

INSPECTION REPORT

LOSTOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lostock, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105174

Headteacher: Miss G Smith

Lead inspector: Mr S Bywater

Dates of inspection: 21st – 23rd February 2005

Inspection number: 267245

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 213

School address: Glengarth Drive
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr M Allanson

Date of previous inspection: 8th February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This average sized primary school is situated in the residential area of Lostock on the edge of Bolton. The school admits children between the ages of four and eleven. There are currently 213 full-time equivalent pupils on roll, of which around ten per cent are from a range of minority ethnic groups. No pupil is described as being at an early stage of language acquisition. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is around one per cent, which is well below the national average. Attainment on entry to the school is best described as above average, although the full range of attainment is represented. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. Twenty other pupils have various needs which include learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. During the last 18 months the school has undergone some significant staffing changes. The headteacher has been in post since September 2003 and four new members of the teaching staff (out of eight) were appointed at the same time. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Award (October 2003) and Investors in People (2002).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18463	Steve Bywater	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, physical education, personal, social and health education and citizenship
32678	Kathryn Dodd	Lay inspector	
30823	Brenda Clarke	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, science, art and design, design and technology and music
14906	Dr Brian Male	Team inspector	English, geography, history, religious education and special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL SUMMARY

Lostock Primary School is a good school. Good teaching ensures that all pupils achieve well and standards are well above average by the time pupils are 11 years old. This caring school has good relationships with parents, other schools and the community. Overall, leadership and management are good and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good teaching leads to pupils achieving well
- When compared with similar schools, pupils attain well above average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science
- Pupils' personal, moral and social development is promoted very well
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well. Relationships are very good
- There is an imbalance in the curriculum and too little time is provided for physical education
- Assessment in mathematics is not as helpful as it is in English
- Links with parents and the community are good and parents are justifiably happy with the education, care and support that their children receive
- The headteacher provides good leadership. She is supported well by an effective governing body
- Co-ordinators do not check and improve subjects well enough

The school has developed well since the last inspection. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved well. The Foundation Stage curriculum has improved very well through improved planning which reflects the six areas of learning, better use of assessment, more varied classroom activities and more efficient organisation and management. Checking and improving teachers' performance are now seen as an integral part of school improvement, helping to raise standards in teaching and learning.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

Key: A – very high; 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.

Throughout the school pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above the national average. In the 2004 national tests for 11 year olds, pupils' performance in mathematics and science was above the national average whilst in English it was well above average. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils enter the school with attainment that is above average overall. Children make good progress in the reception class and also in Years 1 to 6. As a result, standards in English and mathematics are currently well above national expectations in Year 6. Standards in science and ICT are above expectations at the end of

Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups achieve well.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' attitudes are very good and they are keen to work and take part not only in lessons but also in other aspects of school life. Pupils have good opportunities to develop personally and to take on responsibilities. Their behaviour and relationships are also very good. Attendance is very high but a small number of pupils do not arrive punctually.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good and the school has a satisfactory curriculum. The overall quality of assessment is satisfactory.

A high proportion of teaching is good or better. The high quality teaching enables pupils with a wide range of needs to learn effectively. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy and the very good management of pupils' behaviour in most classes are very positive features. Support staff generally make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, especially in helping pupils with special educational needs. In English and mathematics the school meets effectively the needs of the higher attaining pupils. More could be done in other subjects. The quality of pupils' learning is good. They are keen to learn, and clear about what is expected of them. They work well, both co-operatively and collaboratively. Assessment in most subjects is satisfactory and enables teachers to track pupils' attainment and set challenging work. However, in mathematics, it is currently not being used to identify what pupils should do next and does not always involve pupils enough.

The school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities to develop learning both academically and socially through well-organised activities. However, there is some imbalance in the curriculum. The amount of curriculum time for pupils in Years 3 to 6 barely meets national recommendations. In addition, the time allocated to physical education per week is inadequate, and is further reduced by placing lessons at the end of the school day. However, provision for extra-curricular sport and music is particularly good. There is a good level of care. There are good links with parents, local schools and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. Leadership is good. The headteacher is committed to improving the quality of education and her clear vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations are shared by staff and governors. Management of the school is satisfactory. The role of key staff has been seriously affected by staff absence and leadership of key staff is currently satisfactory. They are not sufficiently involved in monitoring what goes on in their subjects and have insufficient understanding of the strengths and weaknesses to plan improvements. The work of the governing body is good, and all legal requirements are met. Governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and areas that need to develop further.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents value their school and express positive comments. They are particularly pleased with the range of learning opportunities offered. Pupils think very highly of the school and speak with pride about their achievements and their experiences.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The school has already identified the following developments with which the inspection team agree.

- Develop further the assessment in subjects other than English and continue to involve pupils more in self-assessment and knowledge of their targets;

- Reconsider the curriculum timings and give due regard to all subjects, especially physical education;
- Develop the monitoring and evaluation role of curriculum co-ordinators.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Standards are generally above the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good, and often very good, teaching ensures that pupils achieve well overall.
- Children get off to a good start in the reception class.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are well above the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science and ICT.
- Standards in other subjects are generally in line with those usually found.
- The school's positive climate for learning and pupils' excellent attendance and very good attitudes contribute to their good achievement.

Commentary

1. Most children enter the reception class with standards of attainment that are already above those usually found. Good teaching and a wide range of stimulating activities ensure that children make good progress. By the time they enter Year 1, standards are well above average in the personal, social, language and literacy aspects of development, and above average in all other aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum that were inspected. There was insufficient evidence to judge overall standards in physical development.
2. The school's scores in national tests for seven year olds in 2004 (table below) were well above the national average in writing, above average in reading and in the top five per cent of schools in mathematics. These standards were in line with those of similar schools in reading and above in writing and well above in mathematics. Scores were much higher in writing than in previous years, when they were generally average, and also higher in mathematics. This was a result of the school's very effective focus on writing, and a number of pupils doing particularly well in the mathematics test. Scores were slightly lower in reading than usual, partly as a result of the focus on writing. Scores in both reading and mathematics have been generally well above the national average over the last four years.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.9 (17.3)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.1 (14.5)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.7 (17.5)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Inspection evidence suggests that current standards in Year 2 are well above the national average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Rightly, the priority given to writing last year has lessened and equal attention has been given to the teaching of all basic skills. As a result, reading standards are higher than those achieved by pupils in the 2004 tests. The slight fall in standards reported in writing and mathematics result from normal changes between year groups. Pupils achieve well because of a good focus on the required skills and some particularly good teaching in Year 1.

