

INSPECTION REPORT

CLARENDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105153

Headteacher: Miss W L Holland

Lead inspector: Dr Alan Jarvis

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st October 2004

Inspection number: 266626

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 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll; 387

School address: Clarendon Street
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of Mr. D Connor
governors:

Date of previous 11th January 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very large and complex primary school. It has a nursery on site and educates boys and girls up to the age of eleven. It serves an area which is in the top 7 per cent most deprived neighbourhoods in England. Most pupils live close to the school but some travel from further afield. The most noticeable feature of the school is the very high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language (approximately four out of five) of whom about a third is at an early stage of acquiring English. The most common home languages are Gujarati, Urdu and Panjabi. Around two thirds of pupils are from an Indian heritage background. The largest other group of pupils comes from a Pakistani background, with pupils from Caribbean, Asian or white British backgrounds also being represented. Currently, there are 12 pupils whose parents are seeking asylum. Five pupils are in public care. Overall, the pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are well below average, although there is some spread of advantage. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is above average and would be even higher if all parents entitled to claim this benefit did so. Attainment on entry to the nursery approaches well below average levels; attainment at the start of full time education in the reception class is broadly well below average. An average proportion of pupils enters or leaves the school in any one year. Some pupils undertake extended leave to visit relatives in other countries. An above average proportion of pupils have a special educational need; an average proportion is supported via a statement of special educational needs. Pupils' special

needs include specific needs such as dyslexia or moderate learning, speech and communication, physical or social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. The school has close links with the local secondary school and a multi agency support service (known locally as the BEST team). It receives special funding to help to support pupils at various stages of learning English as a second language. Accordingly, the school works closely with BEMAS (Bolton Ethnic Minority Achievement Service) staff, some of whom are employed in school. It is also a partner in the sports co-ordinator initiative and the "Sure Start" project where artists come to work with the children in the Foundation Stage.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2711	Dr. Alan Jarvis	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage; Science
1311	Dr. Barry Wood	Lay inspector	
31838	Martyn Williams	Team inspector	Mathematics; ICT, religious education; physical education., citizenship
21045	Sue Walker	Team inspector	English; art and design; music; special educational needs.
20368	Sue Macintosh	Team Inspector	English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a complex, but **very effective** and extremely inclusive school. It is, rightly, highly regarded by the community it serves. From a low base on entry all groups of pupils achieve very well by reaching average standards overall by the end of Year 6. Teaching and learning are highly effective and supported by a high quality curriculum. Leadership and management are very effective at many levels. Pupils are cared for very well. It provides excellent value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- All groups of pupils achieve very well in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science and music because teaching and learning in these areas are very effective.
- Excellent racial harmony shines like a beacon. This, coupled with the very good care pupils receive, ensures they learn, thrive and flourish in a climate free from any form of harassment.
- The leadership team and most key staff provide a very strong drive for improvement.
- The high numbers of pupils at an early stage of acquisition of English and those who have a special or other need are supported very well and made to feel safe and secure.
- Although the headteacher and her staff try hard to involve all parents in their children's education, few parents are involved in the life and work of the school.
- The external accommodation for pupils in the nursery and reception classes is unsatisfactory and the playgrounds are bare and unattractive.

There has been a very good improvement in the school's effectiveness. Improvement has been rapid in recent years. This is because, like the cogs in a machine, extra bilingual support, much improved teaching, significantly improved provision in the Foundation Stage and clear targets for teachers have come together and worked in unison to raise standards. Stronger leadership and management at many levels are raising standards quickly. All the key issues previously identified have been very effectively addressed, most notably in science and the Foundation Stage.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	E	D	C
Mathematics	D	D	C	B
Science	D	D	C	C

*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.*

Achievement is very good throughout the school regardless of pupils' starting points, gender, ethnicity, special educational need or level of acquisition of English. Overall results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 have risen from below average in 2002 to

just below average in 2004 compared with all schools. The children in the nursery and reception classes, who are younger than normal, achieve very well in most areas of learning. Although they are likely to reach standards which approach below average levels in all areas of learning, this is a significant improvement on much lower levels on entry. Standards in the current Year 2 are average in reading, writing and mathematics, which represents very good achievement in terms of pupils' capabilities and previous starting points. Pupils in the current Year 6 entered with low standards. They did not always have the benefit of very good teaching or the very good levels of bilingual support now enjoyed by the younger pupils. However, they have achieved very well through Years 3 to 6. Standards in the current Year 6 are average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Results in the 2005 National Curriculum tests are likely to be the highest they have been. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average and pupils are making up for the lost ground when provision was not as good. Standards in religious education and music are above average and pupils achieve very well in these subjects. Pupils achieve well in art and reach average standards. Although performance compared with similar schools in 2004 approached above average levels all value added measures were well above. Both show a good rise on the previous year.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their attitudes, behaviour and spiritual, moral social and cultural development, are very good. Attendance is good and pupils are punctual to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality of education. Teaching is very good. Pupils are often engrossed in their learning because teachers have high expectations of them. Over time teaching in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science, music and religious education is very good. Pupils with special educational needs or at an early stage of acquisition of English are supported very well in their learning. Teaching was satisfactory in a minority of lessons. In these, over-direction by the teachers resulted in opportunities being missed for pupils to fully devise lines of enquiry or undertake extended pieces of work. Thorough assessment in the Foundation Stage and many subjects helps pupils recognise their achievements and improve.

The curriculum is very good. The very well planned and balanced curriculum in the Foundation Stage ensures that pupils get off to a flying start. The key areas of literacy, numeracy and science are planned for and emphasised very well. ICT is now well used in virtually all subjects. The curricula in music and religious education are also very strong. The under-developed outside accommodation limits achievement in the Foundation Stage in children's physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. All staff are very mindful of the community they serve. They ensure that all pupils, including those who are vulnerable or who have a particular need, are very well cared for and supported. They are very vigilant in protecting pupils from dangers inside and outside the school. Few parents help in classrooms or at home because many do not have the confidence to do so. There is no parent-teachers association.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership team is very influential and very effective in its work. Performance management is acutely focused on raising standards. Management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and bilingual support is

very good. A high priority is placed on developing the skills of staff and deploying them to best effect. Statutory requirements are met. Governors are supportive of the school but do not do enough monitoring of work at first hand.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school. They respect the commitment shown by all staff and praise how well their children are taught and looked after. Pupils are happy at school, like the things they have to do, participate enthusiastically and know that their views are taken seriously. However, the inspectors judge that the school is even better than they both think.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Instil more confidence and enable more parents to be partners in their children's education.
- Develop the outdoor accommodation, especially that for the Foundation Stage.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is very good throughout the school. This is regardless of pupils' starting points, gender, ethnicity, special educational need or initial level of acquisition of speaking English. Standards are average by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6 all groups of pupils have achieved very well in reaching average standards in English and science and above average standards in mathematics from low standards on entry.
- Standards in music and religious education are above average and pupils achieve very well.
- Achievement has been rapidly rising and is now very good.
- Children get off to a flying start in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of speaking English achieve very well because of the very effective support they receive.

Commentary

1. Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking into account their progress and capability. The key reasons why achievement is now very good and rising are that:
 - provision in the nursery and reception classes now ensures a very strong start;
 - teaching is much improved and is consistently very good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science;
 - pupils are cared for very well, nurtured and their progress is tracked very well;

- increased and very good support for pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language is having a very effective impact; and
- the annual performance targets of staff have been very effectively focused on raising standards, especially in English, mathematics and science.

2. Many younger children start in the nursery class. A high proportion, although confident in their home language for their age, speak very few words of English. In addition, many are unused to socialising with other children. Consequently, many have considerable ground to catch up. Children become engrossed in their learning from the very start and relish being at school. They achieve very well by reaching standards which approach below average levels in all areas of learning. This is because of the very good ethos for learning which has been established in the nursery and reception classes, the generally very good teaching and a very stimulating curriculum. However, the limited outside accommodation has a negative impact on standards in physical development and in acquiring an understanding of the physical world.

