

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Limehurst Primary School**  
Oldham

LEA area : Oldham

Unique Reference Number : 105638

Headteacher : Mrs Y S M Clare

Reporting inspector : Mr S G Evans  
21217

Dates of inspection : 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706771

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Nursery, Infant and Junior
Type of control :	Community
Age range of pupils :	3 –11 years
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Whitebank Road Oldham Lancashire OL8 3JQ
Telephone number :	0161 911 3140
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Appropriate authority :	Governing body
Name of chair of governors :	Mrs S Buckley
Date of previous inspection :	May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr S G Evans, RgI	Equal opportunities Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Music	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Mrs G Marsland, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mr J Heap, Team Inspector	English History Art	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Efficiency
Mrs J Cox, Team Inspector	Special educational needs Under fives Geography Religious education	The curriculum and assessment
Mrs A Lowson, Team Inspector	Design and technology Physical education	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress in their work throughout the school.
- Provision for the under fives is very good, and this ensures pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good. Their attitudes to learning, relationships with one another and their personal development are good.
- There is good curriculum provision. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The quality of a very high proportion of the teaching across the school is good.
- The provision for pupils' moral development is very good and good for their spiritual and social development.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership. She is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher. The school receives good support from the governing body.
- The support and guidance pupils receive is very good.
- There is a good partnership with parents and the community.
- The school gives good value for money.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Attainment in information and communication technology is too low.
- II. A full risk assessment has not been completed.

**The school's very many strengths far outweigh the areas requiring improvement. The weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has successfully addressed all the key issues identified in the last inspection report. Pupils' standards of attainment are higher now than at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching is significantly better. The leadership and management have improved. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are better. Assessment is used more effectively to evaluate pupils' progress and to plan lessons to meet the varying needs of pupils. Community links have been extended. The school has improved because of improved leadership, including that of subject co-ordinators. The progress pupils make whilst at the school is now greater. The school is well placed to improve further.

## Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	<i>Key</i>	
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
			<i>average</i>	C
			<i>below average</i>	D
			<i>well below average</i>	E
English	E	B		
Mathematics	E	C		
Science	C	A		

Each year group of pupils differ widely in their overall level of ability and in the range of problems that they present for the school in addressing their needs. The cohort of pupils who completed the national tests in 1999 included a higher than usual proportion of pupils (40 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs. Also, within this year group there was a higher than usual level of turnover of pupils. Thirty-three per cent of pupils were not at the school in Year 2 when the pupils completed their national tests at the end of Key Stage 1. These reasons account for the drop in standards compared with the previous three years when standards were broadly average in English and mathematics and above average in science.

Inspection evidence indicates current standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is below that expected for pupils of this age. Religious education attainment by the age of eleven is in line with what is expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Attainment in other subjects is in line with that expected for primary school-aged pupils.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	-	Good	Good
Information technology	-	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education	-	Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The quality of teaching is good overall and is a strength of the school. The teaching has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. Teaching is satisfactory and better in all lessons, with 44 per cent good, 24 per cent very good and three per cent excellent. This is a very significant improvement compared with the findings of the previous report. Teaching of the under fives is good in 50 per cent of lessons and very good in 40 per cent. At Key Stage 1, teaching is very good in 21 per cent of lessons, good in 50 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. At Key Stage 2 five per cent is excellent, 21 per cent very good, 41 per cent good and the rest satisfactory.

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses.*

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is very good. They develop good relationships and good attitudes to their work.
Attendance	Satisfactory. It is broadly in line with national average.
Ethos*	Very good.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides very good leadership, with very good support from the senior management team.
Curriculum	Good. The assessment procedures are effective in identifying pupils' strengths and weaknesses, and for monitoring their progress.
Pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good. The school teaches the principles of right and wrong, and the importance of valuing all people, caring for others and increasing self-confidence. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The school is well staffed with teachers and support staff. There are adequate resources overall, except for information and communication technology. The quality of the accommodation is very good.
Value for money	The school gives good value for money.

\* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

## The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>III. Staff are easy to approach with any concerns.</li> <li>IV. The school encourages parents to play an active part in school life.</li> <li>V. It enables their children to reach a good standard of work.</li> <li>VI. It keeps them well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>VII. It provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>VIII. They are satisfied with the school's homework provision.</li> <li>IX. It promotes positive values and attitudes.</li> <li>X. The parents feel this is a good school, with a caring and happy environment.</li> <li>XI. Their children like school.</li> </ul>	None.

Inspectors' judgements support the parents' positive views.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The headteacher and staff, in conjunction with the governing body, should:

- \* raise attainment in information and communication technology at both key stages by implementing the school's new scheme of work to ensure that there is:
  - i) increased access by pupils to computers and better planned use of time for pupils to practise skills on computers;
  - ii) more teaching of specific information and communication technology skills;
  - iii) effective assessment of pupils' attainment in information and communication technology so that work is matched accurately to pupils' varying needs;
  - iv) an increase in the number of computers.

(paragraph 12, 26, 72, 130 and 133)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important area for development should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- \* complete a full risk assessment (paragraph 58)

Development of information and communication technology is identified as a priority in the school development plan for this year. The school has also bid for funding from the National Grid for Learning.

## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

- 1 It is a new building situated on the Limeside housing estate to the south of the town centre of Oldham. There are 274 pupils on roll, with 53 identified as having special educational needs. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. The average class size is 25 and the pupil teacher ratio is 20 pupils to one teacher. There are 26 fewer pupils on roll compared with the time of the last inspection. The number of pupils on the register for special educational needs is the same. There are 40 full-time children in the nursery, of whom one is identified as having special educational needs. Fourteen of the 33 pupils in the reception classes are under five years of age. This is a similar picture to the time of the previous inspection. Children are admitted full-time to the nursery class at the age of three, and to the reception classes at the start of the school year in which they are five. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below that expected of children of this age.
- 2 The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is approximately three times the national average. Many pupils come from families experiencing serious economic deprivation. Eleven pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds and all pupils come from homes in which English is the first language.
- 3 The school's mission statement is:  
" The school seeks to develop through continuity, consistency and the provision of a caring, stimulating and stable learning environment, high expectations of pupils in academic achievement, positive social behaviour, all inter-personal relationships and dress and good manners"
- 4 The school's aims are:
  - To provide a caring, orderly environment in which quality teaching and learning can take place and to develop in each child, high standards of self-discipline and self-esteem, so that all feel that their efforts and contributions are valued;
  - To offer a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum with high standards of teaching and learning, within which ALL pupils achieve their full potential;
  - To encourage in all members of the school a responsible attitude towards their immediate surroundings and to be aware of the responsibilities of the individual towards the care of the wider environment and have respect and tolerance for other religions, races and cultures and display a sensitive and caring attitude towards all individuals;
  - To develop individuals who can work independently and co-operatively, showing respect and tolerance for others and their views;
  - As a community, the school seeks to encourage a positive working relationship between governors, parents and the local community.
- 5 The school's priorities for development during the current academic year are the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the raising of standards and improving provision in information and communication technology. The school has set a target of having 63 per cent of pupils at the nationally expected level by the end of Key Stage 2 in English by 2002.

## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1  
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	19	17	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	32	34	35
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	89 (69)	94 (67)	97 (74)
	National	82	83	87

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	17	19	19
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	32	35	35
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	89 (71)	97 (74)	97 (93)
	National	82	86	87

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

## Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	23	12	35

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	15	12	20
	Girls	6	6	8
	Total	21	18	28
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	60 (76)	52 (63)	80 (83)
	National	70	69	78

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	16	13	21
	Girls	6	6	8
	Total	22	19	29
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	63	54	83
	National	68	69	75

## Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	6.9
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.1
	National comparative data	0.5

## Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	29
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

- 6 In the 1999 Key Stage 1 national tests, attainment was above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the teacher assessment for science, results were above the national average. When compared with similar schools, pupils' results are very high in writing and mathematics, and well above average in reading. In the end of key stage tests standards of attainment have been below average for the three years prior to 1999. Current inspection evidence indicates standards by the end of Key Stage 1 in reading and writing are below average, average in mathematics and above average in science. The cohort of pupils who completed the 1999 national tests contained a more than usual large number of higher attaining pupils and fewer than normal pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. This is the factor that explains the sudden rise in standards in one year, and the difference in inspection findings and the 1999 results. Standards of attainment are similar to the time of the last inspection in reading and writing, but have improved in mathematics and science.
- 7 In the Key Stage 2 national tests of 1999, attainment was average in science but well below in English and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, attainment was well above average in science, above average in English and average in mathematics. Over the three years prior to 1999, standards in English and science improved each year faster than standards improved nationally. In mathematics they improved in line with national trends. Current inspection evidence indicates attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in science is above average and average in English and mathematics. The cohort of pupils who completed the 1999 tests contained a higher than usual (40 per cent) proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Also, within this year group there was a higher than usual level of transience. Thirty-three per cent of pupils were not at the school in Year 2 when the pupils completed their national tests at the end of Key Stage 1. This explains the low standards for this particular year, and the difference in the inspection findings and the 1999 results. Standards of attainment have improved in mathematics and science since the last inspection, and are similar in English.
- 8 The school assembles a wide range of data on pupils' attainments and has used this information to set targets for each existing year groups of pupils in Key Stage 2. By 2002, when the existing Year 4 pupils are tested, the school has set a target of having 63 per cent of pupils at the nationally expected level in English and 60 per cent in mathematics. These are low in comparison with the rate of progress pupils make year on year.
- 9 Children enter the nursery with attainment that is well below that expected of children of this age. This is confirmed by a detailed assessment of pupils' skills when they enter the nursery. By the age of five, attainment is below age-related expectations nationally in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. It is in line with age-related expectations in social, personal and physical development. Children who are under five years of age make good progress across all areas of learning. The best progress is made in their personal and social development.
- 10 By the age of five children's attainment overall is low in language and literacy. Some children attain standards that are not significantly different from those found nationally but most do not. Children develop good listening skills, and answer clearly simple questions from stories. They handle books with care and interpret the pictures when talking about the book. Some higher attaining children recognise and write their own name. They also copy adult written sentences. In mathematics the majority of children do not attain nationally agreed levels of attainment for five-year-old children. Children count to ten, recognise two-dimensional shapes such as triangle, square and circle. In number rhymes and games they add and subtract in practical situations, for example when singing the rhyme " five currant buns". Some higher attaining children develop a good understanding of mathematics language such as "first" and "in front of".