4. The school's scores in national tests for 11 year olds in 2004 (table below) were well above the national average in English and above the national average in mathematics and science. These standards were well above the average of similar schools. There are no significant differences in standards achieved by boys and girls or minority ethnic groups. Standards in English have been consistently well above the national average over the last four years. Standards in mathematics and science have varied with different year groups, but have generally been at least above the national average. The consistent scores in English have been underpinned by the consistently high standards in reading across the years. Standards in writing have not been so high.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (28.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.1 (29.8)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.6 (30.4)	28.6 (28.6)

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

5. Inspection evidence indicates that current standards by Year 6 are higher than the 2004 scores in both English and mathematics, and are now well above the national average. Standards in science and ICT are above average. Although pupils develop good practical skills in science, work is not always adapted to suit their differing needs and higher attainers do not achieve as well as they might. Pupils achieve well overall, particularly in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is often very good and learning is sharply focused.
6. Standards in other subjects are not as high as in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT, and are generally in line with the national average. This is partly because more time is given to the core subjects, and partly because teaching in these subjects identifies expected learning outcomes much more specifically. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in religious education, where standards are in line with those usually found. As other subjects (history, geography, art, physical education and design and technology) were only sampled, there is no formal judgement about attainment in these, but standards are generally in line with those usually found. Evidence indicates some shortcomings in what pupils can do in art, however, due to inconsistent provision. Standards in music are satisfactory in Year 2 and 6 but
7. Standards in computing and e-learning focus better particular aspects of learning enable pupils with special education needs to make good progress in terms of their targets. There is also good provision for pupils capable of high attainment in English and mathematics, and as a result, these pupils achieve well in these subjects.
8. The school's positive climate for learning impacts on all pupils through encouraging positive attitudes to learning, raising pupils' self-confidence and making learning interesting. Excellent attendance aids their learning. Pupils enter the school with standards of attainment that are above average, and leave at Year 6 with standards that are generally well above average in English and mathematics. Pupils' overall achievement is, therefore, good overall.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Behaviour is very good overall, and relationships very positive. Attendance is high.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are confident, have high self-esteem and work well independently when given the opportunity.

- Pupils enjoy very good relationships with the staff and each other, and are mostly considerate and respectful.

- There is a very caring ethos within the school within which pupils are seen as individuals.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is very good.

Commentary

9. Attendance is high and has been consistently so over recent years. It is very unusual to find no unauthorised absence at all. Pupils enjoy coming to school but a significant minority arrive late. Punctuality is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 97.2%

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.8	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

10. Pupils' very good attitudes to work have been maintained since the previous inspection. Good teaching and interesting lessons encourage a positive approach to learning and most pupils are very keen to do well. The very positive attitudes are underpinned by the parents' support for education and the school, and the interest they take in their children's learning. In some classes, particularly in Year 3 and occasionally in Year 4, a small number of pupils are not always positive in their approach to their work, particularly when lessons fail to engage them fully. However, overall attitudes are very good.
11. Pupils' very good behaviour has also been maintained since the previous inspection. Expectations are high and clear in most classes, and pupils respond very well to these. As with attitudes there are some lessons, mainly in Year 3 and to a lesser extent in Year 4, where pupils become restless or inattentive at time, and this can also happen when classes are taken by a different teacher. In many classes, pupils are involved in formulating the rules and agreed procedures, and this is very effective in building pupils' understanding of and commitment to these rules. It also means that pupils continue to behave very well, even when not directly supervised by an adult. Pupils therefore behave very well round the school and in the playground. No pupil has been excluded in recent years.
12. The school's personal development programme for personal development is effective in promoting concern for others and so underpins the very good relationships that prevail across the school. Teachers are very good role-models for these relationships and have created a very caring ethos within the school where pupils are seen as individuals. Pupils are friendly and polite, and are also very considerate of others. The range of helping roles around the school is very effective in contributing to this.
13. Arrangements such as the school forum, where elected representatives of each class meet to discuss issues of importance to the school, are effective in promoting responsibility and a sense of ownership of the school. Pupils are particularly skilled at conducting discussions within this forum, and take account of each other's views very well indeed. The school's programme of 'circle time', where classes discuss matters of personal importance in a mutually supportive setting, is also effective in promoting a shared approach within the school, as well as an understanding of others' needs.
14. Moral and social development is very good. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong, because of the staff's high expectations and the very clear guidance given. Spiritual development is good overall. Pupils develop a growing understanding of their feelings and they also show very good understanding and respect for the

feelings, values and beliefs of others. Pupils' cultural development is also good. The multi-cultural element within this has been developed well outside the sphere of religions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good and the school provides a satisfactory curriculum. Assessment is also satisfactory. The quality of care, support and guidance is good and there are good links with parents, other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is good and as a consequence, the quality of learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start in the reception class.
- There is high quality teaching in literacy.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well.
- Teachers have very good relationships and in most lessons, pupils are managed well.
- In a very small number of lessons, pupils are not challenged and they become restless.
- Assessment procedures, especially in mathematics, are not rigorous enough.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	9 (24%)	13 (35%)	12 (32%)	2 (5%)	0	0

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

15. Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage. The reception teacher has a good awareness of how young children learn through experience and talk. She and the classroom assistant work well as a team; they prompt the children to talk about what they are doing and give them time to explain themselves fully. Their insistence on the children having good manners and on waiting their turn ensures that the children learn what it is to be part of a group. They provide good quality support when the children work at their activities. Personal and social skills are well promoted in many activities. This results in children developing very positive attitudes to learning. Activities are interesting and adults use a very thorough and detailed assessment system that clearly shows the progress children make in their work.
16. Teachers in Years 1 to 6 know their pupils well and good attention is paid to the teaching of literacy. Lessons in this subject are often very good. Teachers plan their lessons in detail and often make good use of interesting texts to focus the pupils' attention. The opening sessions of text sharing are usually well structured to help the pupils to see key features or to make connections. For example, Year 6 pupils shared the reading of a newspaper story of a puppy left in a dustbin and sensitively discussed the persuasive writing before then considering an alternative view. Group work is also usually well planned and organised so that the pupils get on independently while the teacher works with particular pupils. The quality of the plenary sessions varies. In the more effective plenaries, the pupils were reminded of what they had learnt and how effectively their work demonstrated the features covered. In others, the time was used mainly to share what pupils had done.

17. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils and generally make a good contribution to pupils' learning. They are used to good effect during lesson introductions, when they offer support and guidance and continue to help pupils during the main lesson activities. The quality of pupils' learning is much enhanced by the work of these support staff. They have good relationships with the teachers and pupils and offer unobtrusive but effective support.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Needs are well understood and lessons take account of these needs with special activities often designed for individuals or small groups, but which promote the overall intention of the lesson. Individual education plans are generally helpful in setting targets and devising appropriate activities, but in some plans the targets are rather vague or too long term. There is good overall support from teaching assistants and some very good support for some pupils with particularly demanding needs. Pupils are treated sensitively and staff are careful to build pupil's self-confidence. All of this ensures that pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
19. Teachers inform their pupils well through giving clear introductions to lessons and telling them about what they are going to learn. Before activities start, teachers ensure that pupils have the right levels of understanding. Standards of behaviour are usually high, especially in inspiring lessons such as a Year 6 lesson about circuits and electricity. Consequently, in the significant majority of lessons no time is wasted dealing with inappropriate conduct, and pupils can get on and learn, which they do effectively. Pupils show high levels of concentration and are productive. Only in a very small number of lessons do pupils become restless and disruptive and this is almost always due to inappropriate challenge and boredom.
20. All of the parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching was good. Inspection evidence and the pupils' achievement support the parents' views.
21. Satisfactory assessment procedures have been developed which enable teachers to track all pupils' progress, especially in reading and writing. However, performance information in mathematics is not yet used effectively to support planning or tracking of pupils' achievements accurately as they go through school. It is also the case in science where higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. In ICT, many pupils have good skills and a good knowledge of what they need to do next. Teachers miss opportunities to make use of pupils' own knowledge in assessing how well pupils are doing.
22. Recently developed assessment procedures are now in place for all other subjects. These inform teachers of the how well pupils are achieving in the work they are given but are not linked to National Curriculum levels. Because of this, teachers do not always plan challenging work for all ability groups. In a significant number of lessons in subjects other than English and mathematics, the same work is given to the whole class and some pupils do work that is too difficult, whilst others need more challenging tasks. Learning for pupils at all levels of ability is affected when this happens, including for those pupils with special educational needs.

