nursery and reception classes, and in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is generally very good in Year 3, and satisfactory in Years 4 to 6, with good and sometimes very good features. Excellent music lessons were taught by staff from the local authority music service in Years 3 and 4. Assessment and marking have improved to be satisfactory, and they are good in some classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- One in five lessons seen were very good or excellent, although the expectation and challenge for higher achieving pupils are not always good enough.
- The good quality of relationships established promotes good behaviour and concentration in lessons.
- Music input from local authority staff in Years 3 and 4 inspires the pupils, and contributes very well to staff development.
- Planning for learning in the nursery and reception classes in general is good, including the use of assessment.
- The use of assessment in Years 4 to 6 is satisfactory, but needs to be better to help accelerate achievement for older juniors.
- Pupils' understanding of how to improve their work varies from class to class.

Commentary

15. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen, a big improvement since the last inspection when one in ten lessons were so judged. A key factor here is the quality of relationships developed between the staff, and between the staff and pupils. The headteacher leads well in this respect. Many of the pupils say that he is an important figure in school, because he is 'kind and funny.' His approach affects the whole school, and the day-to-day interaction between the staff and pupils is relaxed and purposeful. This allows the staff to teach, and the pupils to learn, particularly as behaviour in lessons is good.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons.

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	8 (18%)	20 (47%)	13 (30%)	0	0	0

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

16. Since September, when the staffing situation in the school became settled for the first time since the last inspection, all the staff have worked hard to create a shared approach to lesson planning and assessment. The influence of the newly created leadership team has been important here, with the deputy head leading the development of improved systems for assessing pupils' work and planning new tasks and activities to extend learning. This is most effective so far in English, where the marking of pupils' work is often detailed and helpful. This improved system is not yet used consistently enough in a number of subjects, for example mathematics, to ensure that higher attaining pupils are challenged to achieve the higher levels they are capable of.
17. The good support for pupils with special educational needs extends the quality of education provided by the school. A particular strength is the good deployment of teaching assistants, who work in good partnership with the teachers and children. All know what they are expected to do, which enables pupils to make good progress. Working with the special needs coordinator (SENCO) and the class teacher, they identify and target individual pupils' needs and make sure that all have the opportunity to learn. Support assistants know all the pupils well and give good

personal and academic help during lessons and also provide effective sessions when they work one-to-one or with a small group in a separate room, so that pupils can achieve the targets set out in their individual educational plans. This approach is a possible model for staff to extend their planning to meet the needs of potentially higher attaining pupils more effectively.

18. From the nursery to Year 2, teaching is now consistently good. This is leading to good progress in learning, and helps these pupils to build on their developing skills in literacy and numeracy particularly. For example, pupils in Year 2 made good progress in using time connectives such as 'then', 'last night', 'afterwards', in developing a story, because the teacher had planned the lesson successfully. During a multi-activity session in the Foundation Stage, one of the teachers intervened well in children's imaginative play to extend the quality of their role-play, and their speaking and listening skills. However, no very good or excellent teaching was seen in these classes, and this limits the pace of pupils' improvement and the overall quality of their learning.
19. Very good and excellent lessons were seen in English, science, art and design, history and music. These lessons were all in Years 3 to 6. In Year 3, for example, the pupils received very good teaching in English, science, and history, and excellent teaching in music. This points the way forward for all the staff to raise pupils' achievements by the end of Year 6 by aiming to repeat this higher level teaching on a more consistent basis. In English, mathematics and science, for example, almost all the teaching seen in Years 4, 5 and 6 was satisfactory. Whilst this helps pupils to make satisfactory progress in their learning, it does not provide the additional boost needed to accelerate progress sufficiently.
20. In most lessons across the curriculum, the staff begin their lessons by explaining what the pupils are expected to learn. These learning objectives are usually prominently displayed, to remind the pupils as the lesson progresses, and referred to again at the end of the lesson. This is generally effective, but sometimes the objectives are set out in the language from the national guidance for teachers. These are occasionally difficult for the pupils to understand. For example, a mixed Year 1 and 2 class had the learning objective, 'We will use time-connective words to sequence events.' Some of them could not read some of these words, but knew what was required when it was explained by the teacher. It would be more helpful to phrase these objectives in language matched to the pupils' level of understanding.

An excellent contribution to staff development from the local authority music service - a course bought by the school to improve teaching and learning in the subject.

An advanced skills music teacher skilfully helps a mixed Year 4 class work together. She has a trainee advanced skills teacher observing, and the class-teacher also shadows her work as part of her own development. In the second lesson of a series, most of the pupils sing as a choir. Two boys are encouraged to introduce the piece despite their limited skills: the joy on their faces as they sing the first phrases unaccompanied is magical. The teacher is dynamic and authoritative, enthusing all the pupils and managing the whole session extremely well. She has taught the class the previous week how to play the separate notes of the accompanying chords on tuned percussion instruments, and the pupils have had the opportunity since then to practise. Six of them now accompany the singing, joined by five pupils playing violins, and another on piano. The children have not played as an ensemble before, but by the end of the session, they achieve an enthusiastic and competent combined performance that represents outstanding progress in their learning of key elements in the musical repertoire. Overall, the leading teacher's influence on the pupils and the teachers is very effective.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is broadly satisfactory, but opportunities provided for enrichment are good. Staffing is adequate, and the accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, with good indoor accommodation from nursery to Year 2. However, the infant playground is inadequate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery and reception classes enjoy a good range of activities that cover the recommended areas of learning well.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social, and health education is good, and there are good opportunities for them to develop their understanding of citizenship.
- The staff provide a good range of experiences to widen and enrich children's learning opportunities.
- Music provision has improved significantly since the last inspection, but the quality and range of school resources for music are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use the skills they learn in mathematics in a range of practical and problem-solving activities.
- The size and condition of the infant playground are unsatisfactory for the age and numbers of pupils.

