

INSPECTION REPORT

PARKROYAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Macclesfield

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111016

Headteacher: Mr Nick Warren

Lead inspector: Mrs Chris Field

Dates of inspection: 30th November to 2nd December 2004

Inspection number: 267475

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:	404
School address:	Athey Street Macclesfield Cheshire
Postcode:	SK11 6QU
Telephone number:	01625 426083
Fax number:	01625 617358
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr Stephen Horner
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school, which is located in the heart of Macclesfield town, is larger than most with 404 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils who attend the school are from the neighbourhood, which comprises a mix of private and rented housing. Many of the children have attended the playgroup, which shares the school site, before joining the reception. Although covering a wide span, children's attainment is broadly average when they transfer to Year 1. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds but a few have dual heritage or are from Chinese backgrounds. Seven pupils speak English as an additional language, their first languages include Philippino, Urdu and Bulgarian. A below average proportion of pupils have special educational needs that cover a range of learning difficulties; two pupils have a statement.

The school was accredited with a Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2000, a government Achievement Award for raising academic standards in 2001 and the Healthy Schools Award in 2003 and 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
9479	C Field	Lead inspector	Personal and social education and citizenship.
9428	J Butler	Lay inspector	
15414	D Carrington	Team inspector	English as an additional language, English, French, information and communication technology and religious education.
20326	P Clark	Team Inspector	Special educational needs, provision for children in the Foundation Stage, mathematics, design and technology and physical education.
21816	B Thomas	Team Inspector	Science, art and design, geography, history and music.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is highly **effective** in providing a very good quality education for its pupils and is successful in enabling them to achieve well. Teaching and learning are good, with many strengths. The school ethos is vibrant and exciting; work in the arts is of particular high quality. Pupils are proud of their school and very much enjoy being there. The headteacher gives very good leadership with strong support from the extremely committed staff. The school clearly adds significant value to the pupils' education and provides **very good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics, science and art and design.
- Good teaching enables good learning with very good features in the upper juniors that result in accelerated progress.
- The progress made by higher attaining pupils is inconsistent, especially in the infants.
- The very clear educational direction provided by the headteacher harnesses 100 per cent staff commitment to promoting the school's aims and mission.
- A very good curriculum, with an excellent range of extras, provides very worthwhile experiences for pupils of all ages.
- Very good systems for health and welfare are underpinned by very good relationships that support the pupils' very good personal and social development.
- Assessment, including marking, pupils' self-review, and parents' support for the targeting of pupils' next steps in learning are not sharp enough.
- Very good links with the community, other schools and colleges are very beneficial to extending pupils' educational experiences.
- The monitoring and evaluation role of non-core subject leaders is not sufficiently developed.

The school has sustained the best aspects of the educational provision reported on last time it was inspected in 1999 and has made very good improvement to identified weaknesses. The school has very good capacity to continue its improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement is **good** overall. The children in the reception class known as the *Foundation Stage* receive a rounded education and achieve well. Pupils achieve well in the infants, though higher attaining pupils could potentially achieve more if they received consistent challenge in their work. Current standards in Year 2 are above average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and art and design. Pupils achieve well in the juniors, with some very good achievement in the last two years. Current standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics, science and art and design and above average in ICT and religious education. Standards are average in all other inspected subjects at the end of both Years 2 and 6.

The table that follows shows that in 2004 the Year 6 pupils reached well above average standards in all tested subjects. When Year 6 pupils' prior attainment at Key Stage 1 is checked, these results show that they made very good progress in English, and good progress in mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. This reflects good achievement overall and is a similar picture to that reported at the time of the previous inspection.

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are **very good**. Pupils enjoy school, they persevere with their work and behave well. Relationships are very good and the school is a very happy and high achieving learning community. Attendance is close to the average and pupils' punctuality is satisfactory. Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is **good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is **very good**. Teaching and learning are **good** with particular strengths in upper juniors. Classrooms are vibrant places in which pupils of all ages achieve well because of interesting activities that enable most to be challenged at the right level across the subjects they study. However, in some lessons in the infants more could be expected of high attaining pupils. A good start has been made in assessing pupils' achievement in the core subjects but this has yet to be extended to other subjects. Marking and target setting are not being used well enough to support ongoing learning. The curriculum offers very worthwhile learning experiences for the pupils, with excellent enrichment. French is taught weekly to a good standard. The very positive care and support that pupils receive help them to learn confidently and with success. Pupils are very well supported, especially those with special educational needs. The very good provision for pupils' personal and social development ensures that they are well prepared as responsible future citizens. The school has a good partnership with parents and has forged very effective links with other educational institutions and its community to the benefit of pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The headteacher is a very good leader who inspires and empowers others to take responsibility with confidence. The outstanding team spirit and strong corporate effort are the main driving force in moving the school forward. Core subject leaders are very well informed about their subjects but non-core leaders do not have sufficient opportunity to gain a full overview of the standards in the subjects they lead. Governors are committed to, and very proud of, the school. They undertake their *critical friend* role successfully and apply the principles of best value securely to all decisions.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with the school and the majority hold positive views about the rounded education their children receive. Some raised concerns about communication that the school is working hard to improve. Pupils say that they like art and design, ICT and writing stories best of all. Many told inspectors that they like their school just the way it is and would not change a thing!

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that higher attaining pupils, especially in the infants, receive a good level of challenge in their work.
- Sharpen up teachers' assessment, including marking and the targeting of pupils' next steps in learning and widen the opportunities for pupils to review their own progress and involve parents in supporting this process.
- Further develop the role of non-core subject leaders in rigorously monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and standards to ensure that the features of best practice are identified and shared.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good**. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics, science and art and design and above average in ICT and religious education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics, science and art and design.
- Very effective improvement strategies are resulting in rising standards in ICT and religious education.
- All pupils, irrespective of their background, gender or ability, are provided with equality of opportunity to succeed. However, high fliers do not receive a consistent level of challenge.
- The school has yet to set up a rigorous system that involves teachers, pupils and parents in all years in setting and reviewing targets to support even better achievement.

Commentary

1. The school has been successful in sustaining credible standards since the time of the previous inspection. Very effective improvement strategies have resulted in standards being raised in information and communication technology (ICT) from a below average to an above average level. The provision in religious education reported by the 1999 inspection to be weak, is now good. Pupils reach above average standards in religious education and benefit from a very hands-on approach to learning that involves them in gaining knowledge about the three major world religions of Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism and drawing from them to support their own life experiences.
2. Most children currently in reception started with typically average levels of skills and knowledge. The effective team of early years staff help the children to make good progress in all areas of learning, with most meeting the goals expected and a few exceeding them. Over their time in school boys and girls receive equal opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding in English, mathematics and science and the well above average standards at the end of school reflect this. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, are well provided for and make good progress against the specific targets set for them. Pupils who do not speak English at home are represented in all attainment groups and they achieve at the same good rate as their classmates. The school agrees challenging targets with its local education authority to show clearly its ambition to strive for high standards. The pupils currently in Year 6 are well on track to reach the demanding targets set for 2005.
3. Pupils move forward in their learning and achieve well during their time at school, particularly in English, mathematics and art and design. The very good curriculum, high staff confidence levels and strong leadership drive in place to support pupils' learning, are key factors in assisting the consistent rate of achievement in all years in these three subjects. Very effective additional strategies in literacy and numeracy are in place to assist slower learners. They are organised by the very skilled group of support staff and are having a very beneficial effect on the achievements of this group of pupils. However those who are capable of high achievement could potentially build their knowledge and skills at a faster rate if the work set for them was better matched to so doing. For example, in some lessons observed, mainly in the infants, these pupils were set the same tasks as others with extension work identified for when they finished. In many instances the lesson was concluded before the pupils moved onto the higher level task. Work in books shows this sameness of approach that is limiting a higher standard of work.
4. Standards in science reach the same well above average level of those in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 but are not as high at the end of Year 2. The approaches in the infants are successful in providing pupils with the information they need to build their

knowledge and understanding but are less effective in enabling pupils to develop scientific skills. The school is alert to this and is currently focusing on better promoting a *learning by doing* approach to science.