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum with good opportunities to enrich pupils' learning via an interesting range of visits and visitors. The accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage reception class is good, giving them a good start to their education.
- The curriculum promotes good achievement in pupils' basic skills and personal development.
- The amount of curriculum time in Years 3 to 6 is barely adequate.
- A good range of visits and clubs enriches the curriculum.

- Curriculum links with local secondary schools are good.

Commentary

23. The curriculum meets statutory requirements in all subjects, including the Bolton Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Since the last inspection there has been very good improvement in curricular provision for children in the reception class. There is now a very well planned, relevant curriculum enriched by a very good range of appropriate, interesting activities. The outdoor curriculum, however, is not yet fully established.
24. The school has concentrated on maintaining the high standards in English, mathematics and science reported at the last inspection. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are used well to produce good achievement. Strategies to address weaknesses in pupils' investigative skills in science have been introduced effectively, enabling pupils to achieve well. These initiatives have resulted in less focus on other curriculum areas, for example art and design, resulting in inconsistencies in provision, co-ordination, time allocation and subject evaluation. This lack of development also results in a narrowing of provision because subjects are sometimes taught in isolation, taking limited account of pupils' interests and missing opportunities to make links in pupils' learning. Some topics, for example in history and geography, are studied for very long periods of time, and so the issues lose coherence in the pupils' minds. The school plans to develop a more creative approach to the curriculum, and to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are taught in a consistent way.
25. The amount of curriculum time for pupils in Years 3 to 6 barely meets national recommendations. Having additional afternoon breaks compounds the effects of this. For example, the one hour of curriculum time allocated to physical education per week is inadequate, and is further reduced by placing lessons at the end of the school day. The aptitude that pupils show for this subject suggests that some of their potential remains untapped.
26. A good range of visits and visitors enriches pupils' learning. For instance, Year 3 pupils visited Smithills Hall to reinforce learning about the Tudors, and as part of a literacy project, Year 2 pupils visited Bolton Arena. A wide variety of visitors also add an extra dimension. These include theatre groups, artists, physical education coaches and musicians. An after-school club provides a valuable service for parents and carers. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, and good opportunities to take part in competitive sports. Provision for the arts is satisfactory. The school makes good use of peripatetic music teachers, and a significant number of pupils have additional music tuition. A school-based teacher gives her own time to developing
27. ~~Extra-curricular development is promoted~~ well through lessons. There is a clear policy and suitable curriculum plan that includes satisfactory arrangements for sex and also drugs education. Teachers deliver the subject in discrete lessons, giving good opportunities for pupils to raise and discuss issues. Such activities provide good opportunities for pupils' social development as they negotiate, co-operate and listen to the views of others, contributing significantly to their speaking and listening skills. The school forum also provides a valuable opportunity for pupils to think about the wider issues facing the school.
28. The school provides very well for the inclusion of all pupils. Good provision for pupils with special education needs enables them to take part in curriculum activities alongside their classmates. Although special activities may be designed to meet pupils' specific needs, they generally enable pupils to take a full part in class lessons, and so these pupils are fully included. The school has invested in a good number of additional, well-trained teaching assistants who provide good, effective group support for pupils in lessons. Pupils from ethnic groups are well integrated and all pupils are treated equally.
29. A strength of the curriculum is the well-organised activities planned jointly by teachers from Lostock Primary School and the local secondary schools. This provision ensures a smooth transfer of pupils when they move school at the end of Year 6. Pupils

develop confidence because they meet their new teachers beforehand and spend time in their new schools prior to transfer.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Support and guidance for pupils are good. The school has good procedures for involving pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships with adults, along with a caring environment, give pupils the confidence they need to do well, and to feel safe and secure at school.
- Pupils know that their views matter and have good opportunities to contribute to making decisions about their school.
- Arrangements to support children when they start in reception class are good.
- The recording and monitoring of health and safety issues are not always rigorous enough.

Commentary

30. Parents are, rightly, confident that their children are in good hands at school. Relationships between pupils, teachers and support staff are very good. Staff give a high priority to caring for pupils' welfare and well-being and, as a result, pupils know that they have someone to turn to when they are worried and in need of support. Pupils are encouraged to support one another very well. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 undertake their roles as 'Lostock Listeners' enthusiastically and willingly. They are well prepared for the responsibility that the role carries and, as a result, it contributes very well to pupils' personal and social development. The very positive atmosphere makes pupils feel happy, safe and valued at school. There is good provision of support and guidance based on monitoring. However, although academic targets are set, pupils do not always fully understand them.
31. The school values the views of pupils and has established effective ways to involve them in its work, including the school forum. Pupils know that their views matter and that they can influence school decision-making. Pupils in Year 6, for example, are involved in deciding appropriate rewards to be used for recognising pupils' achievements and good behaviour, and in deciding which sanctions are suitable for inappropriate behaviour. They say that this motivates them to do well.
32. A carefully planned programme of induction, which is appreciated by parents, supports children starting in the reception class, and allows them to settle quickly into their new surroundings. Good links with local secondary schools and the close attention given to the needs of all pupils to prepare them for life beyond primary school ensure that the transfer of pupils to the next phase of their education is a smooth one.
33. Overall, there are good procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment. Risk assessments for events and activities in and around school are very good, and the range and detail of health and safety policies are particularly thorough. The good policy for ensuring pupils' safety whilst using the Internet involves pupils, staff and parents well. Governors fulfil their duty to complete regular health and safety checks, but the recording of findings is insufficiently thorough to ensure the identified risks are prioritised, and that progress is monitored or reviewed periodically.

Partnerships with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive good quality written information and guidance about the school, their children's progress and how they can help at home.
- Parents are supportive of the school and involve themselves well in pupils' learning.
- The school actively seeks and responds to the views of parents.
- Good community links, including visits and visitors, enrich pupils' learning.