- 11 In English by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below national expectations, but in line by the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 reading and writing standards are below average. Reading and writing standards are average by the end of Key Stage 2. In mathematics at Key Stage 1, attainment is close to the national average and by end of Key Stage 2 it is line with the national average in all areas of learning. Pupils' mental calculation and numeracy skills are in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. In science, by the end of both key stages attainment is above average across all areas of learning.
- 12 Attainment in information and communication technology is below national expectations by the end of both key stages. Attainment is low in information and communication technology because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use computers in lessons. There are not enough computers. Pupils' attainment in the subject is not assessed effectively so work is not matched accurately to their varying needs; teachers' planning does not indicate clearly how skills are to be taught in individual lessons. Standards for religious education by the end of both key stages are in line with those recommended in the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a sound knowledge of major Christian festivals and other world faiths. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils gain a deep understanding of the significance of artefacts and symbols in different religions. By end of both key stages, pupils develop sensitivity towards the feelings and emotions of others.
- 13 In art, design and technology, geography and physical education, pupils at both key stages are reaching standards in line with expected levels for their age by the end of the key stage. There was insufficient evidence in history and music at either key stage to make a judgement. Since the last inspection the overall attainment of pupils across the curriculum is higher at both key stages. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in history at either key stage because it will not be taught until later in the school year. In music, only two lessons were timetabled during the inspection so no judgement on attainment or progress is made.
- 14 Progress in relation to prior attainment at Key Stage 1 is good in English, mathematics, science, religious education, art, design and technology, geography and physical education. It is satisfactory in information and communication technology. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make very good progress in science, good progress in English, mathematics, art, design and technology, geography and physical education. Progress in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory over time. It is currently good in some lessons in Years 4 and 6. Pupils' progress at Key Stage 1 is consistent across all classes. At Key Stage 2 it is good for some Year 3 and 4 pupils, for others it is satisfactory. The rate at which pupils progress increases significantly in Years 5 and 6.
- 15 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at both key stages. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is positively affected by good teaching and effective use of well-deployed, skilled support staff. Pupils who receive additional literacy support in Year 4 make good progress. Higher attaining pupils make good progress. There is no significant difference between girls and boys in the rate of their progress.
- 16 The improvement since the last inspection in attainment and the rate at which pupils progress is brought about by the increase in good quality teaching. Better planning and more effective use of pupil assessment to match work to pupils' different needs also contribute to improved attainment and pupil progress. Pupils' good attitudes to learning positively affect the rate at which they progress. The increase in help that is provided by skilled support staff also positively affects pupils' progress.

## **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

- 17 Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to their work, behaviour, relationships and personal development are strengths. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. In classrooms, pupils listen carefully and usually concentrate for long periods. In the good lessons, pupils work well together in groups, for example in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson they discussed knowledgeably the properties of shapes. Pupils are friendly and polite. They show courtesy to each other, to teachers and to visitors who are greeted in an open, friendly and happy manner. Pupils show respect for property. For instance in science, Year 6 pupils handle rock samples sensibly and take great care with artefacts in religious education.
- 18 Behaviour in lessons, around the school and at playtime and lunchtime is very good. This reflects the views expressed by the parents in their meeting with inspectors. Pupils conduct themselves very well at assembly times; they enter and leave the hall quietly and sensibly which supports the creation of a very effective environment for collective worship. Clearly, pupils respond well to the school's consistent approach to discipline and respond very favourably to the many rewards available for good work and good behaviour. There have been no exclusions and no incidents of bullying or aggressive behaviour were seen during the inspection week.
- 19 Relationships in the school are good. There are many occasions when pupils work closely and co-operatively together. For example, in Year 3, pupils used circle time<sup>3</sup> to share ideas about the difference between hearing and listening. They respect others' views and beliefs. Pupils of different ages mix well in the playground. Overall, there is a positive and friendly working atmosphere within the school.
- 20 Pupils' personal development is good. Staff allocate responsibilities, for example classroom monitors, packed lunch collectors and helpers who set up computers. These activities are carried out diligently and effectively, often without adult supervision. It is clear that pupils respond well to feeling valued as individuals.

## **Attendance**

- 21 Attendance is satisfactory. It is broadly in line with the national average at 93 per cent for the last reporting year. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Most pupils are punctual arriving at school, but a small minority of pupils are persistently late. The attendance rate is not significantly different from the time of the last inspection.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

- 22 The quality of teaching is good overall and is a strength of the school. The teaching has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons, with 44 per cent good, 24 per cent very good and three per cent excellent. This is a very significant improvement compared with the findings of the previous report. Teaching of the under fives is good in 50 per cent of lessons and very good in 40 per cent. At Key Stage 1, teaching is very good in 21 per cent of lessons, good in 50 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. At Key Stage 2 five per cent is excellent, 21 per cent very good, 41 per cent good and the rest satisfactory.

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<sup>3</sup> In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues, which touch them.

- 23 The quality of teaching of the under-fives varies from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall. Individual lessons are well planned and clearly show what is to be taught and learned. In the best lessons the teachers have high expectations that are based on a good understanding of the learning needs of the children. Very secure subject knowledge is evident. Relationships with the children are very caring and the management of their behaviour very good. Assessment of children's attainment is thorough and is used effectively to plan work that is matched accurately to their varying needs. Support staff provide very good support for pupils' learning.
- 24 The overall quality of teaching at both key stages is good in mathematics, science, religious education, art, design and technology, geography and physical education. It is satisfactory in English and information and communication technology. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching in history and music.
- 25 Across the school, teachers work very hard to plan and prepare lessons. The planning adequately shows what is to be taught and learned. Teachers give pupils opportunities to develop numeracy and literacy skills in different subjects, for example in design and technology by measuring and in science by ensuring pupils record their findings in a variety of different written formats. There is effective use of pupil assessment to ensure that activities are matched to pupils' varying needs and prior attainment.
- 26 Pupils' progress is positively affected because teachers use a range of appropriate teaching methods. These include whole-class teaching, group and individual work, involving practical, investigative and problem solving activities. Time and resources are generally used efficiently. The exception is that computers are underused to support pupils' learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Pupils' behaviour is managed effectively. A strength of the teaching is the good relationships between staff and pupils. Support staff are used well to support pupils' learning and contribute positively to pupils' progress.
- 27 The quality of the marking of pupils' work is good. All work is marked and the best marking places emphasis on what pupils need to do to improve their work further. Homework is provided and extends significantly pupils' learning.
- 28 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs generally takes place within their classroom and is good. There are effective support strategies. These include good use of skilled support staff, planned withdrawal for specific teaching of literacy and numeracy and work set at appropriate levels.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

- 29 The curriculum for the children under five years, in both nursery and reception, including those with special needs, is very good and very effective. The quality of planning is good; the teachers plan the activities thoroughly to ensure work becomes appropriately harder as children move through the nursery and reception. All six nationally recommended areas of learning for children aged three to five are covered. Children are assessed on entry to both the nursery and reception. The systematic evaluation and assessment inform teaching and planning helps to ensure children make good progress. Children under five receive a good start in school. They build on the six areas of learning and are ready to begin their work on the National Curriculum in Key Stage 1.
- 30 The curriculum in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good overall and meets statutory requirements in all national curriculum subjects, and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The provision in information technology is less secure in the amount of planned time to enable pupils to practise their developing skills. The curriculum gives appropriate time to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and there is adequate time allocated to religious education and all other subjects. The school is successful in meeting its aim, to provide a curriculum that is balanced, broadly based and differentiated for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school is committed to providing equal opportunities and every pupil has equal access to all areas of the curriculum. Appropriate provision is made for sex education and awareness of drug misuse, through science and health education.

- 31 Very good procedures are in place for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs from the assessment on entry to nursery and from the local authority baseline assessment in reception. The curriculum meets the requirements of all pupils on the Code of Practice<sup>4</sup> special needs register. Pupils have full access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, matched to their needs. Very good additional provision is made for these pupils through specific teaching and non-teaching support during literacy and numeracy time. This specialist support provision makes a positive impact on pupils learning, which in turn contributes to the consistently good progress pupils make. Extra support is given for additional literacy work. This support is planned very effectively.
- 32 The previous inspection required the school to review planning in information and communication technology, history and music so as to meet requirements of the National Curriculum. Also the school had to ensure religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The school has made good progress in addressing these issues. There are now good quality schemes of work in all subjects. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. Significant improvements have been made in the implementation of information technology.
- 33 The school has focussed its attention appropriately on implementing literacy and numeracy. Pupils, including those with special needs, are organised into sets to enable ability group teaching to take place in literacy and numeracy, which has had a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- 34 There is good quality of medium-term planning in both Key Stages. Planning to ensure work becomes appropriately harder as pupils move through the school is good. Short term and daily planning is satisfactory. Medium-term planning places good emphasis on knowledge acquisition. The development of skills and opportunities to apply it are less well-considered, particularly in information technology.
- 35 Subject co-ordinators have a copy of teachers medium-term plans to monitor coverage and continuity for pupils. This strategy has ensured a good quality of medium-term plans, and has had an effective impact on pupils learning by ensuring continuity and progression. The headteacher has established an exemplary overview of all curriculum areas through thorough evaluation.
- 36 The curriculum is enhanced, and impact positively on pupils' learning, by opportunities for visits out of school including an activity weekend in Norfolk and visits to the Medlock valley, as part of a topic on rivers. Pupils visit Uppermill and Quarry Bank Mill. The under fives nursery children visit to Heaton Park, while reception children visit Daisy Nook. Such visits enhance pupils' social skills as well as developing their knowledge and understanding of the world outside school. There is a good range of extra curricular and sporting activities. These include library and reading clubs, a recorder club, and an infant craft club for baking and making models. A Spanish club will take place later in the year. Extra curricular sports include football. Pupils receive professional coaching from Manchester United's Community staff and have close links with Oldham Town football club. There is a netball team and pupils participate in competitions in the borough. Pupils play cricket in the summer. There is a drama club, which offers pupils opportunities to explore their feelings in role-play situations. A high proportion of pupils take part in these activities which have a very positive effect on their personal and social skills.
- 37 Individual pupils' profiles and records accompany the pupils when they transfer to the secondary school. This provides continuity in learning and progress as they move from one stage of education to the next.
- 38 There is good curriculum support from the governing body. There are governors who have responsibility for monitoring the school's work in every subject area, including literacy and numeracy. All curriculum policies have been discussed and agreed with the governing body. The governors take an active part in overseeing the curriculum and make regular visits to see it in practice in school. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

