

INSPECTION REPORT

FAIRFIELD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bury, Lancashire

LEA area: Bury

Unique reference number: 105287

Headteacher: Mr C Ashley

Lead inspector: Ian Hocking

Dates of inspection: 23-25 May 2005

Inspection number: 266809

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	253
School address:	Rochdale Old Road Bury Lancashire
Postcode:	BL9 7 SD
Telephone number:	0161 764 1559
Fax number:	0161 253 6789
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Miller
Date of previous inspection:	5 July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Fairfield Community Primary School is on the eastern side of Bury about two miles from the town centre. Most of the pupils come from a large estate of local authority owned homes or from privately or rented homes close to the school. There are 253 pupils on roll, which is more than many other primary schools. Year groups vary in number and this affects class sizes. In most year groups there are more boys than girls.

Thirty-four children attend either the morning or afternoon session in the Nursery. Children start school in the September following their fourth birthday, on a full-time basis over a period of two weeks. On entry to school most pupils have had pre-school experience and many attended the school Nursery. Attainment on entry varies considerably but is generally below average, especially in communication, language and literacy. The boys' attainment is often lower than that of the girls. When they begin school, only a small number of children show well-developed skills in reading, writing and number, as well as maturity in social skills. Speaking and listening skills are well below average for many pupils when they begin in the Nursery.

Twenty-five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is about the national average. Twenty pupils are from ethnic minority homes; eleven speak English as an additional language, which is higher than in most schools. Four pupils are in public care.

The school experiences a significant level of pupil mobility. For example, in the school year 2003/4 eight of the fourteen arrivals had special educational needs. There are 52 pupils (23 per cent) with special educational needs, which is higher than the national average. Seven pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is also above the national average. Only one of these pupils began in this school, the remainder having arrived from other schools.

In 2004, the school received an Activemark, and in 2003, a Healthy Schools award. School Achievement awards were gained in 2001, 2002 and 2003. In 2005, the school achieved renewal of the Basic Skills Quality Mark, which was previously awarded in 2001.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1272	I Hocking	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, physical education.
31718	D Shields	Lay inspector	
16761	M Hemmings	Team inspector	Science, geography, history, religious education, special educational needs.
30362	J Henshaw	Team inspector	Foundation stage, English as an additional language, English, art and design, PSHE and citizenship.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Fairfield Community Primary is a good school that benefits from good leadership and management and good governance. The hard working headteacher has created an effective team that provides a good quality of education, resulting in pupils of all abilities achieving well. Given these good outcomes and below average costs, the school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management are good.
- Good teaching enables all pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute significantly to their learning.
- Pupils' learning and personal development benefit from a very well enriched curriculum.
- There are good links with parents and carers, the community and other schools.
- Accommodation in the Nursery building and in the ICT suite is unsatisfactory.

The school has made good improvement since it was previously inspected. All of the key issues have been dealt with successfully. In addition, there has been significant improvement in teaching and assessment, curricular provision, and partnership with parents and the community, all of which contribute to improved educational standards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	C	D	B
Mathematics	B	C	B	A*
Science	A	C	B	A

Key: A - top 5%; 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.*

Overall, achievement is good for all groups of pupils. The results in the table above represent very good achievement for the 2004 Year 6 group, and reflect the very good teaching in Year 6. Standards in the present Year 6 are average in English, mathematics, science, ICT and history, and above average in physical education. Standards meet those specified in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Achievement is good for pupils in Years 3 to 5 and very good in Year 6.

Standards for the present Year 2 pupils in reading, writing, mathematics, science, ICT, history and physical education are average. Year 2 pupils meet expectations for religious education. Overall, achievement is good because of good and often very good teaching.

Most children reach the goals they are expected to meet by the end of Reception but a significant minority do not. When taking into account the below and, in the case of language

skills, well below average level of attainment for most children when they start in the Nursery, achievement is good because of good teaching.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall. Attitudes and behaviour are good and occasionally in Year 6 they are exemplary; this contributes significantly to learning. Moral and social development is good; spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils have a good knowledge of their own culture and of the diversity of cultures in today's society. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and they are punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good. Staff work as an effective team that provides good equality of opportunity for all pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and higher-attaining pupils are well challenged. Pupils' personal qualities of effort and commitment to their work are significant strengths that contribute to learning. Teaching is very good in Year 6 and results in very good learning for these pupils. The arrangements for assessing pupils' progress in National Curriculum subjects are good. Similarly, there are good systems for recording the progress of children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers have very good knowledge of individual pupils and provide well for their needs.

Pupils benefit from a particularly well enriched curriculum, for example, through visits, visitors and a residential experience. Learning in English and mathematics is enhanced by good quality resources. However, the accommodation for ICT is unsatisfactory and is not conducive to pupils' well-being and learning. Similarly, the Nursery building and outdoor play facilities for Reception classes are unsatisfactory and impede learning. The school provides well for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Good and productive links with parents and carers, and with other schools and colleges, also contribute to pupils' achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and management through a clear sense of direction and from his personal example of hard work.

The senior management team and subject co-ordinators also provide good leadership and management. Governance is good because the governing body has an effective role in strategic and financial planning. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents express satisfaction with most of the school's work; in particular the majority commend leadership and management, the quality of teaching, children's progress, the range of activities on offer and the arrangements for helping their children settle in.

Pupils' views are very positive. They appreciate the opportunity to express their views through the School Council and feel valued, well cared for and supported by staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve accommodation for the children in Nursery and develop the facilities for outdoor play for Reception pupils.
- Improve accommodation for the ICT suite.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall achievement is good for all pupils, regardless of gender, background or ability. Standards reached by the present Year 6 pupils and Year 2 pupils are average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's most recent national test results for Year 6 pupils were well above those of similar schools.
- All pupils, regardless of gender, ability and background, achieve well.
- Year 6 pupils achieve very well in physical education.