Commentary

34. The partnership between home and school is good. The school ensures that parents are kept up to date with all that happens through regular newsletters and the website, both of which are of a very high quality. Good information and good quality reports are sent home so that parents know what their children will be studying and how they can help at home.
35. Parents show a genuine interest in pupils' learning and an eagerness to become involved in school life. A good number of parents regularly give practical help in classrooms or in the library, and others help with educational visits. An active parent and teacher association organises a good range of social activities and raises valuable funds for additional resources, for example playground equipment and water bottles.
36. Recent formal consultation with parents highlighted 'communication between home and school' as an area for improvement. The school responded very positively to this by formulating a detailed action plan and making changes. Parents report that, following consultation, communication has improved and the majority of parents' views are now positive. The school is not complacent, however, and recognises that this area requires further improvement. Parents, for example, would still welcome additional opportunities to find out more about how their children learn and develop knowledge and skills, and a number of workshops are planned. Furthermore, the success of changes made to date is still to be fully evaluated. Consultation with parents on other aspects of the school's work and development is not regularly sought.
37. The good number of visitors welcomed into school, and the visits out of school, including trips to museums, theatres and local churches, increase pupils' understanding of their community and enrich their learning in several subjects. Pupils say they particularly enjoy this aspect of school life. A good range of opportunities for pupils to become involved in local events, including charitable activities, such as distributing harvest gifts to senior citizens, helps them to develop a real sense of belonging to their community and an awareness of social responsibility. Pupils have good opportunities to mix with pupils from other local schools in various sporting and musical events. Links with the wider community, particularly to enhance pupils' multi-cultural development, are not as well established. The school has identified this as an area for improvement and is taking good steps to address the matter. For example, a link has recently been established with a school in South Africa. The 'before and after school club' makes good use of the school building, generating useful income for the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides good leadership. Management is satisfactory. The leadership of key staff is satisfactory. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's clarity of vision and high aspirations for the school are good.
- The staff currently in school work together well as a team.
- School improvement planning is good, but its implementation has been affected adversely by staff absences.
- Leadership and management of a number of subjects are barely adequate.

- There is a strong commitment to the professional development of staff.
- Governors keep in close touch with all aspects of school life and are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- There is good quality financial management and control.

Commentary

38. The headteacher provides good leadership. She is popular with the pupils and parents and provides the school with very clear educational direction. The headteacher is a good role model for other staff and pupils. She is good at ensuring that pupils and staff are well motivated and that there are high aspirations for the school.
39. The headteacher and newly formed senior management team work in close partnership to ensure the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis; this is especially important since a number of key staff are missing. During the staff absences, the school have benefited very well from the input of a consultant deputy head who has helped to provide management support for the headteacher. However, subject co-ordinators, though satisfactory overall, are not as accurate in evaluating how well the subjects that they have responsibility for are developing, partly because of significant staff absences. The co-ordination of some subjects is currently barely adequate. The leadership of mathematics, ICT, history, geography, religious education and physical education is currently being overseen by the headteacher with help from her supportive staff team. However, the depth of monitoring of these subjects is not as strong as one would normally expect and with assessment not being as rigorous as it should be.
40. The headteacher's self evaluation is accurate and, through an effective school improvement plan, it accurately identifies areas for improvement. However, the longer-term picture is still a little cloudy despite the very clear strategic planning, as a result of the staff absences.
41. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) was absent at the time of the inspection, and so discussions could not be held with her. A review of the systems and practices of the school indicates that leadership and management of this aspect are satisfactory overall. Individual class teachers draw up the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. Although the special educational needs co-ordinator gives support and advice on these, there has not been a sufficiently rigorous monitoring of the individual education plans to ensure that all targets are sufficiently sharp or that programmes of support are always clear.
42. The school recognises and is committed to staff development. The performance management process is well established in the school. Teachers' objectives are clearly linked to raising standards and improving school performance as well as their own professional development.
43. The governing body plays a full and active part in school life. It is very well organised and efficient. Committees and governors with specific roles deal very competently with the curriculum, financial and personnel, policy and buildings matters and ensure all statutory requirements are met. They are effective in their monitoring role. The very capable chair of governors works in close partnership with the headteacher to ensure that high standards and good quality provision are secured for all pupils. The school governors are proud of the school and are actively involved in how the school is organised and run. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors are fully involved in the formulation of the school improvement plan; they are regularly updated on its progress and have a sense of ownership of it. Governors are aware of the challenges that face the school, particularly in terms of developing the school in the absence of key staff.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	582951
Total expenditure	544788
Expenditure per pupil	2558

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-15030
Balance carried forward to the next year	23133

Financial resourcing and staffing levels have been carefully considered. There is a good standard of financial management and this helps the school to achieve its educational priorities and to apply the principles of best value at all times.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44. Provision for children in the reception class is **good**. This indicates very good improvement since the last inspection when provision was unsatisfactory. Children now achieve well overall. The quality of teaching has improved significantly because well-planned appropriate activities are a key feature of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Most children enter reception with above average levels of attainment in all areas of learning. Because teaching is consistently good or better in the areas reported fully below, children's achievement is at least good and most are on course to meet all the goals set nationally for children by the end of the reception year (early learning goals). Many will exceed them, hence they are above average overall. The staff provide very well for the inclusion of all children. Those from ethnic groups are settled, happy and fully integrated into school life. Children with special educational needs make good progress because of the high quality small group provision they receive.
45. The 30 children in the reception class are taught by a very effective class teacher and nursery nurse. A support teacher satisfactorily teaches music and a physical session in the school hall. Most aspects of the curriculum are well planned to provide interesting, connected activities that engage children, enabling them to consolidate and reinforce their learning through a well-integrated topic. For example, during the inspection, 'The Little Gingerbread Man' story was used as a catalyst for learning the letter sound 'an', and for early writing, calculating and drama. Planning between the class teacher and support teacher is less effective, with opportunities missed to maintain this integrated learning, limiting the progress that children make at these times.
46. The curriculum is enriched by a satisfactory number of interesting visits and visitors. The outdoor resources have been developed well, but there are insufficient opportunities to use outdoor play as an integral part of provision. Good induction arrangements support parents and children well and ensure a good flow of information between home and school. Good systems for recording and checking children's progress are in place, and these are used effectively to plan activities to meet the differing academic needs of children.

PERSONAL SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good overall and most children achieve very well.
- The very good provision of stimulating activities provided by the class teacher enables children to use their time very profitably.
- Relationships are very good, providing a very positive learning environment.
- The progress of children occasionally suffers when they sit for too long.

Commentary

47. Children enter the reception class with above average skills. Due to very good provision, most make very good progress in this area and are on course to exceed the expected standards by the end of reception. The reception class is a happy, friendly

and welcoming place where children love to come. Because the teacher provides a very good range of worthwhile activities, children are busy and focused. No time is wasted, so that the children make the best use of their time in school. There are very good opportunities for children to work as a class and in small groups, so that they learn to listen to the views of others, to share and to play fairly. The class teacher and nursery nurse form a cohesive team, working well together and ensuring very good role models for the children to follow.

48. Because the teacher plans work that closely matches the differing abilities of children, all are active learners, approaching new work confidently. Adults are competent and proactive so that good use is made of well-focused small group provision, enabling children to receive very good support. One hour is currently allocated to a music lesson taken by the support teacher. This is too long so that the children lose focus and behave less well. Children learn about various celebrations, such as Diwali, Harvest, and Hanukkah, helping them to appreciate their own cultures and those of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very well planned activities ensure that children learn basic skills in a systematic way.
- The teaching of letters and the sounds that they make is very effective.
- Learning is reinforced by good opportunities for parents to help their children at home.
- Assessment is used well to guide teaching and learning.