Commentary

21. The curriculum for the nursery and reception classes in the Foundation Stage is of good quality and provides effectively for this age group. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 meets all subject requirements, within a carefully planned structure that includes a daily act of worship, and religious education. The curriculum for English and mathematics is based securely on the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and good use is made of national guidance in other subject areas.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the work of the school. The school's good ethos for learning includes a commitment to promote equality of opportunity in a positive learning environment for all pupils. This also ensures that both boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds have good access to all the activities and experiences offered.
23. The school provides good opportunities for enrichment across the curriculum, including good provision for pupils' personal, social, citizenship and health education through carefully planned opportunities in lessons and in Circle Time. Sex education

and drugs awareness training also helps pupils to consider lifestyle choices effectively. After school clubs and visits to educational destinations are central to the school's overall provision, particularly in the arts and sport. Strong links have been made between the school and institutions such as Bolton Octagon Theatre and Bolton Wanderers Football Club. These links enhance learning and provide older pupils with good opportunities to develop sport skills and take part in theatrical productions, such as the annual Shakespearean performance. The school does much to enrich learning within the school day, for example through involvement in innovative art and music projects. The Lynde Place Heritage Centre on the school site provides an innovative resource for teaching history through first hand experience and is also used widely by other schools.

24. Since the last inspection, music provision has improved considerably due to the purchase of music tuition from the local education authority. This is having a significant impact on improving teaching expertise and raising standards in music. It also introduces pupils to the full range of orchestral string instruments, provided by the local authority service. However, some deficiencies in the quantity and quality of musical instruments, particularly in tuned percussion instruments, inhibit the quality of pupils' learning. Provision for religious education and for practical investigative science has also been much improved. However, a deficiency in teachers' subject planning in mathematics restricts opportunities for pupils to develop the appropriate skills in using and applying mathematics. Time management is more effective than at the last inspection due to more efficient timetable arrangements and better organisation of the school day. However, there is room for further improvement as part of the national focus on remodelling the workforce.
25. Following a period of great instability in staffing, the present staff profile is much improved and now provides the necessary expertise to teach the full range of required subjects to this age group. The indoor accommodation provides a satisfactory learning environment, with good provision from the nursery to Year 2. Provision for information and communication technology is good. The computer suite and the recent investment in interactive Smartboards and laptop computers has the potential to enable pupils to do well in this subject.
26. The size and condition of the infant playground is unsatisfactory. It places limitations on opportunities for outdoor activities for younger pupils due to its poor quality, sloping surface and lack of space for the number of pupils who need to use it. However, the staff who supervise this space at play and lunchtimes are vigilant in their care in order that the pupils gain as much as possible from their play opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes satisfactory provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. Support and guidance based on monitoring of their academic progress is also satisfactory. The school involves the pupils in its work and development effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pastoral care for pupils is very good, and teachers know their pupils well.

- The school seeks and welcomes the views of pupils.
- Pupils have a good and trusting relationship with others.
- Induction procedures are good.
- Staff training in Child Protection and first aid has not been updated recently.

Commentary

27. Members of staff quickly identify situations where pupils have specific needs and take positive action to meet them. Organised activities such as discussions about friendship and caring help pupils to appreciate family, friends and teachers, and how they relate to one another. Assemblies bring the whole school "family" together to share ideas about caring and appreciating the unique qualities of each individual. Additional support for children with special educational needs is a strong feature of school provision and these pupils are fully included in all that the school provides. A good example of social interaction is the way in which pupils enjoy taking toast and fruit together at morning break.
28. Most pupils get on well with adults who work in the school. Non-teaching staff, including mid-day supervisors and the caretaker, have developed good relationships with the children, that lead to a happy, relaxed atmosphere. Pupils agree that there is an adult they could approach if they have a problem. This is clear from the trust that pupils show when they turn to adults for help. The staff listen to the pupils, and take their views into account effectively, including through the School Council.
29. The school carries out health and safety checks of the building in line with local authority guidelines and the procedures are satisfactory. Evacuation procedures and electrical testing are regular features of health and safety provision, and the building is kept very clean. Staff understand the procedures for reporting any concerns they may have about children and action is taken by the designated teacher for child protection. There are also good links with a range of external agencies on behalf of children. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle through the distribution of fruit at playtimes and the constant availability of drinking water throughout the day. The governing body is taking prompt action regarding aspects of health and safety reported to them from the inspection.
30. There is satisfactory provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring. The school is now gathering information about pupils which is used to monitor their progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has also improved the systems to identify, assess, support and monitor pupils, including those pupils who have a special educational need. The very good relationships between pupils and staff mean that those with special educational needs have confidence to seek help for their work and for their personal problems. Pupils are beginning to understand target setting and they show their work with pride. Most enjoy and strive for academic improvement and success, although the effects of past weaknesses in academic guidance have affected the achievement of older pupils adversely.
31. There are comprehensive arrangements for the induction of pupils new to the school. These include meetings for parents, "taster" sessions and a helpful booklet. Parents said at the meeting prior to the inspection and in the responses to a questionnaire that induction arrangements are good and that their children settle down quickly.

