

INSPECTION REPORT

MEDLOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105483

Headteacher: Mr Stuart Herrington

Reporting inspector: Mr Ian Hocking
1272

Dates of inspection: 27th April - 4th May 2001

Inspection number: 192371

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant & Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Wadson Road
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Postcode: M13 9UJ

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs P Layzell

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

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31718	Denise Shields	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
6642	Peter Hill	Team inspector	Information technology Art History Special Educational Needs English as an additional language	How well are pupils taught?
16761	Melvyn Hemmings	Team inspector	Science Geography	The school's results and pupils' achievements How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30362	Jacqueline Henshaw	Team inspector	English Music Religious Education Equal Opportunities Foundation Stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Medlock Primary School is situated in the Ardwick District of Manchester, half a mile from the City Centre. The vast majority of children live in local authority and other rented accommodation. The school is housed on two sites and was originally two separate schools. The buildings on each site are in a very poor condition. It serves a culturally rich population. Approximately 76 per cent of pupils come from ethnic minorities and about one quarter of the pupils are the children of overseas students. A very high proportion of pupils, 156 in all, speak English as an additional language, 36 of whom are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The population of the school is highly transient; 45 per cent of pupils join the school after the age of 5 or leave the school before reaching the age of 11. As a result there can be marked variation in achievement, especially in national test results, from one year to the next.

Over recent years the school has continued to grow and has 291 pupils on roll and 60 in the nursery. The level of attainment of pupils on entry to nursery is well below average. Fifty-one per cent of pupils qualify for free school meals, which is well above the national figure. There are 97 pupils on the register of Special Educational Needs (SEN), which is above the national average.

One of the aims of the school is to provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which enables each child to attain high standards and achieve his or her full potential. The identified priorities of the school include raising attainment in writing and mathematics and to continue to give emphasis to the arts. The school aims to provide a positive, supportive and socially inclusive environment in which children co-operate and value each other. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for one term and the deputy headteacher was appointed to the post during the last week of the term prior to inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school, characterised by very good leadership and management, very good teaching and outstanding provision for pupils' personal development. The combination of all these strengths enables the school to be outstandingly successful in meeting all its stated aims, including that of all pupils achieving their full potential in a caring, supportive and inclusive environment. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards attained by pupils are much better than those of similar schools.
- Leadership and management is very good and promotes high standards.
- Teaching is very good, with a significant amount being excellent, resulting in very good learning by all groups of pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good – they enjoy school and show excellent interest in the activities offered in lessons and beyond.
- Excellent relationships are a strength of the school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and richly enhanced through art, dance, music and extra-curricular activities.
- The school's high emphasis on inclusivity enables all pupils to benefit from what is on offer in lessons and in extra activities.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and results in an exceptional ethos.

What could be improved

- Attendance and punctuality.
- Toilet provision is poor and could impact on pupils' health, safety and welfare.
- Library provision – the quality and quantity of non-fiction books and books written in dual languages needs to be improved.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since it was last inspected in February 1997. Both the key issues identified at the last inspection have been fully addressed. In addition, the quality of teaching has improved substantially which is raising the levels of achievement for all groups of pupils. Provision for information technology has also been enhanced significantly.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	E	B
mathematics	D	E	D	B
science	C	E	C	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results of the Year 2000 tests for 11-year-olds show that standards in science are at the national average, standards in mathematics are below the national average and in English they are well below. However, when comparing the school's results with those of similar schools, standards in English and mathematics are above average and standards in science are well above average. Because of the high proportion of pupils who join or leave the school part way through their primary school education, there have been fluctuations in standards over the last four years but the trend of results is similar to the national picture. The school's targets for 2000 were at least met in all three-core subjects and higher targets have been set for the next two years in a quest to raise standards to the national level.

Results for 7-year-olds, in Year 2000 tests, show that standards are close to the national average in reading, below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools performance in reading and mathematics is very high (i.e. in the top 5% of such schools) and well above average in writing. As with the results of 11-year-olds, these results vary from year to year but the overall trend is similar to the national trend, except in mathematics where there has been a substantial improvement since 1996.

The inspection finds that the work of pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 broadly reflects the standards attained last year. Pupils' work in art, music and physical education is above national standards.

Pupils with English as an additional language, including some who are at a very early stage of English language learning, achieve very well and are well represented amongst the higher attaining pupils. Similarly, those who are gifted, talented or have special educational needs also achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. There are no significant differences in the standards attained by boys and girls.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: Pupils show excellent interest in both their work and in extra activities and enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. The overwhelming majority know right from wrong and reflect this in their actions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: Pupils have excellent relationships with each other and with adults in school. They show very good respect and are very able to take initiative and responsibility.
Attendance	Well below average. Pupils' punctuality is also unsatisfactory.

This area represents a great strength of the school. Outstanding interest is apparent when pupils are learning in lessons and when they attend out-of-lesson activities; for example, in the school computer club, steel band etc. The excellent quality of relationships contributes greatly to the harmonious and productive ethos in the school. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are not good enough and need to be raised.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

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

Teaching is very good in 55 per cent of lessons, good in 24 per cent and satisfactory in 9 per cent. In 12 per cent of lessons teaching is excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Very good teaching results in very good learning for all groups of pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and, through very good assessment procedures, know how well pupils are achieving. This provides a reliable base for the very good planning which in turn results in all pupils having a clear view of what they are intended to learn and how well they achieve. Pupils work hard and show very good levels of interest, concentration and independence. Literacy and numeracy are well taught and teachers give pupils appropriate opportunities to apply these skills in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good: school provides a rich, relevant and balanced curriculum.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good: individual pupils' needs are well met through work that is closely matched with what they are intended to learn. Classroom support is very effective.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good: very effective provision is raising pupils' levels of attainment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent: high quality assemblies and the positive role models provided by teachers' example contribute greatly to the school's outstanding ethos.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good: the school has excellent procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and academic performance. Toilet provision is poor.

The school is very successful in maintaining a balanced curriculum, where high emphasis is justifiably given to developing the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology alongside an equally keen focus on other subjects including art, music and dance. Good opportunities are offered to all pupils to engage in a very good range of extra-curricular activities that enrich their lives and enable talented pupils to develop their expertise. Very good provision is made for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for those who have special educational needs. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains an outstanding feature of the school's work. Pupils' personal welfare is compromised by the poor quality of toilet provision.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good: leadership and management promote high educational standards within a caring, supportive and inclusive ethos.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: governors are highly committed and fulfil all their statutory responsibilities effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good: the school has very successful systems for checking on and improving its work, especially the quality of teaching and pupils' work.
The strategic use of resources	Very good: the very good use of designated funds ensures that the needs of all pupils are well met. Principles of best value are appropriately applied.

Very good leadership and management ensures that the school is outstandingly successful in meeting its stated aims. Staffing levels are very good and all staff are well deployed. Resources are good in almost all areas of work. However, the library provision is unsatisfactory. The ICT suite is a very good resource and is used most effectively. The external appearance of buildings and toilet provision are poor.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good. • School staff are approachable. • Their children are expected to work hard and are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<p>A very small number of parents expressed some concern about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information they receive about their children's progress. • The range of activities provided outside lessons.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school is well led and managed.• The school works closely with parents. | |
|--|--|

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed above. However, inspectors judge that the range of activities provided outside of lessons is judged to be very good. The information parents receive about their children's progress is judged to be satisfactory overall, but there is some inconsistency in the quality of reports sent to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 There is a need for caution when analysing the test results for 7 and 11-year-olds, as the school's population is highly transient, with a high percentage of pupils joining the school after the age of 5 or leaving the school before reaching the age of 11. This is exacerbated by the mid-term intakes of pupils who are at an early stage of English language acquisition or who have special educational needs. Consequently there can be a marked variation in attainment, especially in national test results from one year to another. The national test results for eleven-year-olds in the last few years have fluctuated but, in general, have followed the national trend. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds were well below the national average in English, below in mathematics and average in science. In comparison with similar schools, standards were above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was well above average in all three subjects. Many of the current Year 6 are attaining below the level expected for their age in English and mathematics but in science are in line with the national expectation. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 7-year-olds were in line with the national average in reading, below in writing and well above in mathematics. Teacher assessments for science indicate that pupils' performance was above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance was very high in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing and science. The attainment of most pupils in the current Year 2 classes is average in reading and writing, above average in mathematics and below average in science. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. When taking account of the children's well below average skill levels when they start school, there is very good progress being made, resulting in pupils of all abilities achieving very well, especially in comparison with pupils in similar schools. The main reason for this is the high percentage of very good and excellent teaching that pupils receive throughout the school.

2 On entry to the nursery, most children have not reached the levels of development anticipated for their age, particularly in the key areas of language and mathematics. They experience a wide variety of worthwhile activities that effectively develop them across all six areas of learning recommended for children in the Foundation Stage of Learning. By the age of five, most achieve the nationally agreed early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development, creative development and personal, social and emotional development. This represents very good progress, which is a result of high quality teaching and children being provided with a stimulating learning environment that effectively prepares them for the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum as they enter Year 1.

3 Standards of reading and writing at 7 years of age are in line with the national average but are below by age 11. This is due to high pupil mobility that includes mid-term intakes of pupils who are at an early stage of English acquisition or who have special educational needs. A number of strategies are in place to develop and improve reading skills across the age groups and ability ranges. Pupils read regularly to their teachers and are encouraged to choose from a variety of genres for silent reading and to supplement their reading books. Book reviews are completed at home to encourage understanding and to develop home-school dialogue. Pupils' understanding of texts has improved since the last inspection. High expectation of pupils and challenging tasks delivered through the National Literacy Strategy have had a very good impact on the development of this skill. Texts are chosen from a variety of cultures, reflecting and celebrating the wide cultural diversity within the school.

4 There are examples of good and very good written work in all classes. At an early age pupils write independently using their own knowledge of phonemes, word banks and classroom displays to help. They are encouraged to become independent writers and relevant purposes for writing are provided. Older pupils compose their writing in draft and learn how to develop and improve through shared writing. Visitors to school inspire writing and pupils use ideas they have gained. Strategies to improve the writing of older pupils are working well and they are now producing higher quality, extended pieces of work.

5 Standards in speaking and listening for pupils aged 11 are below that expected for their age but they have made good progress from the well below average skill levels they have when starting the school. These skills are developed through opportunities to express opinions, work co-operatively or use drama and role-play. Pupils share ideas, play imaginatively and express themselves in a variety of ways. Thoughtful planning, constant awareness of their needs and very good relationships ensure that pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Home languages are used effectively to develop confidence, self-esteem and understanding.

6 The National Literacy Strategy has had a good impact on standards and literacy is a very strong feature in all other subject areas. The improvement of basic skills such as spelling, handwriting, grammar and punctuation are strongly emphasised in every subject and, as a result, standards in these areas are good. Pupils write letters and diaries in history and in geography pupils in Year 4 have created newspaper articles based upon pictures of the African village of Kirua. In science, pupils write reports of their experiments and label their diagrams and pupils in Year 3 have written a series of instructions on how to plant and look after seeds as part of their investigations into germination.

7 In mathematics, by the time that they are 11, most pupils know and can use a variety of methods in order to complete accurate written computations involving the four rules of number, and are able to apply their knowledge that inverse operations can be used to check their results. The more able pupils can competently manipulate decimals within written multiplications and divisions. The majority of pupils have an appropriate speed of recall of number facts but a significant minority have slow recall. However, almost all pupils have acquired a range of mental strategies that they are both confident and competent to explain, using appropriate mathematical vocabulary.