Commentary

1. Throughout the school there are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic groups. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good quality extra support they are given. The school is also equally successful in providing for the needs of high ability pupils and, as a result, they also achieve well.
2. Most children in Reception attain the levels expected in each of the Early Learning Goals, but a few continue to work below this level when they begin Year 1. This nevertheless represents good achievement relative to the below average level of attainment of most children when they began school and reflects good teaching. In particular, levels of attainment in speaking and listening are well below average for many children when they begin school.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.2 (15.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.2 (14.2)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.1 (15.7)	16.2 (16.3)

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

3. The above table shows that overall the school's results in national tests were below national results, but were average when compared to similar schools. However, this was largely due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Over the last five years, the school's test results have improved at a faster rate than the national trend.
4. Present Year 2 pupils achieve well as a direct result of good and sometimes very good teaching in Year 1 and 2. Standards seen during the inspection are better than those of last year and reflect the fact that this class has much fewer pupils who find learning difficult. The impact of actions taken by the school's leadership two years ago is also a

significant factor in these improved standards. Standards are now average in English, mathematics, science, ICT, history and physical education. In religious education, pupils reach standards in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.1 (26.6)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.9 (26.6)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.5 (28.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- The above table shows that results in English were below the national average but results in mathematics and science were above national figures. This difference in performance between these three subjects is accounted for by the fact that well over one in three pupils in this group had special educational needs, especially in language. When compared to similar schools, these results were above average in English, well above average in science and very high (in the top five percent) in mathematics. These results represent very good achievement for this group of pupils when taking into account their prior attainment when they were in Year 2. The school's results in national tests have matched or been above national averages for the last four years.
- Achievement in Years 3 to 5 is good for all pupils because teaching is good. Pupils in Year 6, however, are achieving very well as a result of very good and occasionally excellent teaching. Standards in English, mathematics, science, ICT, and history are average; they are above average in physical education as a result of very good teaching. Standards in religious education match those specified in the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work and school are good. Their moral, social and cultural development is good; spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a very harmonious and friendly community.
- Pupils enjoy learning but in a few lessons pupils become restless and do not concentrate on their work.
- Daily assemblies make only a limited contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

Commentary

- Pupils get on well with their classmates and have very good relationships with teachers and the other adults who work with them. Pupils say they like and enjoy school and all the activities they are able to take part in. Pupils with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority backgrounds equally enjoy and are involved in all aspects of

school life. However, there are some pupils with personal behaviour problems that have an adverse effect on their learning.

8. In almost all instances, lessons and other school activities are happy and productive. This is because almost all pupils enjoy the experience of learning. The vast majority of pupils try hard and are attentive and this has a positive impact on how well they achieve in lessons. There are examples of excellent attitudes from the oldest pupils, who respond very well to teaching that is interesting and challenging for them.
9. Generally, pupils co-operate with each other and work well in small groups and pairs, even in the very cramped ICT suite. However, occasionally in lessons, pupils show less willingness to apply themselves to tasks and they become restless. This is usually because they do not respond to the school's strategies to manage their behaviour, or on occasions when teachers' behaviour management skills are not secure. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a minority of pupils expressed some concern that not all pupils behave well; inspection findings do not support this view. Although the oldest pupils often demonstrate very good and mature behaviour, overall, in lessons and when moving about the school building, pupils' behaviour is good. When outside at play, in the main pupils are well behaved but occasionally behaviour can be over-boisterous. Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous towards visitors. When they start Nursery attainment for most children is below average and some children have poorly developed social skills. However, they generally learn quickly and by the end of their Reception year most have achieved the Early Learning Goal for personal, social and emotional development and are confident, sociable and ready to learn.
10. In the year prior to the inspection, there were three fixed-term exclusions, attributed to two boys. The school tries hard to support the pupils and their families and only uses exclusion when all other avenues have been exhausted.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	247	3	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	7	0	0

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

11. During the inspection, no instances of harassment or oppressive behaviour were seen, and in discussions, pupils confirm that bullying and racial incidents are very rare. If they do happen they tell an adult, whom they confirm will help them. The results of the pupil questionnaire indicate that pupils feel the school treats them fairly; in discussions they quote many examples of this. Discussions with pupils also indicate that they have a very good understanding of the need for racial tolerance. The school is good at

promoting and developing pupils' understanding of cultural diversity. Pupils are well prepared for life in a multi-cultural world. However, pupils' spiritual knowledge is less well developed. They are given good opportunities for spiritual development, for instance in lessons such as literacy and art, but daily assemblies make little contribution to pupils' spiritual awareness.

12. Attendance is broadly average, with little unauthorised absence. Despite the school's best efforts, a minority of families do not ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time. This puts their children at a disadvantage because their learning is interrupted or they miss the introduction to their lessons.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

This school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. All pupils achieve well because of good teaching. Pupils experience a good and very well-enriched curriculum and pupils' learning benefits from strong teamwork between staff, as well as good links with parents, the community and other schools. Good provision is made for pupils' care, welfare and safety. Resources are satisfactory overall but some key features of accommodation are unsatisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall, and very good in Year 6. Assessment of pupils' progress is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is a significant contributor to learning.
- Teachers' good planning ensures that work is set at just the right level to meet the range of individual needs.
- Very good teaching and learning enable Year 6 pupils to achieve standards well beyond those of similar schools.
- Teachers' marking is thorough and the information gained from assessment is used constructively.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	6 (16%)	20 (54%)	8 (22%)	1 (3%)	0	0

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

13. Teaching and learning are good overall and significantly better than at the previous inspection, when they were judged satisfactory.
14. Very good teamwork between teachers and support staff is a major factor in ensuring that the diverse needs of all pupils are very well met and that all pupils, regardless of gender, ability or background, achieve well.
15. Teachers have a secure and often good knowledge of the subjects they teach and almost always successfully engage pupils' interest. Teachers' explanations and questions are pitched at the right level to meet individual needs. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers provide appropriately modified but consistently challenging programmes to meet pupils' needs. In-class support and withdrawal for intensive small group teaching result in pupils' good achievements. Pupils who show high ability are given additional challenge, as seen often in literacy and numeracy lessons, enabling them to achieve well. Good support is given to those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English and this, too, results in good achievement.
16. Teachers almost invariably require pupils to show good standards of behaviour. In the vast majority of lessons, good use is made of lesson time because interruptions are minimal, enabling pupils to work uninterrupted for sustained periods of time. This encourages pupils to persevere and work hard. Pupils in all classes, and especially in Year 6, show good application and pride in their work. Parents strongly endorse these positive views of the teaching. Pupils receive much encouragement from staff and have very good relationships with them. These features form the basis of the good teaching and learning seen and account for pupils' good achievement.
17. Teaching and learning are good overall in the Foundation Stage (namely Nursery and Reception classes), which represents an improvement since the previous inspection when they were judged only satisfactory. Staff work as an effective team to ensure that children's needs are well met.
18. Teaching in the Year 6 class is very good overall and in two lessons it was excellent. The teacher's enthusiasm and her excellent relationships with pupils underpin very skilful management of the class so that the pupils are inspired to learn; consequently, these pupils achieve very well.
19. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in one lesson. This was not typical of other lessons in this class and resulted from some pupils' learning not being sufficiently focussed. Throughout the school, the features of the lessons where the quality of learning was satisfactory included teaching that was unimaginative, a lack of pace, and a lack of clarity in the tasks given to pupils. In such lessons, pupils were not as enthusiastic or as well behaved as in other lessons.
20. There are good procedures for assessing and recording individual pupils' attainment and progress. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when assessment was judged satisfactory overall. There is now an effective whole-school system of assessment and recording of pupils' levels of attainment, for all subjects, that enables teachers to plan work that is well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and positively, including written comments, for example,