Pupils in Year 6 confirm that they feel well prepared for transfer to high school, but this is mixed with a feeling of sadness to be leaving a school in which they feel safe and secure.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. There is a good partnership with other schools and colleges, and links with the community are very strong.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with the local and wider community provide real benefit to the pupils' quality of education.
 - The links with other schools and colleges have good impact on staff development and curricular developments.
 - Mechanisms for the transfer of pupils to the next stage of education are good.
 - There is a successful Parents' Association which supports the school well.
 - The school's efforts to involve parents in their children's education is only partly successful.
 - There are required items missing from some documentary information for parents.
32. There are satisfactory arrangements to keep parents informed through regular written communications and the two formal parents' consultation evenings. The prospectus gives basic information and is supplemented by regular newsletters that bring parents up to date with new developments and current issues. As was reported at the time of the last inspection, the annual report to parents from the governing body and the prospectus have some statutory items missing but the documents are helpful in terms of explaining how to interpret standard attainment tests. School reports give detailed information on how pupils have performed in subjects but do not tell parents what children need to do to improve and there are no targets for future development. The comments about pupils' personal development show that teachers know pupils well.
33. Good partnerships with parents of pupils with special educational needs have a strong effect on their achievement. These parents are included in their children's learning reviews, and kept well-informed. Parents are advised in how to support their child's learning at home. Their children's individual learning plans are shared with parents at consultation meetings. All other parents feel that the school works hard to keep them informed, and to deal effectively with any concerns or complaints they might have.
34. Parental involvement in the life of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher confirms that there is a small but dedicated band of parents who help in the school, but he would welcome the involvement of a wider group of parents, a priority in the school improvement plan. The Parents' Association is a very active group of people that organises social and fund-raising activities. As a result of their effective and imaginative planning, significant sums have been raised to support the school. A group of parents, grandparents, governors and staff responded well when the school appealed for help to decorate the upper hall. The school held a meeting for parents about the summer term programme for the mixed Year 1/2 class and their comments were influential in planning the activities. Parents of children due to start school have a range of meetings and good information to help their children to settle down

quickly. The school reaches out to parents, but this does not yet achieve the level of involvement desired by the staff.

35. The school opens its doors to the community. The support from Bolton Wanderers Football Club is valued by the school, its pupils and their parents. Pupils can follow a study support programme at the Reebok Stadium through the "Football in the Community" project. Some Year 4 pupils visited Bolton Town Hall as part of their citizenship programme and enjoyed tea with the Mayor and Mayoress. The local Methodist minister is a regular and welcome visitor to school, talking to the pupils and leading assemblies. Pupils also visit the church for special celebrations. There is very good support from the local authority music service, and good opportunities for pupils to perform music in a range of venues. A visiting artist and the Bolton Octagon Theatre Group have worked in the school, and pupils confirm their enjoyment of the sessions that have been held.
36. Links with other schools and colleges are good. The school offers the facilities of its heritage centre to pupils from other schools and letters seen show children's appreciation of the opportunity to explore living conditions and artefacts from the Victorian era. There are good links with the high schools to which pupils transfer. Pupils are presently benefiting from science lessons at the local high school and sporting links are also a feature of the partnership. The local further education college offers pupils the opportunity to follow a construction programme: Year 6 pupils said, "We built chimneys." Trainee teachers and college students are welcomed into school for work experience placements. All these good links raise pupils' awareness of the importance of the school to the local community and give them the opportunity to act as good citizens.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. This represents strong improvement since the last inspection, when leadership was judged to be unsatisfactory and management poor. This is a major factor in the judgement that the school no longer has serious weaknesses. Leadership is now satisfactory, as is management. There has also been good improvement in the governance of the school, which is now **satisfactory**. However, whilst almost all statutory requirements are met, some elements of information for parents are missed from the prospectus and the governors' annual report.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement in leadership, management and governance since the last inspection.
- The governing body now has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, although some required information for parents is left out of key documents.
- There is a strong concern about the needs of individual pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.
- Leaders provide good role models for staff and pupils.
- Whilst development planning is satisfactory, the headteacher and key staff are not sufficiently clear when prioritising school developments, and do not always focus sharply enough on the need to improve pupils' achievement.

Commentary

37. The headteacher has worked tirelessly to bring about improvements following the judgement of the last inspection that the school had serious weaknesses. He has been willing to take advice from outside agencies and to consult governors and colleagues. He has managed the consequences of traumatic staff absences satisfactorily and newly established staff are showing great commitment to school improvement. The decision to widen the leadership team is a promising development. Though it is in its infancy, the opportunity to discuss the school's work openly and to have support from an outside mentor is helping to establish a more effective team approach. The most recent strategic planning document is wide ranging and covers many pertinent areas for development. However, the significant weakness is a lack of clarity about setting strict priorities that focus rigorously on raising achievement and standards.
38. Where subjects and aspects are managed well there has been measurable improvement in achievement. The decision that the deputy headteacher should co-ordinate assessment throughout the school has led to a good improvement in this area, particularly in literacy. However, further work is needed to refine the systems so that pupils' progress can be tracked effectively across the school in all areas. Good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and of information and communication technology have resulted in good achievement and progress in these areas. Similarly, good leadership in English and science have led to an improving trend in standards, a weakness at the last inspection.
39. Many co-ordinators are new to their role, but they are making good use of the more open, shared culture to monitor pupils' work across the school. Issues of general concern are becoming more immediately apparent, leading, for example, to a focus on improving writing skills in all subjects. Systems are now in place and being implemented to monitor the work of the school, though it is too soon to judge the effect of these on standards. A strong aspect of the management of the school is the way in which new staff are well supported by their named mentor and also by the whole staff. This reflects the caring aspect of the school's shared ethos, and provides good role models for other staff and for pupils as they see the way that the adults cooperate and get on well together. The headteacher is particularly effective here.
40. Leadership, management and governance of special educational needs are very good. The recently appointed co-ordinator (SENCO) ensures that the good provision of the school extends to those with specific learning needs and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The staff's planning and assessment of nominated pupils are monitored by the co-ordinator to improve teaching and learning. This thorough approach by the SENCO enables this provision to be a strength of the school. The governor for special educational needs works closely with the SENCO, visiting school regularly to monitor the effectiveness of policy implementation, and keeping the full governing body informed.
41. The governing body plays an active part in the life of the school. Governors visit the school formally and informally on a regular basis and freely give of their time and expertise in support of the school. For example, one governor analysed the test results in 2003 and 2004 to help the school to identify areas for improvement, and

another spends a morning every week hearing older pupils read. The governors now have a secure and improved grasp of the strengths of the school and a clear vision of what is needed to improve. This increased awareness, and the willingness of the chair of the governing body to ask searching and sometimes uncomfortable questions as well as to support the headteacher, have been important factors in the improvements in the leadership of the school.