8 Pupils can use their numeracy skills in an effective way across the curriculum, as is seen in science work where they use data collection and graphical representation to record their findings. Also in science, pupils in Years 5 and 6 can use these skills to find out how many times a heart beats over a certain period of time, in their investigations into life processes and living things. In geography, pupils in Years 3 and 4 can create block graphs to show how much rubbish was collected in the school on different days, as part of their work on learning how people can affect the environment.

9 In science, pupils of all abilities achieve very well because of the strong emphasis that teachers place on developing pupils' knowledge and understanding by being involved in structured practical investigational activities. In many lessons the pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively in pairs or small groups and in so doing show initiative and take some responsibility for their own learning. Consequently, by the time that they are 11, most pupils show an appropriate ability to devise and carry out a fair test and to be able to record their findings in a variety of ways.

10 In information and communication technology (ICT), standards are average and pupils achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. A significant reason for this very good progress is the expertise of the non-class-based specialist teacher who teaches ICT skills throughout the school. There has been improvement in the provision for the subject since the last inspection, with the creation

of a computer suite and all pupils use this effectively. However, pupils are not spending enough time on computers when they are back in the classroom in order to use their ICT skills to enhance their work in other subjects.

11 Throughout the school standards of attainment in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils gain an understanding of the stories and beliefs of a variety of religions through visits and visitors, discussion with pupils of that faith and direct teaching, using a good selection of authentic artefacts and other resources. This multi-faith school makes good use of the diversity of faiths to increase knowledge and understanding of other cultures and to secure an atmosphere of respect. Very good relationships also allow pupils to safely explore feelings and express opinions.

12 Most pupils achieve satisfactory standards in design and technology by the time that they are 11. There is a good balance between designing and making that effectively develops pupils' skills in these aspects of the subject. Teachers have a high expectation of the finished product, as is seen in the good quality models of wheeled vehicles made by pupils in Year 2.

13 In history, the standards that pupils attain at age 11 are good as a result of the wide range of stimulating and challenging activities given to them that effectively develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject. Previous learning is consolidated by the use of books, photographs and historical artefacts. Pupils show they can use evidence appropriately to find out about the past and how things change over a period of time.

14 In geography, most pupils achieve very well and have reached average standards by the age of 11. There is effective development of pupils' ability to extract information from secondary sources and good progress made in the acquisition of correct geographical vocabulary so that pupils can talk confidently about their work. Good use is made of the immediate environment and visits to places, such as The Peak District and the seaside town of Formby, to develop further pupils' knowledge and understanding in the subject.

15 In art and design, standards are above average, which owes much to the expertise of the specialist art teacher who works with most classes. There is a strong emphasis on pupils learning basic skills across a wide range of artistic techniques and media so that they are able to choose for themselves the best format to express their ideas. The close links that the school has with Whitworth Art Gallery also effectively develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject.

16 Standards of attainment in music are good, with a significant number of pupils demonstrating standards that are very good and excellent. Listening skills are well developed and pupils are exposed to music from many cultures. Pupils are given many opportunities to practise and perform to a variety of audiences, which is exemplified by the school's involvement in the annual Manchester Arts Festival. Music features in cross-curricular areas of literacy, dance and art, which further develops the pupils' abilities to respond to the music they hear.

17 The standards that pupils attain in physical education by the time that they are 11 are above average. As they pass through the school, the boys and girls are equally exposed to a wider range of activities, which gives them confidence and many opportunities to learn from each other. An outstanding example of a teacher demonstrating expertise was seen in a gymnastic lesson for pupils in Year 2 in which the teacher's demonstration of how to land quietly from a cartwheel dramatically improved pupils performance.

18 Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment and achieve very well as a result of the well-structured support that they receive. The procedures for evaluating the progress made by these children towards their learning targets are very effective, with reviews being thorough and helpful. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are very well catered for, with the school employing additional high quality specialist staff to support these pupils. As a result, they have access to all areas of the curriculum and achieve very well. The more able and gifted pupils also make very good progress in their learning and achieve very well. A significant reason for this is the high quality of teachers' planning, which effectively matches activities with these pupils' abilities. There are no significant variations in the achievement of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

19 Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good. Relationships between adults and pupils and pupils themselves are excellent. These strengths make a very positive contribution to pupils' progress and to the exceptional ethos of the school, which provides a very good climate for learning. Since the last full inspection, standards in all of these areas have improved.

20 Pupils' very positive attitudes to school and to learning are underpinned by the excellent relationships that are a key characteristic of the school. Virtually all pupils are exceptionally enthusiastic learners and very keen to participate in all the activities offered. A significant number of pupils at some point during the week come to school early to use the computers or practise the steel pans. Their learning is helped by their willingness to contribute in lessons. They answer questions, discuss their work and how they are doing it and they seek help when they need it. Pupils take an interest in and gain obvious enjoyment from their lessons. They listen to their teachers very well and because of this they are clear about what they are to do next. They concentrate very well on their work and they try very hard. For example, during an art lesson, pupils tried to ensure the lines they drew were evenly spaced or distanced further apart to gain a lighter shading effect.

21 In classrooms, at lunchtime and at play the behaviour of the overwhelming majority of pupils is very good and in several lessons it was judged to be exemplary. The standard of behaviour on occasions when there is little direct supervision is excellent, for example, when pupils use the computers before school or at breaks and lunch-time or when they work in their classrooms before the official start of the day. Because of the school's exceptional ethos and high expectations of behaviour, the vast majority of pupils have a high degree of self-discipline. Pupils have a very clear respect for adults who work in the school. A notable feature is their politeness towards visitors; they are considerate, friendly and keen to help and talk to them.

22 A few pupils find difficulty controlling their behaviour but they still try hard to live up to the school's standards and expectations. Only on very rare occasions does the behaviour of these pupils interrupt the flow of the lesson. This is because they receive good support from the classroom assistants and also because their behaviour is dealt with very effectively by class teachers. During the year prior to the inspection two pupils were excluded but have since returned to school and are fully integrated into school and classroom life.

23 Although pupils come from a wide range of different cultures and social backgrounds, racial and social harmony exists throughout the school; older pupils speak proudly of this. All pupils, whatever their background, are included in all activities and although they have different cultures and beliefs the overwhelming majority mix and play well together. Instances of bullying are rare; pupils and parents express confidence that if any incidents did occur they would be dealt with very promptly and effectively.

24 Relationships between teachers and pupils and among pupils themselves are excellent. They are based on mutual trust and respect, with staff being proud of every pupil's achievement. It is this that underpins pupils' attitudes and behaviour and contributes greatly to their learning.

25 Pupils respond very well to the opportunities provided for them to carry out responsibilities. Younger pupils act as class monitors or help to look after the outside garden area. Whilst older pupils, although they do not have specific responsibilities that increase in complexity as they grow older, still carry out tasks such as putting out the benches for assemblies. All pupils take great pride in carrying out even the simplest tasks. Older pupils are elected to the recently formed school council. They take these responsibilities very seriously and are keen to put forward the views of their peers. Pupils confidently express their opinions without fear they will be ridiculed, for example, when reading and evaluating letters written to persuade an audience. They collaborate well in small groups or pairs, such as during a Year 6 PE lesson when practising ball skills with their partners, they were careful to ensure there was a suitable distance between them before throwing the ball. Pupils are also developing into independent learners and make choices about how they will research for information, for example, during a history lesson a group of pupils chose to use the Internet whilst others sought information from books. Pupils help and support each other very well and collaborate whilst working independently of the teacher during group work.

26 Although those pupils spoken to say they enjoy attending school, attendance rates are well below the national average and have not improved since the time of the previous inspection when they were judged to be below national figures. Absences impact on the continuity and progression of learning. Unauthorised absence is above national figures. There are a significant number of pupils who arrive late in the morning. During the spring 2001 term, 47 per cent of the pupils on roll recorded one or more late mark. Late arrival puts pupils at a disadvantage as they miss vital teaching. Registers are taken efficiently but they are closed outside the government recommendations of 30 minutes after the start of the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

27 Teaching is very good overall and there is a significant amount of excellent teaching. During the inspection week there was no unsatisfactory teaching and there were no lessons where any significant weaknesses were observed. Overall, this is exceptionally high quality teaching and contributes very significantly to the success of the school and the very good progress that pupils make.

28 Teaching is excellent in 12 per cent of lessons, very good in 55 per cent of lessons, good in a further 24 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 9 per cent of lessons. A measure of the extremely high standard of teaching can be gained from the fact that there were more excellent lessons than those that were judged satisfactory.

29 The teaching of pupils aged under-five is very good with teachers' knowledge and understanding of the needs of their pupils being excellent. The reception class teachers ensure that the pupils are secure and well catered for in a very caring environment. Relationships are excellent and considerably enhance pupils' learning.

30 Teaching is very good in Key Stages 1 and 2 in mathematics, science, ICT, art, geography, music, and physical education and in Key Stage 2 is very good in English and design technology. Teaching is good in religious education in both key stages and in history in Key Stage 2 and good in English in Key Stage 1.

31 A notable strength of teaching throughout the school is the appropriate and very high expectation that teachers have of what pupils are capable of achieving. Overall this is excellent and has become shared by the pupils so that they expect to do well, to concentrate hard and to be well behaved. The list of skills that teachers perform very well in their lessons is considerable and includes; the teaching of the basic skills; the planning of lessons; their very effective teaching methods; the way they manage their pupils; their relationships with pupils and with all other adults and; the way they monitor and evaluate their pupils' progress and individual needs.

32 The consistency with which teachers approach planning and teaching their lessons is exceptionally good in all key stages. For example, behaviour management, which is very successful in all classes, is calm and well organised with all teachers using common strategies and methods. As a result, pupils throughout the school respond well to the evenness of approach and clearly know what is expected.

33 There is a strong and very clear partnership between all adults working in the school. Classroom assistants are a very important part of lessons and play a significant role in helping pupils to learn. Pupils are supported in a range of ways including individual and small group work with support staff, either in the classroom or in a quiet area, where the work set is tailored to their individual needs. In all these situations there is the same high expectation and excellent relationships so important to pupils' learning, developing their self-confidence and self-esteem as well as skills.

34 In two areas of the curriculum, art and ICT, there is specialist teaching and in both these subjects this has a significant effect on the quality of the teaching and on the pupils' development of skills knowledge and understanding. In ICT half class groups are taught in the ICT suite, concentrating on developing high levels of expertise in using computers as well as the application of the software in a range of subject areas. In art lessons an artist has taught lessons and now works alongside the class teacher, developing pupils' creativity as well as their art skills in using media and communicating their ideas and feelings. Especially in art currently, this very good strategy is having a very positive effect on teachers' skills and awareness as well as pupils' attainment.

35 In a very well-planned and exceptionally well-taught Year 6 English lesson the teacher made excellent use of vocabulary and was careful to explain the meaning of difficult words. She had excellent relationships with her pupils and the overall result was a good-humoured lesson with pupils' learning being excellent. As a direct result of excellent teaching, pupils worked very hard, were very well behaved and achieved a lot during the lesson. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson the teacher strongly developed pupils' confidence through her excellent relationships with the class and her very positive approach. The lesson planning was excellent and her management first class. The teacher's high expectations of what the pupils' could do were rewarded by the high level of the pupils' co-operation and their hard work and very positive attitudes.

36 Pupils' individual needs are very well met in all lessons and areas of the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted are well catered for. Class teachers are involved in the production of pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). These contain clear and achievable targets and are regularly updated and pupils' progress in relation to the targets is constantly assessed. Similarly, those for whom English is an additional language receive high quality specialist support and work that is well matched with need. Home languages are used appropriately to help those pupils who are at an early stage of English language acquisition.