Commentary

49. Most children enter reception with above average attainment in speaking, in listening and in their awareness of letters and the sounds they make. Their early writing skills fall within average levels. The very good quality of teaching and learning brings about a very good level of achievement. Hence, most children are on course to achieve, and the majority to exceed, most of the early learning goals in this area. Due to children's mature personal and social skills and the provision of very interesting activities, they are already able to take part in a full literacy hour. The teacher has very good computer skills, effectively using an interactive whiteboard in whole-class activities. This powerful tool enables all to see and take an active part in the lesson. Learning is enlivened by the use of puppets and 'Big Book' provision. Rigorous, challenging activities grab the children's attention and no time is wasted. The way the curriculum is organised provides children with lots of experiences around a single topic, enabling them to reinforce newly acquired learning in a range of activities. Adults work effectively with small groups to provide plenty of opportunities for speaking and listening and for children to learn to listen to the views of others in whole-class sessions. Opportunities for drama and role-play enhance this provision.
50. Letter sounds are taught effectively by combining their sounds with actions. This is successful and most can hear the initial sound in a word. Many already blend letters together to make simple words such as 'man'. This enables children to make great strides in their reading and early writing. Communication between home and school is good. Children read regularly at home and practise letter sounds and key words. This consolidates their skills well and enables parents and carers to be actively involved in

their children's learning. Children's pencil control skills are good, and most children now form letters confidently. The teacher provides good opportunities for children to practise these skills in a variety of ways by, for example writing times of delivery for pizzas in the class 'pizza shop'. Approximately half of the children are beginning to write simple sentences, using the sounds that letters make. Good systems of assessment enable the teacher to provide work at exactly the right level. Targets are set and shared with parents.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good practical activities make learning fun.
- Good teaching enables children to achieve well.
- Some activities are too challenging.

Commentary

51. Most children enter reception with above average skills in counting. Because teaching and learning are good, most children make good progress so that the majority are likely to achieve, and a significant number to exceed, the early learning goals in this area of learning. The teacher provides many good activities enabling children to practise new skills in a variety of ways. For example, children sang a counting song, moved beads along a string as they counted down and, with help, constructed addition and subtraction sums. They then practised this new learning in small group activities. This approach reinforces learning in a variety of practical settings. For example, high attaining children worked in the 'pizza shop', adding a variety of food toppings, calculating the cost and writing simple addition sums. By the end of the reception year, most children can count and recognise numbers to 20, write simple calculations and have a good knowledge of basic geometric shapes. Because the teacher uses subject-specific words, they are developing a good vocabulary with which to describe their work. They are beginning to understand 'one more' and 'one less' and words such as 'equals', 'plus' and 'subtract'.
52. Because the activities are challenging and both adults are fully involved in instructing small groups, some individuals do not have the support they require to complete their tasks. This reduces the progress they make at these times. Because children do not have an appropriate visual aid, a significant minority write numerals incorrectly.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff focus on very practical tasks that suit the children well.
- Activities provide good opportunities for children to learn to investigate ideas and
- Catering is used effectively to increase the scope of learning.

Commentary

53. Children enter the reception class with above average attainment in this area. Good teaching and learning enable them to consistently widen their experiences through a range of carefully structured, exciting activities. Children achieve well and the majority exceed the early learning goals. Children show inquisitiveness and are eager to take part. When investigating foods, the teacher's very good choice of fruits and vegetables greatly increased the scope of the lesson. For example, children named and compared a leek with a spring onion and an onion, and a carrot with a turnip etc. This increased their skills of observation and vocabulary as they described the small differences. Most

children categorised the items correctly and confidently named their favourite foods. A range of relevant activities reinforced learning. For example, children baked gingerbread men; others made a group collage using fresh vegetables. In small groups, staff took every opportunity to develop children's vocabulary, questioning them to extend their answers.

54. Role-play is used well to support children's discovery, to practise new skills and to increase vocabulary. In the 'pizza shop', children prepare pizza bases, arrange toppings in symmetrical patterns and package the finished goods. They handle a range of tools and materials. The teacher uses the interactive whiteboard in many lessons and encourages children to manipulate items on the screen. Most children enlarge and reduce images confidently, dragging them to the required place. Children use a digital camera independently to record their work. They show awe and wonder as they observe vegetable sections under the digital microscope. Limited use is made of the outdoor provision to add another dimension to this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

55. Owing to inspection priorities and inclement weather, no overall judgements were made. Children have many good opportunities to increase their ability to handle and use equipment, such as scissors and construction kits. In outdoor play, they confidently steer and propel bikes and scooters, showing good awareness of space and themselves. They show good hand/eye co-ordination when cutting and sticking, and most colour in with accuracy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-thought-out provision enables children to make links in their learning.
- Good organisation enables children to make independent choices.
- Adults sometimes over-direct children's drawing and painting.
- Children are sometimes given insufficient opportunity to take an active part in lessons.

Commentary

56. Teaching and learning are good overall and as a result children achieve well. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area. Children's learning is consolidated well through a good range of opportunities for creativity. For example, children donned masks or used puppets to act out the story of 'The Little Gingerbread Man', adapting their voices to the different characters. In small world play, they worked as a group to produce a setting for the gingerbread man, again acting out the various parts. Role-play also offers good opportunities to develop creativity as children dress in uniforms and take on differing roles. Adults interact well with children at these times, extending the scope of play and developing children's speaking and listening skills. When drawing and painting, adults sometimes draw the outlines for children without encouraging the child to 'have a go' first. This limits opportunities for individual responses and for children to sometimes learn from their mistakes. Children use a variety of media and most show good skills of observation. When making scrap model houses, they persevere to produce work of good quality. In music, the children

were insufficiently challenged to sing tunefully. Too little activity resulted in a significant minority behaving negatively and this reduced the progress made in the lesson.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good overall and this underpins pupils' very good achievement.
- Standards are well above the national average in reading, speaking and listening.
- Achievement in writing is good, but not as good as in the other aspects by the end of Year 6, although standards are now rising.

Commentary

57. Standards of attainment have improved since the previous inspection, and are now well above the national average across the school. There is a range of very good strategies for promoting reading, speaking and listening across the school and there is very good support from parents for reading. The best teaching is focused very clearly on the identified learning needs of different groups, and enables pupils to develop the specific skills they need to progress to the next level. Teaching assistants give good support for the subject, particularly through guided reading sessions and through work with groups on specific programmes. The subject is well led, and leaders have been successful in identifying the need to improve writing, and in promoting strategies that
58. Pupils entering Year 6 with standards of speaking and listening already above those usually found. They benefit from a wide range of opportunities to develop skills within this area and, as a result, make very good progress, so that standards are high by the end of Year 6. Many classes make very effective use of techniques, such as paired discussion, role-play and drama, to provide opportunities for speech and discussion. Some of these opportunities are in other subjects. For example, in a very good Year 6 personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson, groups of pupils were set the task to make up a short play to illustrate the dangers of particular drugs. The exercise was very well supported with written information about the drugs and the pupils were able to draw upon this, and their knowledge of specialist vocabulary, in their plays. They were particularly adept at switching from an informal to formal style of speech as they drew on reading to do this.
59. Standards of reading are generally well above the national average across the school. This is very good achievement for the pupils. The teaching of reading is very good overall, and particularly good in those classes where exciting texts are used, and where there is a very specific focus on the literary features of the texts, as well as on the recognition of words. There is a considerable focus on reading, with younger pupils being heard read individually and in groups, and with extra reading sessions held for older pupils. This, together with very good support from home, promotes not only the high standards, but also the great enjoyment that many pupils derive from reading.
60. Standards of writing are above average across the school and represent good achievement. The teaching of writing is generally good across the school, where some very good techniques are in use. For example, there was good use of writing partners, where pupils appraise each other's work, in Year 6, of a 'fish game' in which pupils matched beginnings and endings of words in Year 1, and of 'living sentences' in Year 5. In the best teaching, learning objectives are specific to each group, with pupils building precisely on their present level of skills. Pupils are often able to draw upon very wide vocabularies and sophisticated use of language in their speech; for example one Year 3 pupil described a Viking in a picture as "The masterful Viking brandishes his mighty sword". However, not all pupils are able to translate speech into writing in