42. Financial management is satisfactory. The school's resources have been greatly stretched by the effects of long term staff absences, though this has been mitigated by the recent successful bid for additional funding. The figures in the table refer to the previous year's finances, when unforeseen costs were incurred due to the exceptional levels of staff absence. Governors are increasingly aware of the principles of best value, and have begun to challenge the school more effectively to compare itself with schools in similar circumstances. Given the below average unit costs, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004.

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	832,537
Total expenditure	862,792
Expenditure per pupil	2,797

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-10,041
Balance carried forward to the next	-40,296

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**, maintaining a strength identified in the last inspection.

When children start in the nursery, their attainments vary from year to year but are below what is usual for their age overall, particularly in social and in speaking and listening skills. All 35 children attend nursery part time, either morning or afternoon. The 37 children in the reception year attend full time. The purpose-built Foundation Stage accommodation is bright and attractive with direct access to a secure outdoor area, which is being developed well as an outdoor classroom. However, the area of the infant playground used for large wheeled toys is quite steeply sloped and unsuitable for young children. Resources in general are of good quality and are used effectively in a stimulating range of practical activities that meet the needs of young children well in all areas of learning.

Achievement is good for all children, including those few from minority ethnic groups. The children with special educational needs are well supported and they achieve well. The Foundation Stage functions well as a unit with children of nursery and reception age working in harmony. A strong feature is the good balance between children's free choice and the adult-directed activities when children are grouped according to their age and stage of development. This good balance enables all children to achieve well and most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals set for the end of the reception year. The good assessment records, based on close observation of the children, confirm this.

The curriculum is good overall. Activities are interesting and practical and meet the needs of young children well. A good feature is the way in which learning in different areas is linked. For example, children learn about solid shapes and reinforce this learning well in the construction area when designing and making structures. Teaching is good overall so that children learn well, and make good progress. All adults work co-operatively and the well utilised skills of the Nursery Nurses make a very good contribution to children's learning. All adults are deployed well throughout the day to improve the quality of learning.

The Foundation Stage is led and managed well. There are good systems in place for planning work and assessing children's progress and this contributes to the good provision and children's good achievement. A strong aspect is the way all staff are valued. This very good teamwork has enabled the Foundation Stage to continue to function well during the temporary absence of the Foundation Stage coordinator.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships between all adults set a good example for the children.
- Children respond well to the firmly-established routines and rules.
- There is a high expectation for children to develop independence from the start.

Commentary

43. Teaching is good and so children achieve well, and make good progress towards achieving the recommended goals by the time they start in Year 1. The atmosphere in

the Foundation Stage is warm and secure and activities are interesting so that children enjoy coming into school. Children respond well to the well-established routines, such as the signal to stop and tidy up, and to the high expectations of independence, as when changing for physical education. Good work and effort is acknowledged and reinforced through praise and awards such as 'Busy Bee' badges and this encourages good attitudes to learning. The very good relationships between adults and the way they treat each other and the children provides a very good example to the children, who behave well.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults are well deployed throughout the day and speak to the children whatever the activity.
- Work to develop the basic skills of reading and writing is well matched to the needs of different groups of children.

Commentary

44. Teaching is good, leading to good achievement so that most children reach the expected goals by the time they start in Year 1. There is a strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills. Adults talk to children and ask questions of them whatever they are doing. For example, the staff demonstrate and name position words like 'under' and 'over' in the movement lesson.
45. Children develop a good interest in books as they enjoy listening to the exciting way in which adults tell stories. They are encouraged by the staff to join in with the refrains or in making animal noises at the appropriate places. There is a good emphasis on the systematic teaching of letter sounds, for example drawing objects that start with 'the sound of the week'. Another good feature is the way learning is organised for small groups of children of similar ability to develop reading skills well. The teacher guides the reading skilfully by choosing interesting books which encourage children to relate the stories to their own experiences.
46. There is a good range of activities to encourage children to write and make marks. Name cards are readily available to help children to name their own work. Children are shown how to form letters correctly and how to hold the pencil so that they can control the movements. They are motivated well as they enjoy making party invitations and there is a good selection of words on display or on prepared cards for children to copy.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop good counting skills through interesting practice.
- Practical activities help children to develop their mathematical understanding.
- Children sometimes spend too long sitting on the carpet in class activities.

Commentary

47. Children achieve well because teaching is good, so that most reach the expected goals by the start of Year 1. There is a good emphasis on developing counting skills and children respond enthusiastically when asked to count forwards and backwards in different voices. Most children in reception are confident when counting to 10 and higher attaining children count confidently to 20 and beyond. Good quality resources are used effectively to help children's understanding. For example, the staff encourage the children to look closely at bright shapes in order to match them to their drawn outline. Higher attaining children develop their understanding further as they are asked to describe similarities and differences between squares and rectangles. Some whole class sessions are a little too long, so that some children become restless. They quickly regain their interest during the following good range of ongoing practical activities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use the computers with confidence.
- The interesting range of activities has a clearly identified purpose.
- Use of the outdoor classroom is limited as it has no rain cover.