37 Numeracy and literacy skills are taught very well to a high level. There is an appropriate emphasis on these areas in the timetable and lessons are well planned and managed to develop pupils' basic skills.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

38 There are very good curricular and other opportunities provided for pupils throughout the school. In the Foundation Stage of learning, the teachers and other adults working in the Nursery and Reception classes have created a very effective learning environment for the children in their care.

39 This leads to them making very good academic and personal progress in all the areas of learning expected for this age range. For pupils aged 5 to 11, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented very successfully and this is enabling them to achieve well in English and mathematics in comparison with pupils in similar schools. There has been improvement in the provision for information communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection, with the creation of a computer suite and the appointment of a non-class-based specialist teacher to teach ICT skills throughout the school. Additional support is provided for the pupils in Year 6, in after school sessions, as they prepare for the national tests for 11-year-olds. All statutory requirements are met, as are the demands of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. There is a very good range of activities that support and broaden the pupils' access to learning, including breakfast and lunchtime clubs and homework club. The school places strong emphasis on creative activities, with pupils having access to a rich variety of opportunities in art, dance, music and drama. There is a long tradition of pupils being able to take part in high quality musical performances and drama productions and there is regular involvement in the annual Manchester Arts Festival. The curriculum is also enriched by involvement in national and local initiatives such as 'Excellence in Cities', which enable the school to provide further significant learning opportunities for its pupils.

40 The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is very good, with many opportunities for them to relate to others in a variety of situations in and out of school and, as a result, they learn to respect the values and beliefs of other pupils and adults. This provision for social education is enhanced by an extensive range of visits, including a residential stay at an outdoor pursuit centre, during which the pupils learn a variety of social skills such as working together and caring for others. They are successfully helped to develop good attitudes towards healthy eating and are made aware of the harmful effects of habits such as smoking, as part of their work in science. The school provides for sex education for pupils in Year 4, with parents being kept fully informed about this aspect of the curriculum. However, there are weaknesses in this practice as over 25% of pupils in the current Year 6 have joined school in Years 5 and 6 and consequently have not benefited from this provision. The pupils are given many opportunities in and out of classrooms to show initiative and take responsibility, which effectively supports their personal development. Younger pupils take registers back to the office, deliver messages between classes and get out and put away resources and equipment in lessons. The older pupils have the opportunity to be elected onto the school council, whose responsibilities include putting over the views of pupils as to how school life can be enhanced, such as improving the poor quality of their toilet facilities. All pupils have weekly opportunities to take part in circle time activities, in which they sit in a circle with their teacher to talk about any problems they might have and such issues as the importance of caring for others. A good example of this was in a session for pupils in Year 2, when they were able to discuss the impact of their actions on others and how they felt about it.

41 There is strong emphasis on the school being a socially inclusive community and, as a result, it is very successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Equality of opportunity is implicit in the work of the school, with the examples set by staff and their classroom practice being fundamental to this provision. They are outstandingly successful in celebrating cultural diversity, challenging stereotypes and promoting positive role models. There are very effective systems in place to support pupils with special educational needs and, as a result, they make very good progress

towards the targets in their individual education plans. There is also very good provision for pupils who have English as an additional language and for those who are gifted and talented. This enables all groups to make very good progress in their learning and achieve well. There has been an improvement in the school's planning procedures since the last inspection, with the long-term planning being updated to incorporate the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's curricular schemes. These planning procedures are good and provide teachers with effective information about the key learning objectives and skills to be taught so that they are able to provide work that suitably builds on pupils' prior learning. Teachers effectively plan together in year groups to ensure that pupils of the same age in different classes are given similar work and so have equality of opportunity in their learning.

42 The provision for extra-curricular activities offered to pupils is very good, with a wide variety of clubs that include football, netball, badminton, games, art, technology and dance. The pupils in the choir and the infant and junior steel bands are able to practise during lunchtime and after-school sessions, and in so doing, effectively improve their performance. The school also gives all pupils opportunity to take part in an extensive range of educational visits that enrich the curriculum by providing further significant learning experiences. They are able to visit many places of educational interest that are to be found in Manchester, such as the Museum of Science and Industry and the Whitworth Art Gallery. Recently a group of pupils spent time at the Bridgewater Hall, composing and playing alongside a professional conductor and orchestra. Pupils have been able to take part in the Maths Fest at Maine Road, the home of Manchester City Football Club, and at York. There is a residential stay at Ghyll Head outdoor pursuits centre in the Lake District to help develop pupils' personal and social skills. The school arranges for many visitors to come to school, including authors, storytellers, musicians and drama groups to work with pupils to develop their skills across a range of areas.

43 Strong links with the community make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. This is exemplified by the school's involvement in the annual Manchester Arts Festival that culminates in a performance in a professional theatre. A Buddhist has run workshops for pupils in Years 3 and 4 to deepen their understanding of that religion. Role models from business have come into school to support activities during Maths Week. The pupils are actively involved in raising money for a variety of charities, including 'Blue Peter' and 'Children in Need'. Within these activities they gain a good understanding of the needs of others. Informal links exist with a variety of local businesses that enable the pupils to gain an awareness of the world of work. There are effective links with the local secondary schools that successfully prepare pupils in Year 6 for when they transfer to these schools. There are also close links with Manchester High School for Girls and Manchester University whose students come into school to work with pupils to extend their learning.

44 The school's aim "to develop in children reasoned attitudes, values and beliefs which create a respect for other races, religions and ways of life and foster a caring and supportive response to others" is met in full. This area is a significant strength of the school. The provision greatly enriches the quality of the school's life as a community and helps pupils from the wide range of faiths and cultures to develop positive attitudes, a sense of responsibility and high self-esteem. The school's aims, relating to pupils' development in these areas, are very strong and very well supported by the values that permeate the daily running of the school. This makes a very strong contribution to pupils' achievement because it underpins the school's exceptional ethos for learning. Parents speak very highly of this aspect of the school's work, and subscribe to the view that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.

45 The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. There are many well-planned opportunities for pupils to reflect upon the spiritual dimension in their daily lives. For example, Year 5/6 pupils have compiled a "Belief Book" that reflects on life's journey, with evocative

comments such as “we can prepare for life’s journey because we learn as we grow older”. Younger pupils have written thoughtful prayers and hopes which are displayed for all to read. There are also regular opportunities for reflecting upon significant events, such as “Life’s Achievers”. Pupils’ creative work, especially in art and music, features highly in the curriculum to reflect successfully moods such as happiness or sadness. The assemblies make a very good contribution to pupils’ personal development. For older pupils, the steel pan band provides a truly uplifting start to their assemblies. For younger pupils, a dramatic sense of occasion is created, especially during the Friday Good Work assembly, where “Punctual Pete” plays a significant role during the celebrations. In all assemblies, there are opportunities for pupils to reflect on how the themes might apply to their own lives and these provide a calm and dignified end to the collective worship. Pupils are very aware of the variety of faiths and cultures represented in the school community and say they value this.

46 Pupils’ excellent moral development is consistently and positively fostered through the school’s approach to promoting very good and sometimes exemplary behaviour. Through its aims and policies, the school places a high value on the understanding of the difference between right and wrong, successfully raising awareness that an individual’s behaviour impacts on others. All staff provide very good role models and value pupils in their care, acknowledging and praising their efforts and achievements. Class rules and their consequences are well understood and the overwhelming majority of pupils have a great respect for each other and adults, both inside the school and in the playground. They try very hard to live up to the school’s high standards. Many elements of the very good personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) contribute to raising pupils’ awareness of moral issues; for example, the younger pupils have studied environmental issues in the locality, whilst older pupils have considered relationships and the concept of identity. Parents are very pleased with the values promoted by the school.

47 Excellent provision is made for pupils’ social development, with exceptional relationships underpinning all of the school’s work, being based on mutual trust and respect between staff and pupil. The values of co-operation, sharing and helping each other are promoted from pupils’ earliest days in the school. Especially notable is the care and patience shown by pupils to those new to the school, for instance, if a pupil has limited or no English language, they draw pictures or use hand gestures to communicate with them. All pupils, whatever their cultural heritage, are fully integrated into the social life of the school. From nursery classes onwards, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for different tasks, such as the younger pupils look after the outdoor area, clear up after lessons and carry out various tasks to help their teacher. Older pupils, although having no clearly defined more complex responsibilities, help the lunchtime supervisors in the hall or carry out classroom duties. When older pupils carry out tasks linked to ICT or art, during breaks or lunchtime, only minimal supervision is required. Pupils are assumed to be responsible and trustworthy and the vast majority live up to these high expectations. During the PHSE lessons, circle time is very well used and it makes a significant contribution to developing pupils’ self-confidence and esteem as well as their listening skills.

48 There is excellent provision for pupils’ cultural development, with the school celebrating the richness of the diversity of background of both pupils and staff in the school in an outstanding way. Through art, music and geography, cultural education is enhanced and this is supplemented through the provision of extra-curricular activities, including visits and visitors. Pupils celebrate special festivals from a variety of cultures, such as Christmas, Easter, Eid and the Chinese New Year, and are encouraged to share their own traditions with their classmates. Many opportunities are given for pupils to visit places of interest, such as art galleries, museums and the mosque. Displays of pupils’ work, commercially produced posters, photographs and welcome signs all reflect the many cultures and languages of the pupils. Artwork and music feature prominently in developing pupils’ cultural awareness. Pupils’ artwork, depicting the African culture, provides a stunning display in the central

area in the junior building. The school's involvement in the Manchester Arts Festival also contributes significantly to this area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49 Taken overall, this aspect of the school's provision is very good but within this there are both excellent and satisfactory features. The day-to-day personal support and guidance provided for pupils is excellent, especially in relation to monitoring and promoting acceptable behaviour. Pupils' academic progress and personal development are monitored very well. Every pupil is highly valued as an individual and encouraged constantly to try their best. These strengths underpin the whole ethos and work of the school because they bring out the best in pupils. They promote confidence and self-esteem, a desire to achieve and a willingness to learn. The school pays good attention to child protection matters and health and safety arrangements are satisfactory.

50 The school's aim, "to provide a caring and supportive environment where children feel secure and happy", is met in full. The headteacher and staff know the pupils very well and provide a very supportive and friendly environment for them to work in. Day-to-day personal support for pupils is excellent and because of this pupils work confidently and grow in self-esteem; this makes a positive contribution to the standards they achieve.

51 The school's arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. The deputy headteacher makes a significant contribution to this aspect of the school's work; she has the trust and respect of the vast majority of the pupils she deals with, even when they are in trouble. All teachers have a consistent approach to dealing with incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Sanctions are only rarely used because self-discipline and respect for others is promoted very well as part of the school's ethos and the excellent relationships that exist. Appropriate behaviour, effort and achievement, in all aspects of school life, are regularly and frequently rewarded; pupils value this, especially the "child of the week". Pupils say they are always dealt with fairly and they understand the need for both punishments and rewards. The support for those pupils who sometimes find difficulty controlling their behaviour is very good. The recently introduced emotional literacy programme, run by one of the classroom assistants, plays a significant part in this. The programme enables pupils to have 1:1 quality time to discuss and reflect on their actions and also to work on strategies to help them deal with their behavioural problems. It is too early, however, to assess the success of the initiative.

52 The school has very good procedures to eliminate bullying and harassment. Excellent relationships, mutual trust and respect between staff and pupils and the values of co-operation, which are promoted very well from pupils' earliest days in the school, all contribute to the success of this area. Elements of the PHSE programme and circle time are all used very well to raise awareness of bullying and racial harmony.

53 The arrangements for child protection are good. Teachers are aware of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about pupils in their care. There is no written policy or guidance, however, to ensure that the awareness of teachers is raised to the possible signs of abuse or neglect.