5. Standards in Year 2 are currently above average in English, mathematics, science, ICT, religious education and art and design. Standards are average in all other inspected subjects.
6. The table that follows shows that in the 2004 national tests Year 2 pupils attained above average standards in reading and mathematics and well above average standards in writing. The results are above those found in similar schools in reading and mathematics and well above in writing. Results improved significantly on those in 2003, particularly in writing, with boys doing so much better in 2004 than in previous years. The much improved results reflect very well on the effectiveness of the school's improvement strategies.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.8 (16.3)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.9 (15.1)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.2 (15.4)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 70 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

7. Standards in Year 6 are currently well above average in English, mathematics, science and art and design and above average in ICT and religious education. Standards are average in all other inspected subjects.
8. The table that follows shows that in the 2004 national tests, Year 6 pupils reached well above average standards across the board. In English the results place the school in the top five per cent when compared to the results found in similar schools. Results in the other two subjects are well above those found in similar schools. The overall rate of improvement at the end of Year 6 is in line with that seen nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.9 (28.7)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.0 (28.6)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.9 (31.0)	28.6 (28.6)

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

9. The school is very inclusive in its practice and holds useful assessment data on how well year groups and individual pupils are doing. The school is developing a system of target setting in English and mathematics that has potential to heighten staff and pupils' awareness of the next steps for learning and has merit for extension across other subjects. So far there has been limited use of targets in marking for example to show pupils how to improve the standard of their work. The next step is to involve them and their parents, in regular reviews of their progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and values are **very good**. Their behaviour and personal development is **good**. Attendance is close to the national average and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils love coming to school, they are very keen to learn and are proud of belonging to the Parkroyal family.
- Relationships are very good.
- Any anti-social behaviour is dealt with very effectively and pupils feel safe.
- Pupils show very high levels of respect for the feelings and values of others.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and at play.
- Pupils are keen to take on more roles of responsibility within school.

Commentary

10. The school motto of *Knowing, growing, caring and sharing* epitomises the school's ethos and is very well met in practice. Pupils' attitudes to school and to learning are very good and a real strength. They told inspectors that they love coming to school, enjoy the many and varied learning opportunities and do their best in lessons, where they listen attentively and try hard. From the youngest to the oldest, active listening is encouraged, and pupils quickly learn how to share, work together and celebrate each others' successes. Pupils are proud of their school and can think of very little to improve it. They say that one of the best aspects is the wide range of visits that give them exciting opportunities to see and do things that are new. Some Year 4 children were enthusiastic in their recall of a trip to a museum to see artefacts from Ancient Egypt.
11. Very good relationships throughout the school underpin the very good climate for work and play and reveal the commitment of everyone to doing their best for one another. In this way adults provide very good role models and a consistent approach to promoting good behaviour which is greatly valued and respected by the pupils. Behaviour is good and when an individual has problems in managing their own behaviour, the systems to support them are very effective. Exclusion is extremely rare, but is used as a last resort when it is necessary to emphasise that aggression against members of the school community will not be tolerated. In a recent anti-bullying survey conducted within the county, the school scored very highly which demonstrated that the pupils feel safe.
12. Pupils show very good levels of respect and understanding towards those with different beliefs and values, and there is good racial harmony in which cultural differences are celebrated. During a recent *Arts Week*, mosaic flags to represent the different nationalities of pupils were added to the exterior of the school. Religious education is used very well to promote an understanding of major world faiths. To support their work on India, pupils in Year 5 visited a Sikh temple and were enthralled by the things they found out. Personal accounts interspersed with digital photographs of the visits are on display for other pupils in school to share.
13. The personal development of pupils is good overall and they mature into young people who are polite, considerate and good to know. The school provides opportunities for them to take responsibility as classroom and staircase monitors and reading buddies. There are increased responsibilities for road safety and recycling officers and the forthcoming elections for the school council will provide a better chance for pupils to influence and contribute to day-to-day decisions which affect the quality of school life.
14. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory and this year's figures show an improvement in the level of unauthorised absence which is currently 0.3 per cent. The great majority of pupils have good attendance records and their parents notify the school of any reasons for absence. In the last reported year the figures were worse than previously for a combination of reasons. The recording of absence follows strict procedures which comply with legal requirements, but

reporting was beset with technical problems due to computer system faults. Also in the last academic year there were a few children who were educated off-site and in some cases in other countries for a large part of the year. Attendance figures that appear to be below average were artificially depressed by the school's system of accounting.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/4 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.0	School data :	1.0
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **very good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall with particular strengths in Years 5 and 6. The curriculum offers **very good** learning experiences for the pupils and those who need it are given very good levels of support, especially those with special educational needs. The school has a **good** partnership with parents and has forged **very effective** links with other schools and its community to the benefit of pupils.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables good learning with very good features in the upper juniors that result in pupils making accelerated progress.
- All teachers and support assistants work together as a team and relationships are very good.
- A useful start has been made with target setting in English and mathematics but more work is required to enable a sharper view of progress in other subjects, including the full involvement of pupils in self-review in all areas of their studies.
- Marking is not sufficiently focused on pupils' next steps in learning.

Commentary

15. The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning has continued to improve since the time of the previous inspection, despite a number of staff changes. The excellent lead given by the headteacher to creating a high performing team is paying dividends. New staff have brought with them a freshness of approach that complements the skills and talents of more experienced staff. Everyone is reflective about his or her own practice, and keen to share ideas for improvement. Classrooms are vibrant places in which pupils of all ages achieve well because of interesting activities that enable most to be challenged at the right level across the subjects they study. Consistently high expectations for behaviour, with the emphasis on praise and encouragement, are at the heart of the warm and caring ethos created. Display is of a very high quality and invites pupils to find out more through the use of questions and instructions as well as celebrating personal successes. An ICT generated display projects the buzz of activity in classrooms and provides a very positive first impression to parents and visitors.
16. Teaching and learning are good overall. During the inspection 98 per cent of the lessons observed were of satisfactory or better quality with 80 per cent of good quality. The good quality is shared amongst the staff and was apparent in the sample of pupils' work saved from last year and the work in current pupils' books. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed in which pupils' restless behaviour interrupted the pace of the lesson and impeded overall achievement. Very good features in the upper juniors that include very high expectations, a brisk pace to

learning and lots of *hands-on* approaches result in pupils making accelerated progress in their learning in these years. In contrast, in some classes in the infants, although good attention is given to helping pupils build knowledge, less attention is paid to their skills development. In particular, more could be expected of higher attaining pupils in planning and initiating appropriate aspects of their own learning and in sharing with others their strategies for solving problems.