Commentary

48. Children achieve well because of the good teaching in this wide area and so reach the recommended Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. They have regular access to the computers which helps them to develop confidence and good control when manipulating the controls. Children learn well because each activity amongst the extensive range on offer has a clear purpose. For example, children learn about different foods as they make sandwiches and experiment with different shapes and materials as they make models from discarded cartons. They gain an understanding of diversity by playing with dolls representing different cultures, and the study of a variety of faiths in RE. The outdoor area is being developed imaginatively to extend learning, and there is a good range of equipment such as train sets and large crates for construction. However, the use of this good space is limited in inclement weather as there is no cover available.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Clear instructions and demonstrations help children to improve their skills.
- The playground is unsuitable for large wheeled toys.

Commentary

49. Teaching is good and so children achieve well to attain the recommended level by the start of Year 1. A strong feature of this area of learning is the way in which adults demonstrate how to move their bodies or to use equipment such as pencils to develop children's skills. Regular use of the hall helps children to develop a sense of space. In a good lesson in the hall the teacher made good use of children's ideas to demonstrate good movements and this encouraged other children to improve, and also raised the chosen pupils' self esteem. Children have regular supervised access to the infant play area to use wheeled toys and larger equipment, but the slope and the uneven surface make it unsuitable.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given the chance to use a good range of materials.
- Learning is enhanced by the timely adult intervention.

Commentary

50. Children achieve well to reach the recommended level at the end of the reception year. Teaching is good. Children have good opportunities to use a good range of materials and develop painting and drawing skills well, for example by painting balloons and decorating party hats. They enjoy exercising their imagination in the role-play areas such as the Post Office. Children cooperate well in the imaginative play area and learning is considerably enhanced when an adult joins them in the house to talk about celebrating a birthday with cakes and party hats. Music is promoted well, as when children play 'musical shapes'.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **good**, with particularly good features in the teaching of reading and grammar, and in the development of useful assessment procedures to set further targets for learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improved assessment practice is beginning to help staff focus work more accurately to pupils' needs.
- The subject leader keeps good overview of subject developments.
- The development of writing skills is rightly an area for further improvement.
- Good improvements have been made in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
- Pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 experience very good lessons that promote their learning very well.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good help from support staff.

Commentary

51. Standards are broadly average towards the end of Year 2, and pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. Standards are currently well below average towards the end of Year 6. This group had low results in national tests when they were in Year 2. Achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. It is good in Year 3, but has been unsatisfactory for Year 6 due to past weak teaching. Standards towards the end of Year 6 are lower than those reported at the last inspection, but are improving to be close to the levels expected in Years 3 to 5. Pupils with special educational needs

generally receive good support, and make good progress towards the subject targets in their individual education plans.

52. Teaching is good, and led to good progress in learning during the inspection. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when one in three lessons in Years 3 to 6 were unsatisfactory. Leadership and management of the subject are good, and having good impact on improving provision in the subject. In particular, new procedures introduced by the coordinator, in collaboration with local authority consultants, for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress help staff to set challenging new targets for their learning. This is also an important contributor to the overall subject improvement since the last inspection.
53. Speaking and listening have been priorities for development, and this has had good effect. Standards are broadly average in Year 2, but below average in Year 6. Across the school, pupils listen well and act on directions given to them. Occasionally, whole class sessions at the beginning of lessons are too long, and some pupils' concentration wavers. In general, however, pupils have good attitudes to their work in the subject, and behave well in lessons because the staff make their lessons interesting. Few opportunities were seen for role-play or drama to promote speaking skills, but older pupils take part each summer in acting out a Shakespeare play with support from professional staff from the Bolton Octagon theatre. Pupils generally speak clearly, and express themselves well. For example, Year 2 pupils could talk fluently about characters in their reading books.
54. Reading is promoted effectively, and the focus in the nursery and reception classes since the last inspection on helping the children learn the sounds of letters better has led to an improvement in Years 1 and 2 in children being able to work out how to read unknown words. Last year, for example, Year 2 pupils attained above average levels in national tests in reading, with a good improvement in the number of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age. Currently, attainment in reading is broadly average in Year 2. As weaknesses had been analysed in some year groups, extra time has been made available for staff to work with pupils to improve reading skills outside the usual literacy lessons. This is effective for some pupils, but occasionally those pupils working independently of the staff do not make sufficient progress as the tasks they have are not sufficiently interesting or challenging.
55. Many Year 6 pupils receive extra support to develop their skills, but overall reading levels are below average. However, in Years 3 to 5, many pupils make good progress because reading is promoted effectively in most subjects, including history, geography and RE. In a very good Year 3 lesson, the teacher worked with a group using the story of 'The Hodgeheg' (sic). The pupils read well, explaining and extending the ideas when questioned by the teacher, and this extended very effectively the good level skills they had already established in Year 2. Another group, working with a support assistant, took it in turns to read from a story book. The support assistant prompted them well, and because they concentrated hard they made good progress in reading out loud. This is generally the case for all pupils with special educational needs.
56. Writing has been identified as a key priority for further improvement across the school. This is particularly the case for boys in Years 1 and 2, and for girls in Years 3

to 6. This latter is because in the 2004 English tests, girls performed well below girls nationally. Good examples were seen of the range of writing skills being developed. These included poetry in a variety of forms, including the use of unusual and interesting similes in Year 6. Year 5 pupils rewrote scenes from a story as play text, and analysis of their work shows good progress in sentence structure, grammar and punctuation. Year 4 pupils also develop their writing skills in a good range of forms and styles, and the teacher's marking often extends the challenge for higher attaining pupils. Spelling is promoted satisfactorily, and most teachers mark pupils' work effectively to help them correct errors. Occasionally, however, insufficient account is taken in staff's writing assessments of pupils' spelling errors.