54 Overall arrangements for health, safety and welfare are satisfactory. Staff are clear about the health and safety arrangements and teachers adopt safe practices in their day-to-day work. Fire drills are regularly carried out and documented. The toilet provision is poor and compromises pupils' health, safety and welfare. A number of staff have received first-aid training and there are effective arrangements to inform parents about illness or accidents at school but, in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, minor accidents are not formally recorded. Pupils' personal and medical information has not been updated recently. Supervision arrangements are effective and the lunchtime organisers have

received training to undertake their role. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, lunchtime is a particularly social occasion because of the high level of support provided for the children. The school's sex education policy is clear and provision is made for teaching sex education to pupils during Year 4. There is no follow up programme, however, during Year 6; thus pupils who may have joined the school since then receive no information.

55 The previous report indicated weaknesses in assessment procedures and a key issue for action was to ensure full use of day-to-day assessment to guide and influence future planning. This issue has been successfully dealt with and teachers now use assessment information effectively to evaluate pupils' performance so that they can plan future work accordingly.

56 The procedures for assessing and recording individual pupil's attainment and monitoring the progress that they make as they pass through the school are very good. This enables teachers to decide pupils' levels of attainment and set targets for improvement, especially in English and mathematics. There are also effective procedures in place to analyse the optional and statutory test results to identify areas of weakness and then set manageable targets for improvement for groups and individual pupils. This is shown by the way the school has identified and prioritised the need for improvement in standards in writing for younger pupils and in aspects of English and mathematics for older ones.

57 Assessment information for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is used effectively to plan future work. The information from the initial assessments when pupils start school is used in a very effective manner to plan future learning experiences. Systems to monitor the achievements of different groups of pupils by ethnicity and gender have recently been put in place. However, it is too early to use this information to identify any trends to enable the school to take action to improve provision if needed.

58 The arrangements to monitor and promote pupils' personal development are good. Because teachers know their pupils very well, they rely on informal communication and procedures to chart progress. There are no formal written records by which pupils' personal development is monitored as they move through the school, although a very detailed overview of each pupil is written for the annual progress report to parents. Teachers support and encourage pupils in their learning and recognise and reward their efforts and achievements. They ensure pupils are given responsibilities from their earliest years in the school. Because of this, pupils want to do well in their lessons and are keen to carry out the responsibilities offered.

59 The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Teachers raise any serious concerns with the headteacher and the recently appointed education welfare officer (EWO) investigates absences. The school has recently introduced a number of rewards to promote good and regular attendance and punctuality; it is too early to assess the impact of this strategy. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are not good enough and need to be raised.

60 The arrangements to support pupils' on entry to the school and to smooth their transition to secondary education are good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

61 Parent's views of the school are very positive. They say they are always made to feel welcome in school and express the unanimous view that any concerns they raise are dealt with quickly and competently. Pupils' achievements are celebrated with parents through daily certificates awarded for particular effort or achievement. The school often writes or telephones parents to inform them if

the behaviour of their children has improved, if previously it had been a cause for concern. Although parents are encouraged to become involved in school life and with their children's learning, only a few give freely of their time, helping regularly in classrooms and with other school activities; the contribution parents make is valued by the school. Where their children are directly involved, for example, the Easter egg assembly or performing in the Manchester Arts Festival, parental support for these events is very good. The school has run the Early Start parent programme and Family Numeracy Project for the parents of the youngest pupils; there has been a disappointing lack of support for these events. Where they are able, parents generally support the work their children do at home, by hearing them read or helping them to learn their tables. Although there is much established good practice, the school does not regularly seek parental views; because of this the school cannot be certain it is meeting the needs of all its parents.

62 The quality and range of information provided for parents is good. Each year the school publishes a well-presented magazine the "Medlock News", which celebrates pupils' work in a chosen subject; last year showed examples of work from numeracy lessons across the school. Regular newsletters, day-to-day information and well-positioned notice boards, together with information evenings, keep parents well informed about school life. However, curriculum information is not readily made available to keep parents informed about what their children are learning. The governors' annual report to parents is well presented and the school and nursery brochure give prospective parents a clear overview of the school. Twice a year, afternoons are set aside for parents to discuss their children's progress with teachers. The school ensures that bi-lingual staff are available to translate information for parents. Each term, pupils' effort grades are published for parents; they appreciate this. Reports to parents about their children's progress are inconsistent in quality. In the best examples, they clearly state what pupils know, understand and can do. Whilst there is much good practice, there are examples where comments focus on attitude to work and topics covered during the year; because of this parents do not always have a clear picture of the progress their children have made and what improvements are needed.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

63 Leadership of the school is very good and ensures that the school is outstandingly successful in meeting its stated aims. The recently appointed headteacher provides clear educational direction and promotes high educational standards within a caring, supportive and inclusive ethos. His style is consultative, involving all the key players within the school. He has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has the respect and confidence of pupils, colleagues, governors and parents.

64 Despite two changes in the headship of the school since the last inspection, the very good quality of leadership and management has continued to raise the quality of teaching and other areas of provision. Both of the key issues identified in the last inspection have been fully addressed. The very good support provided by the senior management team contributes successfully both to the smooth day-to-day running of the school and to its long-term development. The deputy headteacher provides an excellent role model of pastoral care. Very good leadership by the co-ordinators of English and mathematics has been instrumental to the successful implementation of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy. Similarly, all teachers fulfil their recently revised subject leadership responsibilities enthusiastically and most effectively. The system of pairing subject leaders from each key stage enables colleagues to share views and to establish what needs to be done to raise standards further.

65 The governing body is effective in fulfilling its duties and statutory responsibilities and benefits significantly from the educational expertise amongst its membership. Governors have an appropriate

structure of committees that meet regularly and, through minutes of meetings, keep each other fully informed of decisions taken. They are also kept well informed by the headteacher and through a system of partnership with subject leaders on the teaching staff. In addition, the Chair of Governors provides valuable expertise in teaching mathematics, on a voluntary basis, to high attaining pupils. Two other governors work in the school each day. Therefore, through both formal and informal means, governors maintain a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

66 The school makes very good strategic use of its available resources including additional funding for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Funds provided by the “Excellence in Cities” initiative are also well spent. The use of these various sources of funding contributes greatly to the very good achievement of all groups of pupils. The draft school improvement plan (SIP) makes clear the priority areas for improvement and in final draft will identify the personnel responsible and provisional resource costs. Governors are involved in evaluating the progress made in each of the targets identified in the SIP and in considering proposed new targets. Decisions taken in setting the budgets are appropriately taken in relation to the educational priorities; for example, in providing an ICT suite, supporting pupils with special educational needs and those who are identified as potentially disaffected and those for whom English is an additional language. The school budget is closely monitored. The quality of the school’s accounting procedures is good and has been improved since the most recent audit report.

67 The school has very good procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching and for improving standards. In particular, lessons and standards of work in literacy and numeracy have been formally monitored by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators respectively and this has led to the school improving its teaching in these subjects. Similarly, the school makes very good use of its analysis of assessment data to target specific areas of teaching to bring about improved standards. The school governors and staff remain committed to raising standards; as evidenced by booster classes and additional targeted teaching that aims to extend pupils’ attainment to National Curriculum Level 6 in mathematics and science.

68 All staff present very good role models for pupils and foster the excellent relationships that are apparent in the school. Parents testify to the friendly atmosphere in the school, which is all the more commendable when taking into account the size of the school population and the extensive and diverse range of pupils’ backgrounds.

69 The management of special educational needs (SEN) is very good. The two co-ordinators for SEN work very closely together and have a detailed knowledge of the Code of Practice. This ensures that the SEN register is kept up to date and that relevant information is clearly communicated to others. The school involves parents and outside agencies appropriately to support pupils’ learning. Provision for pupils with SEN is very good and has been significantly enhanced by the school’s commitment of funding for additional classroom support assistants.

70 Staffing levels are very good and all are well deployed to promote pupils’ learning. Over recent years, the school has benefited from the productive partnership established with a higher education establishment. There is a high proportion of relatively inexperienced teachers. The school is highly committed to the continuing professional development of staff; as evidenced by its induction process for new teachers and the encouragement given towards in-service training of all teachers. The recently revised staff handbook also ensures that all those who are new to the school have ready access to details of day-to-day routines and procedures. Classroom support assistants and nursery nurses contribute significantly to the learning and progress made by all pupils and especially those with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The school administration staff carry out their duties both efficiently and effectively and present a welcoming image of the school.

71 Resources are at least adequate in almost all areas of provision. Good resources contribute to learning in the Foundation Stage and in mathematics, science, religious education, art, music, physical education and design and technology; very good resources are provided for ICT. Resources are bought by applying the principles of best value and staff makes effective use of resources. Very good use is being made of the ICT suite enabling pupils both to develop information technology skills and to apply such skills in their work in other subjects. Library provision is presently unsatisfactory because at least 25 per cent of the books are outdated, unattractive and, in some cases, inaccurate. There are also insufficient bilingual books to meet the diverse needs of pupils.

72 Governors have committed additional funds to improve aspects of the accommodation but await the outcome of a bid for a new building. Nonetheless, in the meantime, the outside condition of both buildings is poor and in stark contrast to the internal environment. The teachers create highly stimulating learning areas and celebrate pupils' work through most attractive and relevant displays that promote and reinforce learning. Toilet provision in both buildings is poor and represents a risk to pupils' health, safety and well being. The building is kept clean by the caretaker and staff and is treated very carefully by the pupils.

73 When taking into account the relatively high income it receives, the very good teaching provided and the achievement of pupils, the school is providing very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

KEY ISSUES:

In order to improve the school's provision for pupils' personal welfare the governors and headteacher should:

1. Improve the rates of pupils' attendance and punctuality; (paragraph 59)
2. improve the toilet provision in both buildings and especially for the girls in the juniors' building. (paragraph 72)

Other items governors may wish to include in their Action Plan:

Improve the provision of library books by: purging the existing stock of outdated and inappropriate texts and increase the quantity both of non-fiction texts and texts that are written in dual languages. (paragraph 71)

The provision for, and standards achieved by, pupils with English as an additional language.

74 Throughout the school there is a high proportion of pupils who come from homes where English is an additional language. There is great cultural diversity and there are pupils from 20 different nationalities. The school has identified 156 pupils as speaking English as an additional language with 36 being at an early stage of English language acquisition. 56 pupils are supported through an initiative to raise levels of achievement for pupils from ethnic minorities. The funding is provided through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG). This funding enables the school to focus the work of a teacher, the Ethnic Minority Achievement Co-ordinator, and one classroom support assistant on raising levels of achievement for these pupils.

75 The school has targeted pupils' work in numeracy and literacy as priority areas. This has been very successful and has raised the end of key stage levels of achievement of pupils in the focus groups. The co-ordinator analyses test results and then sets appropriate targets for individuals and for groups of pupils. The schools senior management team is involved in the process and in the identification of areas for development and improvement.

76 The target group teaching is very good. It is very well planned and lessons proceed at a very good and appropriate pace. The teacher ensures that there is a high level of challenge and enthusiasm in the lessons. As a result, pupils respond very well. They want to learn and to improve and they enjoy their lessons. Pupils listen very well to their teacher and to other pupils. Attainment in the majority of lessons is above average and pupils make very good progress overall.

77 The use and co-ordination of the grant is very good. It is clearly and effectively targeted, planning is very good and the school is clear about what it expects to provide for pupils and what it expects them to achieve. The co-ordinator works closely with the EMAG funded classroom assistant who works very effectively with individual and small groups of pupils in their classroom. They provide them with material which is well matched with their needs and ensure that they can understand the lesson content.