in Year 6 English, that guide pupils as to how they might improve their work. Information gained from assessment is constructively shared with pupils to help them develop a clear knowledge of their progress and to plan the next steps in learning.

The curriculum

The school offers a good curriculum, which is enriched very well through a wide range of extra-curricular activities aimed to meet and support the needs, talents and interests of pupils. Overall, resources are satisfactory. However, unsatisfactory accommodation sometimes causes disruption or discomfort and limits opportunities for learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, especially in sports, and an outstanding French club.
- The provision of a wide range of experiences in the arts makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural awareness.
- The ICT suite is too small and the Nursery building leaks.
- Pupils who have special educational needs are offered a supportive curriculum that meets their needs well.
- Planning for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is good.

Commentary

21. Overall, the curriculum is planned well and focuses on the development of pupils' communication skills, from an early age. This is reflected in improved standards in speaking and listening and reading and writing, particularly for the younger pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit particularly from the emphasis on communication and achieve well. Appropriate links are made between subjects and pupils use their developing skills in order to improve their understanding across lessons. In the main, resources are adequate and good use is made of these. Resources are good in English and mathematics and have a positive impact on pupils' achievement in these subjects.
22. Those who have special educational needs are well supported. Their learning is planned well and this helps them to join in lessons successfully. Sometimes, supported lessons take place in the new meeting room and pupils benefit from quiet and focused attention in comfortable surroundings.
23. However, accommodation overall is unsatisfactory because the ICT suite is cramped and the workstations cannot comfortably accommodate the pupils. Several pupils often share workstations intended for one and this is detrimental to pupils' learning and welfare. Also the fabric of the Nursery building is rotten in parts. Although the school has endeavoured to maintain what was originally a temporary building, the roof leaks when it rains. This causes disruption to the Nursery day because equipment has to be moved. The fenced outside area for Reception children is used well but is too small to adequately support children's physical development.
24. In order to widen pupils' experiences and to develop their interests, the school provides a very good range of extra-curricular clubs, visits and visitors. The residential visit for pupils in Year 6, for example, has had a very good impact on improving their ICT and

physical education skills. In addition, pupils successfully learn to get on with each other and take responsibility for themselves.

25. Across the year, pupils are offered a variety of opportunities to try different sports and to receive quality coaching. The school has good links with Bury football club, which provides access for talented pupils, and the involvement of the England Women's Football Roadshow demonstrates the school's commitment to equal opportunities.
26. Different age groups are also given many opportunities to enhance their learning through visits and visitors. For example, in history pupils visit Smithills Hall and Dunham Massey, and there are also visits to a synagogue, church, mosque and the Quantum Science Theatre. The French club makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' self-esteem and to their knowledge of language. These lessons for Year 5 are very well planned, prepared and resourced and make full use of ICT. As a result, the pupils are confident and are acquiring a very good command of spoken and written French.
27. Central to the extra-curricular opportunities is the school's commitment to the arts. This is clearly seen in the very good quality multi-cultural displays, which reflect not only a range of cultures and their art but also a wide variety of techniques and use of materials. The school enjoys visits from dance and theatre groups and presents two well-received productions a year.
28. Personal, social, health, citizenship and emotional development is promoted well. As part of the commitment to this aspect of learning, a professional artist developed the theme of citizenship, resulting in pupils' thoughtful contributions to the displayed wall hangings. 'Circle Time', when pupils share and talk to each other, regularly takes place in most classes. Health education, including drugs and sex and relationships education, is sensitively taught through science and within cross-curricular activities, or in more discrete lessons as pupils become older and more aware. Statutory requirements are met in these areas.

Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. Pupils receive good support, advice and guidance. There are very good opportunities for pupils to be involved in and to influence the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a very good and trusting relationship with at least one adult in school.
- Teachers know pupils very well.
- Pupils' views are listened to and acted upon very well.
- Not all pupils are involved in setting and reviewing their targets in literacy and numeracy.

Commentary

29. Pastoral care and guidance is good; parents appreciate this. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe there. All adults know pupils very well and regularly share information about them with each other. As a result, individuals and their families are very well known. In discussions, pupils say there is an adult they are confident to talk to if they are worried or unhappy; this view is supported by the questionnaire results.

Pupils in Year 6 say how much they appreciate 'bubble time' when they can talk privately to their teacher.

30. Systems to ensure pupils' welfare permeate all aspects of school life. They are clearly understood and implemented by all concerned that work or help in school. There are well-planned arrangements for supporting children who join the school partway through the school year. Arrangements to help the youngest children, who are starting formal education for the first time in the Nursery, are good. Overall, health and safety throughout the school is well promoted but there has been no recent whole school risk assessment. Arrangements to support pupils' medical needs or to deal with accidents or illness that occur during the school day are well managed. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged throughout the school.
31. Pupils indicate both in discussion and through the questionnaire results that they are confident to ask their teachers for help during lessons. During the inspection, good examples of one-to-one support were seen in many lessons. Pupils say that when teachers mark their work it helps them understand how they can make improvements. Assessment information is used well for the oldest pupils to involve them in setting and reviewing academic targets in literacy and numeracy. They confirm that this helps them understand how they can improve their learning. However, this is not consistent practice in all classes.
32. There are good arrangements for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs. The school liaises well with outside agencies when extra support is required to meet the needs of these pupils.
33. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the School Council. They know how they can make suggestions and feel their views are listened to and that they have been able to make a real difference to school life. Older pupils say their viewpoints are considered and they find 'Circle Time' helpful if there are class concerns that need to be discussed. The school regularly seeks the views of pupils by other means, for instance through questionnaires. Suggestions, where appropriate, are taken into account when the school is planning future developments. There are good opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility and contribute to the smooth running of the school; this makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with parents and carers. Links and liaison with the community and other schools and colleges are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The community is used well to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' personal development.
- Parents' and carers' views are regularly sought and concerns swiftly dealt with.
- Links with other schools are put to good effect.