The tables shown in this section give average point scores for pupils. Each level in the National Curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term. So, if a school's points are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.0 (15.3)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.5 (14.7)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.3 (16.0)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Results in the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 2 have been rising in line with the national trend. Most improvement has been made in reading and writing because the teachers have focused on these areas. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were below average in reading, average in writing and well below average in mathematics. They were not as good as in 2003. This was because more pupils than normal joined the school during the course of the year and had ground to make up.
4. Pupils are now achieving very well in the current Year 2 in terms of the standards reached at the end of the reception class and their capabilities. Very good teaching and bilingual support are paying off. Standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. They are also average in science, ICT and religious education.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (25.5)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.3 (26.2)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.6 (27.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. Results have improved in the last three years in the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 6. They have risen from being below average in 2002 to just below average in

2004. Improvement has been most marked in science because of the raised profile of the subject, better training, and a very good focus on language development and scientific enquiry. Much of the improvement in English and mathematics can be put down all teachers realising the clear targets set for the standards to be reached in their classes. Last year, pupils did well in the national tests compared with their peers in similar schools.

6. In the current Year 6, standards and achievement show further improvement. In the core subjects of English and science, standards are average; in mathematics, they are above average. They are likely to be the highest they have been in the school in the 2005 National Curriculum tests. Standards continue to rise because these pupils have experienced more very good teaching, bilingual support and the benefits of the very good ethos which has been established. Standards in ICT are average but are also improving, as is achievement. This is because the facilities are much better, teachers are more confident in using the equipment and pupils have many more opportunities to develop and use their skills across the curriculum. Standards are above average in RE. This is because of a very good curriculum which results in pupils having a well developed understanding of other faiths. Standards in music are also above average and pupils achieve very well. This is because of the very rich curriculum experiences on offer.
7. The leadership team regularly monitors the achievement of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. This shows that over a period of time no one group does consistently better or worse than any other. The analysis also very quickly picks up any underachievement. As a result, extra support is given and this contributes to their very good achievement. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well, particularly in their acquisition of language. The individual needs of those pupils with physical, learning or behavioral difficulties are identified at an early stage and are also given timely and concentrated support. Although not all reach the expected level for their age, most make very good progress from a low starting point. A significant number achieve so well they are deemed to no longer require additional support. Pupils entering school or nursery with little or no English achieve very well and reach average standards overall by Year 6 because of the very good support they are given.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their personal development is very good. This is greatly supported by the school's very good moral, social and cultural education and good spiritual education. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Racial harmony is excellent; relationships are very good and pupils play harmoniously together.
- Children in the nursery and the reception classes thrive and rapidly gain confidence.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are consistently very good and make a significant contribution to the school's sense of purpose and their very good achievement.
- The headteacher and staff's extremely high expectations earn the trust of all pupils.
- Pupils' very strong personal qualities, including independence and maturity, enable them to take advantage of the many opportunities that the school provides.

Commentary

8. The school makes very determined efforts to focus parents on their children attending school. Most parents comply. The leadership team realises that extended overseas holidays are a potential problem. With the help of the education social work service it has reduced their impact on pupils' education. Very strong and well-understood procedures have improved attendance over the last three years, which is now above the national average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.4
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. Children in the nursery quickly settle into the extremely welcoming environment. There are very few tears on leaving their parents, and their attitudes and behaviour are often excellent. Children in the reception classes make very good progress, even when they have not had the advantage of pre-school experiences. They want to listen to their teachers and become engrossed in the many activities. Their attitudes and behaviour are consistently very good and they achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development.
10. Pupils' flying start in the nursery and reception classes is further consolidated through their very good attitudes and behaviour in Years 1 to 6. Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) staff work well together with class teachers, which acts as a good role model for the children. The school's culture of extremely high expectations quickly communicates to all pupils. They listen well to their teachers, concentrate when working alone, and are co-operative when working in pairs or groups. Even before Year 6 they have realised that hard work will bring success. They want to contribute to class discussions, despite many pupils not having English as their first language. Only one pupil has been excluded in the last five years and none in the last three.

Example of outstanding practice

Racial harmony shines out like a beacon so that pupils learn and flourish without fear.

A new visitor to the school immediately senses something special! You are made to feel welcome, no matter whom you are. There is an extremely relaxed atmosphere. Strikingly, pupils from the many ethnic backgrounds learn, relax and play safely without any unkindness or harassment. It is clear to see they value each other's differences and contributions in lessons and the many clubs and activities. Assemblies support pupils of all faiths extremely well and allow pupils to reflect on well-chosen themes. The format of assemblies has been robustly debated to ensure that they are fully inclusive and cause no offence. For example, no music is played but the drum is sometimes used and singing features strongly. If Eid, Christmas or Diwali correspond they are celebrated jointly within the school; for example, a Father Christmas may be seen with the Imam on party day. In lessons, pupils learn about and have respect for the celebrations and beliefs of other faiths through very well-balanced religious education. Regrettably, racial tensions have been reported in surrounding towns. Staff, governors and the local Imam are ensuring that the enlightenment within the Bolton community for integration, racial harmony and respect for all faiths is mirrored within their school. Remarkably, this outstanding feature has been sustained since the last inspection.

11. A very strong programme of personal, health and social education backs up the very well developed provision for spiritual, moral and cultural education. Colourful displays effectively represent the many strands of the pupils' education. The school is very successful in making pupils aware of their feelings and emotions from an early age through classroom discussions. Good quality assemblies support pupils of all faiths and allow pupils to reflect on well-chosen themes. In lessons, pupils learn about and have respect for the celebrations and beliefs of other faiths through well-balanced religious education. All pupils know the difference between right and wrong. This is because they are taught to share, trust, and be fair with each other. The school's very good ethos values each individual and strengthens their confidence and self-esteem, but within the context of friendship and teamwork. Pupils receive a very rich blend of cultural education, so that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. All pupils of diverse nationality are encouraged to have pride in their own cultural roots and traditions. They learn about the local community and aspects of British history such as the Great Fire of London, as well as appreciating art, music and theatre.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. Teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum are all very good. Additional very good features include very good care and support. Links with other schools are good but parents are not involved enough. Outside, the accommodation is unsatisfactory, in stark contrast to the lively classroom environments.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently very good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Teachers have very high expectations and pupils are often engrossed in their learning.

- Pupils with special educational needs or who are at an early stage of acquisition of English are supported very well in their learning.
- Thorough assessment helps pupils recognise their achievements and improve.
- Some opportunities are lost for pupils to show independence and use their speaking skills.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4%)	22 (45%)	17 (35%)	8 (16%)	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.

12. Teaching has improved significantly because teachers follow up the advice given after their lessons have been observed. At the last inspection it was judged satisfactory overall with fourteen per cent judged very good or excellent. The table illustrates very clearly how much more is now very good or excellent. Teaching and learning now form one of the school's key strengths and contribute strongly to the very good achievement of the pupils. Both the parents and the school judge teaching to be good. The inspectors judge it better than this. From the school's point of view this is based upon monitoring over the last two years. Since then the benefits of staff training and targets for teachers have further strengthened teaching.
13. The key reasons why teaching is so good and pupils are often engrossed in their learning are:
 - the very good relationships in classes create a supportive and calm climate for learning;
 - many lessons proceed at a very brisk pace and hold the attention of all groups of pupils;
 - pupils are encouraged to work in groups as well as concentrating on their own work;
 - teachers' very good command of their subjects enables them to teach with assurance;
 - the purpose of each lesson is made very clear to pupils and ideas are explained well;
 - tasks are often imaginative and suitable for the needs and aptitudes of each pupil;
 - there is a very good balance between direct teaching and practical tasks;
 - pupils themselves are very keen to learn and consequently very little time is lost.
14. One key reason why achievement is so much better than the last inspection is that teaching in the nursery and reception classes is now very good. Previously, it was unsatisfactory. Teachers now jointly plan very well together. This results in a very effective blend of challenging teacher-directed activities and those which the children initiate themselves. Learning is predominantly very good. However, the unsatisfactory outdoor area limits learning and achievement in children's physical development and understanding of the world.
15. Key skills in English, mathematics and science are taught to very good effect. Planning is of a consistently high quality. The teaching and learning strategies promoted through the Government's national literacy and numeracy strategies are implemented very well. In science, there is a very strong emphasis on scientific enquiry. Teachers are mindful of the need to incorporate plenty of opportunities for pupils to use speaking and listening and literacy in order to develop further their linguistic skills.
16. There are clear and systematic procedures for the identification of pupils causing concern as well as those who need support to overcome their learning or language difficulties. Support is provided right at the start of their school life; this is continued for as long as it is

needed. Each of these pupils has a clear individual learning plan, which sets out precisely what they have achieved and what they need to learn next. Teachers and support staff use these to match tasks very well to the individual learning needs of each pupil. Pupils have clear and realistic targets and so they know exactly what they are expected to learn. Support staff are well trained, teach effectively and enable pupils to work productively.