78 Besides working with the identified groups of pupils, the co-ordinator is very effective in promoting and celebrating the cultural richness of the school. There are high quality displays of images from around the world, improving pupils' awareness of the cultures and religions of others, besides recognising their own background and considerably raising individual pupils' self esteem. The provision of bilingual books and other written and printed material has been audited and reviewed, displays of books placed in the library and other areas of the school, and lists of available information provided for all staff.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	86
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
12%	55%	24%	9%	0%	0%	0%

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	57	290
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		162

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	97

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	156

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	71
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	98

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	20	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	15
	Girls	16	17	19
	Total	27	27	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (76)	77 (70)	97 (78)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	12	10
	Girls	17	18	18
	Total	26	30	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (76)	86 (78)	80 (84)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	25	15	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	23
	Girls	9	9	13
	Total	24	25	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (57)	63 (55)	90 (64)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	16
	Girls	7	7	13
	Total	18	21	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	45 (48)	53 (64)	73 (62)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	11
Black – African heritage	13
Black – other	18
Indian	3
Pakistani	11
Bangladeshi	6
Chinese	15
White	87
Any other minority ethnic group	84

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	2	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	24.4

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	337

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.5

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70

Number of pupils per FTE adult	14.3
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	733200
Total expenditure	745485
Expenditure per pupil	2004
Balance brought forward from previous year	105840
Balance carried forward to next year	93555

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	350
Number of questionnaires returned	72

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	26	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	39	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	46	3	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	38	8	3	1
The teaching is good.	65	28	0	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	29	11	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	35	0	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	28	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	51	38	6	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	53	39	1	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	40	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	26	10	3	10

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

79 Children enter the nursery at standards well below national expectation. Despite making very good progress in all the areas of learning, they enter the reception classes below expectations. Nevertheless, this represents good achievement from their starting point.

80 The children continue to build on their previous learning and further develop their skills and understanding. At the end of the Foundation Stage most pupils are in line with national expectations for the early learning goals. There is some difference in the competence of pupils in communication, language and literacy, dependent on whether English is an additional language. However, most pupils are articulate and communicate well. All children settle into school quickly and their personal social and emotional development is rapid.

81 Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good across all classes. All teachers have an excellent understanding of the areas of learning and of how pupils of this age learn. There is a strong teaching partnership, which includes the invaluable support of nursery nurses and classroom assistants. They make a significant contribution to the quality of the lessons.

Personal Social and Emotional development

82 Standards of development when pupils start school in the nursery are well below expectations for these areas of development. Children in the nursery make very good progress but their development is below expectations when they enter the reception classes. A very high priority is justifiably placed on the importance of this development and it is planned and included within every other area of learning. As a result of a caring, respectful ethos and very good teaching in both the nursery classes and reception classes, children attain the early learning goal for this area of development by the time they are five years of age.

83 Children in the nursery show respect and respond well to all members of staff. Boys and girls of all ethnic groups play and work harmoniously in an excellent environment where individual children flourish personally, socially and emotionally. They are able to make choices. Equipment is well labelled in words and pictures to enable children to find resources. Children are taught to become increasingly independent. On a nursery picnic the children lined up quickly and quietly and carried biscuits and cakes for their teacher. They shared, took turns and waited patiently for the shape sandwiches they had made.

84 Children in reception classes learn to identify families and to become emotionally secure. Teachers value all contributions and the children's self-esteem is high. Very good relationships have the greatest impact on the rapid development in this area, particularly where children have little or no spoken English.

Communication, Language and Literacy

85 Standards of attainment in this area are well below expectations when children first enter the nursery. Some children have little or no spoken English. However, despite making rapid progress, they enter the reception classes at a level of attainment below expectations. They are in line to meet expectations at five years of age.

86 Teaching is very good across the Foundation Stage for this area of learning. Skilful questioning is used in nursery to develop children's speaking and listening skills. All pupils, including those with little or no English and those with special educational needs, are confident and try to answer questions. All teachers articulate well and explain clearly. Every opportunity is taken to develop language skills. This is particularly seen in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and in physical development. The acceptance and valuing of all contributions and the re-modelling of children's answers leads to them quickly learning correct English.

87 Structured play activities embrace other cultures such as multi-ethnic dressing-up clothes, dolls and cooking utensils. Children write and act in role in their estate agents or wash cars at their "car wash" outside. Large, colourful tents in the garden provide structured activities such as puppets that allow privacy to develop social skills but are monitored to challenge and develop language.

88 Basic skills are well taught and a clear development is seen from nursery to reception classes. Children are beginning to form letters well and are writing independently. Reading is given a high priority through a new system of 'reading at home' for the nursery children. A broader range of books has been introduced and children are encouraged to share their feelings and respond to the book via a reading review. Children are introduced to a range of writing that is used within a context. This included the labelling of houses, following a walk, for their building project or providing information about houses for sale in the estate agents.

Mathematical Development

89 Standards of attainment on entry to the nursery are well below expectations. Children make very good progress but standards are below expectations at the start of reception. By the time they are five years of age, most children reach national expectations for this area of development.

90 Teaching of mathematical development is very good across the Foundation Stage. Resources are very good, effective and appealing to young children. Teachers find relevant opportunities to include mathematics and mathematical language within other areas of the curriculum. For example, counting in twos was developed through a pairing of socks game inside the classroom which was replicated in the washing of socks outside and pairing them on the line.

91 Children in the nursery classes know the names of shapes and this knowledge is extended within the classes for older or higher attaining children to include 3-D shapes. Individual higher attaining pupils were asked to state the number of corners or sides on their shape sandwich. The children learn about height, weight and number and patterns through a variety of activities.

92 Reception class pupils are learning addition and subtraction to 20 and know numbers to 100. They learn about money and can do calculations with money. They learn about time, symmetrical patterns and 3-D shape. Prior knowledge is assessed and pupils move on accordingly. Challenge, high expectations and a range of opportunities lead to very good learning in mathematical development.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

93 Standards of attainment on entry to the nursery are well below expectations. Children make very progress but standards are below expectations at the start of reception. By the time they are five years of age, most children reach national expectations for this area of development. Although standards are well below expectations at the start of their school life, children are fortunate in that this

multi-ethnic and multi-faith school provides many first-hand experiences which develop a clear knowledge and understanding of the world.

94 Teaching of this area is very good throughout the Foundation Stage. Close links with parents in the early years means that children are able to celebrate their different cultures and share their knowledge and understanding with others. Different festivals are celebrated and a large map on the walls of the nursery classes indicates where each child's family originates from and is linked to their photographs. Children are taken out regularly and taught to observe or to listen carefully. They record their findings in different ways including photographs. They look particularly at change in the environment over time. They grow seeds, learn about colour and bake.

95 Information and communication technology skills are developed through the regular use of the computer in classrooms and the ICT suite. In the classrooms, children are supervised and taught skills such as use of the mouse and various tools. Reception children write about themselves using word processing skills. In the ICT suite children were introduced to the work of Jackson Pollock and taught how to reproduce similar pictures using line and fill tools.

96 The children are encouraged to use all their senses and can often be observed smelling dough or soapy water, manipulating malleable materials or feeling the textures of materials. In the reception year, children learned about different building materials and their properties.

Creative Development.

97 Standards of attainment on entry to the nursery are well below expectations. Children make very good progress but standards are below expectations at the start of reception. By the time they are five years of age, most children reach national expectations for this area of development. A significant number of pupils reach standards above expectations.

98 Teaching of this area of development is very good. Very good relationships and high expectations of behaviour allow experimentation with media or tools and lead to very good learning. Children have free access to musical instruments, listen to music in their classes and sing with joy. Almost all can sing simple songs from memory and children with little spoken English learn very quickly and join in whenever they can.

99 Children design pizzas, make their own box houses and caterpillars, using skills of cutting and joining. In the reception classes, children designed their own pasta picture frames using symmetrical patterns. An excellent display of African masks by a reception class included felt pen designs on brown card and printed masks designed on polystyrene.

Physical development

100 Standards of attainment on entry to the nursery are well below expectations. Children make very good progress but standards are below expectations at the start of reception. By the time they are five years of age, most children reach national expectations for this area of development. Some pupils reach standards above expectations.

101 Teaching of this area of development is very good. Good provision is made for outside play within a designated fenced area. Children have access to a climbing frame on a safe surface, covered areas, riding and balancing equipment and a garden. Benches, paths, lawns, trees and plants provide a pleasant outside environment in which to develop motor skills. Small apparatus of bats, balls, a basketball net and skipping ropes are provided to develop ball skills and co-ordination.

102 Reception children have physical education lessons in preparation for Key Stage 1 and also have access to the outside environment. In one dance lesson children made good use of space and good performance was demonstrated to the class. As a result, pupils tried hard to improve their movements.

103 Children are able to manipulate very small objects such as tiny beads to make a patterned mat. They can use scissors, glue and split pins to join materials. The pupils learn about keeping healthy particularly through the food they eat and through exercise.

104 Co-ordination of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has developed the role of parents through the 'reading at home' system and the Early Start and Family Numeracy programmes. Visits to other early years settings for staff, a review of planning and in-service training has led to high quality teaching and provision for all the pupils.

105 Some classrooms are rather small and at times they appear cramped. This is more problematic during the winter and inclement weather. Consideration should be given to the layout of the classrooms and whether areas could be rearranged.

ENGLISH

106 In the 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds, attainment in English was well below the national average but above that of pupils in similar schools. Overall, standards of attainment of the present Year 6 are generally below national expectations. However, very good teaching and targeting of pupils has focused on raising attainment for all groups.

107 156 pupils have English as an additional language and 36 pupils are at an early stage of English acquisition. These factors and high pupil mobility rate impact on the overall standards of achievement. The achievement of individual pupils is good.

108 In the 2000 national tests for 7-year-olds, attainment was close to the national average in reading and below average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' attainment was very high in reading and well above in writing. Standards of attainment of the present Year 2 are in line with national expectations.

109 There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' understanding of texts has improved. High expectations of pupils and challenging tasks delivered through the National Literacy Strategy have had a very good impact on the development of this skill. Texts are chosen from a variety of cultures reflecting and celebrating the multicultural make-up of the school. Provision for the reading development of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language is well planned and appropriately supported.

110 Visitors to school inspire writing and pupils use ideas they have learned. Strategies are in place to improve the writing of older pupils. This is working well and these pupils are producing higher quality, extended pieces of work; as reflected in the story writing in Year 5 which led to a successful prize-winner and pupils in the winner's class were invited to meet an author.

111 Overall, the teaching of English is very good. It is never less than satisfactory and sometimes excellent. The teaching of English in Key Stage 1 is good and in Key Stage 2 it is very good. The teaching of basic skills and speaking and listening is very good throughout the school. Staff ensure that

pupils have a range of strategies to use for reading, comprehension and spelling. Punctuation is well taught within context, particularly in shared and guided reading and writing. Pupils are given many opportunities to practise using these skills. Planning is thorough and appropriate. Particular attention is given to pupils who have English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs. As a result, all groups achieve well.

112 Relationships in classes are very good and this results in generally good and sometimes very good or outstanding behaviour and responses from the pupils. Pupils listen very well and enjoy their work. Lessons are purposeful. High expectations and challenge result in work that matches pupils' needs.

113 In a Year 2 lesson about recognising significant children's authors, good teaching featured the teacher reading the story in role thus capturing the pupils' attention and developing very good relationships. Key questions on the board focused learning and a brisk pace moved the lesson forward. Pupils in a Year 6 target group are clearly challenged. Excellent relationships and good humour focused their attention on the Dickens text. This resulted in high quality discussion. In an excellent lesson on recognising persuasive texts, a brisk pace, well-prepared resources and enthusiasm led to enthusiastic responses by the pupils. They readily asked and answered questions. This included pupils who have recently arrived in the country and are at a very early stage of English acquisition.