17. Pupils told inspectors they find learning fun and enjoyable and can't wait to come to school. Parents hold positive views about the quality of teaching and pinpoint this as a key feature in helping the pupils achieve so much and in some cases against the odds.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 64 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (1.5%)	10 (16%)	38 (59%)	14 (22%)	1 (1.5%)	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.

18. Teaching is good overall in the Foundation Stage. Between them the teaching team in the early years have a good command of all areas of learning and are working in successful partnership to enable the children to learn well.
19. Pupils with special educational needs receive some good one-to-one and group support from teaching assistants who are well deployed and effective in role. Teachers set suitable learning challenges in response to pupils' diverse learning needs, as work provided is closely related to targets identified in pupils' individual learning plans. There are very good literacy and numeracy strategies in place to help pupils catch up with others. The work of volunteers in support of reading is a positive feature.
20. There are particular strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics, science and art and design that lead to well above average standards at the end of school. These include:
- Methods that are highly imaginative and capture pupils' interest and sustain very best efforts, including the very effective use of ICT.
 - Probing questioning that helps pupils to develop their thinking and linguistic skills and also extend subject-specific vocabulary and an appreciation of concepts.
 - Very high insistence on positive behaviour through an emphasis on praise and reward.
 - Well focused plenary sessions that are geared towards helping pupils improve their work.
 - Well planned homework challenges that are supported by pupils and parents.
21. A good start has been made in assessing pupils' achievement in the core subjects that pupils' study but this has yet to be extended to other subjects. Marking and target setting are not being used to support ongoing learning well enough. Pupils do not have a clear enough picture of what they need to do next to improve their work and this is a missed opportunity to seek even better achievement.

The curriculum

The school's curriculum is **very good** and is well matched to the needs and aptitudes of the pupils. Excellent enrichment is provided through the extremely wide range of activities that all pupils experience over the year. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum well. The level of staffing is good and this has a positive influence on the quality of pupils' experiences.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good improvement has been made to the curriculum since the time of the previous inspection.
- The programme for the arts is excellent.
- The school is forging ahead with making provision for pupils to learn a modern foreign language.
- There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities that considerably enhance pupils' experiences.

Commentary

22. The curriculum is in much better shape than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Today the curriculum is broad and balanced and fully meets statutory requirements. The good provision made for core subjects is central to pupils' good achievement during their time at school and the school's strong performance in National Curriculum tests reflects this. There is excellent attention paid to widening pupils' horizons and providing enjoyment and creativity in learning through the extensive added extras, for example *Arts Weeks*. Parents hold very positive views about this aspect of their children's education.
23. Very good improvement has been made in building the ICT resources to a good level of provision. Teachers are confident in their use of ICT and it is well embedded as a tool to support pupils' learning across the subjects they study. The curriculum for religious education has been improved from an unsatisfactory level of quality to one that is good. Planning in religious education is thorough and recently half termly assessments are helping bring focus to those aspects that require more in depth study. The quality of the programme for religious education fully accords with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The very good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education including citizenship, is pivotal to securing the very harmonious and respectful relationships so evident in school. The school's work on anti-bullying has met with national acclaim.
24. There is a good curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage. They experience a wide range of well planned activities whether in *Wonderland*, *Numberland* or *Letterland*. The very good team approach is ensuring that the children start their education with a good range of experiences across all areas of their learning. Reception children have worked alongside real doctors, nurses, police officers, crossing patrol wardens and postal workers as part of their project about *people who help us*.
25. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements. The school has made a useful start in considering what additional provision is required for those with gifts and talents or those who are potentially very high attaining. For example, a few pupils attend a Saturday school at one of the main receiving High schools who make extended provision for gifted mathematicians and those with talents in the performing arts. The school's very strong commitment to addressing educational inclusion aspects results in all pupils being provided with equality of opportunity to succeed.
26. The school is forging ahead with making provision for pupils to learn a modern foreign language. French was only sampled during the inspection, as there were few opportunities to observe lessons and little work from past lessons available for scrutiny. In the Year 3 lesson observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good and the pupils achieved well. The policy of conducting lessons mostly in French is successful in promoting pupils' basic conversation skills.

The pupils are enthusiastic about their French lessons and they grow in confidence as they practise their response to questions about their names, ages and class. There is emergent recognition of simple written text through the effective use made of simple labels and the school has a good collection of dual language books such as the *Rainbow Fish* and *Handa's Surprise*. Studies in French are making a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and to the richness of the curriculum in general.

27. The school organises a number of special weeks to enable deeper exploration of key aspects of the curriculum. For example a design technology day involved children in the Foundation Stage making clothes for Teddy, Year 1 pupils in playground design, Year 2 in making winding toys, Year 3 pupils designing and making photograph frames, Year 4 money containers, Year 5 moving toys using cams and Year 6 making gloves. Last year all pupils visited an art gallery as well as undertaking other activities as part of celebrating *Euro 2004*. All pupils celebrated the European Day of languages in September 2004. The *PR Press* newsletter, a high quality publication issued termly, shares the great richness of the curricular experiences being provided. These include Year 4 pupils' residential visit to Burwardsley Outdoor Centre and Y6 residential visit to Boreatton in 2004, as well as other year group visits to Thurstaston Beach, the Blue Planet Aquarium, Sudbury Hall, Macclesfield Town Hall to find out about Fair Trade and a visit to the Jewish Life Museum. During the year the school has invited singers, artists, Latin American dancers, puppeteers, authors, storytellers, cartoonists and musicians to share their expertise and experiences with the pupils.
28. The huge investment in refurbishing the buildings since the previous inspection, has had a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning experiences. The school is well resourced, having two halls, a very well equipped ICT suite and an excellent library. The school's next priority is to implement a playground enhancement scheme with input from the new school council and this will be a good step forward.

Care, guidance and support

The quality of care provided for pupils is **very good** and the support and guidance given to them is **highly effective** and contributes very well to their learning. There is **good** involvement of pupils in decisions which affect school life.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The welfare, health and safety of pupils is given high priority.
- Pupils are very well known by their teachers and trust them implicitly.
- Very good guidance is given to enable pupils to achieve their very best.
- Pupils are involved well in daily school life, and are well prepared for the next stage of setting up a school council.

Commentary

29. The school has maintained the caring and supportive environment reported by the previous inspection. Parkroyal is a very caring school in which all adults are vigilant and conscientious in their attention to matters of the health, safety and welfare of pupils. The procedures to ensure child protection are very good and follow local area guidelines. The cover for first aid is very good and pupils are given the chance to learn first aid practice for themselves when in the juniors. The school has been awarded the *Healthy Schools Standard* in pursuit of which it paid particular attention to promoting good oral hygiene.
30. When children enter the school, either in the Foundation Stage or later, they and their families receive good information, advice and support to smooth the passage. Pupils soon become very well known to their teachers and support staff, and very good relationships are built on trust and confidence. For example, when one pupil was complimented on his work, he did not hesitate to share the praise when he replied, *"I have a very good teacher"*.