17. The EMA teacher and bilingual staff provide very effective additional support for pupils at the early stages of acquiring English. For example, the bilingual staff working with children in the nursery frequently assess pupils' progress. They make accurate notes of any English the child contributes and how well they understand the task. In the infants, the bilingual teaching assistant interprets and explains to pupils targeted for support. She reinforces the meaning so pupils understand the lesson and encourages them to participate effectively throughout. This also helps the pupils to develop their spoken English and their confidence in using it. The EMA teacher used questioning very effectively in lessons in Years 2 and 3 to extend pupils' use of English in their learning. As a result these pupils learn and achieve well.
18. Strengths in teaching and learning far outweigh any weaknesses. However, in a minority of lessons there is sometimes too much direction by the teachers. This results in opportunities being lost for pupils to devise fully their own lines of enquiry or undertake extended pieces of work. Sometimes, in class discussions, teachers do too much talking. As a result pupils tend to offer little more than brief answers. In subjects where there are more variable levels of confidence and expertise, such as art and design and design and technology, co-ordinators are on hand to provide knowledgeable support to colleagues.
19. At the time of the last inspection the systems for assessing pupils' work were not used effectively enough. This is no longer the case. Teachers now use an extensive range of methods for assessing what the pupils have learned and the progress they have made. This is particularly effective in English, mathematics and science. Teachers, and the leadership team, use data from the National Curriculum tests and from assessments to help them target any weaknesses and plan suitable work for the varying needs of the pupils. In addition, helpful portfolios of pupils' work in all subjects provide good evidence of standards achieved by the pupils in each year group against National Curriculum levels. The marking of pupils' work is thorough and consistently motivates pupils and helps them improve. At its best, it identifies their errors and suggests how they can be overcome, whilst at the same time offering encouragement and praise where appropriate.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good. Enrichment activities are good. Resources and accommodation are good overall, but the outside accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for the nursery and the reception class is very well planned and balanced.
- The external accommodation for pupils in the nursery and reception class is unsatisfactory and the playgrounds are bare and unattractive.
- The very good curriculum in English, mathematics and science underpins the very good achievement in these subjects.
- All groups of pupils enjoy the fullest opportunity and access to all the school has to offer.

Commentary

20. The very good curriculum enables children to achieve very well in all areas of learning in the nursery and reception class. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection when the curriculum for children under five was unsatisfactory. Access to secure outdoor play areas has improved but space remains limited. The school has no grassed areas and treeless expanses of tarmac in the playground do not provide inspirational surroundings for pupils. This impairs higher standards being reached in the children's physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. The school is doing its utmost to obtain adjacent land but particular complications relating to previous land use are delaying progress. Contingency plans exist to address the issues should intentions fail.
21. The key areas of literacy, numeracy and science are emphasised very well. This has resulted in the curriculum progressively developing pupils' skills and knowledge and making the learning relevant to all. Skills-based cross-curricular approaches are now beginning to enhance provision in other subjects in line with the new national Primary Strategy, and contribute to pupils' overall very good achievement. A particular improvement has been the increase in ICT resources, notably interactive whiteboards already in several classes and planned for all by next year. ICT is now well used to enhance virtually all subjects.
22. Social and educational inclusion is very well fostered. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are in the early stages of learning English receive very good support from their teachers and teaching assistants, who use their skills and experience very well. Staff ensure that all needs are identified as soon as possible so that learning can be suitably modified, often through booster and withdrawal sessions. Bilingual support helps to provide pupils with full access to their entitled curriculum. Bilingual story-telling, where the teaching assistant involves the children in the story using Gujarati and English, also makes a very effective contribution to children's understanding and enjoyment of language.
23. A good programme of additional experiences and visits complements and enriches work in the National Curriculum. Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs, especially sporting activities, although musical activities are relatively limited: there is for example no choir or instrumental tuition. Residential experiences are also not offered. Many activities take place at lunch time. This is because many pupils have commitments at the end of the school day - in particular, attendance at their religious school (Madrassah) - so the school arranges as much as it can to suit these circumstances. In consequence, over eight out of ten pupils participate regularly in at least one activity.

Care, guidance and support

The school's care and welfare of pupils is very good. Pupils are provided with very good academic support and advice. The school involves pupils well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are very vigilant in protecting pupils from dangers inside and outside the school.
- The very good care of pupils ensures that pupils enjoy school and can do their best.

- Good levels of support from outside professional agencies help tailor care to individual pupils.
- Few pupils have targets for their personal development.
- Pupils are quickly made to feel welcome but there is little additional support for older pupils, such as asylum speakers who are at an early stage of learning English.
- The school successfully listens to and acts on pupils' views.

Commentary

24. The headteacher and her staff are very mindful of the community they serve. Since the last inspection, they have improved all aspects of support, guidance and welfare. Policies and procedures are more rigorously defined and implemented. As a result all staff are very clear what to do should any problem arise. Pupils themselves say they feel safe and know who to go to if they are concerned. Child protection procedures adhere to Bolton's strong statutory guidelines. Staff are very vigilant to potential risks to children. As a result, staff are very effective in protecting children from dangers both inside and outside the school. Despite the school building having difficult access for young children, it is a safe site as evidenced by the low accident rate. The headteacher and caretaker undertake regular audits of the school premises and the school completes risk assessments for many activities. Accident procedures and fire drills are effectively implemented.
25. The school is welcoming to external professional agencies. In turn, it receives good and well-focused support. For example, the local behaviour and education support team professionals provide good support to those pupils with emotional and behavioural problems, both at home and in school. In addition, they assist the school with the transfer of vulnerable pupils to secondary school. They have initiated the playground buddy and the reception carers' scheme, as well as given guidance on healthy living.
26. Pupils' progress is tracked very well, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in English, mathematics and science. Careful records are kept of pupils' academic progress. The targeted support that is given and well thought out verbal or written targets given to pupils contribute to the very good achievement. Teachers know the language, special educational or other needs of the children in their care and as a result can give very clear guidance in lessons. If need be, extra support is given through "booster" classes or on a one-to-one basis. The leadership team and class teachers know the personal needs of pupils very well. Pupils are extremely clear that there is an adult they would go to if they are worried at school. However, in contrast to the records kept on academic progress the tracking of pupils' personal development is mostly informal and mainly relies on individual teachers' accumulated experiences with pupils. As yet, the use of individual performance targets for personal development is not as widespread as it might be.
27. Children are introduced well to school life. A few pupils, including those who are asylum seekers or refugees, come from families who are new to England. They are warmly welcomed and quickly integrated into the school family. Staff show a high level of skill and "tender loving care," which helps younger pupils with very little English to make very good progress. However, little additional support is available for those older pupils who are admitted to the school throughout the year. As a result some have difficulty in understanding lessons without support but they do well when this is provided.
28. The leadership team have developed a variety of ways of involving pupils in the work of the school. At the start of the year each class develops its own class rules. A "school

council” has been in operation for three years and this encourages pupils to apply themselves enthusiastically to putting their views into practice. The school routinely calls for pupils’ views through class teaching and personal and social education lessons.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with parents and connections with the local community. Good links with other schools have been fostered and established.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has the full confidence of parents, who respect the commitment shown by all staff.
- Although the headteacher and her staff try hard to involve all parents in their children’s education, few parents are involved in the life and work of the school.
- Information and ways of communicating with parents could be improved.
- The school has a good relationship with other primary and local secondary schools.