114 Support staff, used within English lessons, are very effective and contribute to the quality of the lessons. The contribution of the EMAG staff, additional literacy support, Nursery Nurses, bilingual and classroom support is significant. Pupils are quickly able to access the curriculum and make very good progress.

115 The quality of marking is good. Positive, constructive dialogues are often entered, and at times, pupils evaluate other pupils' writings. Staff and pupils are aware of criteria to mark and improve work and use these to set their targets.

116 A number of strategies are in place to develop and improve reading skills across the age groups and ability ranges. Pupils read regularly to their teachers and are encouraged to choose from a variety of genres for silent reading and to supplement their reading books. Book reviews are completed at home to encourage understanding and to develop home-school dialogue.

117 There are examples of good and very good written work in all classes. From an early age, pupils write independently using their own knowledge of phonemes, word banks and classroom displays to help. They are encouraged to become independent writers and purposes for writing are provided. Older pupils compose their writing in draft and learn how to develop and improve through shared writing. They use their knowledge of texts to write their own. Pupils develop skills of presentation and layout and the use of literary features.

118 Speaking and listening skills are developed through opportunities to express opinions, work cooperatively or use drama and role-play. Pupils share ideas, play imaginatively and express themselves in a variety of ways. Skills are developing well. Thoughtful planning, constant awareness of their needs and very good relationships ensure that pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Home languages are used to develop confidence, self-esteem and understanding.

119 The National Literacy Strategy has had a good impact on standards and literacy is a very strong feature in all other subject areas. For example, when writing letters and diaries in history or non-fiction writing in science.

120 Pupils' preparation for the Manchester Arts Festival permeated all aspects of English and other subjects such as art and music. Much of the stimulus for this recent Festival provoked examples of high quality writing from older pupils. Pupils were given the opportunity to perform drama to a large audience.

121 The improvement of basic skills such as spelling, handwriting, grammar and punctuation are strongly emphasised in every subject and, as a result, standards in these areas are good. There is an opportunity to develop presentation further through the use of pens from Years 3 or 4.

122 Co-ordination of the subject is very good. It is a shared responsibility that uses expertise from Foundation stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. Planning is monitored and the co-ordinators have monitored pupils' attitudes to, and standards of, reading. The quality of writing is analysed and examples of each level are annotated and placed in files. This has led to target setting.

123 The Key Stage 2 library is an area that requires considerable improvement. Reference books and a large proportion of non-fiction books are very outdated and in a poor condition. Non-fiction books are not classified other than by topic groups and there is no cataloguing of books. Pupils are unable sufficiently to develop library skills. In spite of recent purchases of a greater range of fiction and non-fiction books for classroom libraries, there is still a need to supplement these further and to replace poorer quality and outdated texts. A greater number of suitable dual-language books should be placed in the library and classrooms. These should include fiction and non-fiction and, as far as possible, represent the languages spoken in the school. There is no library in Key Stage 1 due to accommodation restrictions. Class libraries are usually just adequate in quantity. Generally, through the school, books are not adequately valued through display and presentation. For example, through the grouping of a display of books by one author or a particular genre.

124 In general, the use of information and communication technology within English is satisfactory. Pupils use word-processing skills, research skills using the Internet and use a range of software. Last year pupils communicated poems and writing through e-mail during an I.C.T. residency.

MATHEMATICS

125 The school's 2000 test results for 11-year-olds are below average when compared with all schools nationally but above average when compared with schools of a similar nature. Over the last four years, though the test results have been below the national average, they have followed the national trend of improvement. Evidence from the work of the present Year 6 pupils confirms that standards are below average overall but all groups of pupils are achieving very well.

126 By the age of 11, most pupils know and can use a variety of methods in order to complete accurate written computations involving the four rules of number. They are able to apply their knowledge that inverse operations can be used to check their results. High attainers can competently manipulate decimals within written multiplications and divisions. The majority of pupils have an appropriate speed of recall of number facts but a significant minority has slow recall. However, almost all pupils have acquired a range of mental strategies that they are both confident and competent to explain using appropriate mathematical vocabulary.

127 The school's 2000 Year test results for 7-year-olds are well above average when compared with all schools nationally and high, (i.e. in the top 5% of schools) when compared with similar schools. Since 1998, standards have been above the national average. Scrutiny of work from Year 2 pupils

confirms above average standards. This represents very good achievement from the well below average standards of most of these pupils when they began school.

128 By the age of seven, pupils have successfully learned mentally to manipulate numbers to at least 20 and are adept at counting in 2s, 5s and 10s. They have a basic understanding of tens and units and can group items, e.g. sweets, accordingly. They have a secure understanding of odds and evens and know about elementary properties of plane shapes. High attainers are able to perform mental calculations very rapidly and explain their strategies coherently.

129 Comparisons with the standards between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are to be made with caution due to the highly transient nature of the pupil population of the school. Over a quarter of the pupils currently in Year 6 joined the school less than four years ago and a significant number has special educational needs or are at an early stage of English language acquisition.

130 Very good improvement has been made since the previous inspection, particularly with regard to the quality of teaching. The school's very successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) contributes to the very good achievement of all pupils.

131 The quality of teaching is very good in Key Stage 1 with one lesson where teaching was excellent. Similarly, very good teaching occurred in Key Stage 2 where two lessons were judged to be excellent. This represents an impressive amount of high quality teaching across the school.

132 Excellent teaching in a Year 2 lesson was notable for the teacher's high expertise and modelling of very good use of mathematical language. As a result, pupils made very good gains in their ability to round numbers to the nearest multiple of 10. In a Year 3 lesson, involving teaching pupils pencil and paper methods of addition, excellent teaching was characterised by enthusiastic delivery, frequent checking of pupils' understanding and the use of open questions such as "do you spot anything?" The combined effect of these factors promoted pupils' learning. In a Year 6 lesson, involving some low attaining pupils, the teacher's excellent teaching was highly successful in motivating pupils. Her own enthusiasm allied to high expectations and excellent strategies for managing some potentially difficult pupils produced remarkable outcomes. Pupils responded with high levels of motivation and achieved very well in relation to their prior attainment.

133 In all lessons throughout the school, teachers' lesson planning is very thorough and pupils are always informed about what they are intended to learn. Teachers deal constructively and sensitively with pupils' misconceptions or errors. Pupils listen very well and are highly motivated. They respond confidently in front of their peers without fear of failure or rebuke and respect each other's feelings when errors are made. They co-operate fully with adults and show high interest, concentration and pride in their work. Pupil behaviour is invariably very good and in two lessons exemplary. The very good and excellent relationships between staff and pupils and the positive way in which mathematics is conveyed to pupils leads to pupils' enjoyment of the subject.

134 Teachers' very effective assessment of pupils' work and high expectations of what pupils can achieve provide a secure basis for the close match and challenge presented in activities given to pupils whose needs are very different.

135 Throughout the school all pupils, including those who are at an early stage of English language acquisition, others with special educational needs and those who are high attainers, are well provided for. This is mainly due to the accurate assessments and records made by teachers that provide them with the requisite information upon which future work is planned according to need. Additionally, those

pupils who have special educational needs are well supported by the very good additional help of classroom assistants.

136 The introduction of the NNS has been successful, especially in the way teachers carefully structure their lessons and place emphasis on mathematical vocabulary and the development of pupils' mental skills and strategies. Lessons begin with a brisk and appropriate mental warm-up. During the main part of lessons, pupils are successfully introduced to new knowledge and skills and teachers make good use of the plenary part of lessons to reiterate learning.

137 Pupils are able to use and apply their numeracy skills in other subjects, for example, when measuring, in design and technology and science, when using bar charts in geography and in ICT when using spreadsheets and control technology. Teachers promote pupils' clear understanding of the intended learning outcomes by reading them with pupils. Similarly, the emphasis placed upon pupils giving oral explanations contributes to the development of their speaking and listening skills.

138 Very good subject leadership and teachers' enthusiasm have contributed to the very good improvements in the subject since the last inspection. The enthusiasm, expertise and commitment of the co-ordinators has enabled them to fulfil their role very successfully, including monitoring of colleagues' plans and pupils' workbooks. Analysis of test data is used to determine the relative performance of different groups of pupils and to identify any possible areas of weakness. Good quality resources contribute to pupils' learning. There is very good use of the ICT suite to support mathematics but the school now needs to make greater use of the ICT equipment residing in classrooms.

SCIENCE

139 There is a need for caution when analysing the test results for 7-and 11-year-olds as the school's population is highly transient, with a high percentage of pupils joining the school after the age of 5 or leaving the school before reaching the age of 11. Consequently, there can be a marked variation in attainment, especially in national test results from one year to another. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11 are in line with the national average and well above average for similar schools. For the pupils aged 7, the results are below average when judged against national standards but well above average in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels for both age ranges was above the national average and, in relation to similar schools, was well above average. Over the last four years standards have fluctuated but have generally followed the national trend and there has been no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The standard of attainment of the current Year 6 and Year 2 pupils is comparable with that of the previous year. As many of the pupils have well below average attainment on starting school, these results show that pupils are achieving very well in relation to their prior attainment.

140 The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school, which enables pupils of all abilities to make very good progress. This shows a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be good. The teachers show secure subject knowledge, prepare their lessons thoroughly and stress the importance of learning through structured practical activities. There are very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they can do and a brisk pace to lessons that ensures that all pupils have a very high work rate. The teachers in Year 1 make sure that pupils have many opportunities to be involved in practical activities to develop their scientific knowledge and understanding of their senses, and how they can be used to explore the world around them. Pupils in Year 2 learn how to handle a variety of simple scientific equipment carefully and safely and to take part in discussions about scientific ideas. This was evident in lessons for Year 2 pupils on discussing

similarities and differences in themselves and others and in grouping living things according to observable similarities and differences. Strong emphasis is given to teaching pupils the basic skills of carrying out an investigation. They show a great deal of curiosity and enjoyment when involved in practical work and are very keen to answer questions. However, despite teachers emphasising the correct use of scientific language, many of the pupils have only a limited vocabulary and this hinders their ability to develop the skills of being able to talk about their work in a suitable manner. Many pupils also find difficulty in recording their findings in writing and this limits the range of methods in which they can record what they have discovered. Consequently, by the time that they are 7, although most pupils show appropriate skills in carrying out a simple fair test, many are limited in their ability to communicate their ideas using correct scientific terminology or in recording their findings in an appropriate variety of ways.

141 The teachers of older pupils ensure that they are given opportunities to learn how to handle a wider variety of scientific equipment and resources to develop their knowledge and understanding effectively. Very good questioning is used to explore and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas; as was seen in lessons in Years 3 and 4 on investigating how light travels in straight lines and how shadows are formed. In these lessons, the teachers were able to give very effective demonstrations of these scientific ideas and then allowed the pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning when carrying out their own investigations. In so doing, the pupils showed good ability to organise themselves and to co-operate well in small groups. Teachers place strong emphasis on the ways to make a test fair; as was evident in lessons for pupils in Year 5, on investigating the factors that affect evaporation. The teachers provide many such opportunities for pupils to work together on well-structured practical activities to find out for themselves, which enables them to make effective progress in their investigative skills. In an excellent lesson on finding out how micro-organisms cause decay, the quality of questioning by the deputy head and ensuing discussion led to all the pupils making outstanding progress in their understanding of this idea. There is good development of the pupils' ability to record their findings in a variety of ways, such as with close observational drawings and detailed scientific diagrams. It is obvious that pupils take pride in their work; as evidenced by the high standards of presentation in their books. There are not enough opportunities in some classes for pupils to be involved in activities that develop the investigative skills of making evaluations and conclusions based on prior scientific knowledge. Throughout the school there is some use of pupils' skills of using information communication technology to enhance their work but this is an area for further development. By the time that they are 11, most pupils show an appropriate ability to identify the need for a fair test and to be able to plan and carry one out independently of the teacher.