31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The systems to identify, monitor and support these pupils is effective. There is a high level of care shown to those with special physical or emotional needs. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully tracked. However, the monitoring of pupils' achievements in subjects other than English and mathematics is limited. Pupils are not given sufficient information about what they have to do to reach higher standards in their work. Pupils with special educational needs are included well in all lessons and make good progress in their learning.
32. Pupils receive very good guidance and support when necessary to help them achieve their very best. This is mainly oral, or working to group targets, and there is some room for improving the review of personal targets. Parents have agreed that they would like to be more involved in supporting their children's aim to improve.
33. Pupils clearly make a good contribution to the life of the school, by thoughtful and constructive approaches to daily life. A more formal forum for their democratic contributions will be provided when the planned school council comes into operation.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents and has forged very effective links with other educational institutions and its community to the benefit of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use links with the immediate and wider community very well to enrich pupils' learning experiences.
- The school provides parents with very good information about its work.
- There are very good links with local schools and teacher training institutions.
- Parents appreciate the way they are being welcomed as more active partners but would like more information about how their children are getting on.

Commentary

34. The school is very good at looking outside its boundaries and bringing in a wide range of specialists to greatly enrich the learning experience of its pupils. Parents are welcomed as important partners at the very start, and they are provided with good quality information to help them support their children's learning at home. In response to a parental questionnaire, the school has improved the amount of curriculum information they receive, and parents are very supportive of the new Friends of Parkroyal group. However, there are still many parents who would like better information about how their children are getting on. The school has identified this area as one for improvement this year, with planned changes to the reporting procedures.
35. Links with the community are very good, and support colourful enrichment of lessons in virtually every subject area, and especially during *Arts Week*. Pupils enjoy a host of visitors, school trips and residential opportunities which bring their lessons to life and give them first hand experiences to remember with pleasure. From the *people who help us* in the reception classes to the professional footballers who coach lessons, pupils can see the connection between their studies and the real world.
36. Very good links with Manchester Metropolitan University, for which the school is a teacher training partner, provide innovative teaching and have included some specialist teaching in French. There are extension opportunities for gifted and talented pupils at the local high school '*Saturday University*' and the local cluster of schools support musical performances. A peer education project with other schools also makes a significant contribution to personal and social education. Pupils are thus well prepared for mixing with a new peer group when they move on to their chosen secondary schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school ethos is vibrant and exciting and is a clear reflection of the very good leadership provided by the headteacher.
- Key managers and other staff are very effectively empowered to take responsibility with confidence.
- There is an outstanding team spirit and strong corporate effort in school, which are the driving force in making very effective improvement.
- Governors undertake their *critical friend* role successfully and apply the principles of best value securely to all decisions.
- The school clearly adds significant value to the pupils' education and provides very good value for money.
- The role of non-core subject leaders in the rigorous checking and evaluating of teaching, learning and standards is insufficient.

Commentary

37. The very good improvement made since the previous inspection is a key indicator of the very good quality of leadership in school. The headteacher provides decisive, energetic leadership that recognises and steers the potential of all staff to be effective leaders and managers. The headteacher has built an excellent team of staff who are all focused on pupils' best interests and who strive hard for success. The deputy headteacher and other key managers provide very good educational direction and like their colleagues on the staff, are very hardworking, conscientious and very good role models. Staff take the mantle of responsibility very well and are confident and effective leaders.
38. The welcoming, friendly and very supportive ethos of the school is one of its main strengths. This has been achieved because all staff are fully committed to the promotion of effective learning for all pupils, regardless of background. The very good quality of strategic planning and performance management ensures that the efforts of staff are focused squarely on the very sensible priorities adopted by managers and governors. This has resulted in very good school effectiveness overall and the well above average standards and good achievement shown by pupils.
39. Governors are a full part of the school team. They are well informed about its performance and make careful comparisons to ensure that the school is competitive in its purchases and in the very well rounded development of the pupils. In this way, governors ensure that the school meets the principles of *best value* very well. Governors have good understanding of the school's finances and they ensure that management of the tight budget is prudent and wise.
40. The Bursar is a key player in the management and organisation of many elements of the school's work. He undertakes his duties with very cheerful efficiency and he is a respected and popular member of staff. The Bursar ensures that financial management and control are effective.
41. Leaders of non-core subjects work hard to develop their subjects, but unlike their colleagues in charge of core subjects, they have few opportunities to monitor and evaluate standards and the quality of provision directly in all classes through the school. They clearly have the skills and aptitudes to do this successfully. Overall, management of the school is good. Some work is necessary to ensure the assessment, target setting and tracking process is consistent and rigorous through the school and across all subjects, but a firm start has been made to these things in the core subjects.

42. The very good quality of provision, the well above average standards and the good achievement of pupils are all the result of decisive leadership and effective governance and management. These are significant aids to pupils' many successes. A barrier to improvement that the school works hard to overcome is the very tight budget. The expenditure per pupil is well below average and the carry forward is much less than in many schools. Nevertheless, it is clear that the school adds considerable value to pupils' education through the very good learning experiences provided and gives very good value for money. The potential for sustained future improvement is very bright.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	797,672
Total expenditure	780,527
Expenditure per pupil	1,904

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	19,881
Balance carried forward to the next	17,145

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children receive a good start to their education in the reception classes known as the *Foundation Stage*.
- Teaching is consistently good enabling the children to learn successfully.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good.

Commentary

43. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in three reception classes. Each class base takes on a distinctive role – *Letterland* (literacy), *Numberland* (numeracy) and *Wonderland* (creative activities). The children's personal and social development is given very high status across all experiences.
44. The children benefit from good quality play and physical development opportunities every day. The Foundation Stage is well resourced and benefits from spacious accommodation that enables staff to meet the needs of the four to five year old age group successfully. All designated areas involve the children in well planned experiences, offering a broad and rich curriculum to which all children have good and equal access. Children receive a good start to their full-time education. Prior to starting their reception education, most children attend the privately run nursery/playgroup situated on the same site as the school. Very good relationships between the two units have been established, ensuring the very smooth transfer of children from part-time to full-time education.
45. When children join the reception classes their skills and understanding are similar to those of many children of the same age in schools across the country. Good teaching enables most children to achieve well, so by the time they move into Year 1 most are on track to start the subjects of the National Curriculum. Regular assessments enable staff to check on how well children are doing and to pitch tasks for them at the right level. The school has acknowledged that the next stage is to link assessment more firmly into ongoing work to ensure that children's learning does not lose momentum, especially for the potentially higher attaining children. The school has begun to address this by encouraging higher reading skills, and a growing number of children are reaching levels in excess of that expected for their age. Parents are fully involved in helping and supporting their children and communication with them is good. A noticeable feature in the reception classes is regular homework in the form of reading tasks and undertaking searches for information. This successfully enhances children's achievements and cements well the relationship between school and home.
46. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed by a hard working, dedicated leader and the prospect for continued improvement is good. All staff work very happily together in the best interests of the children. Inspection findings reflect a similar picture to that observed at the time of the previous inspection in all areas of learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been good with the introduction of a Foundation Stage curriculum that successfully links areas of learning and skills taught in the reception classes with those in the infant classes, thus ensuring continuity of children's education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good and this in turn boosts children's confidence.
- Children have good levels of independence because of the well-structured, warm and friendly atmosphere.
- Children with special needs are identified early in their school life and are given good support that enables them to achieve well.
- Achievement is good and many will exceed the goals set for them.