this way. Standards in writing are not as high as in reading, partly because less time has been given to the aspect in the past, and partly because pupils have not always had sufficient opportunities for practice with guidance on how to improve. There is now a greater focus on this aspect and standards are rising.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. There is very good use of language and literacy in other subjects, such as history and geography. This extends reading and speaking and listening skills through research and the use of paired or group discussion, role-play and drama. For example, in a very good Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils learned the art of note-taking by using a book about the Ancient Egyptians from their history topic. Opportunities for writing in other subjects are often limited by tasks that require very short written answers. The library is well stocked, but few classes make extensive use of this facility for independent research

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well as they move through the school.
- The National Numeracy Strategy is used well by teachers.
- The subject is well promoted in classrooms.
- Leadership and management are at an early stage of development.
- Assessment procedures are not rigorous enough.

Commentary

62. Standards of attainment are above the national average by the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. This pattern of attainment generally maintains the high standards seen in the previous inspection but is slightly lower in Year 2 because, for the first time in many years, this Year 2 cohort was below the Bolton average on entry to the school. Pupils throughout the school are achieving well, including those with special educational needs. Recent test results have shown that Year 6 girls perform particularly well in the national tests and differences in performance between Lostock girls and girls nationally are significantly higher. In lessons observed during the inspection, teachers were careful to ensure that they directed questions carefully to boys and girls, as well as different ability groups. This ensured that all pupils felt involved and challenged during question and answer sessions and in the plenary at the end of lessons. In many year groups, a significant number of pupils are working at a level higher than one would normally expect. For some of these pupils, this represents very good achievement.
63. Numeracy lessons are fun and the pupils enjoy them. Good quality homework for all pupils builds well on work done in lessons. A scrutiny of pupils' work showed that lower attaining pupils have made good progress in all year groups, especially in presenting their work neatly. The higher attaining pupils make best progress in Years 5 and 6. Some good work has been done across the full range of the mathematics curriculum. As a result, all pupils develop a secure grasp of number and how to apply it in solving problems, as well as good knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures and data handling.
64. The quality of teaching is good. In the numeracy lessons seen, the teachers' confidence, enthusiasm and good subject knowledge were very evident. The pupils were often highly motivated and keen to be involved and as a result, their learning was

good and in some cases, very good. Teachers plan conscientiously and make effective use of practical resources, such as counting sticks and whiteboards. In sharing the purpose of the lesson with the pupils, the teachers frequently relate it to what the pupils know already. Using the National Numeracy Strategy, teachers ensure that pupils develop their understanding, knowledge and skills in a systematic and organised way. Pupils of different levels of ability have a good understanding of what they are doing because they are always told about what they are going to learn.

65. No time is wasted and lessons move at a good pace. The pupils learn and achieve well because they are helped to make relevant connections between what they know and new information. In lessons, the initial sessions of mental mathematics are generally lively and the teachers prompt the pupils to think quickly and to explain their answers. In sharing and discussing strategies, the teachers provide a good model for the pupils in the way they set out computations clearly on the class interactive whiteboard. The ready and encouraging exchanges between teachers and pupils give the pupils confidence that in turn leads to success and feelings of positive self-esteem in mathematics. The teachers' skilled questioning, with integral use of mathematical vocabulary, develops and deepens the pupils' understanding.
66. The current subject co-ordinator has only taken leadership of the subject in recent weeks and has had little time to impact on the school's work. However, she and the headteacher have already identified correctly a need to improve assessment procedures for the subject and to track the progress of pupils more rigorously. There is currently insufficient analysis of pupils' results in statutory and non-statutory tests. For this reason, teachers are not clear about which particular areas of the curriculum or groups of pupils to focus on in order to improve their practice. There has been no recent monitoring of the quality of others' lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. The skills associated with numeracy are promoted satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum but they are often taught more by accident than by careful planning. However, analysis of pupils' work in subjects, such as science and geography, provide good examples of data handling, and work with number is promoted in ICT. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 learnt how to use spreadsheets in working out the usage of water in their homes.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school pupils' achievements are good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and is outstanding in Years 5 and 6.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop investigative skills.
- Pupils enjoy science and have good attitudes to learning.
- Work is not always sufficiently differentiated for pupils of differing abilities.
- There is limited use of ICT to support learning.

Commentary

68. The high standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained. In the 2004 national tests, pupils' standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 were above national

expectations. Inspection findings indicate a similarly positive picture for the current Year 2 and 6 cohorts. Pupils achieve well.

69. Pupils' investigative skills are the strongest aspect of their science. This is because teachers have undergone training in this aspect and plan consistent opportunities for pupils to carry out practical investigations. Hence, by the end of Year 2, most pupils know how to devise a simple test and can say how to make this fair. By the time they reach Year 4, most pupils carry out scientific tests independently and undertake all aspects of the scientific process. For example, in a Year 4 lesson about insulators, pupils first predicted the outcomes of the experiment. They chose the resources they required, confidently carried out the investigation, accurately measured and recorded results and drew conclusions. Because pupils were actively engaged, the level of interest was high and pupils were motivated to concentrate and persevere for a good
70. ~~The quality of~~ The quality of teaching is good overall and is outstanding in Years 5 and 6. Teachers plan challenging activities that grab pupils' attention. For example, in an inspiring Year 6 lesson, pupils were given four questions to answer about electrical circuits. Because they had all the information and equipment they required, they carried out investigations enthusiastically, with sustained concentration. Working in groups, they displayed excellent levels of personal and social development as they listened to the views of others and worked co-operatively as a cohesive team. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use subject-specific vocabulary well, giving pupils a language with which to describe their hypotheses. Teachers manage pupils very well, so there are no behaviour problems, enabling a clear focus on learning in lessons. Teachers plan interesting activities that engage pupils. All aspects of the science curriculum are effectively covered, enabling pupils to develop a good, all-round knowledge and
71. ~~Scrutiny of pupils' work over time indicates~~ Scrutiny of pupils' work over time indicates that teachers do not always carefully differentiate the activities for the varying abilities of pupils in the class. This sometimes leads to pupils with below average attainment being unable to complete the work. At other times, this results in the work having insufficient challenge for higher attainers, precluding them from working at a higher level or writing or evaluating their work more fully. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy their science and maintain a good rate of progress because of the additional support they receive from well-informed classroom assistants. This enables them to be fully included as they undertake the
72. ~~same topic as the rest of the class.~~ The subject leader is new to the role and has yet to make an impact on provision. The headteacher has given effective support and guidance and the co-ordinator is well placed to begin to develop the subject further. Procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress are at an early stage and cannot yet be used as a management tool. For example, pupils' answers in national tests have not been analysed systematically to ascertain strengths and weaknesses in provision. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills in science, and satisfactory opportunities for them to apply their mathematical skills. Opportunities are missed for pupils to apply their ICT skills by, for example, producing computer-generated graphs of investigation results.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well organised.
- Teachers' expertise and confidence have improved as a result of training.
- Pupils are learning and achieving well in Years 1, 5 and 6 because of effective teaching.
- There is too little ICT work in Years 2, 3 and 4.
- Pupils are not involved enough in their own assessment.