Commentary

29. Parents have a good opinion of the school. Their levels of satisfaction have improved since the last inspection. They show high levels of confidence in those areas that matter most, such as their children’s happiness at school and the quality of teaching. The inspection team, however, judge the school to be better than many think; it is a very good rather than a good school. The headteacher and her staff give a very high priority to the school’s relationships with parents. However, day-to-day communication between parents and their children’s teachers is more fruitful in the nursery and infant stages, where access is easier than for the junior classes which are located on the second floor.
30. A few parents take paid jobs within the school, but there are very few volunteers to help hear children read or with other activities. Parent governors serve the school well, but not all positions are filled. Unusually, there is no active parent teacher association. Despite the school’s enthusiastic efforts to date, most parents are content to be passive partners with the school. Currently the parental body do not act as positively as they might in their children’s education. There are very understandable reasons for this. Whilst a small minority of parents are apathetic to the school, some cannot help their children due to poor English language skills. Other parents are at various stages of developing their confidence in talking to the school as an equal partner in their children’s education. However, most parents are subordinate partners in the relationship, but the school does not abuse their trust and is trying hard to build their confidence and ability to help their children. Parents have signed the home-school agreement, and they are increasingly supporting the school well through their children’s attendance and punctuality. A small number of parents help their children with homework. Most parents attend for information afternoons and many school events.
31. The statutory information for parents such as the prospectus and governors’ annual report to parents contains all the information that is required. They are satisfactory in quality. However, although informative, many parents find the prospectus hard to understand because they are insufficiently fluent in English, and do not take up the offer of translation. Annual reports to parents are also satisfactory. They give informative statements of what children can do in all National Curriculum subjects and suggest future targets but few

parents comment on the reports and pupils do not contribute at all. However, most parents feel more comfortable with the verbal feedback opportunities they have with the school on their children's progress. Letters are very good in their clear and informal communication and the newsletters give an uncomplicated view of school life. The school has not yet developed a web site.

32. Parents are happy with homework and the school gives them sufficient information and feedback to monitor their children's efforts. The school is starting to take the initiative in developing parents groups in the nursery and in other classes, but is limited by the lack of an on-site parents' room. The "Sure start" share project is particularly effective in giving ethnic minority group parents information and advice on parenting skills.
33. Links with the local community are satisfactory, but do not make a significant direct contribution to the education of pupils. The school uses local places of interest well for history and geography. The Muslim Imam is a governor and an important visitor to the school. The school has good links with other schools which benefit all pupils. The behaviour and education support team has been initiated by the cluster of local schools. This gives vulnerable pupils essential support within the school as well as assisting with their transfer to secondary school. All pupils make a confident transfer, safe in the knowledge that their needs have been thoroughly reviewed and they will have the best start in their new surroundings. Links with the local secondary school have allowed pupils to enjoy sports tournaments and some co-ordinators to meet for reviews of subjects. Good links with contrasting primary schools in the town help give pupils a view of how their peers live in neighbouring areas.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management, including that of the headteacher, leadership team and most other key staff, is very good. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership team is very influential and very effective in its work.
- Performance management is acutely focused on raising standards.
- Provision for pupils with special needs and bilingual support is managed very well.
- A high priority is placed on developing the skills of staff and deploying them to best effect.
- Governors do not see or discuss enough work that goes on at first hand.

Commentary

34. The headteacher and governors decided two years ago to extend the leadership team from two to three. In this complex school, this has proved to be wise and beneficial. Their individual and joint roles have been very carefully worked out. This enables them to focus critically on what works best and what they need to improve. For example, their improved system for tracking pupils' progress now provides them with a very clear insight into the achievement of pupils from different ethnic background or need. This analysis enables them to target support to those pupils who will benefit most. In addition, teamwork is of very high quality and all staff are crystal clear about the role they have to play in driving standards up. Together they have been very successful in establishing a very good ethos

and climate for learning. The key issues in this report have already been identified by the school.

35. Leadership and management are having a very good impact on achievement because:
- nearly all co-ordinators in the Foundation Stage, National Curriculum subjects and special educational needs lead and manage their areas very well;
 - great care has been taken to ensure that all staff are given responsibility and made accountable for developments in their allocated areas;
 - annual staff reviews clearly inform the construction of the very good school development plan which enables all staff to focus on a small number of issues at any one time;
 - the relatively stable and very well-trained staff are very reflective, keen to improve and work very well together as a united team.
36. The co-ordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good because it is given high status in the school. It is characterised by a well-organised and methodical approach and a thorough knowledge of the pupils and their respective needs. Procedures are implemented consistently by teachers so that pupils make very good progress. Although employed centrally, the EMA teacher and staff are well established and integrated into life of the school. They lead their area of support very well.
37. The work of governing body is going through a period of transition. Several governors have recently joined. This has enabled them to look at ways of improving the terms of reference and effectiveness of their committee structure. The governors have ensured that all statutory requirements are met, including that of producing and implementing a race equality policy. Its performance management policy works very effectively. They have worked strenuously at ensuring that all pupils, regardless of their home background, are fully included in their learning and work in an environment free from harassment. They have a sound grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is as a result of very good information received from the headteacher and some visits to the school to see work in action at first hand. There are firm plans to strengthen this and initiate a more systematic programme of visits.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	951, 667	Balance from previous year	58,173
Total expenditure	906,962	Balance carried forward	102,878
Expenditure per pupil	2,593		

38. The school manages its resources very well. The surplus of just over £100,000 in the table gives a false impression. This is because it includes some monies received right at the end of the financial year, some that had not been reconciled and other sums that had been set aside to pay bills. The true contingency held is just over four per cent, and this is prudent. Principles of best value are effectively applied and financial control is good. The governors have a "savings" fund which is set aside to enable them to finance improvements to the outdoor accommodation. Taking into account the below average expenditure and its very good effectiveness, the school provides excellent value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

39. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Consequently, children make a flying start to their education and all groups of children achieve very well in terms of their capabilities. Very effective steps are also taken to identify the needs and support the development of the many children at an early stage of acquisition of English and others with a special educational or other need. The area is very well led and managed. Provision was unsatisfactory at the last inspection and so improvement has been excellent.
40. The children enter the nursery with well below average attainment. Many are quite young to be starting nursery. Their speaking skills, knowledge of vocabulary and social confidence are particularly poor. However, they are inducted well and enter a vibrant and very stimulating learning environment. The teacher and other adults do all they can to provide a curriculum that is matched very well to the complex needs of each group of children. They are quickly made to feel very secure and soon become engrossed in their learning. This high quality provision continues in the reception classes. During the inspection the children were learning “All about me” and what babies need.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning and teaching are very good in all classes and ensure pupils achieve very well.
- Children settle in to the nursery very quickly.
- Behaviour is very good and children work in a calm and responsible manner.
- Confidence and independence is developed very well from the very start.

Commentary

41. There are several reasons why children quickly feel comfortable with coming to the nursery. A parent toddler group has been established which helps very young children experience the surroundings well before they might join the nursery. A new intake meeting, an open afternoon for children from other nurseries and notice boards helps to keep parents very well informed. Parents are included in the settling-in process and are encouraged to play with their children in their first few weeks in their new environment. A community nurse visits once per week to meet with parents and advise them on any matters that worry them.
42. The teachers and other adults are very caring. They set excellent role models for the children and plan high quality activities to develop children’s personal, social and emotional skills. Consequently, children quickly learn to play together in the nursery without squabbling, although at the start many prefer working on their own. By the time they are in the reception classes they work readily in different friendship groups. Racial

harmony is promoted and expected as the norm. Staff use circle time and snack time to teach children to say "Please" and "Thank you." Children are very polite and welcoming to visitors. Many develop the confidence to start conversations and their self-worth improves considerably over time.