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<sup>4</sup> This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

- 39 Assessment procedures for all children under five, including those with special needs are very good. Their progress is monitored and recorded regularly and effectively, by a combination of observation and testing. The evidence gained is used well to plan future work to ensure continuity and progression of learning. The school has its own assessment on entry to nursery. The local authority assessment is completed when children enter the reception class. The information gained from these assessments, help to identify pupils with special needs and is very effective in informing curriculum planning for all children under five.
- 40 There are good procedures in place for assessing pupils in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics, science and religious education. Procedures are satisfactory in all other subjects except for information and communication technology in which it is unsatisfactory.
- 41 Very effective procedures are in place for assessing pupils with special educational needs. Individual educational plans for pupils are of good quality. Targets identified in individual plans are reviewed termly and pupils' progress is reported to parents. Arrangements for the assessment, recording and reporting of all pupils on the special needs register are fully met and reflect very good practice. The diagnostic assessment of these pupils by the co-ordinator and overall monitoring of the individual plans is used systematically to inform future teaching and planning to ensure pupils good progression in learning.
- 42 There is effective non-teaching support for all special educational needs pupils. This contributes significantly to these pupils having full access to the curriculum and ensures optimum progress for pupils in relation to their individual plans.
- 43 The previous inspection required the school to ensure assessment and recording arrangements reflected National curriculum requirements in all subjects, and the locally agreed syllabus requirements in religious education. The school has made good progress in these areas.
- 44 Assessment procedures are being used effectively in English, maths and science to inform planning for progression. Setting procedures in literacy and numeracy ability groups, for all pupils including those with special needs, and the use of target cards for each pupil, ensure good records of attainment are now maintained. There are levels of attainment in the religious education scheme of work, which align with the local agreed syllabus. This ensures work is matched accurately to the different needs of pupils.
- 45 The assessment co-ordinator organises termly standardisation sessions in which annotated work is discussed. This helps teachers make accurate judgements about standards that pupils reach in relation to National Curriculum levels. The head teacher evaluates all Key Stage 2 reading achievement, workbooks and test results. A record of targets set with pupils is kept. Individual portfolios of work in the core subjects are compiled and discussed with pupils. There are now twice-yearly record sheets giving National Curriculum levels in the core subjects, as well as annual records and reports in all subjects. This ensures that pupils' progress is monitored effectively, so any fall in the rate of progress is quickly identified.
- 46 Assessment practice is more established in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Whilst teachers in the same year group plan together and identify opportunities for assessment, there is sometimes a lack of precision in the focus of assessment, for example, 'assessment by omission', in the foundation subjects.
- 47 The assessment co-ordinator has set up a school portfolio of work in English, mathematics and science. This is used as a monitoring device. Pupils from each year group have pieces of work collated, standardised and a level and grade recorded. This process enables optimum tracking of pupils' achievement throughout school life to show the progress made.
- 48 Assessment is effectively managed by the co-ordinator. The new assessment policy is being monitored by the headteacher to identify good practice and to ensure planning is developed from assessment. Standard assessment results are published annually in the prospectus in accordance with legal requirements.

## 48 **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

- 49 Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In this, the school has maintained qualities identified at the last inspection. Parents expressed strong support for the aims and values which the school promotes both in the questionnaire and at their meeting with inspectors. The effectiveness of the provision contributes successfully to the school's very good ethos. The provision for collective worship is satisfactory.
- 50 Spiritual development is promoted well through daily assemblies and the curriculum, especially in the teaching of religious education, literacy and in circle time<sup>5</sup>. There is a balanced programme of whole school, key stage and class assemblies. These are appropriately supported by a wide-ranging policy, which sets out appropriate themes, hymns and prayers. Pupils are rightly expected to show respect when entering the place of worship and the staff are successful in maintaining an appropriate atmosphere. Further development comes during 'circle time', where there are opportunities provided for issues to be discussed in an open and respectful manner. A strong emphasis in this approach is the maintenance and further development of pupils' self-esteem. Visits and visitors give further opportunities for development. For example, the school has recently started to visit the local church again and its beauty amazes many pupils. Furthermore, a local headteacher has visited to tell them about her journey to Bangladesh; this led to reflection on the existence of others in the 'school under the sky'.
- 51 Provision for moral development is very good, with the teaching of moral issues playing a significant part in assemblies. There is a strongly developed awareness on the part of all staff to promote moral beliefs throughout the day, when opportunities arise. Planning incorporates ideas such as care for all beings and behaviour towards each other. Consequently, the vast majority of pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. A recent example is the emphasis being placed on Remembrance Day and the involvement in fund-raising for the pupils in Bangladesh who are less well off. The system of using 'Good Work assemblies' is effective and pupils are appropriately rewarded for their best efforts and good behaviour. School rules are clear and unambiguous whilst playing a large part in promoting an orderly community. They reinforce the high expectations the school has of pupils' honesty and respect. All staff provide good role models in the various activities they are involved in.
- 52 Provision for social development is good. Teamwork and co-operation are promoted through dramatic productions, involvement in sports teams and music events. Increasingly, pupils are being invited to show greater independence and initiative. For example, Year 2 are expected to use dictionaries to improve the quality of spelling, whilst demands are made on Year 5/6 pupils to use a variety of sources to find the origins of words. A number of opportunities are provided for pupils to develop a sense of belonging to their community. The school runs activity visits for Year 5/6 pupils and each class goes on at least one curriculum visit per year. Raising funds for charities encourages pupils to develop caring attitudes towards those less advantaged than themselves. These include the buying of a talking book for the blind and the distribution of harvest gifts. Local elderly people are invited to the Nativity and provided with refreshments.
- 53 Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Lessons in history, geography, and religious education soundly promote an appreciation of local and distant cultures. For example, in religious education pupils are introduced to several of the main world religions and, in geography and history, pupils learn about Greece and Egypt as well as the local area. Visits to museums and arts centres successfully emphasise the rich seam of cultural diversity and local talent, for instance the visits to the Jewish and Egyptology Museums. Year 6 visited a bookshop in Manchester to meet the poet, Benjamin Zephaniah. Some teachers involve their pupils in mini-topics such as Year 2 having a French breakfast and Year 4 contacting e-mail pen pals in Hawaii. The literacy co-ordinator is vigilant when buying and replacing book stock that provides experience of stories from other cultures.

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<sup>5</sup> In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues which touch them.

## **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

- 54 The school provides very good support, welfare and guidance for pupils, which has a positive effect on their attitudes and progress. The teachers know their pupils well and respond positively to their needs. Parents feel the school provides a safe and welcoming environment for their children. Staff are readily available at the school entrances at the beginning and end of the school day to welcome pupils and as a point of contact for parents with any concerns.
- 55 Procedures for monitoring academic progress are good and have improved since the last inspection. There are individual pupil profiles on pupils of assessed work and a range of formal assessments. Procedures for monitoring personal development are informal but effective. There is a good policy and programme of work for personal and social education that includes circle time, health education and teaching about the dangers of drugs. There are good induction procedures in place for nursery and reception children. Parents are welcome to stay with their children during initial visits. Children settle quickly into the routine in the nursery. Through good liaison with the school's associated secondary schools pupils transfer at the age of eleven runs smoothly. As part of this effective liaison teachers from the receiving secondary schools teach some lessons to Year 6 pupils. These lessons include French and science.
- 56 There are very good procedures in place for the monitoring and promotion of discipline and good behaviour. The school implements very effectively their behaviour and discipline policy. Praise and rewards (badges, stickers, stars, certificates and team points) are given for good behaviour and achievement. Names are also included in the "Gold Book". The headteacher monitors and records serious incidents of inappropriate behaviour and bullying, but early intervention and parental involvement resolves most issues very quickly. There is a graduated scheme of appropriate sanctions in place and clear procedures to deal with any incidents of bullying or harassment. Such incidents very rarely occur.
- 57 The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. Registration meets statutory requirements. Class teachers, senior teachers in each key stage and headteacher monitor attendance with the assistance of the educational welfare officer when necessary. Good attendance is actively promoted through praise, rewards and prizes.
- 58 There are very good procedures in place for child protection and promoting the health, safety and well being of pupils. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection. All staff are aware of procedures and receive annual in-service training. There is an appropriate health and safety policy and pupils are supervised well by teachers and support staff at breaks and lunchtime. There are three first aiders in school. Fire precautions are in place but a whole-school risk assessment is not complete. Electrical checks are not yet due as the building and electrical equipment are new.

## **Partnership with parents and the community**

- 59 The school's partnership with parents and the local community is good and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. Parents speak highly of the school and find the headteacher and staff approachable and always willing to find time to talk with them.
- 60 The information provided for parents is good. The school issues monthly newsletters to keep parents informed of developments within the school. The school prospectus is a useful and informative document. The quality of the school prospectus has improved since the last inspection and now meets statutory requirements. The governors' annual report to parents has also improved but does not provide information regarding the professional development of staff. The school held a meeting for parents to inform them about the National Literacy Strategy. Video presentations are shown in the school entrance hall on such topics as awareness raising about asthma, epilepsy, and headlice and also to view recordings of school productions. The home/school agreement is being implemented. The two parents' evenings each year are well attended and enable parents to consult teachers about their children's progress. Annual reports on pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection. They are informative and set appropriate targets for improvement. The school issues half-term reports for English, mathematics and science. Parents appreciate this extra information about their children's progress.