Commentary

47. When children start reception their personal, social and emotional development is broadly similar to that of most children in other schools. By the time they leave the reception classes, the majority are on target to achieve above the goals expected for their age on transfer to Year 1. Daily routines are well planned and unobtrusive, successfully enhancing children's confidence and self-esteem. Children really enjoy coming to school. Adults are very good role models and children copy them to good effect. Behaviour is very good and children regularly take turns and are sensitive to each other's needs. Children co-operate very well together when sharing a game or toy. Children are expected to take increasing personal responsibility, for example selecting their choice of food at lunch time. Clearing away is very well executed with the minimum of fuss. All children rise well to challenges set for them. Well focused, good teaching that clearly reflects major elements of warmth, care and sensitivity to individual needs is the main reason that achievement in this area of learning is very good for children of all abilities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are given high priority in the reception classes and children's achievement is good overall.
- A more rigorous approach is needed to target setting to ensure all children are sufficiently challenged.

Commentary

48. Teaching is consistently good and all children learn successfully and achieve well. The well structured activities in *Letterland* successfully stimulate children's initial interests in reading books for pleasure. Children are positively encouraged to sequence events in a well-known fairy tale, for example *Goldilocks*. Good teaching successfully encourages children to cut out a series of illustrations related to the story, and then place them in the correct order of events. The activities are well organised and all children respond well to the challenge. Very good relationships clearly support individual needs. The well equipped book area invites children to come and sit down and read a book. Displays of children's early writing achievements successfully celebrate that most children are well on target to achieve the goals expected for their age. Analysis of children's work clearly illustrates that most children use recognisable letters to write simple sentences to retell their news and stories. They confidently and clearly write captions and labels independently for their pictures. In all reception classes, adults tell stories to children in an exciting manner that maintains high levels of interest and develops listening skills as well. Stories shared with children include a traditional range as well as stories from around the world. This means children are developing a good awareness, knowledge and understanding of different cultures around the world.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good.
- The strong focus on mathematical language extends children's understanding well.
- Learning is well planned in *Numberland* where children are successfully encouraged to count and subtract in a range of real life situations.

Commentary

49. Learning in *Numberland* is well planned to encourage most children to count, add and subtract in a range of real life situations. During a numeracy session observed, practical *hands on* activities were well matched to children's abilities. Most children appear confident, counting up to ten and, in some instances, well beyond. The use of an ICT program successfully encouraged children to sequence a random group of numbers from 0 to 20 in the correct order.
50. Teaching is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Number games, songs and rhymes are fun and these actively encourage all to join in with counting and ordering activities. Children's mathematical language skills are well developed alongside their understanding of comparative sizes. Most children confidently recognise circle, square, rectangle and triangle.
51. Displays in *Numberland* clearly underpin the fact that every opportunity is taken to develop children's mathematical skills linking, for example, activities undertaken during creative sessions. Satisfactory systems are in place to check children's understanding at regular intervals. However, a more detailed approach involving targets is acknowledged by the school to be the next step forward to maintain and extend the present good levels of achievement. Most children are well on track to attain the goals expected for their age in this area of learning by the end of reception, and a significant proportion will achieve beyond.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well planned activities successfully extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world outside the school.
- Children use computers very confidently and are developing a good range of ICT skills because of the broad experiences provided.

Commentary

52. This area is particularly well planned and supported by a rich range of interesting activities that suitably capture the interest of most children. Their growing awareness and understanding of the world around them is successfully extended to the detailed observations of living things, designing and making a range of well finished models and by using a good range of ICT software. Teaching is good and children achieve well, with most being well on course to attain the levels expected for their age by the end of the reception year. In one session observed, children talked confidently about their homes and the community in which they live. Children discussed the furniture in their bedrooms and changes they would like to make. Analysis of children's earlier work illustrates very clearly that they understood the physical changes to themselves, including eating habits, from the time they were babies to the present day. For example, '*When I was a baby I liked milk and bananas. Now I am five I like pasta, chips and beans.*' The children also understand the passage of time. As one boy said, '*When I grow up I*

would like to be a mechanic.' A well planned educational visit to Trentabank successfully supported work related to mini beasts, their identification, including detailed drawings, and likely habitats. Displays clearly illustrate the celebration of religious festivals from around the world, for example the Jewish festival of *Sukkah*. All the well planned activities successfully enhance children's appreciation and understanding of the world beyond the school gates.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of well planned activities promotes children's achievement well and enables most to achieve the goals expected for their age.

Commentary

53. The many exciting opportunities that are planned for the children mean that their skills of running, jumping and climbing are extended well. They learn to climb over and through large apparatus as well as use small apparatus such as bats and balls with increasing accuracy. Children also learn to use pencils, crayons and paintbrushes successfully. Their dexterity is promoted well through well chosen activities such as threading a predetermined number of coloured beads. Children handle constructional toys and games as well as jigsaws, all of which promotes good gains in physical development. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Most are on course to achieve their targets by the end of the reception year and a significant number of children will exceed these targets.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because they experience a wide range of creative activities and they are well taught.

Commentary

54. Children's creative work is well displayed throughout the reception classes and this lets children know that their work is valued and respected. Vibrant paintings in the style of *Andy Goldsworthy* illustrate well the effective cross-curricular links built up with mathematics and understanding of the world. Children work with a wide range of different media and many are on target to achieve beyond the expected targets by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good and this enables good achievement to be maintained. The focus on imaginative role-play extends children's imagination very well as they act roles in the *home play corner*, reflecting parents looking after babies. Music is enjoyed and has a significant role in the day-to-day life of the Foundation Stage. During a lesson related to fast and slow rhythms, total involvement by children enhanced high levels of enthusiasm as they successfully compared the movements of the hare and the tortoise. Children were given well planned opportunities to indicate the movement of a camel as linked into the retelling of the Christmas story - experiences that made the lesson lively, enjoyable and meaningful.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good across the school.
- Current standards in Year 2 are above average and are well above average in Year 6.
- Good teaching enables good learning with very good features in the upper juniors.
- English is a very well led and effectively managed subject.
- The progress made by higher attaining pupils is inconsistent, especially in the infants.
- A very good curriculum, with an excellent range of extras, provides very worthwhile experiences for pupils of all ages.
- Assessment, including marking, pupils' self-review, and parents' support for the targeting of pupils' next steps in learning, are not sharp enough.