43. When they start in the nursery, children seldom stay at activities for very long. However, the imaginative and exciting activities and consistent approach provided by the staff ensure that children are regularly engrossed in their work. They learn to make decisions for themselves when they choose which activities to pursue. In both the nursery and reception classrooms, carefully resourced areas have been set up which encourage children to choose the activities which interest them.
44. Children achieve very well in terms of their capabilities and are likely to approach below average standards in this area of learning by the end of the reception classes.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in this area of learning because of the very good teaching.
- Children at an early stage of acquisition of English are supported very well.
- Every opportunity is taken to develop the children's language skills.
- Early reading and writing skills are developed very well.

Commentary

45. Although many children enter school with reasonable skills in their home language, many are at a very early stage in learning to speak English. The support given to them has been improved to a very good level since the last inspection. The language needs of each child are very carefully identified and they are given regular support by a bilingual support teacher and nursery nurse. They spoke fluent Urdu and Gujarati. They supported the work of children in their home language and encouraged them to learn some new words in English and to start speaking in simple English sentences. Standards are likely to be a little higher than well below average levels at the end of the reception classes.
46. Speaking and listening are given a very high priority in the curriculum. Meaningful talk is encouraged in all areas of learning. For example, in role play in the nursery children talked about nappies and dummies whilst in the baby clinic in the reception children discussed the need to keep babies clean and to weigh them to see how well they are growing. In one reception class the children discussed words which rhymed with wall. One said, "Ball and fall do". Another replied, "A tall, wall". Whilst another said, "It rhymes!" Children are encouraged to start conversations. For example, in circle time one girl had just had a birthday party and she was very keen to tell others about the "cake and balloons".
47. Well-labelled and well-resourced reading and writing areas have been set up in all classrooms. In the nursery, children learn that writing carries meaning when they register themselves each morning. By the end of the reception year, higher and a few average attaining children are starting to write in simple sentences. However, there are still many average, lower attaining children and those with special educational needs who cannot yet write all the letter shapes correctly. Nursery children talk about their favourite books

and some are starting to turn pages in the correct order; in the reception classes, children are heard to read regularly and talked to each other, saying “The book is upside down”, “No it’s not. It’s back to front”. The books on offer reflect the different home backgrounds of the children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in this area of learning because of the very good teaching and are likely to approach below average standards by the end of the reception classes.
- Teachers have a very clear idea of what each child can do and use this information very well.
- Very good links have been developed with other areas of learning.
- Learning in classrooms is very effective but the use of the outdoor area is much more limited.

Commentary

48. Teachers have very effective ways of finding out what each child can and cannot do in this area of learning. For example, they systematically observe children in their learning and note down what has been achieved. Their joint planning takes this into account and as a result very challenging activities are on offer everyday.
49. Other areas of learning are used very well to promote mathematical language and skills. For example, the use of the sand and water areas helps the children in their understanding of measure. In the nursery, children start to learn a range of number rhymes and songs. In the reception class they work out how many children need snacks.
50. Plentiful opportunities are provided every day for the children to develop their mathematical skills and ideas in each classroom. For example, children in the reception classes learnt about the ideas of “tall and short” and used this language whilst measuring each other’s height, looking for objects in the classrooms that were shorter or taller than them and using play dough to make short and tall people. Both number areas and role play areas are very well used and are also popular choices in learning. In contrast the outdoor areas are used less frequently. Even so, the nursery children use the steps to count their way into school and occasionally hop scotch mats and relay races enliven children’s learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well overall in this area of learning because of the good teaching.
- The underdeveloped outdoor environment limits investigations of the natural world.
- Plentiful outside visits and very regular access to ICT equipment enrich the curriculum.
- Very good attention is paid to raising the children’s awareness of different cultures.

Commentary

51. A good variety of interesting activities in the classrooms stimulate children's curiosity. In the reception they were enthralled when a mother brought in her baby for them to see. Children in reception developed a sense of old and new when they looked at photographs of themselves when they were babies. Children used a range of materials, scissors and glue spreaders to make different baby rattles. Over the course of the year children explore plants and grow beans. However, the outside environment is bleak and barren. It has no features such as planting tubs, bird boxes, plant life, shrubs or trees, although children do look at shadows and how water seems to disappear after it has rained. These weaknesses impair learning.
52. Teachers introduce children to computers and other ICT equipment from the very start. Computers are always on and chosen frequently in learning. Each morning the children use a large, interactive, computer screen to write their names whilst those in the nursery used this to record their favourite learning areas. During the term children use remote control toys, cassette recorders and digital cameras. Many cultures are represented in each class. In the reception class children were taught how Christians celebrate harvest. Plans show that very good attention is paid to children learning about Eid, Divali, Christmas and other festivals. By the end of the reception classes standards are likely to be below average, although the children do particularly well in their ICT work and gaining knowledge of other cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good gains in their learning and achieve well overall in this area of learning.
- The under-developed outdoor environment limits achievement.
- Children make very good progress in developing their fine motor skills.

Commentary

53. Teaching and learning are good. Children develop an awareness of a healthy lifestyle when they drink milk each day and have healthy snacks. Children are given many opportunities to develop fine finger skills. Nursery children roll and shape dough. They pour sand into bottles. Children use pencils, scissors and brushes to create pictures. They control a computer mouse very well to select items from the screen.
54. There is a very good hall, with plenty of equipment, which the reception children use each week. In a well-organised lesson seen, with plenty of variety, good teaching encouraged the children to move spontaneously and jump in and out of hoops in different ways. Most followed instructions well and worked safely, even though some were over-excited about using hoops for the first time. Reception children learnt to ride and control large wheeled toys during playtimes. In contrast the outdoor environment is very limited. There has been some investment in bicycles and some climbing frames. However, there is no soft flooring. The area is also too small to promote small children running around. Because

the outdoor area is insufficiently used in this area of learning, achievement is good rather than very good. Standards are likely to be below average by the end of the reception classes.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although children achieve very well in all classes, standards are likely to be below average by the end of the reception classes.
- Role play is very well resourced and actively sought by children in their learning.
- A wide range of visitors enrich the curriculum very well.

Commentary

55. Teaching is very good in both the nursery and reception classes. A very good range of play and activity areas stimulate children's imagination. Nursery children set up an estate agents and talked and imagined what it is like to move house. In the reception classes, children held long and detailed conversations with imaginary callers into the baby clinic. Children paint pictures, make collages, models and draw. The nursery children have sewn with threads and wool. Nursery children really enjoyed and joined in singing a range of songs, very ably accompanied on the piano by a former teacher at the school. The reception children learned the sounds of different musical instruments they could shake and enjoyed singing their favourite songs such as "Twinkle, twinkle little star" and "I am the music man". Artists from the community have been very regular visitors and have helped with music, art and drama. A puppeteer who helped to develop children's listening skills and imagination was enjoyed by all.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good so all groups of pupils achieve very well.
- There are very effective systems for assessing pupils and tracking their progress.
- Speaking and listening are emphasised well but questioning is sometimes too narrow.
- Pupils write well but have too few opportunities to regularly write at length.
- The subject is well led and managed and literacy is promoted well throughout the curriculum.

Commentary

56. When they enter the school pupils' standards in literacy are well below average. The vast majority have very limited skills in speaking and listening because they are at an early stage of learning English, which is for them an additional language. This hinders their progress in learning to read and write as they are still developing their vocabulary and mastering the complexities of speech. Thanks to teaching which consistently meets their needs, pupils throughout the school make rapid gains. In Years 1 and 2, they develop confidence in speaking. By Year 2 most have laid down the foundations of reading and are writing independently. In Years 3 to 6 pupils build on their early achievements very well. National Curriculum test results in 2003 were well below average, representing satisfactory achievement. A higher proportion of pupils reached level 4 in 2004 but the increasing complexity of the language still presents a challenge for many, so relatively few reach level 5. Currently standards are broadly average by Year 6. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average.
57. Basic skills are taught very well because teachers are expert in making literacy hours interesting and lively. They know their pupils very well, which means that they pitch tasks at the right level. As a result, pupils concentrate very well and are keen to learn. Teachers use a good variety of effective strategies. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the teacher introduced large dice with vowel sounds on each face. At each throw, pupils eagerly wrote down on their whiteboards a list of words containing the chosen sound, building up vocabulary with delight.
58. The school carefully tracks the progress of all pupils so that those with special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English achieve as well as their classmates. Classroom assistants work in close partnership with teachers and make a valuable contribution to learning because they know exactly what to do in each lesson. Pupils benefit greatly from the increased attention they get in small 'booster' groups. Bilingual support teachers and classroom assistants are very effective in helping pupils with limited English play a full part in lessons and learn very well. Targets are shared with pupils of all abilities. Marking is very thorough and sensitive, providing plenty of encouragement and also indications of how to improve.
59. Continuing efforts to develop speaking and listening skills form a key feature of most lessons. Role-play, puppetry and 'talking partners' have all successfully encouraged

conversation amongst pupils. They are paying dividends in pupils' increasing confidence and accuracy. Most lessons begin with an enthusiastic question and answer session where teachers skilfully bring out thoughtful responses from pupils. Just occasionally questioning does not probe enough, limiting pupils' opportunities to respond at length. In a small minority of lessons the teaching fails to draw all pupils into the discussion so some pupils, often girls, listen passively but contribute little.