142 The curriculum is very good, being broad and relevant, with pupils being able to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills through carefully-structured investigative activities. The leadership is very good with the co-ordinator having a clear view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses, which has enabled her to create a suitable action plan to improve provision. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make very good progress as a result of the well-structured support that they are given. The activities given to these pupils are well matched to their abilities because their strengths and weaknesses are well known by all staff, who work well together as a team. The needs of the higher attaining pupils are effectively met by sessions in the science laboratories at Manchester High School for Girls. There is good use of literacy skills by pupils in their report writing and in their labelled scientific drawings and diagrams. Pupils in Year 3 have also used these skills to write a series of instructions on how to plant and look after seeds as part of their investigations into germination. Pupils also show that they are able to make effective use of their numeracy skills; as was seen in the work of pupils in Years 5 and 6 to find out how many times a heart beats over a certain period of time. Effective assessment procedures are deployed to monitor the attainment of pupils and the progress that they make as they pass through the school, and these enable

teachers to set work that is well matched with the ability of the pupils. The school makes good use of visits to places such as the Museum of Science and Industry to provide further significant learning experiences for pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

143 The development of art has been an important and significant feature of the work of the school for the past few terms. As a result there is a considerable amount of high quality artwork on display in all areas of the school and, although only a small number of lessons were observed, from these, and from an analysis of the pupils' work it is clear that pupils' standards are above average at the end of both key stages.

144 There has been a considerable emphasis on all facets of the arts. The school involvement in the Manchester Arts Festival has provided significant opportunities for bringing together all aspects including art, dance, drama, music, technology, and ICT. Within this excellent "arts" climate, art has flourished. For example, attainment in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils were experimenting with light and shade, how they could reflect tone and how they could make a variety of marks, was well above average for pupils of their age. Lines were carefully drawn, with some pupils being very accurate with spacing and pressure on the pencil. As a result they were able to produce different tones and light and shade by varying the closeness of the lines. Another notable feature of the lesson was the quality of the pupils' use of language to describe what they were doing and the effect they were trying to achieve. Pupils' levels of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 are similarly impressive. The quality use of a wide range of media includes very good examples of creative use of materials to bring out the tactile and visual elements of their work.

145 In all areas of the school pupils are very involved in their work and have very good attitudes and behaviour. They are developing a creativity which is clearly seen, not only in art lessons, but also in other aspects of their work. The school emphasis on the development of creative arts and the links between visual and performing arts is having a clear effect on pupils' ability to express themselves in two and three dimensions and make very good links between skills learned in lessons other than art. For example, pupils use ICT very creatively, as when, in a Year 4 lesson where standards were above average, they produced some very good repeat designs for wrapping paper. The response in this lesson was also very good, with pupils co-operating and concentrating very well, and with very good attitudes and behaviour.

146 Teaching is very good in both key stages. This results in very good learning and levels of attainment. The school has emphasised the importance of art throughout the school. This high level of commitment has led to the development of a joint co-ordination role with an artist and a teacher organising the subject and developing teaching. The artist is currently working alongside class teachers in a supportive environment, helping both teachers and pupils to develop their art skills, knowledge and, understanding. This has been a very successful strategy. Teachers are confident, lessons are well planned and pupils are inspired to produce their best work. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are very good. Teachers cope exceptionally well with the wide variations in pupils' levels of attainment and backgrounds. Classroom management is very good and teachers make very good use of a range of teaching strategies in their lessons.

147 The co-ordination of the subject is very good and is a major factor in the success of the subject throughout the school and the good improvement since the last inspection. The joint co-ordinators work very well together and share a vision of art and the direction the school wants to go in this area of its work. This is very closely linked to the overall development of performing and creative arts with art as an integral and essential component. The school's involvement in the Manchester Arts Festival has had an important impact on art, emphasising the importance of the subject and providing a major focus for school development. The school is well resourced for art with a good range of quality

media, as well as making very good use of less conventional materials, for example when developing textured and three dimensional surfaces.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

148 Standards attained by 11-year-olds are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils in Year 6 have undertaken an investigation of slippers, beginning with careful evaluation of manufactured shoes against criteria such as colour, appearance and comfort. Pupils show appropriate levels of skill in their designs and include pertinent detail such as measurement and materials to be used.

149 During the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons in Key Stage 1. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about teaching and pupils' learning in Key Stage 1. However, the school provided evidence for secure judgements to be made about standards of pupils' work. Standards attained by 7-year-olds are above the level expected for their age. Examples of work completed by Year 2 pupils indicates that pupils are able to plan, make and evaluate their products to a level beyond that expected for their age. For example, pupils are able to use skills of accurate measuring before cutting and joining cardboard boxes and other re-cycled materials to form a robust wheeled vehicle. Year 2 pupils have also examined different types of puppet before planning their own design. They have used accurate drawing, cutting and sewing skills to produce good quality work. Subsequently, pupils make satisfactory evaluations of their artefacts against certain criteria.

150 Teaching is very good in Key Stage 2. Very good and excellent teaching in lessons involving pupils in Years 3 and 4 respectively led to pupils making good gains in the manipulative skills of stitching. These lessons were aimed at developing skills that are intended subsequently to be applied in pupils' decoration of money containers, such as purses. Both lessons were characterised by very good planning and preparation, excellent relationships between pupils and adults and the real sense of purpose, interest, concentration and perseverance shown by pupils. A positive contributor, common to both lessons, was the additional help of two adults with high levels of expertise, enabling pupils to work with an adult close at hand. Both lessons were greatly enjoyed by pupils, not least because of the very positive and good-humoured approach of the teachers.

151 Design and technology tasks provide relevant contexts for pupils to apply learning from other subjects. Examples include use of mathematical skills such as measuring, application of scientific knowledge of electrical circuits in alarm systems and the use of ICT graphics software to decorate their artefacts.

152 Very good subject leadership, by the two co-ordinators, has resulted in very good improvement being made since the last inspection. There is now a secure basis for long and medium-term plans that ensures a consistent and cohesive approach to lesson planning and ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. On the basis of pupils' work displayed around the school, photographic evidence and teachers' plans, it is clear that all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language and those who have special educational needs, are provided with sufficient opportunities to learn about design and technology. The school has an efficient and effective system of recording pupils' work in the subject. The co-ordinators have identified a range of appropriate areas for development, all of which are aimed at further raising pupils' attainment.

GEOGRAPHY

153 By the time that they are 11, most of the pupils attain standards expected for their age, having made very good progress in their learning as they pass through the school. This is a direct result of the very good quality teaching that they receive. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are able to

organise and manage their classes very effectively. There is good use of time and resources and very good use of questioning to find out what pupils know and understand. Teaching is well matched with the needs of all pupils so that all abilities are well challenged. There is good explanation of the ideas to be taught and all teachers place strong emphasis on pupils using correct geographical vocabulary. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 effectively develop their mapping skills, by planning a route from home to school, and learn about transport and communication and the different uses to which land can be put. Pupils can label places on a map of the United Kingdom and have investigated rain and what causes floods. When finding out about the Isle of Struay they have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding about how an island is different from a mainland. In a lesson for pupils in Year 2, on exploring different kinds of maps, the teacher made good use of a recent visit to Formby to stimulate pupils' interest and capture their imagination. In this lesson, as in others, the pupils' attitudes to learning were very positive, being able to sustain concentration and a willingness to ask and answer questions. They were well behaved and willing to listen to the views and opinions of others.

154 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were seen effectively developing their understanding of how people can affect the environment by investigating the kinds of rubbish collected in school in one week. During these lessons, the teachers encouraged pupils to use their numeracy skills to weigh the bags of rubbish and then create block graphs to show how much rubbish was collected on different days. These lessons were well prepared, with the learning objectives being clear and being shared with the pupils, so that they had a good understanding of what they were to learn. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop a sound understanding of river systems when they are investigating how the River Nile has affected its environment. They use their literacy skills to make good quality labelled diagrams of the different parts of the river. There is effective development of pupils' ability to extract information from secondary sources and good progress made in the acquisition of correct geographical vocabulary, enabling pupils to talk confidently about their work. Pupils are able to use their literacy skills effectively to enhance their work, as shown by pupils in Year 4 who have created newspaper articles based upon pictures of the African village of Kirua.

155 Curricular provision is very good, so that all pupils are able to enjoy to a broad range of relevant experiences. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported so that they have full access to all activities and are able to achieve very well. The last inspection report indicated that the needs of the more able pupils were not always effectively met. The school has improved provision for these pupils because planning now takes appropriate account of their prior knowledge and understanding. They are given work that is suitably challenging to enable them to achieve to their full potential. Very good leadership is provided by the co-ordinators who have a clear vision of how the subject is further to be improved. The school makes effective use of the immediate environment and visits to places such as The Peak District and the seaside town of Formby to further develop pupils' knowledge and understanding in the subject.

HISTORY

156 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' levels of attainment are above average. Although only limited opportunities were available to observe history lessons in Key Stage 1, from an analysis of pupils' work in books, folders, on display, and from conversations with staff and pupils, it is possible to judge that the level of attainment of 7-year-olds is at least average. In Key Stage 2, pupils have developed a good level of skill in analysing evidence and in drawing conclusions. Most are able to recognise the characteristics and features of the periods they have studied and are able to place these in context.

157 In both Key Stages pupils enjoy history. They are generally well behaved, concentrate well and have a good attitude to their work. In a Year 5/6 lesson exploring life in Victorian Britain, pupils

shared the teachers' very high expectations of what they could achieve and how they should organise themselves. They contributed confidently to the discussions and were very well behaved and polite, listening to each other and to their teacher. Pupils using the computer showed maturity and concentrated well, sharing their information and helping others.

158 It was not possible to make a secure judgement of teaching in Key Stage 1 as only very few lessons were available for observation. However, teaching is good in Key Stage 2 with lessons being well planned, resourced and managed. Teachers are very careful and thorough in their preparation and ensure that pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn during the lesson. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils resulting in good attitudes and behaviour. They manage the wide range of pupils' aptitudes and levels of concentration very well. This has a very positive effect on pupils' learning and the majority of the classes enjoy their lessons. The way in which teachers understand and meet pupils' individual and special needs is very good. This is considerably supported by the teamwork between classroom support staff, specialist teachers, for example providing language support, and the class teacher. This teamwork ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language have access to all that the school has to offer.

159 The subject is well managed by two subject co-ordinators, one for each key stage. Between them they have ensured that history is well organised with clear direction being provided through the scheme of work and that resources are matched to each historical topic. The co-ordinators provide support for colleagues, giving guidance where required and conduct whole school reviews of lesson planning and pupils' levels of attainment. In this way they have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development. Resources are satisfactory and enable teachers to provide their pupils with a range of first and second hand evidence of the topic being studied. The range of artefacts within school is limited but this is compensated for through planned visits, speakers, and visitors from the local community and links with Local Authority Services. The use of ICT is being well developed as a historical resource, providing pupils with access, through the Internet and through appropriate software, to information on the topics and periods being studied. There is a subject development plan with clear targets and areas for improvement based on a through review of the subject. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

160 The standards attained by pupils aged 7 and 11 are in line with the national average. For a number of aspects of the use of ICT, for example, word-processing and communicating ideas and general awareness and use of the network, pupils have above average levels of skill. In Key Stage 1, pupils are used to using computers and are able to log onto the network, access the programme that they want and work with confidence and good levels of concentration. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are skilled in the use of the computers, both in their classrooms and in the central suite. In a Year 5 lesson where the task was to produce a repeat design for wrapping paper, pupils listened attentively to the teachers' detailed instructions and were then able to use this information competently to produce good designs. Their above average level of knowledge of the computer programmes enabled them to put all the teacher's directions into context and to work very efficiently, using a large number of the tools and facilities that the programme had to offer. Such high expectation, concentration and good quality finished product is typical of the pupils' work in the ICT suite.