- 61 Good opportunities are provided for parents to become involved in their children's learning. Many parents make effective use of the homework diaries and reading record books to share information with their child's teacher. Homework is set regularly and activity packs are available for nursery and reception children. Most parents support learning at home. Parents give good support through the Friends' Association, which raises money for the school by organising social events. Parents attend a weekly assembly which celebrates pupils' achievements. The school encourages parents and grandparents to act as volunteer helpers. They assist with reading, textile technology, design and technology and the art club. This involvement is appreciated by the staff and contributes positively to pupils' progress.
- 62 Good links with the local community support and enhance pupils' learning. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There are educational visits within the local area. For example, two classes visited a local church during the week of the inspection. The local supermarket assisted with a project about recycling. Physical education provision is enhanced by links with the local football team. A local secondary school welcomes Year 6 pupils to use the computer facilities. The school participates in inter-school sports competitions. There is involvement in the local community forum. Year 5 and 6 pupils assisted in the design of a recreational area on the surrounding housing estate. Visitors to the school include grandparents to talk about "days-gone-by" and a local headteacher from a school with a high percentage of multi-ethnic pupils. The headteacher spoke to the pupils about a recent visit to Bangladesh. There are visits from representatives of the emergency services. Pupils made educational visits to a mill, park, the local town centre, theatres and a synagogue. The school works hard to develop new community links but has been unable so far to develop meaningful business links.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

- 63 The school is very well led by the headteacher who provides clear educational direction, and strong, influential and supportive leadership. The deputy headteacher and senior teachers, who together with the headteacher provide a very good senior management team for the school, very ably support her. The senior management team effectively evaluates educational provision in school. The role of subject co-ordinators is clearly defined and they have a positive influence on standards. They provide expertise, evaluate coverage of pupils' work, the quality of teaching and standards of attainment within the subject for which they are responsible. The most recent example is the thorough evaluation, by the special educational needs co-ordinator, of special educational needs provision within the school. The quality of leadership has improved since the last inspection. The school is well placed to bring about further improvement.
- 64 The governing body meets regularly and statutory requirements are met. Its meetings are very efficiently and effectively managed. Committees effectively oversee various aspects of school life and designated governors provide valued support. Governors demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and work hard to support the school with advice and encouragement. The governing body is involved in strategic planning, decision making, and in reviewing and monitoring school developments. This is good practice.
- 65 The school has appropriate aims and values including a commitment to "high standards for all". The implementation of the school's stated aims and values is good and they are well supported by parents. There is a very positive ethos, which reflects the school's commitment to an effective learning environment, very good relationships and equality of opportunity for all pupils. The school's ethos very positively affects standards.
- 66 School development planning is good. It provides in detail areas for development during this year, and, in outline, future plans covering the next three years. Developments are given appropriate priority, costed and clearly show what improvements are to be made in order to evaluate their success or otherwise. Previous strategic planning is reviewed and evaluated and form the basis of the current school development plan. The school development plan is regularly monitored by the senior management team and discussed fully with the governing body.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

- 67 The school is well staffed to meet the needs of the planned curriculum, including areas of learning for the under-fives. Staff have been effectively deployed and curriculum responsibilities have been matched appropriately to qualifications, experience and interest. This is a clear improvement on the match of curriculum responsibilities found in the last inspection.
- 68 Educational support staff work closely with teachers to provide effective support to pupils with special educational needs. Support staff are well deployed and make a good contribution to the work of the school. The school is very clean and well maintained. The caretaker, cleaners and midday supervisors all support the school well, and make a positive contribution to the learning environment of the pupils. At lunchtime, arrangements for school meals are very well organised. Pupils receive an excellent meal service. Administrative staff are quietly efficient and enable the day-to-day life of the school to function unobtrusively.
- 69 Arrangements for the induction of new staff are well established and effective. Newly qualified staff are very well supported by a mentoring system led by the deputy headteacher, and follows the guidance provided by Oldham Local Education Authority. Formal arrangements for the appraisal of staff are not in place, but the headteacher holds an annual review meeting with each member of staff, which is very effective in establishing both school and individual priorities for development. All staff have clear and detailed job descriptions.

- 70 Procedures for the development and training of staff are very effective. The senior management team have a clear vision that the purpose of staff development is to raise levels of achievement for pupils, through improved quality of teaching and learning, and improve the behaviour of pupils. School priorities in the school development plan form the basis for staff development and all staff have undertaken training in the implementation of the literacy and numeracy hours.
- 71 This is a new building and the quality of accommodation is very good. Classrooms and teaching bays are spacious and well furnished. Teaching areas are used effectively to cover the full range of teaching activities. Accommodation for the under-fives is very good and makes a very positive contribution to their learning environment. The school has a large hard surface playground with a marked football and netball pitch. A large field to the front of the school has recently been seeded with grass and will be used as a games area next year when the land settles after the recent building work. Carefully mounted, high quality displays of pupils' work make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and motivation, and ensures an attractive and welcoming school. The school is fully accessible to disabled pupils and although the building is on two storeys, it benefits from having a lift for the physically disabled to gain access.
- 72 Overall pupils benefit from a range of good quality resources in most subjects, although there are insufficient computers and associated hardware to ensure the required provision for information technology. This is having an adverse impact on the quality of teaching and learning in information technology. Resources in English, music, and religious education and for the under-fives are good, and satisfactory in all other areas of the curriculum. In this aspect, the school has made many improvements since the last inspection. Resources are of good quality and are easily accessible to the pupils. Library provision is good, with a range of good quality books available. The school makes use of Oldham School Museum lending service and the school book loan service.
- 73 Very effective use is made of the local and wider environment to enrich the curriculum and provide first hand learning experiences for the pupils. A recent visit to Daisy Nook to work with the Medlock Valley wardens enriched work on rivers in the geography curriculum, and Daisy Nook is also used within the science curriculum to look carefully at the habitats of local wildlife. Recent visits have also been made to Oldham to discover the Town Trail and the Museum in Oldham and the Lowry Museum in Salford are used to examine historical artefacts. This year, as part of their topic studies on Space, pupils in Year 6 will be visiting Jodrell Bank. Residential visits make a positive impact to the progress pupils make in all areas of the curriculum.

### **The efficiency of the school**

- 74 Educational developments are supported well by careful financial planning. The school development plan is appropriately linked to the mission statement, costings and the overall pursuit of school improvement. This is exemplified in the development in the near future of a dedicated area for information and communication technology. Spending on learning resources is relatively low at present, but this reflects the advantageous conditions promoted by having a new school and a large budget to resource it. Earmarked funding, such as that to support special educational needs and in-service training is spent appropriately and has assisted in raising levels of attainment. A particularly prudent decision was the one to buy into the local education authority in-service training provision, which provides greater access to subject and management training.
- 75 The governing body, through the financial spokesperson, carefully monitors budget records and expenditure on a monthly basis. Subject co-ordinators, in conjunction with their link governor, assess the annual need for resources and bid for a share of available funds. This is good practice, firstly in terms of the assessment and secondly, in terms of governor participation. However, the finance committee meets infrequently and does not have as deep a knowledge of the school's finance as it might.

- 76 Effective use is made of staff. This is particularly so in the case of the deputy headteacher, who not only teaches full-time to a high standard but also supports the governors and headteacher effectively by piloting important projects in the classroom. The development of target cards based on individual pupils' assessments are good examples. Accommodation is used well. Generally, learning resources are used well, the exception being the use of computers.
- 77 Day-to day administration and clerical support are satisfactory. Accounts are audited regularly and the recent recommendations by the auditor are being implemented. The clerical staff are supported well by a part-time bursar.
- 78 Attainment on entry is well below average; when pupils leave the school attainment has been raised substantially through the good progress maintained throughout the school. The quality of teaching and curriculum is good. Pupils behave very well and there are good relationships throughout the school. In view of these factors and the high level of funding; the school gives good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

- 79 The school makes very good provision for children under five. At the time of the inspection the children had only been in school for one half term. Admission takes place once a year in September. At the time of the inspection there were 40 children with a full time placement in the nursery class. This class is staffed by one teacher, one nursery nurse full time, one part-time, and one classroom support assistant.
- 80 The two reception classes have 21 and 18 children respectively 14 of whom were four year olds, attending full time. These classes are each staffed by one teacher with one full-time nursery nurse and one classroom support assistant, shared between them. Admission to reception takes place once per year in September. The nursery and two reception classes together form the provision for 3 –5 years olds in the early years' area within the school. The reception children follow a structured timetable in which groups of children of similar attainment work with the teacher for focussed tasks, whilst the others chose from a selection of activities for structured play opportunities. The nursery provides a stimulating and structured environment for adult directed and child self-choice activities.
- 81 On entry to the nursery there is a wide range of attainment, but overall attainment is well below average levels, as identified by the nursery entry assessment. Systematic assessment throughout nursery shows that almost all of the children make good progress. Nevertheless, when they start school most children do not attain the levels typical of the age group. The baseline assessment carried out in the first six weeks of this year showed most children have not reached average levels in language, literacy and mathematics. Children almost attain expected levels in the personal and social skills area of the six desirable learning outcomes for children aged five years.
- 82 The children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in most areas of learning. However, by the age of five most children do not achieve the levels described by the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. The children are on course to attain expected levels for five-year-olds in personal and social skills and in the major skills section of physical development.
- 83 The personal and social development of children is good. The children achieve age-related nationally expected levels in their personal and social development by the time they are five. Children settle very well in nursery and quickly establish effective relationships with staff and other children. They are beginning to co-operate, especially with adults, for example in role-play situations in the home area. All children help to tidy up at the end of an activity! In reception classes they usually prefer to play within a group and co-operate well with other children. They learn to share equipment and take turns, for example in taking the lead part in the 'Good Shepherd'. They all enjoyed finding the lost sheep! Most children are well behaved at all times.
- 84 Children, including those with special needs, in nursery and reception make good progress in this area of learning. The nursery children are learning to make choices in selecting which self-choice activity they wish to try. The children in reception understand and accept the daily routines and the more formal procedures when they work with a teacher or nursery nurse. They are keen to be involved in all activities. They maintain concentration and generally behave well. They become confident and independent.
- 85 The teaching of personal and social education is good for all under fives. Staff are good role models for the children and are consistent in their approach. Class procedures and rules are reinforced throughout so children know exactly what is expected of them. The classrooms are very well organised and resources are easily available to children. This results in children developing some independent working habits and skills.