60. Writing remains a priority for development. Pupils write for a variety of purposes ranging from practical instructions to imaginative poems. More formal spelling and grammar activities reinforce correct usage. There is some evidence of imaginative narrative writing. For example, one pupil wrote, "As night began to fall a girl who had long, tatty hair fell asleep in the damp, dirty back streets". However, in general, opportunities for writing at length, particularly after independent research, are more limited - particularly in Years 3 to 6.
61. The consistent teaching owes much to the well-organised and very effective subject co-ordinators. Thanks to regular monitoring of teaching and learning and detailed analyses of pupils' work and assessment results they know the strengths and areas for improvement in the subject. They have a clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards further, presented in a coherent and manageable development plan which influences all subjects.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. A strength of the school is the way in which literacy is woven into most subjects. This is helping to raise standards. Key vocabulary is emphasised in virtually all lessons, helping pupils to communicate accurately. Discussions are frequent, supporting speaking and listening. Pupils develop their skills in reading and writing through relevant and interesting tasks. This regularly includes word-processing. In history and geography for example pupils write descriptions of school visits. In religious education pupils in Year 4 wrote about the festival of Eid, making comparisons and contrasts with other celebrations they knew. Pupils in Year 6 as part of their work in personal and social education wrote mature and reflective accounts of their hopes for the future, learning to organise their ideas and present them in a way which suited their audience.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are broadly average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. This means that pupils achieve very well over their time in school.
- Teaching and learning are very good; at times they are outstanding.
- Very good subject management ensures that all pupils have work which meets their needs.
- Numeracy is reinforced well across the curriculum.

Commentary

63. Pupils' mathematical skills are well below average when they arrive at the school, but improve rapidly. This very good rate of improvement is sustained throughout all years so that all groups of pupils do much better than might reasonably be expected. National Curriculum assessments for 2003 showed the standards of pupils in Year 2 to be below average and those in Year 6 broadly average, suggesting good rather than very good achievement. Current pupils are doing better. For example pupils in Year 2 perform simple calculations, sort common shapes, use tally and bar charts to a broadly typical standard. A high proportion of pupils in Year 6 are reaching level 5 as they develop their own strategies to solve, for example, problems involving fractions and percentages, with but often without calculators because their mental skills are developing so well. This confirms a very good improvement since the last inspection, when pupils reached broadly average standards by the time they left the school but were judged to have been only below, not well below them on entry.
64. This rise is principally because teaching and learning are very well focused. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. As a result, pupils work very productively. Teachers plan very effectively, adapting the National Numeracy Strategy to fit the school. A key strength is the way in which tasks are made relevant to life. For example, the well-known 17½ per cent VAT was prominent in Year 6 percentage problems so pupils saw the practical value of the classroom activity and worked with enthusiasm. Tasks are interesting, varied and closely matched to pupils' ability, enabling all groups to participate fully in lessons and use their time very well. Teaching assistants are very well briefed. They frequently employ the same probing style of questioning as their teacher colleagues. This helps pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language to achieve as well as everyone else. One pupil who spoke hardly any English arrived too recently for full support arrangements to have been made so word problems were too daunting. In general, explanations and necessary vocabulary are made very clear so limitations in language do not form huge barriers to the development of number skills. All pupils receive clear feedback from regular discussion in lessons and constructive marking and comments made by teachers in their books so they know how well they are doing and what to do next.

Example of outstanding practice

In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, excellent teaching significantly developed pupils' skills in calculating and measuring perimeters.

It was clear to see from the very start that the teacher had a masterful grasp of the subject. She very skilfully presented the tasks to the pupils, linking these to what they had learnt in previous lessons. But not only this; she identified the very comprehensive links that had been made with other subjects. This reminded pupils how much they already knew, set the tone and gave them great confidence. Her high quality instructional teaching was complemented by an almost constant interaction which helped probe the limits of pupils' abilities. Questions were deliberately targeted to pupils of differing needs so that not one felt they were not included. All pupils were aware that they were active learners and were expected to, and did, take part. An excellent pace to the lesson was sustained throughout. Her insistence on them using the correct technical language and explaining their reasoning before the whole class made them quickly master the processes required through sharply focused thinking. This included explaining the effects of using the *wrong* strategies too. The extremely positive relationships in the class resulted in pupils improving their calculation skills very efficiently. They worked with relish through an increasingly difficult range of practical examples.

65. The school has monitored teaching and pupils' work and has analysed the outcomes of statutory and non-statutory tests thoroughly. The tracking of pupils' achievement is very good and helps give teachers a more precise grasp of how well groups and individuals

are doing in order, for example, to implement booster programs where needed. This analytical approach underpins very effective development planning and has resulted in the current whole-school emphasis on mental mathematics that is driving up standards. Assessments are generally accurate but there is, for example, no portfolio of standardised work to make certain all teachers have access to a secure guide to consistency.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Numeracy is well developed across the curriculum and the school is increasingly identifying areas where mathematics can contribute further to learning in other subjects and vice versa. Graph work in science, symmetry in art, measurements of many kinds in geography and design and technology, and calculations using spreadsheets in ICT are only some among many examples of the development of mathematical skills throughout pupils' studies. New interactive whiteboards help teachers bring ICT more effectively into mathematics lessons and relevant programs allow pupils regularly to work in turn at computers in classrooms to enhance their skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All groups of pupils are achieving very well as a consequence of very good teaching throughout the school and a very good curriculum.
- A very good range of enrichment activities helps add zest and relevance to pupils' learning.
- There are very good foci on developing scientific literacy and enquiry.
- The subject is jointly led and managed very well with well-phased plans for development.

Commentary

67. Improvement has been very good since the last inspection. This is because a much higher priority is given to the subject, teachers have had high quality training on how to plan and teach the skills of scientific enquiry, and a very strong emphasis is given to developing those language skills which pupils needed to succeed in science. The curriculum, leadership, methods of assessment and teachers' knowledge of science are also very much improved.
68. Standards were in the bottom five per cent of schools at the last inspection. They had been falling. Achievement was unsatisfactory. Throughout the school pupils were not doing as well as they should. Standards in the current Year 2 are average. This represents very good achievement in terms of their capabilities from just below average standards at the start of Year 1. Standards are also average in the current Year 6. Here, achievement is also very good as standards were well below average four years ago. Compared with the last inspection, pupils are now around five terms ahead of where they were by the time they leave the school. The number of pupils reaching higher levels is substantially improved.
69. One of the key reasons why pupils do so very well is that the development of pupils' scientific literacy is at the heart of learning. This is very important considering the high numbers who develop their fluency in English as they move through the school. The development of scientific vocabulary, explanations, predictions and descriptions is given a high priority. This pays great dividends and by Year 6 most pupils can attempt these well, mostly at an average level. Fewer can write or talk with higher precision about the reliability, significance and validity of their data or give a scientific reason behind their predictions.
70. Teachers have a very clear idea of what pupils will learn in each year. As a result they plan activities at a challenging level to suit pupils with different levels of attainment. Each area of the science curriculum is covered very well, unlike at the last inspection where coverage was uneven and patchy. Many wider opportunities are taken to enrich the curriculum. For example, younger children look at "mini-beasts" in the playground and study habitats in the local park whilst all pupils have visited the Bolton Museum to look at the natural history gallery. A very successful science week was held in which pupils throughout the school worked on a wide range of investigations and parents were encouraged to view these.
71. Teaching is very good because all groups of pupils are regularly engrossed in pursuing and improving their own lines of scientific enquiry. For example, in a Year 3/4 class pupils investigated what would happen when toy cars were propelled by elastic bands held in a U-shaped catapult. They came up with very good ideas such as, "We need something to measure how far the car goes", and, "It is better to do the test on the floor as the cars are

going a long way". In Year 6, nearly all pupils are proficient in accurately identifying the factors they need to keep the same, change and measure in investigations. The class came up with a variety of investigations about dissolving such as, "Do different kinds of sugar dissolve at different rates?" and, "Does the temperature of water affect how quickly the sugar dissolves?" Pupils work very well in lessons and say, "We love doing science".