Commentary

55. The school has made consistently good improvement to the provision in English since the previous inspection. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and speaking and listening. In Year 2, standards in all three elements of English are above average. Pupils achieve well in English from Year 1 to Year 6 because there is good focus on the development of skills, knowledge and understanding and effective teaching and learning. There are significant strengths in provision in the last two years of school, which ensures pupils meet their potential very well. The curriculum is a particular strength and is of very good quality as it has great breadth, balance, relevance and richness. All pupils, irrespective of their background, gender or ability, are provided with equality of opportunity to succeed in English. Pupils told inspectors that they really like English, especially story writing!
56. Pupils enjoy reading in all years, and standards are well above average. The very strong links with parents ensure that reading is shared, practised and improved at home as effectively as it is in school. Pupils read enthusiastically and work hard to make their reading expressive and attention seizing. This was observed in a Year 4 drama lesson where pupils read their own play scripts with imagination and very good interpretation of the character.
57. Writing standards are well above average and achievement is good. There are ample opportunities for pupils to write at length and in different styles. In Years 1 and 2 writing is organised imaginatively and engages the reader well. Punctuation is accurately applied including speech marks and commas within sentences for higher attainers. Choice of vocabulary is increasingly ambitious with growing use of descriptive language. Pupils write for a good range of purposes. As they get older pupils use good descriptive language, for example, in creative stories entitled *The Missing Piano*. In Year 6 pupils have written very creative poems about members of their family that use metaphors to describe the person in question. The range of writing is extensive with instructional text, persuasive writing, letters, autobiographies and poetry featuring well and with accurate spellings. Handwriting skills are developed well and pupils write neatly. The choice of writing implements sometimes affects the quality of the final product but pupils try hard to write legibly, neatly and in a uniform joined hand. Writing is celebrated very well through the high quality displays in classrooms and about school.
58. Pupils speak with great confidence, clarity and expression. They speak at length when necessary and engage in meaningful discussion with adults and other pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6. Overall standards of speaking are well above average, as are those of listening. Pupils are attentive, they concentrate well and they think carefully about what they have heard.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is good and some lessons of very good quality were observed. In some lessons the balance between pupils listening to their teachers and active

learning is biased to listening, which is successful in developing speaking and listening and reading but not as focused on writing. However, there are many significant strengths, often seen in Years 5 and 6, which include the very good level of expectation and challenge in junior years, and, across the school, the insistence on good behaviour and the effectiveness of teaching assistants in supporting good achievement. Pupils work productively, show good levels of independence and responsibility and they collaborate well with others. The very good quality of relationships with staff and other pupils is an asset in learning.

60. All the above strengths were observed in a Year 5 lesson where the pupils were very closely focused on producing a very well planned list of written instructions for making a string of decorative paper figures. They checked the tense was consistent throughout the list, making certain this was in the *imperative* form, and tested the instructions thoroughly. A very challenging moment came when the pupils realised that their instructions were not precise enough to produce four linked figures. Instead, some fell into two sets of two figures. They discussed this situation with the others in the group, considered everyone's response and set about modifying the instructions with enthusiasm and success.
61. The leadership of English is shared by two teachers. They give very good direction to the subject and have very good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. The monitoring and evaluation of provision is of good quality. However, there remains work to do to improve the quality of marking, target tracking and pupils' self-evaluation to ensure that pupils achieve at best levels through the school. Assessment is satisfactory and the school has identified ways in which improvements will be made. There is good potential for provision in English to be improved effectively in the future because it has very capable leadership.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. The school has very successfully ensured that reading, and speaking and listening skills are developed effectively in other subjects. The development of writing is very good in many instances. For example, there is some particularly good writing in religious education, and links to history and ICT are very secure. The use of worksheets in some subjects, such as science, places a cap on achievement because all pupils' work from the same task and higher attainers, especially in infant classes, are held back in the development of fluent and expressive writing in different styles. Nonetheless, cross-curricular links between English and other subjects are very good and contribute to the effective practice, improvement and consolidation of skills and knowledge.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching supports pupils' good achievement and high standards.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set work for them that is interesting and challenging.
- Very good subject leadership has enabled the accurate identification of weak areas and effective action to address these has led to improved standards.
- Pupils are not clear about what they need to do to reach higher standards.
- There are good opportunities for developing pupils' numeracy skills across other subjects.
- More could be expected of higher attaining pupils in the infants.

Commentary

63. Since the previous inspection there has been good improvement in mathematics. The very good curriculum, high staff confidence levels and strong leadership drive in place to support pupils' learning, are key factors in assisting the consistent rate of achievement in all years in mathematics.
64. In last year's national tests, standards at the end of Year 2 were above average and well above average at the end of Year 6. There are clear indications from the analysis of pupils' work, lesson observations and discussions with pupils that the present standards being achieved reflect a similar picture. This represents good achievement throughout the school with achievement being accelerated in Year 5 and Year 6 where there is strong focus on enabling pupils to solve problems by devising their own strategies. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons by teachers and other staff, with most achieving as well as their peers. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are represented in all attainment groups and sets and achieve at the same good rate as others. All pupils, irrespective of their background or gender, are provided with equality of opportunity to succeed in mathematics.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers clearly transmit an enthusiasm for the subject through well planned opportunities. Arrangements from Year 3 onwards by which pupils are placed in learning sets suitable to their ability enable work to be matched to their needs. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and they very effectively encourage pupils of all abilities to succeed. In most lessons pupils are highly motivated to work hard and discussions with pupils clearly reflect that mathematics is fun. The real strength of a very good lesson observed in Year 6 was the quality of teacher questioning that required pupils of all abilities to share their strategies for working out a particular problem with their peers. The use of timed targets increased pace and work output to very high levels. The very confident use of ICT by the teacher enabled learning to be both enjoyable and meaningful. The final review of progress successfully revisited the learning intentions and an atmosphere of success was duly celebrated. However, in the infants the use of time was sometimes less successful, with pupils initially sitting on the carpet for a sustained period before work commenced, and the final part of the lesson was rushed so the opportunity to check pupils' understanding of new learning was not fully exploited. Analysis of pupils' work clearly indicates higher attaining pupils in the infants often complete the same work to their peers before moving on to more challenging work at higher levels. Marking is consistent in its regularity and positive nature. However, it does not always indicate what pupils have to do to improve. Homework given weekly clearly supports ongoing class work in a positive manner. The use of computers to enhance and underpin pupils' numeracy skills in their classroom, and the use of the ICT suite is an integral part of most mathematics lessons.
66. An enthusiastic, very well informed subject leader provides very good leadership and effective management and is successfully moving the subject forward, armed with a very impressive range of data related to pupils' achievements over time. The subject leader has carefully analysed national test results in great depth, clearly indicating the subject's strengths and areas for development. This information is used to support target setting for pupils, but the sharing of targets with parents is the next step for improvement as the school strives to enhance achievement rates. The action plan produced by the subject leader is well thought through and very thorough. She has thought carefully about plans to further improve mathematics through the further development of links into other subjects and, as a result, the future looks bright.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Analysis of pupils' work on display and in books clearly indicates that standards in numeracy are good across the curriculum and that most pupils use a range of mathematical skills as part of their work in other subjects, thus developing an appreciation of the practical use of these skills. For example in art and design, printed symmetrical patterns in various media enhance the subject's high profile. Pupils' drawings of three-dimensional shapes successfully link appreciation of form and shadow.

SCIENCE

Provision in science **is good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching and learning.
- There is good use of ICT to support pupils' science studies.
- Higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged, especially in the infants.
- There is good analysis of external tests to inform future planning of the curriculum.
- Teachers' assessment, including marking and the targeting of pupils' next steps in learning are not rigorous enough.