- 86 In language and literacy most children attain below nationally expected levels by the time they are five. Children, including those with special needs, in both nursery and reception classes make good progress in this area of learning. Children quickly learn how to listen well and join in with familiar stories, rhymes and songs in both large and small groups. For instance the nursery children not only listened to the 'animal lady' but also tried hard to join in with singing rhymes in the follow up afterwards in class. They listened well to the story 'After the Storm', a few more able children, could talk about 'Percy the Park-keeper', and which animal came first! They enjoy books. Some children know how to turn pages, and which are the front and the back of the book. Children in reception develop good listening skills, and try to answer simple questions from stories. They handle books with care and interpret the pictures to tell the whole class. Some higher attaining children in reception classes recognise and write their name. These higher attaining children not only develop good pencil skills but also are 'underwriting' adult written sentences. One of these children can read book 2 of the school chosen scheme, and was able to show the inspector not only the title but also match and read all the signs on the corridor mural of 'Hill Street'.
- 87 The teaching of language and literacy in both nursery and reception is good. As the children work the staff talk to them and ask questions to promote the children's language skills. The teachers read stories well which in turn helps the children to concentrate and enjoy them. Staff encourage the children to listen carefully and praise their contributions in discussions. This motivates the children's involvement. Opportunities are provided for role-play where staff intervene appropriately to extend the play so enhancing the quality of learning. Careful planning ensures that all of the children are presented with well-matched opportunities to develop skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing, appropriate for their age. Very good use is made of day to day assessment to take each child to the next stage of learning.
- 88 In mathematics children attain below the levels described by the nationally agreed learning outcomes by the time they are five. The children in nursery are learning to sort, match and count to five. Some higher attaining children count accurately to six and know and use correctly the words 'bigger than' and 'the same as'. In reception every opportunity is taken for counting. In the numeracy oral session children learn to say and use number names to ten in correct order. They recognise two- dimensional shapes like triangles, squares and circles. In action number rhymes and games they learn to add and take away in practical situations, for example 'five currant buns'.
- 89 Good progress is made by most children, including those with special needs, in all areas of mathematics. There is suitable emphasis on numeracy. Some higher attainers develop a good understanding of the language of mathematics such as 'first', 'in front of' and follow a repeating pattern of shapes.
- 90 Children enjoy all areas of mathematics. They listen attentively to the teacher and are eager to answer questions. The teaching of mathematics is good, an example being the work on recognising and ordering numbers to ten. This is done initially as a whole class activity with the teacher making good use of a puppet, questioning children to assess their knowledge and understanding, before acting out the song, to give opportunities to learn and reinforce number skills effectively.
- 91 In knowledge and understanding of the world children attain below levels described as being typical for five-year olds. They make good progress. In the nursery the children are encouraged to explore their senses. For example they recall clearly the feel and smell of their hand after stroking the 'pole-cat'. In reception children recall events from the immediate past, for example telling the rest of the class what happened over the weekend. They plant bulbs. They know bulbs need water, warmth and to be covered with bulb fibre. Higher attaining children used a pictorial record they made to explain it to the rest of the class. Children in the nursery are introduced to the computer in adult focussed activities, to learn how to 'click', and 'point'. Reception children become familiar with using the computer. They use the mouse with increasing control and use a 'rhyme' programme with some adult help.

- 92 The quality of teaching is good. Activities are appropriate and well planned. Teachers have a good knowledge of the age group, know the precise purpose for each activity and give simple, clear instructions. They make good use of observational assessment to identify skills learnt, to plan for the next steps in learning and have high expectations of work and behaviour. They make sure children understand what is expected of them.
- 93 In physical development children's attainment is on course to meet the learning outcomes in the major motor skills section described as being typical for five-year-olds. Progress is good for all children, including those with special needs. Children move confidently around the hall. They develop skills competently in balance, co-ordination and spatial awareness. Nursery children roll and throw balls and work co-operatively with staff. They show increasing control of riding trikes, pushing prams and using the swing boats with confidence. Reception children are aware of the need for safety in the hall and are careful and considerate of other children's movements. They move in different ways with different parts of the body, using long and short steps, gaining good skills in balance, mobility and co-ordination.
- 94 Fine motor skills are established in all under- fives classes. Children learn to use brushes, crayons, pencils and scissors with increasing accuracy. Some children manage zips without help when putting on or taking off their coats. They thread small as well as large beads. The children are now achieving appropriately in most of this area of learning. This is as a direct impact of the good teaching.
- 95 Teaching in both nursery and reception in this area of learning is good. Staff provide a variety of opportunities to develop physical skills and show the children how to use equipment safely, for example how to hold scissors correctly when cutting. They make children aware for the need for safety when climbing or balancing on apparatus. Staff set suitable challenges and provide lots of encouragement to develop children's confidence and skills.
- 96 In creative development children's attainment is below levels by the time they are five years old. In both nursery and reception children experience a range of creative work. Painting and collage activities provide opportunities for children to work in different colours and textures. The nursery accommodation consists of a large room with an allocated craft area that has good hand-washing facilities. Here there are opportunities for more challenging aesthetic experiences in painting and box-craft that allow children to express their own ideas creatively. Nursery children create bonfire collages using yellow and red. Reception children design leaf prints whilst mixing colours to make orange. They recall many songs and rhymes by heart. The imaginative aspect of play is satisfactorily developed through role-play and singing. Some children (especially reception) know the names of instruments such as tambourine, drum and triangle and distinguish between loud and quiet sounds.
- 97 Progress is good for all children including those with special needs. They enjoy and work well together. They join in singing and counting rhymes with great gusto.
- 98 The quality of teaching is good. Activities are well planned and a suitable level of independence is encouraged. Staff ensure children wash and dry their hands, make a choice in activities and materials, to complete their work, and consolidate their learning.
- 99 Children under five receive a rich, broad and balanced curriculum covering the six areas of learning. All classrooms are well resourced and managed well to ensure the best use of resources and staff. Children experience a wide well planned range of structured activities. The children's attainment and progress is monitored through systematic assessment from entry to nursery, and baseline assessment in reception, with observation on a daily basis. These assessments are very well used not only to plan appropriate work, but also to group children for activities, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and so prepare children for work on the national curriculum. Children with special educational needs are identified from entry assessments.

- 100 Staff work very effectively together as a team, both in nursery and reception. The quality of teaching is of a consistently good quality and some very good teaching takes place. Staff have high expectations of attainment and behaviour. Support staff have a very positive impact on the children's learning and progress. Staff work hard to maintain and improve the standards of attainment. All staff working with these under fives children have sufficient training and experience with this age group and are very good at understanding how young children learn.
- 101 Planning is very good. It is detailed to show what is to be taught and learned. It has well-organised assessment opportunities and simple evaluation sheets. Assessment and its use to inform planning is effectively organised into a consistent format, all staff contribute to the daily assessments, and are involved in the weekly planning meetings. Assessment is used well to help plan lessons to meet the different needs of the children.
- 102 Staff take care to build positive relationships and use praise successfully to encourage the children and increase their confidence. There are nursery records of achievement certificates, such as 'I know 4 colours', which are given out at the end of the day. Both children and parents appreciate them.
- 103 Parents are well informed about the curriculum. They are welcomed into the nursery and have opportunities to observe good early educational practice. They are invited to new intake meetings, before entry to school, and 'creche' facilities are provided, to enable them to attend family assemblies, each Tuesday morning. Parents are pleased to take up this opportunity and the assembly is well attended.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

- 104 At the end of Key Stage 1, the 1999 National Curriculum test results were above the national average in reading and writing. When compared with the results achieved by pupils in similar schools, attainment in reading and writing was very high. Between 1996 and 1998, pupils' attainment was below average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 are below average.
- 105 The results of the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds were well below the national average and in line with the average for similar schools. Taken across the three years from 1996 to 1998, attainment was close to the national average. Results have risen considerably in this period. Inspection evidence shows standards to be in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 2.
- 106 By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in speaking and listening is just below average. High and average attainers listen for a satisfactory length of time, talk sensibly about stories they have read and make appropriate responses when questions are asked. By the end of Key Stage 2, many of the pupils are appropriately articulate. They talk freely about their interests and they take notice of what is going on in the world. They introduce a wide range of vocabulary to discussion. Low attainers are less confident and find it difficult to report or speak audibly when adding their views to the discussion. Particularly good discussion takes place in groups when pupils are relating their research information.