57. Handwriting is taught as a skill, and this year, from an analysis of their work in books, many pupils have apparently improved their skills satisfactorily, as the neatness and uniformity of their style develops. However, observation of the pupils when writing shows that they are not reminded sufficiently by the staff of correct posture, alignment of the writing surface, or grip of the pen or pencil when working. This is also the case when writing using ICT, as most pupils use only one finger of one hand on the keyboard when typing. This slows their output, and inhibits the flow of their writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. The use of language and literacy skills across the curriculum is good. There are many opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills for diverse purposes in other subjects, particularly in circle time discussions, and such lessons as history and geography. The staff stress the use and spelling of specific language in mathematics and science. Whilst keyboard skills need further development, ICT is used effectively to extend pupils' writing and spelling skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers in Years 1-3 use simple resources well to help pupils understand, and most teachers use the interactive whiteboards effectively.
- The lesson plans in some classes do not take sufficient account of the needs of different groups of pupils, and the pace of some initial oral sessions is too slow.
- In some classes teachers use questions well.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills.
- The staff make good use of ICT to support work in the subject.

Commentary

59. Standards in Year 2 are just below average. This is a slight improvement on the results in the 2004 national tests, continuing a considerable improvement over the previous year. Standards in Year 6 are well below average, with fewer pupils on line to attain the national standard than in the 2004 tests. This is largely due to the severe disruption to their schooling experienced by this group of pupils in the past because of extended periods of staff absences. The staffing situation is now more settled and the scrutiny of books for pupils currently in Year 5 shows clear evidence of an improvement in standards, as these pupils are working at the level expected for their age. This augurs well for the improvement of the standards achieved in the future.
60. Achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 1-5. A weakness still remains from the last inspection in planning work to meet the needs of different groups of pupils effectively enough. In particular, in some older classes, more able pupils spend time practising skills they already have before moving on to more appropriate, challenging tasks. This means that fewer pupils than average are working at a higher level. Pupils in Year 6 make satisfactory progress in lessons currently, but the cumulative effect of unsettled staffing means that they have not done as well as they could have during their time in school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school because of the good level of support they receive from teachers and support staff. The most recent national tests indicated considerable underachievement of girls but there was no evidence of girls underachieving during the inspection.
61. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Throughout the school, teachers are using interactive whiteboards well to focus pupils' attention and to explain new work clearly, and this is helping pupils to understand more quickly. Good use is also made of computers in the

classroom and the ICT suite to practise and extend skills. A good feature of lessons in Years 1-3 is the practical nature of the tasks and the good use of simple resources to help pupils to develop their understanding. This was seen in a Year 1/2 class where pupils used magnetic counters on a 100-square when working out the effect of adding or taking away ten. In some lessons, teachers pose good questions to encourage pupils to think and explain their answers, as when Year 3 pupils explained that they needed two cards to show the number 10 as it has two digits. In less effective lessons, the pace of the initial oral section is too slow for pupils to develop quick recall of facts. As at the last inspection, there are still insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills in solving problems and investigating patterns. This adversely affects the number of older pupils working at the higher level.

62. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. There has been good improvement in assessing pupils' progress. However, further work needs to be done in setting individual targets so that pupils know what they need to do to improve, and to track their progress through the school. Partly as a result of the staff upheaval suffered by the school, the lack of a common format for lesson planning is delaying the coordinator's opportunities to monitor how effectively lesson planning meets all pupils' needs.

Mathematics across the curriculum

Pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in other subjects, as when pupils in Year 5 measure in millilitres in science to show how much water has evaporated in different areas around the school.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**, improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6 was well below the national average.
- Standards and achievement in the current Year 6 are well below those expected nationally.
- Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 4 are good.
- Some aspects of teaching in Years 5 and 6 are in need of improvement.
- Leadership and management in science are good.
- Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.
- Pupils behave very well in practical science lessons.

Commentary

63. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities. By the time they are seven, standards are similar to those found nationally in all areas of the subject. Pupils' good achievement continues in Years 3 and 4 and standards remain close to those expected for their ages. However, the rate of achievement slows in Years 5 and 6 and by the age of 11, attainment in the current Year 6 is well below expected levels, due in part to recent instability in staffing. These findings are reflected in the

results of the 2004 national tests that showed attainment to be well below that found nationally, particularly in relation to the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 5. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables these pupils to achieve well but overall, older pupils do not achieve as well as they could do in relation to their abilities, particularly those pupils capable of higher attainment.

64. The quality of teaching is consistently good in Years 1 to 4. Key features of the good teaching are the high expectations of what pupils can do and the good provision for pupils capable of higher attainment. The good lesson planning caters well for all ability groups within suitable contexts for their ages and interests. In Years 1 and 2, learning about forces was made relevant through the use of toys and linked carefully to the key learning for this area of the subject.
65. Although teaching in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory overall, there are occasional shortcomings that reduce opportunities for some pupils to achieve as well as they could do. Lessons are planned carefully within practical contexts but pupils' achievement is not as good as it might be due to insufficient provision within some lessons for different ability groups and not enough emphasis on key learning of scientific concepts and vocabulary. Learning objectives for lessons are sometimes not specific enough to help pupils evaluate how well they are doing or to ensure that key learning takes place. Not enough is expected of pupils capable of higher attainment to help them reach the higher levels of learning. Although the use of time in science lessons has improved, with a higher overall allocation of time to the subject, there is still scope for further improvement in how that time is used in order to strengthen the quality of learning. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are not set clear enough timescales for tasks to be completed and as a result, learning can lack a sense of urgency and not enough is accomplished within the lesson. Although the quality of teaching and learning in the area of scientific enquiry is much improved, there is not enough emphasis on accurate graph construction from the data collected and on the interpretation of data and graphs in scientific terms.
66. ICT is beginning to make a positive impact on the subject, for example in the use of a digital microscope for soil analysis in Year 5 and appropriate software for exploring forces in Year 2. However, there is potential for further exploitation of ICT, for example in organising data and generating graphs.
67. Leadership and management in the subject are good. Since the last inspection, the coordinator's determination and vision have been instrumental in improving science provision. Although progress in improving standards in Year 6 has been slowed by recent instability in staffing, a great deal has been achieved in improving the quality of teaching throughout the school, particularly in investigative science. Good quality monitoring of teaching and standards has resulted in a sharply focused action plan with correctly identified targets for further improvement. Resources for the subject are sufficient to meet curriculum requirements.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected in Years 5 and 6, a maintained strength since the last inspection.
- Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching in the computer suite is consistently good, led by the subject leader and a skilled teaching assistant.
- Leadership and management are effective in promoting good standards and teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior abilities.
- The pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to ICT are central to their good achievement.
- More use could be made of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

68. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in ICT in relation to their capabilities and prior attainment. By the age of seven, standards are similar to those expected nationally and by the age of 11, standards are above those expected. This is a similar picture to that found by the previous inspection and indicates that the school is maintaining its good quality provision for ICT.
69. The quality of teaching is consistently good, particularly in the computer suite, led by the subject leader and the ICT support assistant. Lesson planning is effective in providing for pupils of all abilities and promotes very good progress in developing the required ICT skills throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, due to the sensitive and well-timed support they receive in lessons. The good achievement of pupils of all ability groups is due largely to the small teaching groups, good assessment procedures and good resource provision that enable pupils' individual learning needs to be met very effectively. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, a group of eight pupils were able to work through the required elements of the 'Crystal Rainforest' software at an individual pace, supported very effectively by the ICT support assistant. As a result, pupils could apply their previous learning effectively to solve problems and achieved well in learning new skills as these were needed. In lessons where there are larger teaching groups, for example in Year 6, the very good staffing levels and good expertise of the staff ensure that all pupils can achieve well in relation to their abilities. In all the lessons seen, the pupils' good behaviour and obvious enjoyment in ICT were central to their good achievement.
70. The good leadership and management provided by the subject coordinator is an important factor in the consistently good provision for ICT. Her considerable expertise in teaching ICT provides a very good role model for colleagues and she ensures that the subject enjoys a prominent place in the curriculum. She leads by example and her good quality subject evaluation has identified accurate targets for development. The good teamwork between the subject leader and the ICT support staff is effective in ensuring that all aspects of ICT are accessible to all pupils and good care is taken that both boys and girls enjoy the same opportunities.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Although much has been done to extend the use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum, for example with a digital microscope in Year 5 and in mathematics and science lessons in Year 6, its use is still rather tentative and there is scope for it to be better planned and utilised. Considerable investment in hardware and software, such as the acquisition of eight laptop computers three weeks prior to the inspection, has greatly extended the potential for use in all subjects and lessons. However, the use of these good resources is not yet maximised or effectively monitored. Although a good start has been made in the use of Smartboards in lessons, they have not yet become an integral part of teaching and are not being used to their full potential to enhance learning across the curriculum. Teachers are in the early stages of developing the necessary expertise and further staff training is planned.

HUMANITIES

72. Few lessons were observed in this area: none in geography, three in history, and one in RE. However, samples of work completed, work on display and discussions with pupils and staff indicate that standards are broadly in line for pupils aged seven and 11 in geography and history, and in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in RE. Improvement in the humanities since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Leadership and management in these three areas are now sound and suitable resources effectively support learning. In **geography**, pupils also achieve well, and gain a good understanding of the various topics covered in the curriculum. For example, in Year 2, they draw maps accurately, identifying natural and man-made features well for their age. Year 5 pupils have studied water and highlight rivers, canals, and oceans well on maps. They have developed good skills in selecting maps for a specific purpose.

History

Provision in the subject is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Investigative work is good, building well on pupils' previous knowledge.
- There are good cross-curricular links with other subjects.
- Outside visits celebrate work at the end of a topic successfully.

Commentary

73. Standards achieved are in line with those generally found nationally by seven and eleven. Achievement is good, and progress was good in lessons in response to generally good teaching. In Year 1, the pupils had been learning about toys from the past and they used this knowledge well when challenged well by the teacher to order the dates of Teddy Bears on a time line. Pupils in Year 5 understand aspects of Victorian life well for their age, so that when they visited the schools' own Victorian museum in the cellar, Lynde Place, they knew that they were collecting information from the good range of primary resources. They skilfully answered the teacher's probing questions on comparisons between modern and Victorian schools and differences between Victorian and modern daily life.
74. The teacher gave pupils in Year 3 good opportunities to handle papyrus and to try out hieroglyphic writing in art and design. A very good display of artefacts prepared by the teacher supports their learning about Ancient Egypt well, and includes samples of papyrus inscribed with hieroglyphics. Information and communication technology is used well to present information for the pupils in power-point presentations. For example, before a visit to the Egyptology Gallery at Bolton Museum, the pupils watched a presentation on Egyptian mummies.
75. A very good feature of the teachers' planning is that at the end of a topic, teachers organise outside visits to celebrate the work achieved. For example, Year 3 pupils are to visit the Bolton Lecture Theatre to see the play, 'The Boy King'. The cast of the play will be sharing their knowledge of Ancient Egyptian artefacts with the pupils.
76. Leadership and management are good, and ensure that the subject is an important part of pupils' learning. Literacy skills are developed well when pupils discuss their work, and write about what they have learned.

Religious Education

Provision in the subject is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' respect for religious beliefs is well-developed.
- The staff provide a broad curriculum to support learning from and about religion.
- There is good provision through the subject for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Cross-curricular links with other subjects are strong.

Commentary

77. Pupils achieve well across the school, and reach the levels of knowledge and understanding set out in the Agreed Syllabus by Year 2 and Year 6. They understand what is involved in belonging to a faith community in terms of beliefs, practices and values. They can also make simple comparisons between different religions and respect that religion is important to some people and affects people's daily lives.