Commentary

73. The subject co-ordinator is currently absent but deserves praise for being the driving force behind improvements in teachers' skills and confidence and for setting up an award-winning website. Standards are better than those found in the previous inspection and are in line with standards normally expected by the end of Year 2 but above in Year 6. Overall provision has improved with better equipment and improved teaching. All the teachers have worked together and recent training has boosted their subject knowledge. The future for the subject in the school is positive, with recent investment in ICT initiatives and reliable technical support from a recently appointed technician. The school has considered the sustainability of this very carefully in its long-term financial planning.
74. Teaching is satisfactory overall but good in Years 5 and 6. As a result, pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and achieve well overall in Years 3 to 6. However, pupils achieve better in Years 1, 5 and 6 than they do in Years 2, 3 and 4. In Years 2, 3 and 4, teachers are not using ICT enough and this slows pupils' overall progress. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress over time in acquiring and using a range of skills. The teaching sessions are short and well focused; they provide all pupils with explicit, direct teaching and clear demonstrations. Pupils in Year 1 know how to open and shut down programs. Year 1 and 2 pupils control the mouse competently. Year 1 pupils made quick progress in learning how to create pictures on screen.
75. Throughout Years 5 and 6, pupils' achievement is good because of well-organised, imaginative and good teaching that frequently links ICT with other subjects. Pupils in these classes are keen to learn and willing to collaborate and support each other's learning. A very positive feature of the lessons seen in Year 5 was the interaction of the class teacher with her pupils to ensure that lower attaining pupils were given support and higher attaining pupils were challenged. She showed confidence with the subject and secure subject knowledge. The pupils behaved well and showed good levels of independence as they got on with their work. Year 6 pupils have good knowledge about ICT as well as skills in using it. They were keen to demonstrate their multimedia presentations. One pupil confidently explained and showed how he had used different functions to incorporate sound, pictures and text to present information about his hobby. All the pupils have a good understanding of technical language, cells and transition of slides. They have had experience in using other ICT equipment, including the digital camera and electronic microscope.
76. The use of national guidelines ensures the knowledge, understanding and skills associated with ICT are taught progressively as pupils move through the school. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory and can be used by teachers to plan future units of work in the different areas of the subject. However, older pupils are not yet assessing their own skills and achievements and most are capable of doing so.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. All classes are timetabled to use the school's laptop computers. By following the scheme of work, ICT naturally supports other areas of the curriculum, such as literacy and numeracy, as well as developing pupils' knowledge understanding and skills in the subject. For example, in Year 5, pupils confidently used spreadsheets in science, mathematics and geography and added *clip art* pictures and photographs to enhance their work in history.

HUMANITIES

78. It was not possible to see sufficient lessons in history or geography to form an overall judgement about the provision in those subjects. Pupils' work indicates, however, that standards are broadly average. Religious education is reported in full.
79. In both **history** and **geography**, pupils are involved in a good range of activities, but the impact is reduced by the way many of the topics are organised. There is some very good overall planning that makes the precise focus of each topic and the expected outcomes very clear, but pupils' work indicates that this focus is often lost. This is because some topics are studied for very long periods of time, and so the issues lose coherence in the pupils' minds. In some cases, other material is brought in that, though it might be interesting, is not strictly relevant to the aims of the topic, and so clouds learning.
80. In **geography**, pupils have appropriate opportunities to explore the local area and build up their knowledge and skills through first-hand experiences. Visits and field trips provide pupils with additional opportunities to increase their geographical understanding. Effective use is made of the local environment to extend skills and consider issues of importance such as pollution. A very good lesson in Year 2 used the 'Katie Morag' story to explore differences between Bolton and a Scottish island. Very good work in Year 5 involved pupils in filtering dirty water to examine issues of pollution. In some other classes, pupils' work consists mainly of worksheets, and in these classes progress is slower.
81. In **history**, younger pupils cover an appropriate programme studying famous people in the past and considering differences between past times and now. This enables them to reach the standards usually found. Topics through Years 3 to 6 are often long, sometimes very detailed and are mainly enjoyed by the pupils. However, pupils sometimes lose their focus in the topic length, and the detail sometimes detracts from the close focus on expected levels in the planning.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good balance between study of Christianity and other faiths.
- Pupils share their ideas confidently with others because they know that their thoughts are listened to and valued.

Commentary

82. Standards in religious education are generally in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. This is similar to standards found at the time of the previous inspection. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but the quality varies, with some very good lessons that challenge pupils' thinking and put them into open-ended situations where they have to draw upon their knowledge and understandings. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were asked to discuss the religious symbolism of a range of objects, such as bread and wine that have special meanings to particular faiths. Other lessons are more straightforward and cover the required ground, without really challenging the pupils to think or exciting their imaginations.

83. As a result, by Year 6, pupils have developed the expected level of understanding of the major world religions and know the beliefs associated with faiths such as Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. They can compare customs and beliefs, such as the way people pray and the meaning of festivals such as Christmas, Diwali, and Eid. Pupils recognise the importance of holy books and different places of worship including churches, temples and mosques.
84. In those lessons where pupils are considering abstract issues such as friendship or loyalty, they share their ideas confidently and learn from each other. This is because most teachers value and respect others' views. In this way, religious education lessons help pupils develop their sense of community and understanding of other cultures and faiths. This is extended into the wider life of the school through both religious and secular gatherings, such as school assemblies.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