- 107 By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading is below the national average. However, the majority of pupils are making good progress. Higher attainers recognise many words, such as ‘suddenly’ and ‘policeman’. They read accurately, fluently and with understanding. Average attainers are accurate readers who show fluency and understanding. Lower attainers read very simple books accurately and fluently. Higher attainers use content and index pages appropriately. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is in line with the national average. The majority of pupils read accurately, fluently and with understanding. Higher attainers have very good expression and provide lots of interesting detail about their books. They are appropriately interested in a wide range of texts. Lower attainers are making satisfactory progress and are developing their level of understanding and the quality of expression. All pupils know use competently an alphabetical library classification system. The majority of pupils have good library skills and they use them well in research work; most use the Dewey classification system.
- 108 By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in writing is below the national average. Higher and average attainers are sequencing sentences and thereby conveying meaning. The style of writing is quite repetitive at the moment, for example ‘Then... Then...’ Nevertheless, they do provide some interesting detail and their technical skills include the accurate use of direct speech. Most pupils have legible handwriting, but there are inconsistencies in size and shape. Spelling is weak throughout the key stage, despite the fact that the results in tests have been steadily improving. Lower attainers have significant difficulties in most areas of writing, but capital letters and full-stops are beginning to emerge in their writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is in line with the national average. The range and amount of writing increases considerably and most pupils plan their writing soundly and usually use punctuation accurately. Higher attainers write for a variety of audiences and use an ever-widening vocabulary correctly. Whilst there is evidence of imaginative poetry, biography and narrative writing, there are too few opportunities to write longer pieces. Spelling is inconsistent: accurate in tests and among the higher attainers but others experience difficulties on a regular basis. Handwriting is legible and most pupils use a joined script. The breadth of vocabulary is increasing appropriately.
- 109 Progress in Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, most particularly when helped by the good classroom assistants. In Year 1, average attainers develop their handwriting well, especially their use of cursive script. Pupils are beginning to gain appropriate knowledge and understanding of apostrophes. In Year 2, higher attainers develop their handwriting and dictionary skills well. Good foundations are being laid for the future.
- 110 Overall, progress in Key Stage 2 is good. Pupils successfully build on the firm foundations laid earlier. Those with special educational needs also make good progress. In Year 3, listening skills develop satisfactorily, and pupils are gaining confidence in speaking to the group. In Year 4, the majority of pupils extend their vocabulary and gain important skills in redrafting their written work. Year 5 pupils continue to develop the redrafting skills further, but progress with spelling is much slower.
- 111 The school has made a good start in implementing its literacy strategy. Inspection evidence shows that teachers are planning and teaching with the strategy clearly guiding the way. Chosen texts are challenging, usually interesting and used well to support the objectives of the lesson. The school provides plenty of opportunities for literacy skills to be used in a range of other subjects. For example, in Year 2 science lessons, pupils are engaged in the search for words that are used about the growth of bulbs and in developing circuits. In Years 5/6, topic work on space provides pupils with opportunities to use their good library skills, knowledge and understanding. There is also a wealth of information, guidance and examples of pupils’ use of literacy on display in most areas of the school.

- 112 In Key Stage 1, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils show attentiveness, enthusiasm and increasing periods of concentration. Older pupils show initiative when using dictionaries to help their spelling and they are increasingly aware of the need to have pride in their work. For example, in Year 2 pupils were aware that the invitation they were producing needed care and a good presentation. In Key Stage 2, attitudes are satisfactory. Pupils exhibit appropriate levels of concentration, have pride in their work and develop initiative. The variability of response is illustrated in two lessons: in Year 4, a significant number of pupils lost interest in the drafting exercise they were doing and became distracted. However, in Year 6, the challenging lesson about the prologue to 'The Canterbury Tales', retained pupils' interest for long periods and showed the pupils are capable of independent work of a good standard. Standards of behaviour are very good throughout the school.
- 113 Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Around a tenth of lessons were very good, close to two-tenths were good and near to seven-tenths were satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, a third of lessons were very good, a third were good and a third were satisfactory. In the very good lesson in Year 2, the teacher had a very secure knowledge and understanding of the principles of the National Literacy Strategy; included a wide range of strategies to help pupils look for words within words: for example *stand* in the word *understanding*. Expectations are high and made explicit through the deployment of pupils' individual target cards. The management of pupils is calm and clear. The teachers pay strong attention to detail when reading the text and to the good quality of continuous assessment, particularly with the target group. In Key Stage 2, about an eighth of lessons were good and seven-eighths were satisfactory. The good lesson was based on the prologue to Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales'. Planning was detailed, and it formed a part of a coherent series of lessons. The cross-curricular links with history are strong. Expectations of pupils are high, most particularly in the demands on pupils to pronounce difficult words and equally difficult technical language is introduced well. There is excellent use made of video, which clearly brings out the use of Scandinavian/German dialect and led to a useful analysis about the origins of English. Generally, lessons are soundly planned and appropriately follow the design of the National Literacy Strategy. Expectations of pupils are satisfactory and management is usually firm.
- 114 The curriculum is good and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and the majority of teachers use the information gained to design programmes of study. The headteacher and co-ordinator evaluate teaching successfully. The co-ordinator is conscientious, looks to the future for development and provides a very good example in the classroom through the quality of her teaching.

## Mathematics

- 115 Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is close to the national average and in line with the national average at Key Stage 2. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls at either key stage. Standards of attainment are consistent across all areas of learning within the subject. The inspection findings indicate attainment is lower at Key Stage 1 when compared with the above average results in the 1999 national test. Standards are significantly higher when compared with the previous three years' well below average results. The reason for the high attainment in the 1999 test is that particular cohort had a greater than usual number of higher attaining pupils and fewer pupils on the register of special educational needs.
- 116 Inspection findings reflect the results in the 1998 end of key stage National Curriculum test for Key Stage 2. It is a significant improvement on the 1999 test result of well below average. Up to 1999 standards by the end of Key Stage 2 have improved consistently over the years. The 1999 results were adversely affected by the high number of pupils on the register for special educational needs (40 per cent of the year group). Standards are above average by the end of both key stages when compared with similar schools.

- 117 Standards in mathematics at both key stages have improved significantly since the last inspection. The improvement in standards has been brought about by the significant amount of good and very good teaching. Other factors to influence standards positively is the use of a well planned scheme of work to ensure pupils' work becomes appropriately harder as they move through the school. Teachers use effectively assessment procedures to plan work for the different needs of pupils. Pupils' good attitudes to learning in mathematics also contribute to the raising of standards. The introduction of the Numeracy Strategy to teaching the subject helps to raise standards, especially in mental calculation work.
- 118 By the end of Key Stage 1 standards in numeracy are in line with national expectations. Pupils count, add and subtract accurately numbers to twenty, are beginning to understand the place value of each digit in numbers up to one hundred. They have sound mental calculation skills for their age. They name and know the properties of two-dimensional shapes. They estimate and use accurately non-standard and standard measures for weighing. Standards in numeracy by the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with those expected nationally for pupils of this age. Pupils understand the value of a digit in numbers to one thousand. They multiply decimals by ten and one hundred and calculate percentages to work out the discount price of a product. They apply accurately their knowledge of number to add, subtract, multiply and divide five digit numbers. Pupils constructs accurately line graphs. They have a developing knowledge of probability. Pupils have sound mental calculation skills by the end of Key Stage 2. As a result of teachers beginning to use mathematics to develop pupils' literacy skills, a range of mathematical language is used correctly. The displays in classes reflect this emphasis on a good practice of the use of language in mathematics.
- 119 The development of the skills of numeracy in other subjects is satisfactory. In information and communication technology pupils use data to complete a spreadsheet for the construction of a line graph. This work is closely linked to science work about temperatures. In design and technology pupils measure accurately doweling before cutting it to an appropriate length. In role-play in Year 1, pupils weigh objects, and pay and receive money in their shop.
- 120 Pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time. Pupils enter school with mathematical skills that are well below those expected nationally. In lessons pupils make good progress. In a Year 2 lesson pupils made good progress when higher attainers extended their mental calculation skills to work out the value of a digit in a number to one hundred. The average and lower attaining pupils made good progress in consolidating their knowledge of counting to one hundred in fives, recognising and matching numbers to sets of objects. In a Year 5 lesson pupils made very good progress when solving problems involving numbers under one hundred using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division strategies. In a lesson about equivalence of fractions, decimals and percentages pupils moved from having little knowledge at the start of the lesson to calculate confidently by the end of the lesson. This represented very good progress. Support for pupils with special educational needs is planned carefully and contributes significantly to the good progress made by these pupils.
- 121 Pupils' attitudes to learning in mathematics are good and their behaviour in lessons very good. They enjoy the subject, are interested and are generally enthusiastic when doing their work. The pupils listen carefully and answer questions in whole class discussions. They work hard to complete tasks and work with sustained concentration for a length of time appropriate for their age. They work co-operatively and collaboratively when required.

122 The quality of teaching in both key stages is good overall, although it varies from very good to satisfactory. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Pupils are grouped in lessons according to their prior attainment. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress. There is an appropriate mix of whole-class, group and individual work. Planning shows clearly what is to be taught and learned. Lessons are well organised and resourced appropriately. The Numeracy Strategy has been introduced effectively and makes a positive contribution to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, particularly in mental calculation work. Regular assessment of pupils' work is undertaken and marking completed conscientiously. Teachers make good use of assessment to set targets and plan future work. National Curriculum requirements are met for the subject. Pupils receive good feedback on their work through verbal comments and written marking. Skilled support staff are deployed effectively and have a positive effect on pupils' learning. Homework is used well to extend and consolidate pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has an increasing influence on raising standards through providing expertise and monitoring of planning.

122 **Science**

123 The results of the National Curriculum assessments made by teachers in 1999 show that at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is above the national average. This has continued the trend for the last three years. At the end of Key Stage 2, National Curriculum test results in 1999 show that pupils' attainment is above the national average. Attainment over time, based on national test scores, indicates pupils' attainment has been above the national average for the last three years, with no significant difference between girls and boys performance. Inspection evidence reflects these findings, with attainment by the end of both key stages above average. Standards of attainment reached by pupils across all areas of learning within the subject are high, and are a strength of the school. They have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection.

124 At Key Stage 1, in their work related to physical processes, pupils know that light comes from the sun. They understand that darkness is the absence of light. They know there are various sources of artificial light and how a shadow is formed. Pupils know how to construct a simple circuit using batteries, wires and a buzzer. In their study of life processes and living things, they develop an understanding of the conditions necessary for bulbs to grow. The complete good work in their investigative and experimental science work. They observe carefully the growth of the shoots of their crocus. They measure and record their findings accurately. In their investigative work on electrical circuits, pupils recorded their findings by drawing a diagram and labelling it appropriately. When completing work they often pose the questions to explore reasons for something happening. However information and communication technology is underused to store, retrieve and present information. At the time of the inspection no work about materials and their properties was available.

125 At Key Stage 2, in their work on materials and their properties, pupils describe the differences in rocks to aid classification. They test rocks and then classify them according to their characteristics. The work completed is of a very high standard. In their work on physical processes they have a good knowledge and understanding of the solar system. Pupils attain above national expectations in their investigative and experimental work. They describe their experiments and record their observations in tables. They explain what comprises a fair test. They make good use of correct terminology. Through effective teaching of subject specific language the subject contributes well to the development of pupils' literacy skills. Information and communication technology skills are beginning to be developed through science. Year 4 pupils entered scientific data onto a spreadsheet and then constructed a line graph to represent their findings.