161 Pupils' learning is good and often very good. They listen carefully to their teachers and take notice of what they say. In ICT lessons a notable feature is the high level of instruction and guidance provided by the teacher. Pupils listen attentively and are able to remember the instructions and carry out the tasks with a minimum of fuss. Levels of concentration are very good and well above average.

Pupils are often so intent on their work that they disregard other pupils and any distraction. Pupils' attitudes to their teacher and other pupils is very good and pupils use the computers sensibly and with care. Behaviour in the ICT suite is very good.

162 ICT has a high profile across the school and, besides computers in classrooms, there is a central suite of 16 networked computers. Most of the teaching done in this area is by a specialist teacher, working with half classes to a weekly timetable. This is extremely effective and has had a considerable effect on raising standards throughout the school. The quality of teaching is very good with some exceptional features. Planning is thorough and ensures that lessons are well organised and that the National Curriculum requirements for ICT are met. The ICT co-ordinator has developed a very effective style for introducing topics and for demonstrating what the pupils have to do. Teacher and pupils' expectations are very high with pupils generally determined to succeed. On a number of occasions teachers planned very well for the use of ICT as a part of lessons in subjects such as history and geography. On these occasions small groups or pairs of pupils used their ICT research skills to access the Internet and to find facts about the topic they were studying. A good example of this was in a Year 5/6 history lesson where pupils searched for facts about life and transport in the Industrial Revolution. The school recognises, however, that there is a need further to develop the use of computers in classrooms as an integral part of lessons.

163 The co-ordination of ICT is very good. There has been clear and well-targeted development of the subject, notably increased resources, especially the networked suite. The subject is very well organised in both school buildings and, besides the development of the role of the ICT co-ordinator into that of a specialist, there has been an emphasis on staff training. Teacher confidence is increasing throughout the school and there are plans for further training. The co-ordinator, together with the senior management, has developed an ICT action plan which identifies not only resource improvements but also the training implications. The co-ordinator has compiled a file with samples of pupils' work from across the school. This is very helpful in showing the standards that pupils achieve and the coverage of the National Curriculum. This, together with teachers' assessment of what pupils can do, is a good basis for assessment of standards. However, review of subject coverage and assessment of pupils' standards are areas which the school is aware that it needs to develop further.

164 The school is well resourced. Besides the central suite, the school has set up a room with six computers running an integrated learning system aimed at supporting higher standards in English and mathematics. This is a recent innovation and the software is currently being set up to meet the needs of individual pupils. Throughout the school there is a good level of additional equipment to support ICT. For example, the school has just purchased an interactive whiteboard to support teaching and to make presentation to classes and groups more effective; there is good use of digital cameras; printers are available in all areas and the school purchases technical support and advice from an outside agency. The school has made very good improvements in the provision for, and the use of, ICT since the last inspection.

MUSIC

165 Standards of attainment in music, throughout the school, are above average. A significant number of pupils demonstrate standards of attainment that are very good and excellent. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 respond well to their music lessons. The school has two very accomplished steel bands in both key stages and a Key Stage 2 choir. Some pupils receive violin lessons. Pupils are given many opportunities to practise and perform to a variety of audiences.

166 Listening skills are well developed and pupils are exposed to music from many cultures. Music features in cross-curricular areas of literacy, dance and art, which further develops the pupils' abilities

to respond to the music they hear. They are given opportunities to hear live music and on one occasion to compose and play alongside a professional orchestra and conductor.

167 There has been a very good improvement since the last inspection. The high standard of teaching has been maintained and developed in spite of a considerable number of new staff. Standards are now very good due to positive and confident teaching. There are more opportunities for singing within assemblies. The scheme of work is very well understood and followed by all members of staff. Pupils continue to play an active role in music within the community, playing or listening to music outside school.

168 Teaching of music in Key Stages 1 and 2 is very good. The contribution of peripatetic teaching within the school is very good. In a very good Year 2 lesson, a high level of expectation led to good understanding and playing. Pupils in this class sung tunefully and expressively. They were given the opportunity to express their ideas and feelings about music from a variety of cultures and settings. One child was invited to talk about his knowledge of African death rituals when he tried to express his feelings about the music played.

169 A group of pupils from Key Stage 1 are very ably taught to play the steel pans during lunchtimes by a Foundation Stage teacher. The pupils really enjoy their lessons and demonstrate concentration and excellent listening skills. They are able to play as part of a group and demonstrate outstanding performance skills for their age.

170 In a very good Year 6 lesson the introduction to the lesson was effectively linked to literacy and related to previous work. The teacher paid close attention to the inclusion of all groups which ensured that pupils were confident. Pupils who found the tasks challenging persevered. As a result of very good relationships, the teacher and pupils' peers valued all efforts. All pupils learned very well.

171 Behaviour and attitudes within all lessons is at least good and often very good. Older pupils practise with the steel band every morning. They are unsupervised but are reliable, sensible and mature and very well motivated. The relationships and ethos in the school allows this to take place. As a result the quality of the playing is excellent.

172 Pupils who have English as additional language make significant contributions to music in the school through their knowledge of music from other cultures and the use of music within these cultures or religions. The variety of music heard around school in lessons such as dance, within classrooms or dining halls, demonstrates the value placed on the music and the pupils' cultures. Pupils who have special educational need have full access to the music curriculum and achieve very well.

173 Co-ordination of the subject is very good. Resources have been audited and appropriate instruments allocated to key stages. The co-ordinators play an active role in developing the musical life of the school.

174 Further development is needed in the use of information and communication technology within the subject. There is scope for the development of keyboard skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

175 Standards attained by 11-year-olds are above national expectations. By age 11, pupils are able to link good quality gymnastic moves to form a sequence. They have an awareness of the aesthetic aspects of movement, for example, when showing extension in a balance and can perform movements that have symmetrical and asymmetric form. High attainers show well-controlled balances in inverted

positions and are able to perform challenging movements with a high level of confidence. Most pupils show above average levels of skill when bouncing, passing and catching a large ball. Almost all pupils have learned to swim to at least the standard required by the National Curriculum and a significant proportion exceed this standard.

176 Standards attained by 7-year-olds are also above national expectations. In gymnastics, pupils are able to show contrasting speed of movement with many able to take their weight confidently and safely on their hands. In dance, pupils show good levels of awareness of movement and stillness and are able to show good body control when balancing. They interpret sound imaginatively when moving in response to a variety of stimuli.

177 In Key Stage 1, teaching is very good overall and always at least good. In a Year 2 dance lesson, excellent teaching led to pupils making very good gains when learning to move appropriately to music. Similarly, in a gymnastics lesson, the same teacher provided an excellent role model through her enthusiastic involvement which, allied to her excellent relationships with pupils, resulted in an inspiring experience. Again, a key feature of this successful teaching was the high expertise of the teacher. The teacher provided good opportunities for pupils to observe and evaluate the performance of others in order to improve their own actions.

178 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is also very good overall and always at least good. In a Year 3 / 4 games lesson, very good teaching enabled pupils to exercise problem-solving skills in order to overcome the “unfair” situation presented within a 3v1-practice game. The teacher systematically developed pupils’ individual and team skills within a context that challenged them physically, socially and intellectually. Pupils made an exemplary response to this challenge, showing mature attitudes, perseverance and social cohesion. Similarly, very good teaching in a Year 5/6 games lesson provided pupils with appropriate opportunities to evaluate and suggest modifications to aspects of their learning. Pupils’ skills showed improvement as a result of very good teaching points from the teacher and from her brisk pace of teaching. Very good teaching in a Year 6 gymnastics lesson resulted in very good development of pupils’ skills. The teacher’s high expectations of pupils was evident. Throughout the lesson, she prompted pupils to think of ways in which they could improve their performance. A notable feature of this class work was the excellent way that pupils harmoniously shared the use of apparatus.

179 Features of teaching, common to all lessons in both key stages, include very good lesson planning, effective use of equipment, and clear instructions. In some lessons, teachers’ dress code presented a good example to pupils.

180 On the evidence of all lessons, it is evident that there are very good relationships and mutual respect between teachers and pupils. This underpins the very secure and unobtrusive control teachers have of their classes. All lessons provide very good contributions to pupils’ social and moral development. Pupils demonstrate mature behaviour and attitudes, including on those occasions when working in groups independently of the teacher. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are highly able, achieve very well in lessons.

181 Very good subject leadership by the two co-ordinators, allied to effective support from LEA personnel, has led to very good improvement in the subject since the last inspection. Improvements include better resource provision, lesson planning and teaching.

182 Very good provision of extra-curricular activities and competitive sport contributes to pupils’ personal and physical development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

183 Standards of attainment in religious education throughout the school are at least in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Some pupils demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding.

184 There has been a very good improvement since the last inspection. The scheme of work for the second year of the cycle has been planned with contributions from staff. Resources have been developed and include authentic artefacts donated by parents. Religious education is appropriately included in cross-curricular activities such as dance, literacy and music.

185 Pupils in Key Stage 1 undertake work about families of different religions. They learn to care, share and respect living things and property. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 gain an understanding of the stories and beliefs of a variety of religions through visits and visitors, discussion with pupils of that faith and direct teaching using a good selection of artefacts, videos and other resources. This multi-faith school makes good use of the diversity of faiths to increase knowledge and understanding and to secure an atmosphere of respect.

186 Throughout the school, pupils and staff show interest and understanding of many faiths. Pupils are proud of their beliefs and the school ethos encourages expression of these feelings. A beliefs book, written and displayed by Year 5 and 6 pupils, showed how their individual beliefs affect how they act in their lives. Many contributions were written in other scripts; for example, Arabic. The theme of strong beliefs was linked to a recent major Arts Festival. Older pupils wrote letters from the point of view of someone from another religion and explored the concept of sacrifice for beliefs.

187 Overall teaching is good. Very good relationships also allow pupils safely to explore feelings and express opinions. They are offered first-hand experiences during visits to relevant places of worship and from a recent Buddhist story workshop.

188 Teaching in Key Stage 1 also good. In a Year 1 lesson on activities within a Christian Church, the teacher allowed the opportunity for a Muslim child to explain their experience in a Mosque and compared this with a Church. The child gave a good description of the items and procedures someone may see.

189 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is also good. A lesson in Year 3, on the consideration of the impact of religious beliefs on individuals, was aided by the very good use of resources. Positive relationships motivated pupils to talk about their own experiences. The pupils demonstrated the knowledge and understanding of previous work on Buddhism and related this to Islam. They can recognise similarities and differences in religions.

190 Staff, from ethnic minorities, make a valuable contribution to the teaching of religious education. They can be involved in preparing special assemblies, preparing displays, giving advice or helping to source artefacts or books. Their first-hand knowledge and experience ensures that pupils receive the correct information.

191 Religious education lessons make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Time is given for pupils to reflect on ideas and feelings. Pupils work very well together and celebrate the diversity of their religions and cultures.

192 Co-ordination of the subject is very good. A very good scheme of work is completed and ready to be implemented. Staff attended training and are confident in their teaching of the subject. Resources are continuously supplemented.

193 The school recognises that further development in the subject should include the assessment and monitoring of pupils' work and the introduction of a portfolio.