Commentary

34. Both at the pre-inspection meeting and through the questionnaire responses, parents expressed many positive comments about the school and what it has to offer their children. The school responds positively to any issues and concerns raised. Parental views are sought regularly, both formally and informally, and are taken into account

when the school is preparing plans for improvement. The school is pro-active in trying to encourage parents to become involved in school life and their children's education. It has had some success, most notably by encouraging parents of younger pupils to hear their children read at home. Many parents now do so and this is having a positive impact on their children's achievement in reading. However, the school's attempts to encourage parents to attend events such as maths and science days have had little support. On the other hand, where their children are directly involved, as in school productions or achievement assemblies, parental support is reported to be very good. Despite the school's efforts, not all parents support the school by ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time.

35. The information provided for parents has improved since the last inspection and the key issue identified has been fully addressed. Day-to-day information is well presented, frequent and contains practical and helpful information for parents. Pupils' end-of-year progress reports provide clear and detailed information for literacy, mathematics and science; this is a strength. However, they do not provide sufficient information about pupils' strengths and areas for development in other subjects. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their progress.
36. Good use is made of the local and wider community to enrich pupils' experiences. They go on well-planned visits linked to their lessons as well as a residential visit; pupils speak with great enthusiasm about these opportunities. The choir is regularly involved in community events. There are good links with the local church, which is used for visits linked to religious education as well as the school carol service. The school premises and grounds are used regularly by community groups.
37. The school accepts students on work experience placements from both the local college and the secondary school. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education when they leave the school at the end of Year 6 because there is a well planned transition programme, including the 'Passport to High School' project. The well-established links with other schools benefit both pupils and teachers. Pupils take part in a wide range of sporting events and also benefit from the local secondary school's expertise as a specialist sports college. The sharing of good practice with other schools has also enhanced the curriculum and staff expertise, for instance, in physical education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher and other key staff are good. Governance of the school is also good, and governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is a good leader, who provides a clear sense of direction for the school.
- All staff and governors work well as a team.
- There are thorough procedures for checking the performance of the school.
- Governors are more aware of the school's strengths than its weaknesses.
- The school's finances are managed well.

Commentary

38. The leadership of the headteacher has been central to the good improvement the school has made since the previous inspection. For example, he has overseen the development of more rigorous assessment procedures and the creation of a Foundation Stage curriculum. He has created an atmosphere in which everyone involved with the school can work effectively as a team. The deputy head and members of the senior management team support him well. They provide good role models for other staff and pupils and play an important role in the leadership of the curriculum and teaching. Staff respond well to the support and responsibility given to them, and carry out their duties diligently. The headteacher leads by example, though at times taking on too much responsibility rather than delegating to others. The reflection of the school's aims, values and policies in its work is good and contributes strongly to standards of attainment and the good achievement that pupils make. There are good relationships at all levels throughout the school, which is evident in the mutual respect shown between adults and pupils. Pupils say they feel valued, with their achievements being recognised and celebrated.
39. Governors play an active role in the life of the school, being supportive but also being willing to challenge the proposals of the senior management team. Many governors provide much valued voluntary support for the school. They are developing links with subject co-ordinators to help them to have a more secure understanding of the school's performance. Currently, they have a better understanding of the school's strengths than its weaknesses. They carry out their statutory duties conscientiously.
40. There is a good management structure that ensures a clear view of teaching and learning through the school. All have clear roles, which are carried out well. The deputy head has played an important role in successfully dealing with the key issue of improving the school's assessment arrangements since the previous inspection. These arrangements are now good. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, which leads to them achieving well. The school evaluates its own performance well and acts effectively on the information gained. Provision for professional development is good. Performance management is in place for all staff, with many opportunities for them to take part in training that is linked to school and personal priorities, for the benefit of all pupils. Of particular note is the way this has led to an improvement in teaching and learning for mathematics.
41. The arrangements for checking the school's work are good. The school's improvement plan is a thorough document, which contains criteria against which the school can measure its success in achieving its targets.
42. Financial management is good, with the school budget being carefully monitored. There is a secure understanding of the principles of best value when making major budgetary decisions. This is an effective school, running at below average costs. Consequently, it provides very good value for money.
43. The balance carried forward at the end of the financial year 2003/4 was above the recommended level but has been appropriately used to cover additional staffing costs in the next financial year.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	621,223	Balance from previous year	28,084

Total expenditure	603,623
Expenditure per pupil	2,424

Balance carried forward to the next	45,684
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PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44. Most children start school in the Nursery on a part time basis but a few start later in the Reception classes, some having attended other pre-school settings. The Nursery is in a separate building with its own outdoor play space. However, accommodation overall is unsatisfactory because the Nursery building is in a poor state of repair. It leaks in poor weather and disrupts learning. The outdoor area for Reception pupils is also inadequate.
45. Generally, children begin Nursery with standards below expectations in most areas of learning but well below expectations in communication, language and literacy, and particularly in speaking skills. Personal, social and emotional development is also well below expectations for a few children.
46. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed and the assessment of children's learning is good. Overall, teaching and learning throughout the Foundation Stage are good, an improvement on the satisfactory judgement made in the previous report. Teaching is consistently good in the Nursery, and sometimes very good, but there is a very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching in Reception. Support staff make a significant contribution to children's learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships enable children to develop good attitudes to learning.
- Role-play areas are developed well.
- The school is currently able to continue to offer the Foundation Stage curriculum provision for those pupils who need it when they are in Year 1.
- Occasionally some children are not clear enough about what they are learning.