- 126 Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1. This is built upon well at Key Stage 2 in Years 3 and 4. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make consistently good progress throughout the school. The good progress is directly related to good teaching. Pupils in Year 2 made good progress in a lesson about growing bulbs. The teacher used skilled questioning to revise previous learning. Clearly evident were the teacher's high expectations of pupils' attainment. The organisation and resourcing of the lesson was good. In a Year 3/4 lesson pupils made good progress when investigating from where the moon gets its light. Simple but effective resources were used. Very effective use of subject specific language. At the end of Key Stage 2 progress is very good because teaching is very good and excellent. There is also very effective use of specialist teacher from the local secondary school. This very good and excellent teaching results from by very secure subject knowledge, very well resourced lessons and brisk pace to the lesson. There is an infectious enthusiasm about the teaching at the end of Key Stage 2.
- 127 Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave very well in lessons. They listen with attention and show delight in achieving success. They especially enjoy investigative work and lessons that give them opportunities to discuss hypothesise and then test their predictions. They work well co-operatively and share resources sensibly.
- 128 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is consistently good. At Key Stage 2 it varies from satisfactory to excellent (50 per cent of lessons). It is good overall. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of science. They plan purposeful activities and give clear directions and explanations. Pupils are encouraged to share ideas. Expectations are high. The pace of learning is brisk. In the very good and excellent lessons teachers use very skilled questioning to involve pupils in thinking about what they see happening in an experiment. The teaching remains only satisfactory when the teachers expectations of pupils' attainment are too low and the pace of learning too slow. The quality of teaching is significantly better than at the time of the last inspection. This is the main factor in the improvement in standards of attainment since the last inspection.
- 129 Assessment is used satisfactorily to plan appropriate work for pupils. All work is marked, and in the best practice, teachers ensure pupils are given guidance on how to improve their work further. Planning through the school ensures work becomes appropriately harder as pupils move through the school. National Curriculum requirements are met for the subject. The deputy headteacher is overseeing temporarily science provision. This role is fulfilled very well.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Information technology**

- 130 Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology has improved significantly since the last inspection, particularly over the last year. Although individuals in both key stages attain appropriately, the majority does not have sufficient regular access to computers to develop satisfactory information and communication technology capability. Few pupils have access to computers at home. Attainment by the end of both key stages are below national expectations.
- 131 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils enter text and use a mouse to move icons correctly. In a Year 1 English lesson pupils demonstrated these skills when using a rhyming game. Pupils know that some robotic toys can be programmed. The Internet is used well to access information, as in the history lesson about Guy Fawkes. Pupils do not have enough planned access to computers to practise the skills they learn. Computers are not used often enough to create pictures. Little time is given to pupils to access information using a computer.

- 132 At Key Stage 2, pupils enter, amend and save text and graphics properly. Some are able to cut and paste. Pupils enter data accurately onto a spreadsheet to use when producing graphs. Good work was completed when charting the depth of a river as part of a geography topic. Year 6 pupils use a CD-ROM competently to access information in an English lesson on using a dictionary. However pupils have little experience of control technology. In an after-school computer club pupils access the Internet and also send E-mail correctly. This strand of information and communication technology work is not yet available to all pupils.
- 133 In some lessons individual pupils make good progress at both key stages. Over time progress is unsatisfactory for the majority of pupils at both key stages. This is because until the last twelve months the school did not have sufficient resources for pupils to practise their skills. Despite significant investment in information and communication technology there are not enough computers to ensure all pupils have regular and frequent access to develop their skills at a satisfactory rate. The school is aware of this and is planning to increase provision. Progress is also slowed because information and communication technology is not planned for within teachers' short term planning. Another factor to slow progress is the absence of the use of assessment to plan work that is matched to the varying needs of pupils. The exception to this is work for pupils with special educational needs. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support their learning. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
- 134 The use of information and communication technology in supporting literacy and numeracy is increasing. It is used in English to word process poems and extended pieces of writing. Use is made of it to develop dictionary skills. Numeracy skills are developed well in work in probability in Year 5. It is not yet fully effective in supporting pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy because its use is not planned for carefully enough in individual lessons. It is beginning to be used satisfactorily across the curriculum in subjects such as science, religious education, geography and history.
- 135 Pupils show interest and enjoyment when using computers and quickly settle to the task in hand. During their work in pairs they co-operate well, sharing out activities fairly. Pupils show encouraging signs of persistence when they encounter new software. Equipment is handled with care and respect.
- 136 The teaching of information and communication technology is usually integrated into lessons. There is some whole-class teaching. The quality of this teaching is good. However computers are under-used generally in lessons. Where teachers do support pupils using the computer they show good knowledge of the subject, but there is some lack of confidence among some staff. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. The subject is well led by an informed enthusiast who provides valued expertise and support. This leadership is a significant factor in the rising standards. The school meets National Curriculum requirements for the teaching of information and communication technology. The school has a good development plan for the subject, and is very well placed to bring about further improvement.

### **Religious education**

- 137 Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages.
- 137 In Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge of the major festivals of Christianity and other world faiths. The younger pupils become aware of the value of every person, and develop sensitivity towards the feelings and emotions of others. For example, Year 1 pupils consider the Islamic faith. In Year 2, pupils visit a local church and learn the significance of the font, altar, candles and stained glass windows. Progress throughout Key Stage 1 is good, as pupils explore the concept of belief, and their feelings, in light of personal experiences, such as visiting a church. Pupils with special needs make good progress, either by differentiated work or direct adult input. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a developing ability to reflect on their feelings.

- 138 In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their previous knowledge and skills, as they gain a deeper understanding of the significance of artefacts and symbols in different religions. In Year 3 and Year 4, pupils learn in detail about the Islam faith and develop an understanding of the importance of the Qur`an. In Year 5 and Year 6, pupils learn about the symbolism of the cross and the poppy while studying `Remembrance`. Good progress is seen across the key stage for all pupils, including those with special needs, as they demonstrate an understanding of what is involved in belonging to a faith. They make comparisons between experiences of people of other faiths, and their own feelings and experiences. For example, in Year 4, pupils recognised at least one common element with Christianity and Judaism. By the end of the key stage, pupils reflect on objects and symbolism to relate `remembrance ` to their own lives, while considering why `sad` memories are more vivid than `happy` ones.
- 139 The good relationships and positive ethos within the school provide a good foundation upon which to build pupils knowledge of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others. Pupils` attitudes to learning are good. They pay careful attention to stories and explanations, and participate in discussions, thinking critically about the ideas, behaviour and dilemmas, highlighted by religious belief. They respond thoughtfully to others views on religious and moral issues.
- 140 The quality of teaching is good overall, and some very good lessons were observed. Teachers plan the lessons well, with clear learning objectives and outcomes, based upon the new scheme of work and agreed syllabus. They ensure that lessons have a good balance of explanation, and discussion activity, so pupils gain new knowledge and understanding in a number of ways. The good teaching makes sensitive use of artefacts and appropriate pictures and diagrams to make unfamiliar ideas understandable. Differentiated tasks are provided to enable assessment of pupils of all abilities, and to record the progress made. In all classes good relationships form the basis for positive management, and all teachers use praise and encouragement effectively to motivate pupils to further effort. All of these strategies have a positive impact on pupils` progress.
- 141 The previous inspection report noted that planning for the subject did not ensure full coverage of the agreed syllabus, and assessment was not recorded and did not inform planning. This has been very effectively improved by the exemplary work of the co-ordinator, in establishing an effective scheme of work, with attainment targets and `levels` of achievement, directly linked to the agreed syllabus.
- 142 The policy and scheme of work, developed by the co-ordinator, have been effective in supporting teachers in their teaching and planning. The subject is very effectively led by the co-ordinator, who has compiled a very good range of resources, to support the new scheme of work, including artefacts, books and boxes for other beliefs. Improvements in resources, and the effective scheme, have already had a positive impact on pupils` learning and progress.
- 143 Religious education makes an important contribution to the development of language skills, for example, in Year 5 and Year 6, particularly in discussion work, where views are debated and personal opinions are articulated well. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils` spiritual, social, moral and cultural development, and the school meets its statutory requirements. There is equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, including those with special needs, to the religious curriculum.
- 144 **Art**
- 144 Only two lessons were observed during the inspection but judgements are made from the scrutiny of pupils` work, discussions with pupils and staff and scrutiny of teachers` documents. Clearly pupils` make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs.

- 145 In Key Stage 1, pupils record what they see accurately and with a sound appreciation of proportion. For example, the portraits for the corridor timeline have appropriate detail, shape and colouring. Pupils use satisfactorily a wide range of media, for example pencil, paint, charcoal and oil mixed in water. In Key Stage 2, skills continue to be developed satisfactorily, mainly through widening the range of media and through concentrating on improving pupils' observations. For example, in Year 6, pupils made good progress in making highly detailed sketches of a face; particularly impressive was the attention to detail and the successful use of techniques to ensure features are drawn accurately.
- 146 The lessons observed were both in Key Stage 2. They were well planned, provided good guidance and were managed well. The good lesson in Year 6 introduced relevant vocabulary at appropriate times and provided pupils with workable techniques to achieve sensible and accurate markings for facial features. Pupils are expected to evaluate sensibly the work of their classmates. In the Year 3 lesson, the support assistant was used in an effective way to help lower attainers develop their drawing skills.
- 147 **Design and technology**
- 147 Three lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence has also been drawn from scrutiny of pupils' work throughout the school, teacher's planning, and interviews with the co-ordinator and pupils.
- 148 Most pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6, have the skills and knowledge expected of the primary age range in design technology. They recognise correctly the need to design before constructing and what this process involves. Pupils are skilful in using a variety of tools, have experience in using a range of materials and throughout the school; all pupils are very aware of safety features relating to their work in design technology, and in particular, in food technology.
- 149 From an early age pupils talk about or draw what they want to make and follow instructions to construct what they have designed. Pupils in a mixed Year 1 and 2 class made a model of a canal and viaduct after visiting Uppermill in Saddleworth. They looked at photographs and pictures of canals before planning their model. Pupils in Year 2 made boats after planning and choosing their materials. After testing the boats, they discussed how their boats could be improved and drew plans of their revised models.
- 150 In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 5 use a planning booklet to prepare their designs for bridges to a much higher standard than at Key Stage 1. In lessons, these pupils demonstrate how they generate ideas prior to planning their bridge, how materials are chosen to construct their bridge, and understand that it takes time to move from the design to the making process. Examination of completed work shows that pupils are skilful in evaluating their work and the work of others, and that the quality of the finished product is important to them. This is a clear improvement of standards from those found in the previous inspection. Pupils use information technology to support their work, particularly in the initial research and design stage.
- 151 Pupils of all ages make sound progress overall and in some aspects, for example in their ability to reflect on their ideas and make improvements to their designs, progress is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly in their ability to work effectively in group situations and make positive contributions to the planning and evaluation of models and artefacts. This is due to carefully planned and focused support.
- 152 Only three lessons were seen during the inspection, but in these, pupils were keen and enthusiastic in their work and showed that they can listen carefully to instructions. They observe rules relating to safety and handle tools and equipment carefully. Older pupils work together in groups particularly well, giving each other support and encouragement, and showing respect for the opinions and views of others when planning and evaluating work.