72. The very effective joint co-ordinators have had a very positive impact on provision and standards and teachers' confidence. Their monitoring and evaluation of standards and teaching are rigorous and incisive. This leads to concerted action by all staff to drive standards higher. There is a very good action plan for the subject. Their promotion of high expectations for learning has been helped by them acting decisively on the views of pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards, teaching and learning are improving thanks to increased resources.
- The curriculum is well planned and all aspects of learning are covered effectively.
- The subject is well led and managed and consequently standards are improving.
- ICT features well in most subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

73. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. At the last inspection, standards were below average by Year 6. Pupils did not reach the standards they ought to have done. Pupils are now reaching average standards by Years 2 and 6 and are achieving well in all years. Standards are not higher by the time pupils leave school because older pupils did not have access earlier to the good quality resources they enjoy now.
74. The subject has improved much in the past three years. Achievement has improved because the subject is now better resourced. The key to progress has been the development of an ICT suite and more recently the purchase of interactive whiteboards. Training and support from the co-ordinator have ensured that teachers are gaining confidence in using ICT throughout the curriculum and for their own preparation and administrative tasks. ICT skills are taught weekly to each class and ICT is regularly used in other subjects.
75. Over time, all groups of pupils undertake tasks which cover all strands of the curriculum. For example, they use word-processors, databases and spreadsheets in their learning. The lack of spreadsheet use was a shortcoming identified at the last inspection but this has now been rectified. Younger pupils use software to control such as floor robots; older pupils use sensors to monitor the physical environment and data-loggers to record and evaluate their findings. ICT is used well to provide support for lower attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and those for who English is an additional language. E-mail is used regularly, pupils in Year 3 for example being able to add attachments. The use of computers at home, however, is limited so pupils lack what has become in many schools a common support to learning: in a typical class surveyed, six out of ten pupils

had no access to a computer outside school. The school makes equipment available at lunchtime to help compensate for this. Portfolios of evidence show good curriculum coverage; the use of digital imagery, Internet research and multi-media presentations in the work of older pupils shows that they are fast making up for their missed opportunities.

76. Teaching and learning are good in all years. In lessons observed there were strengths in teachers' subject knowledge, planning and linking with other subjects. A very good lesson for Year 2 blended the importing of graphics and aspects of numeracy with word-processing and instructional writing to share a recipe for "Crispy Cakes". Pupils worked very well in mixed-ability pairs. They co-operated so well it was hard to tell who was the higher or the lower attaining pupil. This was because the teacher's questions and feedback to individuals were so effectively targeted. Where teaching was less effective the pitch of challenge was over-cautious and did not stimulate pupils to reach their highest levels.
77. Leadership and management of the subject are good. A lot has been accomplished in the last two years, including a successful bid for ICTiS funding. The way forward is clear: a bank of 16 wireless laptops and ancillary equipment awaits delivery; more interactive whiteboards are due to arrive but the current budgetary position means that all classrooms cannot be equipped until the next financial year; a new computerised and more sharply defined assessment system is in preparation but is not up and running.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. Good use is made of ICT across the curriculum. Word-processing is prominent in extended writing, posters and displays, for example, in English and history. Data-handling and the development of number skills are supported through mathematics software. Computer-aided design software gives Y5 pupils better insights into possibilities and limitations when finding their ideal home. In science, for example, pupils use equipment to gather and record data on sound in their investigations in Year 6 on sound. Pupils undertake effective research using CD-ROM and the Internet for subjects such as history and geography, for example in work on the Victorian era. Software is available to help even the youngest pupils in their artwork.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. Work in history and geography was sampled.

79. **Geography** is emphasised well. The curriculum is thoughtfully planned so that units of study last for at least half a term. Consequently topics are studied in some depth, which leads to a good level of knowledge and understanding. A key feature of the provision is the emphasis that is given to practical activities and field work, for example pupils developed their understanding of rivers when they visited the local river to undertake practical and investigative activities. Samples of work show that a strength in the teaching is the way links are made between geography and other subjects so that learning is coherent. For example, pupils studying India in geography have also learnt about Hinduism as part of their religious education. Indian dance is promoted in physical education and they have used their skills in numeracy to make graphs about the climate in

India. Staff have benefited from recent training in the subject, which has increased their confidence.

80. In **history** pupils benefit from an interesting range of activities that widen their knowledge and understanding in the subject. The curriculum is well planned. Consequently, there is a good balance between the acquisition of information and the development of skills such as chronology and the ability to observe similarities and differences between the past and present. Discussion with pupils reveals they also have a good body of knowledge. For example, pupils studying World War 2 have a sound understanding of the need for rationing and how it affected people at that time. Teachers make good use of historical artefacts and visits to historical sites to bring the subject alive for pupils. There is a good emphasis on practical activities and first-hand experience such as the popular Victorian day. Speaking and listening are promoted well through activities such as role-play and pupils also benefit from plenty of good opportunities to write for a range of worthwhile purposes. The subject makes a good contribution to the cultural and social development of the pupils.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn much *from* religion as well as *about* a range of faiths through a very good curriculum.
- They learn to explain their own values and beliefs clearly and courteously in terms of their own experiences.
- Teaching is very good.
- Assessment procedures are developing well.

Commentary

81. Pupils in Year 2 reach the expectations of the Bolton Agreed Syllabus, as they did during the previous inspection. Scrutiny of available work, observation of lessons, and particularly discussions with a representative group of pupils of all abilities indicate that by Year 6 they exceed expectations. This demonstrates very good achievement over their time in school in terms of their capabilities and because their attainment on entry is well below average. It also shows that there has been a good improvement since the last inspection, when pupils in Year 6 met the syllabus expectations.
82. The school has interpreted the agreed syllabus very well, producing a comprehensive scheme of work divided into clear and manageable units which build up steadily to provide pupils with a wide-ranging and quite detailed body of knowledge about Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam. A careful balance is kept between the two attainment targets of learning about and from religion, and this is a major factor in explaining pupils' achievement. Discussion is a major feature but pupils undertake a variety of tasks and have opportunities both to write and to word-process appropriate accounts. This too is an improvement since the last inspection.
83. Lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to good, but outcomes indicate that teaching and learning in the longer term must more usually be very good. A notable feature of

learning is the way in which pupils develop confidence in explaining what they believe, with due regard for other views and practices. Year 6 pupils recalled in much detail what they had learned about Ghandi, Mother Teresa, and Martin Luther King and how their beliefs had influenced their lives. Muslim pupils, for example, identified features which they too could appreciate in the lives of non-Muslims, maturely referring to the need to have direction in life, making efforts to do good and not wandering aimless and selfishly. One girl recited a lengthy part of Martin Luther King's famous speech and movingly explained what that condemnation of prejudice meant to her. Of the small number of lessons observed, some were in fact not taken by the usual class teachers. In consequence teachers did not always know individual needs well enough to match tasks as closely or to give every opportunity for pupils to consider things for themselves.