85. No judgements on provision are made in art and design and design and technology as no lessons were observed in these subjects. Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils.
86. In **art and design**, the limited amount of work on display and in books suggests that the range of work is limited. This shows a decline since the last inspection when pupils' standards by the end of Year 6 were above those expected nationally. This is because the school has concentrated on maintaining standards in English, mathematics and science, limiting development of this subject. Most teachers appear to teach art in one-off lessons so that pupils do not build up skills, knowledge and understanding in a consistent way. The school acknowledges poor art skills generally across the school, so that by Year 6, many pupils lack the basic skills of drawing, sketching and using a range of media. The use of sketchbooks is underdeveloped. Whilst resources are satisfactory overall, classroom provision is inconsistent. For example, in a Year 4 history lesson, the paintbrushes used were of poor quality, so that pupils could not produce accurate and fine detail. The subject is enriched by the work of artists in residence, who lift the quality and range of work. For example, Year 1 and 2 classes worked with a textile artist to construct silk banners depicting the seasons, and every child contributed their ideas to the attractive playground mosaic. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use computer-generated art programs and to apply their art skills to other subjects; for example, Year 4 pupils made well-executed three-dimensional masks as part of their Egyptian history topic. The subject provision is well placed to improve as it is led by a knowledgeable, energetic co-ordinator, who has effectively managed the subject provision in Year 1 and 6 as well as developed pupils' practice a range of skills prior to designing. For example, Year 5 pupils constructed simple hinged doors for the design and making club model houses with hinged doors. This good practice gives the pupils the skills they require prior to completing the work. However, in most classes there is little evidence of the design process being fully in place. Teachers do not routinely plan work so that pupils disassemble products prior to designing, produce detailed, drawn design intentions or evaluate the finished work. The scope of provision is often limited. For example, Year 3 pupils used commercial templates to produce houses. In Year 2, models of Tudor houses were similar because a limited range of resources resulted in all pupils using the same materials. The co-ordinator has rightly evaluated the need for whole-school training to ensure a consistent development of skills and the promotion of the full design process. ICT is not used as a tool for modelling and teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to apply mathematical skills such as measurement.
87. In **design and technology**, the limited amount of work on display and in books suggests that the range of work is limited. This shows a decline since the last inspection when pupils' standards by the end of Year 6 were above those expected nationally. This is because the school has concentrated on maintaining standards in English, mathematics and science, limiting development of this subject. Most teachers appear to teach design and technology in one-off lessons so that pupils do not build up skills, knowledge and understanding in a consistent way. The school acknowledges poor design and technology skills generally across the school, so that by Year 6, many pupils lack the basic skills of drawing, sketching and using a range of media. The use of sketchbooks is underdeveloped. Whilst resources are satisfactory overall, classroom provision is inconsistent. For example, in a Year 4 history lesson, the paintbrushes used were of poor quality, so that pupils could not produce accurate and fine detail. The subject is enriched by the work of artists in residence, who lift the quality and range of work. For example, Year 1 and 2 classes worked with a textile artist to construct silk banners depicting the seasons, and every child contributed their ideas to the attractive playground mosaic. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use computer-generated art programs and to apply their art skills to other subjects; for example, Year 4 pupils made well-executed three-dimensional masks as part of their Egyptian history topic. The subject provision is well placed to improve as it is led by a knowledgeable, energetic co-ordinator, who has effectively managed the subject provision in Year 1 and 6 as well as developed pupils' practice a range of skills prior to designing. For example, Year 5 pupils constructed simple hinged doors for the design and making club model houses with hinged doors. This good practice gives the pupils the skills they require prior to completing the work. However, in most classes there is little evidence of the design process being fully in place. Teachers do not routinely plan work so that pupils disassemble products prior to designing, produce detailed, drawn design intentions or evaluate the finished work. The scope of provision is often limited. For example, Year 3 pupils used commercial templates to produce houses. In Year 2, models of Tudor houses were similar because a limited range of resources resulted in all pupils using the same materials. The co-ordinator has rightly evaluated the need for whole-school training to ensure a consistent development of skills and the promotion of the full design process. ICT is not used as a tool for modelling and teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to apply mathematical skills such as measurement.

88. In **physical education**, provision is judged as unsatisfactory despite no lessons being seen. This is because the amount of time allocated to this subject is less than one hour per week and insufficient for pupils to gain suitable knowledge, skills and understanding. In addition, parents and pupils report that lessons have been missed when pupils have misbehaved. The school recognises these shortcomings and is preparing to deal with the issues as it reconsiders the curriculum.
89. It is disappointing that the statutory curriculum is so restricted because some exciting opportunities are provided. For example, a local high school has provided dance lessons for all the pupils and training for staff. There is also close liaison with another secondary school as part of transition arrangements and Year 11 students help with football coaching. Bolton Wanderers Football Club has also delivered football training and the Soccer Academy has provided a literacy and practical session to support pupils' learning.
90. Pupils in Year 4 attend swimming lessons and any non-swimmers from Years 5 and 6 are included in lessons. As a result, almost all pupils can swim 25 metres by the time they leave school.
91. The school provides a number of activities to enhance the sporting curriculum. A residential visit provides an opportunity for pupils to participate in adventurous pursuits and clubs. Some clubs led by staff or parents give opportunities for pupils to enjoy extra-curricular football, netball, rounders and athletics.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for pupils to play a wide variety of instruments.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Lack of monitoring and evaluation has resulted in weaknesses in provision not being addressed.

Commentary

92. Standards at the end of Year 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. Pupils' composing and performing skills are at the levels normally expected but they do not sing well in the junior classes. Pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory. This shows a decline in standards since the last inspection when pupils' standards were above those expected nationally.
93. A specialist teacher, who plans a good range of activities that build skills knowledge and understanding in a structured way, teaches the subject. Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, there are occasionally weaknesses in the management of pupils, especially with Year 6 pupils that result in a reduction in the pace of lessons and the quality of learning taking place. Lack of careful monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in the subject has resulted in these aspects not being addressed, and as a result, there has been a decline in pupils' standards at Year 6.
94. One hour of curriculum time is allocated to the subject in all classes, but the teacher does not always plan a suitably varied programme for the full hour. For example, in some topics, such as teaching high and low sounds, less curriculum time is required,

but when teaching musical composition more flexibility is required. This restricts and impacts on the teaching and provision overall.

95. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to receive music tuition from peripatetic music teachers of brass, keyboard and stringed instruments. Pupils receive this provision enthusiastically and take-up is high. The music teacher also gives generously of her free time to teach recorder and choir groups. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development as pupils learn about the importance of, and gain satisfaction from, performing in assemblies and annual events. These include regular performances in assemblies, local events and larger school performances at Harvest and Christmas.
96. The subject is enriched by visits to interesting places. For example, Year 5 visited a local mill, and used this experience to compose music capturing the sounds made by machinery. Exciting visitors, such as African drummers, and opportunities to listen to a range of music from other countries, effectively promote a multi-cultural perspective. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to compose music electronically.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

97. Although too few lessons were seen to judge overall provision, this is a positive feature of the school. The school promotes healthy eating and a healthy and safe lifestyle. For example, pupils in Year 6 sensitively and maturely discussed the dangers of drug abuse.
98. Pupils are encouraged to become citizens of the school community, the local community and industrious members of their country and the world. They learn that actions have consequences and understand that vandalism is wrong and that we all need a caring community. Pupils are very keen to take responsibility, whether it is as a representative of the school forum or, for example, a 'Lostock Listener'. They describe their school as a 'happy place to be'. Pupils constantly think of others as they raise money for local charities but they also consider those further afield, for example through the Tsunami Appeal.
99. The pupils are encouraged well to look after the world and its resources. For example, pupils in Year 5 recognise that water is a precious resource and they consider how they can save water in their everyday 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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	1
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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