- 153 From the small number of lessons seen, but more particularly from the examination of pupils' work throughout the school, and from pupils' accounts of what they have done, in both key stages teaching is good overall. Teachers' plan appropriate activities to build upon skills, and to develop and extend existing knowledge and understanding. Classroom assistants are used well to give focused support, which makes a positive impact of the quality of the finished products made by the pupils. Skills and appropriate techniques for the use of tools and equipment are well taught.
- 154 The co-ordinator is in a "caretaking" role this year. However, he has a clear view of standards in design technology across the school and ensures that in planning the curriculum, staff place appropriate emphasis on the skills of planning, designing and evaluating. The previous inspection noted that a policy document was not in place. This has still to be written as the school is awaiting the new Curriculum 2000 documentation before proceeding, but development of the subject is included in the School Development Plan for next year.
- 155 **Geography**
- 155 Although very few geography lessons were observed during the inspection, additional evidence has been gathered by inspecting pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils. There were no geography lessons taking place in Key Stage 1, the subject is taught in a block pattern and rotates with history on the timetable. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and they most frequently make good progress.
- 156 Pupils, make satisfactory progress throughout Key Stage 1, within their topic cycle this term, 'transport around our school', and 'Festivals and Seasons'. They develop early knowledge and skills, through a study of the Uppermill viaduct. They record accurately what they observe and use the relative vocabulary to follow directions to plan a route, for example, 'From my home to grandad's farm', using directional words like left and right, to show their developing understanding of and mapping skills.
- 157 In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 are making a study of the weather around the world. They recall and discuss the difference between the Polar Regions and England. Pupils in Year 5 are following up extensive fieldwork on the Medlock valley, comparing the depth and velocity of the river. Satisfactory progress is seen across the key stage pupils are building well on earlier skills, as they carry out their own enquiries, using research skills to find information on the local environment. By the end of the key stage pupils use a graph and chart to record their findings. Most pupils complete a line graph using 'given' data on the computer. Higher attaining pupils use their own graphical evidence, working independently on a comparative survey of the findings from two classes.
- 158 Pupils respond well to geographical work. They are enthusiastic and inquisitive and make judgements based on evidence being acquired, for example about, the relative depth and velocity of the river at different times. They enjoy the questioning and discussion sessions; they explain the geographical concepts accurately and use atlases, maps and graphs well, to find information.
- 159 The quality of teaching is good. Work is closely matched to pupils' needs and to the relevant National curriculum programmes of study. Teaching strategies provide an appropriate balance between listening and active participation. Good use is made of open-ended questions to extend pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of fieldwork to provide pupils with first-hand experiences. All of these strategies have a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- 160 The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator; she has produced an effective scheme of work, which provides good guidance for teaching geography throughout the school. It has a good system to record assessment and inform continuity of teaching and planning. The topic cycles now follow the relevant programmes of study. This has ensured a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Resources in the subject are good, the school makes good use of the local environment, to enhance pupils learning opportunities. Pupils' numeracy skills are well used in mapwork and in recording graphic information on computers.

161 **History**

161 Due to constraints in the timetable, very little teaching of history was seen during the inspection. The design of the curriculum means that the subject will not be taught until later in the year and as a consequence there was no work completed that could be scrutinised. There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on pupils' work.

**Music**

162 Only one out of the two music lessons timetabled during the inspection were observed. No overall judgement is made regarding the progress pupils make. Also, no overall judgement on the quality of teaching is made. Planning for the subject indicates that all areas of the music curriculum are covered. The school makes good use of a commercially produced scheme to ensure the requirements of the National Curriculum are met.

163 In the Key Stage 2 lesson observed pupils made good progress in developing critical listening skills. They sang confidently in rounds. They are beginning to appraise their own work satisfactorily. The quality of teaching within the lesson was good. It was based on high expectations of pupil performance and secure subject knowledge. There is a good range of instruments and recorded music for use in lessons. There is a display of good quality work about using graphic notation. Pupils in assembly sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. Although a non-specialist, the subject co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject.

164 **Physical education**

164 Although it was not possible to observe the full range of work in physical education, scrutiny of work in planning, policy and the scheme of work, and discussion with the subject co-ordinator, all indicate that the school delivers an appropriate curriculum. Dance, gymnastics and games are delivered in Key Stage 1, with swimming, athletics and outdoors adventurous activities at Key Stage 2.

165 The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming, which is held weekly at Failsworth Baths. The school plans a term's swimming lessons for the upper-juniors and by the time pupils leave the school 96 per cent of pupils swim 25 metres unaided. Pupils enjoy their swimming lessons and are taught well. Pupils are involved in local swimming galas when they compete with pupils from other schools.

166 Standards in physical education have been maintained since the last inspection. By the age of seven, in dance pupils can compose and control their movements in an imaginative way when responding to music, and through practising, can improve their performance. They travel using hands and feet, and hold a balance in a poised way. Even the youngest pupils use space safely and listen carefully to instructions.

167 Key Stage 2 pupils develop a sound understanding of the rules and skills associated with different forms of physical education. Pupils know how to warm up and why this is done. They work effectively with a partner to plan a sequence of movements and evaluate their own performance and the performance of others. This was particularly evident in a Year 5 lesson, as pupils worked in pairs to devise, practise and refine a sequence of movements. Pupils understand and use appropriate language in relation to movement skills; for example older pupils know how to "synchronise" their movements. Residential visits each year for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils to Norfolk makes a positive contribution to the outdoors and adventurous aspects of the curriculum.

168 Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing and improving their skills in gymnastics, dance and games. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The pupils in Reception make good progress in self-help skills when dressing and undressing, and in their ability to use large spaces safely in the Hall. Some very good progress was observed in Year 6 as pupils learnt new skills in ball control and, through practise, improved their skills markedly.

- 169 Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are well motivated and interested in their physical education lessons. They respond well to the challenges given by their teacher and work hard to practise and improve their performance. Pupils work well independently and within small groups. Pupils respect their teachers, and each other; for example, older pupils are able to offer sensible advice when evaluating the performance of others.
- 170 The quality of teaching at both key stages is good and sometimes excellent. Very good teaching is evident in the carefully planned lessons that show clearly what is to be taught and practised. Warm-up and cool-down sessions are used effectively to teach the effect of exercise upon the body. Teachers have high expectations of both performance and behaviour, and provide good role models as they change into appropriate clothing for physical education activities. Lessons have pace and challenge, with pupils given the opportunity to improve the quality of their work, for example when practising ball skills in Year 6, or gymnastic movements in year 5.
- 171 The co-ordinator for physical education is a newly qualified teacher who is new to this role. He has recently adopted a scheme of work to ensure curriculum progression of skills, and monitors the teaching of the curriculum by scrutinising teachers' planning.
- 172 Extra curricular sporting activities include weekly training for football and netball, which are well attended by both boys and girls. Kwik cricket takes place in the summer term and basketball is soon to be added to the range of sporting activities offered by the school. Extra curricular activities are ensuring that pupils develop a sense of fair play and adherence to specific rules.
- 173 Work in physical education makes a contribution towards the development of both literacy and numeracy skills. Listening skills are used as pupils follow instructions carefully and opportunities for correct vocabulary are promoted when older pupils become familiar with words such as "synchronise". Numeracy is developed, as pupils are encouraged to count numbers in groups and in small games equipment.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

- 174 The inspection team consisted of five inspectors, one of whom was a lay inspector. They spent 16 inspector days in the school.
- 175 During the inspection:
- \* they saw 63 lessons or part lessons;
  - \* they held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff;
  - \* they held discussions with members of the governing body;
  - \* they held discussions with representatives of the agencies which support the school;
  - \* they observed pupils in and around the school at break times and lunch times;
  - \* they took lunch with the pupils;
  - \* they scrutinised samples of work from all classes together with pupils' records, reports and teachers' planning files;
  - \* they heard pupils in each class reading and spoke to them about aspects of their work and school life;
  - \* they scrutinised minutes of governing body meetings, school policy documents, the attendance registers, the school development plan, previous inspection report and action plan;
  - \* they held a meeting of parent before the inspection and analysed questionnaires giving parental views.

## DATA AND INDICATORS

### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	274	0	53	176
Nursery Unit/School	40	0	1	n/a

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

#### Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week	131

#### Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	40

#### Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week	94

Average class size:	25
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## Financial data

Financial year:

1998/99
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	£
Total Income	586,783.00
Total Expenditure	584,624.00
Expenditure per pupil	1,804.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,659.00
Balance carried forward to next year	32,818.00

**PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:

316
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Number of questionnaires returned:

30
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**Responses (percentage of answers in each category):**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	40	47	7	3	3
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	53	37	7	3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	33	53	10	3	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	33	57	3	3	3
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	52	45	0	3	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	52	37	7	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	40	57	0	3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	38	52	3	7	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	43	50	7	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	43	47	7	3	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	60	37	0	3	0

Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, the sum may not = 100%

Percentages given are in relation to total number of returns, excluding nil replies