Commentary

47. In the warm, friendly Nursery, children form very good relationships and friendships and grow in confidence. Well-labelled and well-organised resources encourage independence and children tidy up by themselves on given musical signals. This indicates a good improvement since the previous report, when the promotion of independence was a weakness. Children successfully learn personal and social skills through role-play and begin to understand the feelings of others. For example, they demonstrated care and concern for their 'animals' in the 'pet shop'.
48. Overall, teaching and learning are good and sometimes very good. Therefore, most children achieve well. As a result of good planning and careful assessment, almost all children are well behaved and listen carefully. Very occasionally, children in Reception need more support and guidance as to what they are expected to do and to learn. The

children concentrate best when they have a clear focus for their work and play. This aspect of one lesson was unsatisfactory.

49. Children start Nursery at levels of attainment which are generally below average. Some children have poorly developed social skills. However, they generally learn quickly and by the end of the Reception year most have achieved the Early Learning Goal and are confident, sociable and ready to learn. However, there remains a small minority who need more first-hand experiences and more support. At present, the school is able to offer this curriculum, for those who need it, within the mixed age Reception/Year 1 class.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong emphasis on the development of children's reading and independent writing skills.
- Children who speak English as an additional language benefit from the clear focus on spoken language.
- Communication skills are a clear focus within other areas of learning, with the aim of helping children to make sense of their experiences.
- Very occasionally tasks do not sufficiently meet the needs of individual children.

Commentary

50. The school recognises the importance of spoken skills because most children start school at standards below and often well below expectations. From the start, children are given clear models of language structures and offered appropriate and sometimes challenging vocabulary. Nevertheless, in spite of improved standards, by the end of the Reception year there remains a significant minority who do not reach the Early Learning Goal. These children lack specific vocabulary and a wider knowledge of story language beyond what they experience during the school day.
51. Children enjoy reading and listening to stories. These are used to link areas of the curriculum and to make learning appealing. For example, some children from the Nursery spontaneously acted out scenes from their favourite story of 'Handa's Surprise'. This was developed further as children smelt or tasted fruits from the story.
52. Children with less developed spoken skills or those who speak English as an additional language relate these experiences using newly acquired vocabulary. Children are encouraged to talk, take messages and express themselves. They are beginning to talk about what they like or dislike and how they could improve, but this could be developed further. Teaching and learning in this area of learning are good overall, representing an improvement from the previous inspection when provision and teaching were judged satisfactory.
53. The school's policy to develop good basic skills for writing is effective as children in the Reception classes write neatly and independently, demonstrating sustained effort and good control. Most children achieve well. However, there are infrequent occasions

when tasks are not clearly matched to children's abilities and they either complete the tasks very quickly or they struggle because they are too difficult.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are well prepared to interest children.
- Opportunities are taken well to develop mathematical language and understanding in other areas of learning.
- Some activities are not entirely suitable for the age and abilities of the children.

Commentary

54. Within the 'shops', children successfully learn about the costs of their 'pets' and 'plants' and to recognise and use coins. Stories are used well to develop mathematical understanding. For example, a teaching assistant helped children to learn the sequence of days through the use of puppets and resources linked to the story of 'The Hungry Caterpillar'.
55. Mathematical displays and numeracy lessons focus on a range of skills and children succeed in their development of number recognition and counting. However, they are less successful in calculating and some children in Reception are unable to mentally subtract single numbers. Nevertheless, as standards of mathematical attainment are below and sometimes well below expectations on entry to school, children achieve satisfactorily across time.
56. Teachers often successfully use opportunities to develop mathematical language in play and across the curriculum. In one practical lesson, children investigated the concepts of full, empty and half full. However, the concept was too difficult for some children and the organisation required too much supervision. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory and most children reach the Early Learning Goal but a significant minority do not. There has been satisfactory improvement overall.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given good opportunities to use their senses and to develop understanding through first-hand experiences.
- Children develop good knowledge and understanding of local communities.
- The Nursery grounds are used well to encourage children's curiosity.
- The Reception classes are limited in their use of the outside space for this area of learning.

Commentary

57. Children are provided with varied activities to arouse curiosity and to encourage questioning. For example, both in Nursery and Reception classes, children were excited to watch butterflies emerge from their chrysalis. Although standards of attainment remain below expectations, this provision has resulted in good achievement.
58. Teaching and learning are good because staff recognise that children often lack experiences and aim to provide as much as possible in school. Visits, for example, to Formby enhanced children's learning, and visitors, such as, 'People who help us' support children's understanding of the community they live in. A careful selection of resources extends their understanding of the value placed on a multi-ethnic community. For example, Nursery and Reception children contributed to a large, multi-cultural corridor display.

59. Children successfully learn about ICT using computers, cameras and listening centres. They can identify where they live from local maps. They use magnifying glasses to make close observations of their natural surroundings in the Nursery garden. However, the outdoor space for the Reception children is very small and, therefore, opportunities to develop this area of learning outside are limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor play space for Reception pupils is not adequate to develop physical skills in this environment.
- Good opportunities are given for children to develop manipulative skills.
- Children have good awareness of space and are developing good control of their bodies.
- Children are not encouraged enough to evaluate what they have learnt and how they might improve.

Commentary

60. Although Reception children have physical education lessons in the hall and use the space well, they do not have adequate opportunities to develop the skills further in the very small outside area. There is no continuous provision for climbing, balancing, running or jumping or for developing ball skills. Children in the Nursery have access to a larger and more useful area. There is a covered area but, as in the main Nursery building, it leaks and its use in poor weather is, therefore, limited.
61. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but there are missed opportunities to teach children how to evaluate what they have learnt and to encourage them to decide how they might improve further.
62. Most children use fine motor movement skills satisfactorily and develop this through the use of tools such as scissors, and when threading flowers for garlands. In the hall, children learn to control balls and to work in pairs. Reception children use space well and can jump forwards and backwards and hop well. Most children reach the Early Learning Goal, and this represents satisfactory achievement. Improvement has been satisfactory overall although there has been good improvement to the planning of outside learning in the Nursery.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use observation skills well.
- They handle tools and a wide range of media with independence and confidence.
- Teachers record and display children's evaluations of their work well.