84. Leadership is very good. The headteacher in her role as co-ordinator supports and influences staff in the teaching of the subject through advice, organising a good range of resources and arranging appropriate training. There are few visits to places of worship but strong links are developing with the local mosque, whose Imam has visited the school to share Eid celebrations with pupils. Thanks to new ICT resources pupils will in future be able to make "virtual" visits to a variety of churches, synagogues and temples. Assessment procedures currently follow the broad statements of outcome in the agreed syllabus but the school is exploring a more precise system of levels following those of National Curriculum subjects in order to provide more detailed support to teaching and learning and help raise standards even higher.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and music are reported on in full. Design and technology and physical education were sampled.

85. In **design and technology** pupils are introduced to an interesting and challenging range of topics and projects during their time in the school. The school has adopted national guidance as a framework for the curriculum, and this has been modified appropriately to meet the needs of the pupils. A good emphasis is placed on the design process and pupils throughout the school have good opportunities to develop their skills in practical application when they design and make such items as bird tables and musical instruments. Teachers make good links with other subjects - notably science and mathematics - when possible, so that learning is relevant. Literacy, too, features well in many lessons. The pupils enjoy the practical nature of their lessons and are creative and imaginative with their designs.
86. In **physical education** standards in dance observed in a Year 1 lesson were broadly average. Teaching and learning were good. As in all lessons, the teacher made sure that pupils warmed up properly. Her subject knowledge was good as she demonstrated routines and asked probing questions to make pupils think hard about what they were doing to develop their imagination. This ensured that they achieved very well since pupils' physical development is well below average on entry to the school. The teacher's subject knowledge was also good in a gymnastics lesson for Year 6 but there was little opportunity for pupils to discuss amongst themselves what was working well and what could work better to help them see how they could improve upon their average standards. Plans and photographs show that pupils undertake a good range of activities within and beyond the normal curriculum.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and effectively develop their skills over time.
- A good curriculum with plenty of variety helps add interest to learning.
- There is a good emphasis on painting and drawing but less attention is given to 3D work.
- Teaching, although good overall, has some inconsistencies.

Commentary

87. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The pupils are now doing better and build well on their below average skills on entry and their limited experiences at home. Standards are average by Years 2 and 6. This is because the subject has been given more emphasis and there has been an increased focus recently on the development of skills in art. These are impacting well on the standards and quality of work.
88. Pupils learn from an early age how to mix and apply paint correctly and how to use pastels to best effect. Observational drawing shows a developing understanding of perspective and proportion with an increasing attention to fine detail as pupils grow older. Sketchbooks are used by pupils with increasing effectiveness to practise their skills and explore techniques. Work is generally mounted and displayed beautifully to celebrate pupils' achievements and to illustrate what they have learned. However, insufficient 3D work has been attempted.
89. Throughout their time in school pupils experience a good range of different techniques and types of art because the curriculum is well planned. It has been well adapted to suit the needs and interests of the pupils and is well resourced. Pupils encounter a good range of different techniques and skills as they grow older. For example, in Year 2 pupils produced well-observed pastel drawings of flowers using a smudging effect to soften the lines. Art is used well as a vehicle to illustrate work covered in other subjects and also to promote other cultures. For example, pupils in Year 4 created pictures of places of worship as part of their topic about celebrations. Visiting artists further enhance the art curriculum by working alongside pupils on extended projects. In one such project the pupils produced sculptures of good quality, using plaster of Paris and armatures. ICT is used well.
90. A thorough scrutiny of retained work confirms that, over time, teaching and learning are good overall but stronger earlier on in the school. Many of the good lessons are taken by the co-ordinator, who has a well-developed knowledge of art techniques and how to apply them. This arrangement is working well in improving the standards of work in the school and creating a good level of continuity between year groups. Lessons are well planned to build on past experiences and there is a good emphasis use of correct vocabulary. Much teaching demonstrates clearly how different media, such as pastels, should be applied, but also provides good opportunities for pupils to experiment with different effects. In contrast, where pupils work under the guidance of less experienced teachers their work sometimes lacks refinement and precision. This is often because teachers lack the expertise in identifying what needs to be done to bring about improvement. For example, some of the painting on display in the school lacks maturity because the pupils have not

been encouraged to apply paint correctly in even brushstrokes or to blend the colours in a colourwash. There are times when teachers select inappropriate media to create pictures, such as coloured pencils for portraits when pastels would give more versatility and subtlety of shading.

91. The co-ordinator monitors work carefully, ensures teachers have the materials they need and puts on training to help raise the confidence and skills of teachers. There is a sound action plan for the subject. However, leadership and management are satisfactory rather than good because more inroads could have been made into helping some teachers improve their teaching and promoting more 3D work.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well from a low starting point because teaching is consistently very good.
- The subject is very effectively led and managed and supported by very good resources.
- Good opportunities are provided for speaking and listening and for collaborative work.
- The very good curriculum is widened by interesting extra-curricular activities.

Commentary

92. At the time of the last inspection standards were average. Since then, however, the school has worked hard to raise the profile of the subject. Pupils are now achieving very well in relation to their limited skills when they first join the school and reach above average standards by Year 6. Consequently, there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Throughout the school pupils sing tunefully and rhythmically, following an accompaniment well. They sing with enthusiasm from a memorised repertoire. Older pupils have a secure understanding of musical notation and can read and clap the rhythms of simple phrases and they use their knowledge in their own compositions.
93. A key reason why pupils do so very well is that all nearly all classes are taught by the same enthusiastic and skilful teacher. Teaching is consistently very good; lessons are enjoyable, varied and proceed at a very brisk rate. Because the lessons are all taken by the same teacher each lesson is matched very well to the needs of each year group and so builds smoothly on prior knowledge and understanding in the school. One of the main characteristics of the lessons is the way in which the teacher expects quality and accuracy and that all pupils to give of their best and work hard. They do! Because of the very good knowledge of the subject the teacher is able to help pupils to improve their performance with timely suggestions and advice, for example, about the correct way to breathe when singing. Each lesson is planned with great precision and moves along briskly so there is no time for pupils to become bored or restless. The teacher is entirely clear about what is to be achieved. Pupils develop several skills in each lesson because there is plenty of variety in the activities.
94. A very good range of attractive musical instruments that are tempting to the pupils supports the teaching. They are in new condition, colourful and representative of many

cultures. Pupils are used to handling the instruments and know the correct way to play them, and this is reflected in the quality of their compositions and performance.

95. There are good curricular opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in speaking and listening and social skills when they work in groups on musical composition. They are encouraged to use correct musical vocabulary such as 'timbre' and 'tempo'. The teaching emphasises the need for all pupils to be included in group work and reminds groups not to block out the shyer members. As a result, there are good levels of discussion and collaboration, especially with older pupils, and they are confident to play their music to the rest of the class. Several additional enriching features enhance the provision. Pupils learn songs from a range of ethnic cultures in their original languages, thus celebrating the diversity in the school. Some of the pupils learn to play recorders in a lunch time club and there is an after-school drumming club provided by the local education authority. During the course of a year several visiting musicians perform different types of music for pupils to enjoy and some of the older pupils join with singers from other local schools for an annual 'Sing Day,' which culminates in a public concert.
96. The co-ordinator is very proactive and dedicated to ensuring the highest possible standards. She is very reflective about her work and has a very incisive understanding of what works best and the small number of areas that need further development, such as the need to monitor provision earlier on in the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

This area was sampled.

97. This area is very well planned and coordinated. Much development has taken place since the last inspection to improve the curriculum, for example through the introduction of "circle time". Time is regularly allocated in class to teach an appropriate programme of topics relevant to the age and maturity of the pupils. In a very good Year 2 lesson pupils were encouraged to talk about their own feelings and those of others. The teacher showed high expectations through the use of drama followed by perceptive questions which transformed pupils' initial impressions and confirmed to them that it was, in fact, acceptable and even desirable to cry in certain circumstances. They learned a lot about handling negative feelings and gained confidence in expressing themselves. All staff take care to ensure that all pupils feel they matter individually. They are encouraged to take part in assemblies and help around the school, cultivating a spirit of co-operation and mutual care. These and the very good role models and high expectations set by adults help promote very good social skills and maturity.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	1

Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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