Commentary

68. Standards in science have improved well since the previous inspection and are well above average by the end of Year 6. Standards are close to the national average at the end of Year 2. A good quality curriculum is in place to enable pupils to experience all strands of the subjects. However, the approach in the infants, though effective in providing pupils with the information they need to build their knowledge and understanding, is less effective in enabling them to develop scientific skills. The school is alert to this and is currently focusing on better promoting an investigational approach to science.
69. All pupils, irrespective of their background, gender or ability, are provided with equality of opportunity to succeed in science. Pupils who speak English as a second language are represented across the attainment groups in science and they achieve as well as their classmates. The group who are least consistently well served are the highest attainers who are not always given sufficient challenge in the work they are set. Pupils are often given exactly the same tasks, and this restricts opportunities for higher attainers to achieve to a better standard. Inspectors' scrutiny of past work indicates that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations and devise their own recording formats in some years.
70. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Work in books shows good breadth and depth in the experiences provided in science. Strong emphasis is placed on promoting subject-specific vocabulary and pupils have secure grasp of the correct terminology, for example when labelling the parts of a plant. Work shows a good understanding of how to carry out a fair test, as seen in work to test the absorbency levels of different materials. In Year 5, thorough investigations of the earth's rotation and the effect on day and night have been carried out with very good extension work about the angle of the sun and the links to the seasons of the year. In the two lessons observed teaching and learning were both very good. Here high expectations and well chosen activities resulted in the pupils making very good gains in their scientific knowledge. In Year 2, pupils worked collaboratively to make a simple electrical circuit that would enable a bulb to light up and in Year 3, pupils discovered key facts about why plaque builds up on human teeth and then planned their own fair test to research some of their findings further. Homework is well planned to support scientific research.
71. ICT is used very well across the school to support science work. In Year 5, pupils have located information about different planets in earth's solar system using a database. In Year 6, for example, the pupils use ICT programs to help them understand how to complete and to break electrical circuits and to deepen their understanding about the properties of magnets. There are many examples of the use of mathematics supporting pupils' work in science, in the use of charts, graphs and tables to help present data.
72. The science leader gives a very good steer to the subject. Statutory test results are analysed effectively to highlight strengths and weaknesses that are fed forward into subsequent planning. The subject leader has provided effective support for colleagues by improving resources,

including a review of ICT software and encouraging the good science links with industry. She has identified the need to monitor planning, teaching and pupils' learning on a more regular basis as the next step forward. There remain some areas for future improvement, including the assessment of skills in order that teachers have a clearer picture of pupils' attainment in science. Marking and the setting of targets for pupils so that they can identify the next steps in their learning and be involved in subsequent self-review are also ripe for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in ICT and standards are above average through the school.
- ICT skills, knowledge and understanding are promoted effectively across the curriculum.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and there are some significant strengths.
- Leadership and management are very effective in ensuring the quality of provision in ICT is good.
- The curriculum is of very good quality.
- Assessment is not consistent or rigorous enough.

Commentary

73. The school has made very good improvement to provision in ICT since the previous inspection. The resources have been totally overhauled, staff knowledge, confidence and expectations raised considerably and the use of computers to assist pupils' achievement in other subjects has been intensified. As a result, pupils achieve well in all years and standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils have good confidence in using computers and allied technology in a range of applications, including computer control and modelling and data handling. There is evidence in their past work of some high quality results, such as Year 6 work on landscapes in art and design and the use of the internet for research in history.
74. Teaching and learning quality is good. There is close focus on skills development in lessons and pupils work collaboratively, often enthusiastically, and consistently in a productive way. The pace of learning and the spurring of some pupils to even greater achievement, especially in the infant classes, are features for improvement. Assessment systems are at present undergoing an overhaul. There is a very clear plan of action to produce the necessary rigour and consistency.
75. ICT is very well led by the headteacher. He has extensive subject knowledge and is a very good role model for other staff and the pupils in his imaginative use of technology. He has ensured that all other staff are united in their confident approach to the subject and this has resulted in the significant improvement of provision. Management systems work well in ICT and provide good insights into the strengths and areas for development. Decisive action is taken to make improvement and share strengths. This points to a successful future for the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. The use of ICT across the curriculum is frequent and of good quality. There are strong links between the subject and English, mathematics, science, art and design and history. For example, pupils in Year 6 were observed as they built a spreadsheet to show the pattern of multiplication tables. They used mathematical formulae well in this work and were able to make lengthy lists of multiples of the chosen value. They talked enthusiastically of the patterns in the tables. Their knowledge and understanding of both mathematics and ICT were improved effectively through this work.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for religious education is very good and this ensures skills, knowledge and understanding are built effectively.
- Achievement is good and standards are above average in all years.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good features.
- Religious education is well led and soundly managed.
- Assessment, including marking and pupils' self-review is not effective enough in ensuring achievement is maximised.

Commentary

77. Religious education has a strong profile amongst the school's work and the curriculum for the subject is very good. Staff have good subject knowledge and confidence and teach religious education effectively. Thus, the pupils learn well, their achievement is good and standards are above average overall. The improvement since the previous inspection has been good.
78. Standards are above average in all years. Pupils develop good understanding of Christianity. For example, Year 1 pupils were fascinated by the *Christingles* brought to school by their teacher. They were able to identify what each element of the *Christingle* represented and to relate this to their good knowledge of the life and work of Jesus. Several pupils were able to suggest that the red ribbon represented Jesus' blood, which He spilled for the world (the orange). Pupils also learn effectively about Judaism and a very good lesson observed in Year 4 celebrated the feast of Passover with members of the community. Buddhism is the third religion studied and a good lesson was seen in Year 5 that effectively developed the idea of a web of friendship. In this lesson, pupils also showed how well they were learning from religion, which is also a consistent feature of their achievement in other classes.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good and some very good teaching was observed. In junior classes especially, pupils are very well motivated towards their learning by the very stimulating themes and the effective teaching methods used. All teachers are insistent that their pupils behave and work well and pupils respond very successfully to these expectations. The level of productivity is very good in religious education and there is some very good quality written work in pupils' books.
80. Religious education is well led and soundly managed. There have been few opportunities for the direct monitoring of standards and quality of provision and assessment is not consistent or rigorous enough to give full information about pupils' achievement to enable its careful enough tracking. Marking is not consistently informative about how pupils can improve their work and there are few opportunities in lessons for pupils to evaluate their own learning. However, these

are relative areas for improvement within a subject that is very well resourced and effectively promoted.

Geography and history

81. These subjects were sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. From the evidence seen standards are average in history and geography in Year 2 and Year 6.
82. The pupils work from a well resourced curriculum that provides worthwhile experiences in both subjects. The blocking of time enables a secure depth of study and enables good breadth. The next step is for the subject leaders to work together to ensure that the skills of enquiry and research are promoted to the advantage of the pupils. The very good use of visits successfully enhances pupils' learning. Visits to Macclesfield, Chester, Bramall Hall and Styal Mill all help pupils to understand their historical heritage and enable detailed local studies work. Woodland walks, the Year 2 pupils' visit to the seaside at Thurstaston and the Year 4 residential visit to Burwardsley enable the pupils to compare and contrast different environments to that of their own and enable them to gain a greater understanding about the nature of places. The study of Africa and India further extend the pupils' horizons and knowledge base.
83. The cross-curricular focus to these subjects brings enjoyment in learning. Links with literacy, art and design and design technology are strong. Pupils' literacy skills are further developed through writing diaries, newspaper reports, fact files, and accounts of what it might have been like to live in past times. The sketches and paintings relating to life in Victorian times enhance the pupils' historical understanding. Work in art and design that focuses on landscapes draws on the secure knowledge that pupils have built in geography. In both subjects good use is made of ICT to find out more about places and events, today and in the past.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Art and design has a high profile in school with very good quality work on display.
- Achievement is very good overall.
- Standards are above average by Year 2 and rise to well above average by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and the curriculum is very good and enables very good learning.
- There are good systems in place to assess pupils' skills development from one year to the next.
- Highly effective leadership of the subject ensures that there is very good capacity for future improvements.