Commentary

63. The children enjoy their many and varied opportunities to paint, print, create collages or draw and model, using media such as seeds, buttons, foam, salt dough and pencils. It is clear that children are used to manipulating these materials and there is a good balance between working independently, selecting their own materials, and teacher direction of skills. The quality of teaching and learning is generally good and children achieve well. Consequently, most reach the Early Learning Goal.
64. Children look carefully at books or at natural materials to develop detail on their models or pictures. For example, Reception children recorded detail of their minibeasts onto the salt dough models they had made. Children enjoy listening to music, which is used to good effect each day. They use their imagination well in the role play areas.
65. Children's work is displayed well and sometimes teachers record children's evaluation of their pictures, demonstrating their understanding of what it is they like and the impact of art on others.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils demonstrate improved standards of reading and writing.
- Strategies to improve handwriting have successfully raised standards of presentation.
- Literacy skills are used well across the curriculum.
- Pupils are involved in understanding their individual targets for improvement.
- Teachers do not always use the final sessions of lessons effectively enough to help pupils evaluate what they have learnt.

Commentary

66. Generally children start Nursery with standards that are below average, and often well below average in speaking and listening. Sometimes, pupils who enter the school at a later stage than Reception have special educational needs that are related to English.
67. In 2004, pupils in Year 2 achieved results in reading and writing which were below the national average but in line with those of similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level was well above that of similar schools. As a result of strong emphasis on improving both reading and writing, standards in the current Year 2 class are now average and are on target to improve even further.
68. Results in Year 6 were below the national average in 2004, but above those of similar schools. Standards in the current Year 6 are average.
69. The improvements in both reading and writing have resulted from a combination of improved teaching and curriculum strategies and decisive action by management. Leadership and management of the subject are good because decisions taken are rapidly implemented and the effects monitored. For example, there is now a single age

Year 2 class, which enables staff to focus clearly on this age group. The subject has also received considerable funding for new books, libraries and published schemes, all of which are raising standards.

70. Although teaching and learning are good overall there is also some excellent teaching in Year 6. This is characterised by very high expectations and well-timed, varied activities which successfully involve pupils of all abilities. Teaching has improved since the previous report. Support staff give effective support, particularly for pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils therefore achieve well, and in the case of Year 6, very well.
71. Teachers mark pupils' work well and involve them in setting their own short-term targets, enabling them to understand how to improve their next piece of work. However, the final part of literacy lessons is not always used well enough to help pupils evaluate what has been learnt or to clarify any misunderstandings. Sometimes lessons need to be more carefully timed to make the best use of this phase of the lesson.
72. Reading has been given a high focus. Alongside the focused teaching in guided reading sessions, there has been a return to the approach of individual reading. This policy has been explained carefully to parents, who show enthusiasm and interest in their children's progress. The improved library areas have also sparked pupils' interest and enthusiasm in books and a careful selection of appropriate texts have renewed the interest of more reluctant readers. Pupils in Year 6 compared authors and understood themes, features and structures of a wide variety of texts. In Year 2, pupils identified features of non-fiction texts and applied this to writing their own glossaries. Consequently, reading has improved considerably.
73. An emphasis on improving handwriting and spelling is visible in the neatly presented work in books and displays. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection, when the quality of spelling and punctuation was judged inconsistent. Pupils are given opportunities to use their writing skills for a variety of purposes. They use ICT to write interactive stories for younger pupils, for writing their own fairy stories and to practise basic skills. In Year 1, pupils wrote their own poems in the style of the author Wes Magee, recognising patterns in poetry.
74. The school recognises that speaking and listening skills are the foundation of reading and writing, and provides planned opportunities to improve these skills. For example, drama and performance poetry are used in class. Pupils are also encouraged to talk to each other and, for example, to discuss ideas with partners. Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from these opportunities to talk in varied settings and achieve well.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

75. Pupils use language and literacy skills well in other subjects. For example, in mathematics, pupils used ICT to write in text when interrogating a database. Others use ICT to write persuasive pieces about their favourite holiday destinations. There are interesting reading opportunities within wall displays. Visits to places of worship and the study of Anne Frank's diary evoke enlightening accounts of the visits and perceptive evaluations of the diary. The writers' club and celebration of World Book Day also help pupils to make meaningful links across other subjects. The French club has boosted confidence and teaches pupils about language structures which they can apply to English and other languages.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils, regardless of gender, ability or background, achieve well.
- Teaching is good, resulting in good learning.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and work hard in lessons.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to investigate mathematics.

Commentary

76. The 2004 national test results for Year 6 pupils were above the average of all schools and very high when compared to those of similar schools. The results for Year 2 pupils were well below the national average and were below those of similar schools, partly because this group of pupils had a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, the action taken by the school two years ago is now impacting on standards for pupils at the end of Year 2. Standards of work seen during the inspection match those expected nationally for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils throughout the school show average competence both in performing mental calculations and written computations.
77. Teaching is good and leads to good learning. The result of this good quality teaching is that all pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers have high expectations of pupils to behave well and work hard and, by using praise, encourage and support them in their learning.
78. Teachers make very good use of resources, as seen, for example, in a very good lesson in Year 2 where pupils were learning about clockwise and anti-clockwise directions. Throughout the school, teachers' very good planning and commitment to providing equality of opportunity for all pupils, regardless of ability, are shown in the well-pitched demands made of pupils. Questions are targeted judiciously to ensure that higher ability pupils are sufficiently challenged and teachers provide work that is well matched to groups of different abilities. The very good teamwork between teachers and support staff also makes a notable contribution to pupils' learning. There is some good use of ICT, especially to assist those pupils with special educational needs, but the school acknowledges that the use of ICT is variable and needs further development. Assessment procedures are good. Marking of pupils' work is thorough and teachers give pupils clear guidance as to how their work might be improved. All these factors result in all pupils, including those who find learning difficult and those who are particularly able in mathematics, achieving well.
79. An excellent lesson in the Year 6 class began with a variety of challenging, 'quick fire' mental arithmetic activities that stimulated pupils' thinking. Pupils successfully applied previously learned computational strategies for calculating $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent VAT. This real-life context, together with highly enthusiastic and logically structured teaching, captivated pupils' interest and resulted in an outstanding quality of learning. Pupils' exemplary behaviour in this lesson reflected this excellent teaching.