78. Teaching and learning are good and pupils made good progress in the one lesson seen during the inspection. In Years 1 and 2, the teachers follow the guidelines in the Syllabus which focus on using drama and dance in learning from religions. They study the rich supply of artefacts from the different faiths. A photograph of Year 2 on a recent trip to Horwich Parish Church shows that the pupils are given good opportunities to visit places of worship and study the objects and symbols of more than one religion. Work in Year 5 pupils' books

records their well-developed knowledge of Hinduism. They have learnt the importance of Hindu rituals, such as preparing for a baby, weddings, deaths and funerals and the rites of passage.

79. Religious education contributes well to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils across the school are preparing for Christmas, discussing its traditions and reflecting on the importance of the symbol 'light'. They are looking forward to lighting the Advent candles as they have also celebrated Divali in a display of lights. Social development is good in 'circle time' when pupils share together their feelings and thoughts. The acknowledgement that people have different faiths is an integral part of the provision and contributes well to the school ethos of living in a richly multi-cultural society.
80. Leadership and management are effective, as the subject has improved since the last inspection. Cross-curricular links with other subjects are strong. When learning about Christmas in other countries the pupils used the internet to find information. They searched through reference sheets to find more details and used their literacy skills to record their notes.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision in art and design as only one lesson was observed. In this very good lesson in Year 5 there was clear evidence of a good improvement since the last inspection in the use of sketchbooks and in the study of the work of famous artists. The teacher's own skill and enthusiasm for the subject showed through in his delivery and this led to above average achievement for all pupils. Their skills in mixing subtle shades contributed to still life compositions of good quality.
82. No design and technology lessons were observed and so no overall judgement can be made about provision, and teaching cannot be evaluated. No pupils' work was available for inspection at this stage in the school year but work samples in the subject management file indicate broadly satisfactory achievement and teaching. Curriculum arrangements for design and technology are satisfactory and meet basic requirements. The subject is taught through three study units in each school year and subject planning makes suitable provision for the different stages of the evaluating, designing and making process within each unit.
83. Modest improvement in assessment procedures has been made since the last inspection and self-assessment for older pupils is being introduced. The subject has not been of high profile in the school in recent years but the subject leader has maintained a satisfactory overview of subject quality and provision within the timetable. However, monitoring places insufficient emphasis on tracking the development of the pupils' key design and technology skills. Resources for the subject are well managed and sufficient to meet subject needs.
84. No overall judgement is possible on provision in **physical education**. Only one lesson was seen in dance for Year 2 and 3 pupils. This was a good lesson, where the pupils improved their movement skills in response to music and poetry. Evidence from teachers' planning, and discussion with pupils, suggests that the subject meets

requirements, and that pupils attain the expected levels in swimming by the end of Year 6. The school has reasonable facilities overall to support the subject, although the playgrounds slope quite steeply.

Music

Provision in the subject is **very good** overall, with some excellent support bought in from the local authority Music Service. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Advanced skills teachers from the local authority Music Service provide excellent teaching for the pupils, and staff development for the staff.
- The pupils really enjoy the opportunities presented to learn a good range of skills.
- The school's own music resources are limited, and not representative enough of a range of musical traditions.

Commentary

85. Standards achieved towards the end of Year 6 are similar to those seen nationally, and a few pupils reach higher levels in individual instrumental tuition from peripatetic local authority staff. Achievement is satisfactory overall, but good with some very good aspects in lessons seen in Years 3 and 4. No judgement is possible for Year 2, although these pupils' singing in assembly is about average for their age group.
86. Teaching and learning are very good in Years 3 to 6. The school has bought extensive support from the local authority Music Service, and this is proving to be money extremely well spent. The high quality of the specialist teachers' contributions gives pupils in Years 3 and 4 exciting opportunities to experience and develop a wide range of musical skills and abilities. As described earlier, an advanced skills teacher leads both learning for the Year 3 pupils at a very high level, and very good staff training for a member of the Music Service, and the class teacher. Pupils with special educational needs were fully included in all these lessons, and made similar progress to their peers.
87. In another ambitious and innovative project, led by the head of the Strings teaching section of the Music Service, all 42 pupils in Year 3 have been provided with a violin, a viola, a cello, or a bass adapted to their size. This is an amazing level of resource in a primary school. This teacher leads the pupils in learning how to hold the instrument for playing and at rest, how to pluck the strings, and to read from standard notation. She also insists that they sing in tune the notes they play. She is assisted by another highly skilled teacher who leads the pupils in stimulating preparatory exercises, then supports the lead teacher in coaching the pupils in learning to play this full range of orchestral strings in unison, but reading from the appropriate clef. This lesson concluded with a short recital by the music staff on cello and bass, to the pupils' delight.
88. In all the lessons seen, the pupils had a good range of subject opportunity. In a Year 6 lesson, led without support by the class teacher, who has good subject knowledge and understanding, pupils experienced all the elements of the music curriculum, adding composition and evaluation of their own and other pupils' work to the repertoire. Here the pupils made good progress in keeping a steady pulse, and singing and playing chords with tuned percussion to accompany the singing. They developed a satisfying performance of a four part round, accompanied by three

separate chords on tuned percussion. This lesson was restricted, however, by the limited number of instruments available, even some of those not having a full range of notes to play the full chords.

89. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed, and has improved since the last inspection due to the involvement of the Music Service at the school's request. This augurs well for the continued development of the subject, as staff development is central to the projects. The school's own instrumental resources are still insufficient, however, as at the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

90. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social, citizenship and health education through carefully planned opportunities in lessons and in Circle Time. These sessions help pupils to explore issues important to their personal well being, for example in managing anger or making important decisions. A Circle Time session in Year 4 provided a good forum for pupils to realise how important it is to make the right choices and opened the way for further discussion about peer influences and drug awareness. Sex and relationship education are covered effectively.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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