Commentary

84. Art and design is one of the subject strengths of the school and the provision is even better than at the time of the last inspection. Standards are above average by Year 2 and rise to well above average by the end of Year 6. Achievement is very good overall. Pupils say that art and design is one of their very favourite subjects.
85. The quality of teaching and the curriculum is very good and enables very good learning. Pupils' observational skills and their ability to use a wide range of techniques and mixed media are developed effectively from an early age. Pupils use their sketchbooks well to practise their skills. Drawings are detailed and often imaginative as pupils put their own interpretation on what they observe. When the ideas are translated into larger pieces of work, the very good emphasis

placed on the direct teaching of skills and techniques results in imaginative drawings, paintings, print and collage work in which techniques such as colour mixing and matching are executed exceptionally well.

86. The curriculum is effectively enhanced and enriched by experiences given by the staff, the use of ICT for research, very good resources, art clubs, blocked curriculum time, visits and visitors, including the opportunity to work with professional artists during *Arts Week*. This week is an outstanding success enjoyed by the school and the whole community. Every pupil visits an art gallery to take part in a themed workshop. Pupils of all ages work alongside artists and enjoy first hand experiences of high quality artwork to use as an inspiration for their own creations.
87. Pupils work with an extensive range of media including pencils, crayons, pastels, paints, clay, perspex, textiles and willow withies. They make effective use of ICT to produce patterns as they work in the style of great artists such as *Kandinsky*. Pupils undertake research of styles and techniques to extend their knowledge and understanding before working on paintings that depict scenes from cultures different from their own. For example, in Year 1 the pupils have painted pictures depicting Nigerian life. Older pupils have studied a highly decorative form of art based on the *Abbia* stones made by the Beti people from Cameroon, for inspiration for brushwork as well as embroidery designs. Art and design is also closely linked to other subjects. Particularly good is the matchstick people chalk work in the style of *Lowry* that links to history studies.
88. Lessons in art and design are stimulating and result in high quality learning experiences. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, the pupils worked with flair and imagination, firstly drawing an observation of a shell and then laying on an observation square to enable them to see the contours that they later used to inspire an abstract landscape. The pupils discussed texture, colour, shade and tone and how best to achieve their intentions with very high levels of confidence.
89. The subject leader is an excellent role model for others and is the key driving force behind the very good provision in art and design. The innovative work that is taking place is based on very good teamwork and the good systems in place to assess pupils' skills development from one year to the next. The highly effective leadership of the subject is ensuring very good capacity for future improvements. The forthcoming accreditation for the *Silver Artsmark*, verified by the local education authority, will be well deserved.

Design and technology

90. This subject was sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. From the work on display it is clear that standards are broadly average in the subject.
91. There is evidence of a sound range of work undertaken linked to the real world with good attention given to the designing and evaluating aspects of the subject. Examples of finished products ranging from finger puppets in the infants to powered fairground rides on display in Year 6, are of good quality. The variety of the finished products, for example the face masks in Year 5, show good use of imagination with some very interesting ideas carefully realised. Secure cross-curricular links clearly underpin the range of work undertaken. For example, in Year 6 where the work on the fairground ride involved literacy, numeracy, science, history and ICT, included pupils' use of a digital camera by pupils to record group achievement. Technology days are organised on a regular basis to enable all pupils to have sufficient time to work from the planning to the making and evaluation stages.
92. Work in the infant classes reflects a good range of opportunities to use different construction kits, attempts to disassemble products or to make prototypes for their own structures. Pupils' written work shows sound organisation in terms of steps to be taken during the manufacture and in the evaluation of what they have done in regard to what worked well and what needs improving. Work on *How I made my printing tile*, is well documented. Assessment of skills is an

aspect of the subject that requires enhancing to ensure that work is matched to the needs of all pupils, including those with particular talents in the subject.

Music

93. This subject was sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. Singing is very much enjoyed by the pupils and assemblies are joyous occasions in which their enthusiasm shines through. Occasionally, the recorder group and other musicians provide good accompaniment. There are further opportunities for pupils to learn how to play treble recorders at the after school club. The videos produced to celebrate the school's Christmas activities are both delightful to watch and listen to and demonstrate that all children's contributions are highly valued, from the youngest to the oldest pupils. Year 6 pupils perform their musical compositions for the wider community, taking part in the annual Macclesfield Music Festival. The school organises an *Arts Week* annually, where musicians and singers come into school to share their experiences. Such events add significant enrichment to the pupils' appreciation of different styles of music.

Physical education

94. This subject was sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. Records show that swimming standards are average with 85 per cent reaching the required 25 metres standard, by the end of Year 6.
95. Two lessons were seen during the inspection, one in the infants and one in the juniors and both were of good quality. Good use is made of football coaches from the local Macclesfield team to support skills development and match play experience. Good quality instruction with a key focus on developing skills enabled Year 4 pupils to consolidate and extend their skills in an atmosphere of enjoyment. Pupils were familiar with the need for warming up and cooling down muscle groups and knew the beneficial effects that exercise has on the body.
96. The school works very hard to provide a good range of activities in physical education. Pupils have very good opportunities to take part in locally based sporting fixtures and are encouraged to attend challenging outdoor activities. The school provides a good range of sporting opportunities beyond the school day and pupils participate in coaching sessions and sporting festivals provided by community partnerships. These activities are popular with pupils and contribute well to pupils' personal, social and moral development because of the emphasis on taking part and being part of a team that pervades much of the work of the school. Pupils benefit from having spacious hard surface playground areas on which to develop their skills whatever the weather.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The programme of study is very broad, well led, and enriched with specialist expertise.
- The development of the whole child is at the centre of the school's philosophy.
- All aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are emphasised well.
- The forthcoming school council democratic process is a timely addition to give pupils more of a proactive role in school affairs.

Commentary

97. Pupils' personal development is central to the school's ethos and a great deal is invested to promote success. The policy is to deliver PSHCE across the whole curriculum, both formally and informally, as well as through dedicated lessons. Personal and social skills are supported and monitored through the behaviour and discipline policy. Teaching opportunities are taken whenever they arise, including very effective use of school assemblies, when the act of collective worship is often themed on moral teaching. Pupils learn about the dangers of drug misuse, receive sex and relationships education, and a recent initiative has brought health to the forefront as the school worked for and achieved the healthy schools standard.
98. Links with the local council have given pupils an insight into the work of the mayor, as well as the early lessons about emergency services and other '*people who help us*'. Pupils are also taught child protection awareness appropriate to their age, including aspects of road safety. The high priority given to PSHCE is illustrated by the focus for one special day each year, when one theme is explored very thoroughly in addition to the broad cover normally in place. The opportunities for junior pupils to go to residential events are very valuable signs of the importance the school places on the whole development of the pupils in its care.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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