80. Pupils' enjoyment of mathematics reflects the supportive climate for learning that exists in classrooms. Pupils' good and occasionally exemplary behaviour reflects very good relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils work enthusiastically and concentrate well because they enjoy mathematics; these factors contribute significantly to their learning.
81. Good subject leadership and management have led to good improvement since the previous inspection, for example, in teaching and in pupils' behaviour. Analysis of test results has shown where further improvements are needed, for example, in using and applying mathematics. In particular, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to carry out mathematical investigations.

Mathematics across the curriculum

82. Good use is made of mathematics in other subjects. Relevant opportunities are taken to link mathematics with ICT in order to simultaneously help develop pupils' numeracy and computer skills, for example, when Year 2 pupils used a database to record the results of a survey of the number of residents in their homes. Pupils' numeracy skills are applied well in Year 6. For example, in science pupils measured the time taken for sugar to dissolve, and in geography they used grid references to locate the River Irwell on a map. Year 4 pupils used their knowledge of symmetry in art work. In history, pupils used timelines to help them place events in chronological order.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Because teaching and learning are good children achieve well.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to their work.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning and assessment procedures lack rigour.

Commentary

83. The 2004 national test results for Year 6 pupils were above average nationally and well above average when compared to similar schools. Standards in the present Years 2 and 6 are average. Since these pupils started school with below average skills, this represents good achievement.
84. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and expertise and so are able to demonstrate and explain new scientific ideas to pupils in an accurate manner. As a result, pupils are clear about what they are to learn and what is expected of them. Lessons are carefully planned so that pupils are able to use their existing scientific knowledge and understanding to support their learning. This was seen in a lesson for pupils in Year 3, when they used their experience of scientific forces to investigate the effects of magnetism. Teachers also encourage pupils to use accurate scientific terminology when answering questions and communicating their ideas, which extends their personal as well as their scientific vocabulary. For example, pupils in Year 4 used the terms 'variables' and 'friction' to discuss their investigation to see if people with the

biggest feet jump the furthest. Praise is used well to develop pupils' confidence and raise their self-esteem when carrying out such experiments. There is not enough emphasis on pupils considering the findings to their investigations. As a result, their conclusions tend to be a description, rather than an evaluation, of what they have found out. Teaching assistants are deployed well so that pupils with special educational needs are involved in all activities and make good progress.

85. Pupils show a lot of enjoyment in their scientific activities. They collaborate well in pairs and small groups and are usually well behaved. They handle scientific equipment carefully and are keen to ask and answer questions. They work hard and so are productive in their lessons.
86. The co-coordinator provides good leadership and management, which has a positive impact on pupils' progress and achievement. He has helped to develop curriculum planning since the previous inspection. Consequently, there is now a stronger emphasis on pupils learning through structured, practical investigations. Because of this, most pupils show confidence in planning a test, making sure it is fair and then carrying it out. The curriculum also makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development through enabling them to work collaboratively. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory but not rigorous enough for the school to check the progress that pupils make and then set manageable targets for improvement for groups and individuals. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning in the subject. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good, as teaching and learning are better and there are more opportunities to carry out scientific investigations.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Accommodation in the ICT suite is very cramped and is an unsatisfactory environment for learning.
- Subject leadership and management are good and have been pivotal to good improvement.
- Good teaching and learning enables all pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute significantly to learning.
- Inconsistent use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

87. There has been good improvement in the use of ICT throughout the school since the previous inspection, when not all staff were confident in the use of ICT. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are attaining nationally expected standards. Year 6 pupils are adept in producing multi-media presentations, for example, they have created 'talking books', involving sounds, graphics and text, designed for younger children. They also make competent use of a data handling package to produce pie charts. Pupils' learning also benefits significantly from the range of ICT skills they are taught on a Year 6 residential experience. Year 2 pupils have effectively combined text and graphics to make their own 'Cinderella' story books and are adept in entering data to be represented graphically.

88. Good teaching and learning enables all pupils to achieve well. Teachers make the best possible use of the limited space in the ICT suite. The number of computers has grown since the suite was initially installed and space has become much tighter. Lessons are well prepared and teachers know exactly what they want to cover and pupils to learn. Management and organisation of pupils are good within the constraints of the ICT suite. However, pupils are seated too close for comfort with several pupils not close enough to the computers to be able to operate them comfortably. This is not conducive to pupils' learning and physical comfort. In addition, there is insufficient space to accommodate an entire class at the one time. Pupils' keen approach to learning and their good behaviour compensate to some extent for these limitations and are significant contributors to learning. They co-operate well with each other when sharing computers and respond well to teachers' guidance.
89. Good subject leadership and management have resulted in good improvement since the previous inspection, especially in the development of staff confidence and expertise.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

90. ICT is used satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects. Examples were seen, for instance, in English, mathematics, history and art and design. Year 5 pupils used the internet for research in history, for example in their study of the Victorians. Art work is explored by Year 2 pupils' use of graphics software. Reception-aged children have used a digital microscope to study minibeasts. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs develop their literacy and numeracy skills by frequent access to classroom-based computers. At present there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to use ICT in some subjects, however – notably science and religious education.

HUMANITIES

Religious education and history were inspected in full and are reported below. Geography was sampled.

91. The **geography** curriculum is broad and balanced and enhanced by a variety of educational visits. For example, pupils are able to make good use of local visits to develop their knowledge and understanding of the environment in which they live. Mapping skills are developed in Years 1 and 2 when pupils create a map of their route from home to school. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in geography. This is exemplified in the way pupils have used a variety of statistics to compare and contrast the major rivers of the world. They also use co-ordinates well to show the different features of the River Irwell. There is little use of ICT to support learning. Links to other subjects are developing.

Religious education

The provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching and learning.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning.

Commentary

92. Standards in Years 2 and 6 match the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This represents good progress and good achievement overall.
93. Teachers have secure subject expertise enabling them to organise discussions well to help pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of the main events in the life of Jesus and of the main characters in the Bible. Pupils are provided with good quality opportunities to explore Christian values and beliefs, including the manner in which they affect peoples' lives. This makes a positive contribution to the very good relationships that are to be found throughout the school. Teachers take care to plan lessons that are often linked to pupils' own experiences. This leads to pupils being able to use their knowledge and understanding of everyday life to support their learning.
94. As pupils become older, they are encouraged to reflect upon the needs of others and how they could be given help. Good emphasis is also placed on pupils learning about the beliefs and traditions of other major world faiths, which effectively supports their cultural development. This was evident in a, Year 4 lesson, where pupils were developing their understanding of the similarities and differences between worship in a church, a mosque and a synagogue. There are some good links to other subjects such as art and design, where in a Year 6 lesson pupils learned how the Christian religion uses colour to express feelings. This was linked well to work in art on how famous artists, such as Matisse and Mondrian, used colour to show emotions.
95. The subject co-ordinator gives colleagues useful advice to help them in planning worthwhile and interesting activities for pupils. The curriculum is enhanced by a variety of visits, such as to a church, synagogue and mosque, to give pupils further significant religious experiences. There is little use of ICT to support learning in the subject. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection, so that pupils can use a variety of religious artefacts to develop their learning. There are good displays around the school depicting the beliefs and traditions of different religions. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- There is good use of educational visits and visitors are used to enrich the curriculum.
- Assessment procedures lack rigour.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject.

Commentary

96. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average. This represents good achievement from the time pupils start school, with pupils of all abilities making good progress. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good, as the subject now has an appropriate time allocation and resources are now satisfactory.

97. Younger pupils are helped to develop their understanding of the past by listening to stories about famous people in history. For example, pupils learn about Guy Fawkes and Samuel Pepys and of their significance in English history. In a good quality lesson for pupils in Year 2, they also gained a good understanding of the importance of historical characters from different countries. They showed a good ability to sequence the main events in the life of Louis Braille and his endowment to future generations of people who are blind.
98. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are taught how to use a variety of historical evidence to learn about how things change over time. Good emphasis is placed on pupils understanding the importance of using a variety of sources of evidence to find out about past times. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 6, in which they used a DVD to learn about the Battle for Troy. The teacher initiated a good discussion about how historical evidence can be interpreted in different ways. In a good quality lesson for pupils in Year 5, good use was made of the Internet to research significant events in the life of Queen Victoria.
99. Pupils enjoy their work in history. They have positive attitudes and are willing to listen to and appreciate the views of other pupils.
100. The curriculum is good. It is enriched by a wide variety of educational visits. For example, pupils in Year 4 visited the Yorvik Experience in York, to find out about life in Viking Britain. Assessment information is not used effectively to set targets for improvement for groups and individual pupils. Leadership and management are good, showing a clear view of strengths and weaknesses in the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical education was inspected in full and is reported below. Art and design was sampled. Music and design and technology were not inspected.

101. The one **art and design** lesson observed in Year 1 was very well taught. Skills were taught very well and language and understanding were developed well through discussion and support. In their fabric painting activity, the pupils produced some very bright imaginative flowers. A stunning corridor display of art from around the world provides a focal point for visitors to the school and further large-scale artwork in the hall reflects the high value placed on art and design. A professional artist worked with the school to create wall hangings. The techniques learnt were translated into beautiful hangings to record class themes. For example, Reception children painted minibeasts in the style of Aboriginal artists and made tiles using seeds. Year 4 pupils depicted the Vikings, by using a range of textiles creatively, and Year 5 pupils used wax resist to draw mosques and mirrored textiles for their Islamic art displays. Pupils study the work of artists such as Monet and Van Gogh and produce their own pictures using a variety of effects and techniques. The standard of work on display is above average and is displayed carefully and thoughtfully. It is clear that the curriculum is good and that pupils have a broad range of opportunities to express themselves.

Physical education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils attain above average standards.
- Very good teaching enables all pupils to achieve very well.
- Subject leadership and management are good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and enjoy their lessons.
- Pupils are given a wide variety of valuable experiences which make a very good contribution to learning and personal development.

Commentary

102. Standards in Year 2 are average, and those in Year 6 are above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are particularly able, achieve very well. By the end of Year 6, all the pupils meet the national expectation for swimming, with many of them exceeding the specified 25 metres by a considerable margin. Year 6 pupils also show above average levels of ability in dance, gymnastics and games. They show good quality of movement in gymnastics, for example, when mirroring their partner's actions and when showing stillness and symmetry in their sequences.
103. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teaching is very effective because lessons are carefully planned and skilfully delivered. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' ability to behave sensibly and they plan interesting tasks that both motivate and challenge pupils. Teachers give clear instructions and intervene at opportune moments to allow pupils to demonstrate skills. For example, in a very good Year 6 gymnastics lesson, where pupils' behaviour was exemplary, the pupils noticeably improved their landing skills as a result of the teacher's coaching points. Similarly, in a very good dance lesson, Year 2 pupils' dance movements were improved by timely prompts from the teacher. Pupils have very positive attitudes to physical education. They co-operate fully with each other and members of staff because they respect them and are enthusiastic learners. Pupils behave in a sensible and mature way, for example, when making safe use of gymnastic apparatus. They are keen to develop new skills and are willing to persevere at a task by practising and refining their performance in order to improve.
104. The school provides very good opportunities, in physical education, for pupils' social and moral development, by means, for example, of the observance of rules and by cooperating and competing with others. The school has a particularly successful girls' football team. Pupils experience a very well enriched curriculum. There is a very good provision of extra-curricular clubs and a very beneficial residential adventurous activities experience for pupils in Year 6. Pupils' learning also benefits from specialist coaching of dance, basketball and football. All of these experiences enhance pupils' personal and physical development and contribute significantly to the above average standards.
105. Subject leadership and management are good and have resulted in good improvement since the last inspection. The very hard working co-ordinator presents an enthusiastic and knowledgeable role model for others. He has a clear view of how the subject can be developed and has clear plans to do so.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled. PSHE is covered in the curriculum section of this report.

106. Citizenship is incorporated within personal, social and health education and is taught in a variety of ways throughout the curriculum. For example, assemblies include national and international themes, such as the general election and the voting system. Topics are discussed during history lessons, especially through units such as 'Invaders and Settlers', when pupils meet the issue of racism. This is further developed through links with a local football club representative. An artist-in-residence chose the theme of citizenship for work on artistic wall hangings, which focused on the values of love, kindness, and thought for others. Classes choose a 'Citizen of the Week' award for those pupils who have been particularly helpful. Pupils learn about representation and democracy through the School Council, and how to raise matters of concern. Fund-raising for charities, and talks from visitors help pupils to think beyond their own lives.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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