

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. HILDA'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105702

Headteacher: Mr. H. Buckley

Reporting inspector: Mr P. Edwards
21069

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th October 2001

Inspection number: 198866

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 and junior school

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ward Street
Oldham

Postcode: OL1 2EQ

Telephone number: 0161 624 3592

Fax number: 01612871351

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A. Haque

Date of previous inspection: 1st December, 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|---------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 21069 | Mr P Edwards | Registered inspector | Mathematics Physical education Special educational needs Equal opportunities | The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed What could the school do to improve further |
| 11437 | Mr T Anderson | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes and values How well does the school care for its pupils or students |
| 20911 | Mrs J Dawson | Team inspector | The Foundation Stage History Geography Information and communication technology | |
| 21074 | Mr K Williams | Team inspector | English Art and design | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents |
| 22396 | Mrs J Young | Team Inspector | Science Music Design and technology English as an additional language | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Hilda's Church of England Aided Primary School is in a socially disadvantaged area of Chadderton in Oldham. Most of the children are from the local area and the school is frequently over-subscribed. The level of pupil mobility is low. There are currently 306 pupils on roll, 154 boys and 152 girls. There is also a Nursery catering for 60 pupils who attend on a part-time basis. Most pupils are of Bangladeshi heritage with a very small number from Indian heritage. All of the pupils are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (53 per cent) is more than twice the national average. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special education needs (22 per cent) is average, although the percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (0.0 per cent) is below average. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. During the last two years, five teachers have left the school and there have been three appointments. During the inspection, two teachers were on temporary contracts. Over the last 12 months the school has had difficulties recruiting teachers, particularly those with expertise in teaching pupils learning English as an additional language. The school also has difficulty in recruiting governors and the Governing Body has not been quorate for the last 12 months.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school with a number of good features and some that need further improvement. The headteacher, well supported by the deputy has successfully managed the implementation of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies but the lack of an effective Governing Body creates additional demands for the headteacher. The good teaching is enabling the pupils to make good progress and, although standards are below national expectations in English, mathematics and science, they are improving. The school's drive to raise standards must be seen in the context of the low attainment of the pupils on entry; the high proportion of pupils who are not fluent in English; the proportion of pupils who take extended holidays during term time and some staff changes in Years 5/6 which disrupted the pupils' learning. Given all of this, the leadership of the school is tackling the underachievement of pupils in a systematic way. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- In over two thirds of the lessons the teaching was good or better. This has a positive effect on standards.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good and contribute to the pupils' enjoyment of school and learning.
- The pupils have good attitudes towards school and work and they behave well.
- The school looks after the pupils well. There are good procedures in place to monitor progress in English and mathematics and to monitor the pupils' personal development.
- There is effective recognition of the pupils' cultural background in the curriculum and organisation of the school
- The provision for the pupils' moral and social development is good.
- It works hard to involve parents in their children's learning through the use of bilingual staff.
- The staff work hard to provide an attractive learning environment.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology could be higher.
- Some co-ordinators do not have sufficient impact on teaching and learning in their subjects.
- The governors do not have sufficient impact on the work of the school.
- The attendance rate is below the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1997. The major issue of raising standards in English, mathematics and science has been addressed although standards are still not high enough. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has had a positive impact on the teaching of the basic skills. The provision for information and communication technology has improved significantly, but it is too soon for it to have had an impact on standards. Monitoring of standards has focused rightly on English and mathematics. More attention needs to be devoted to other areas of the curriculum and the governors need to become much more involved in monitoring what is happening in the school. Attendance has improved and the school has received a national award. However, despite its best efforts attendance is still below average.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | compared with | | | | Key |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
| | all schools | | | similar schools | |
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 | |
| English | E* | D | E* | E | well above A average above B average average C below average D well below E average |
| mathematics | E* | E | E | D | |
| science | E* | E | E* | E | |

The 2000 National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds show attainment to be in the bottom five per cent of all schools nationally in English and science and well below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, attainment is well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Provisional test results for 2001 show standards have remained about the same in English, risen slightly in science and dropped slightly in mathematics. The school has kept up with the national trend in standards since 1997 and the overall picture is one of limited improvement.

When children enter the Nursery, their attainment is well below average. Even though most make good progress, few will achieve the early learning goals by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1.

In 2000, the National Curriculum test results for seven-year-olds were much lower than most schools in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools the test results for 2000 were below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Standards remain low because most pupils enter the school with low attainment in these areas and are learning English as an additional language. Provisional test results for 2001 show a slight improvement in writing standards. Teacher assessments for science show attainment to be well below average and this is due in part to the school's concentration on literacy and numeracy.

In the work seen, during the inspection, standards in English, mathematics and science, although improving, are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6. The pupils are making good progress in relation to their prior attainment, but the initiatives that have recently been put in place to raise standards have yet to be seen in improved test results, particularly at age 11. This is also the case with information and communication technology where improved resources and regular teaching are enabling the pupils to make better progress. However, the initiative is too new to measure its impact.

Standards in art and design, design and technology and physical education are average at the end of both key stages. They are below average in history, geography and music. The pupils need to build on previous learning in history and geography and the lack of co-ordination for music has resulted in unsatisfactory progress.

Pupils with special education needs and those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language make good progress throughout the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Good. The pupils enjoy school and most do their work happily and with interest. They answer questions willingly and most join in discussions. These positive attitudes help them to make good progress in their learning. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good. There are high expectations of behaviour and the pupils respond appropriately. They behave well in lessons and around the school. |
| Personal development and relationships | The pupils' personal development is good. They are willing and respond well to responsibilities they are given. They are respectful and the good relationships that exist help to create a friendly learning environment. |
| Attendance | Despite the school's best efforts, attendance rates are below the national average. A significant number of pupils take extended holidays during term time and this affects their progress. |

Despite the school's best efforts, attendance rates are below the national average. A significant number of pupils take extended holidays during term time and this affects their progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching | Good | Good | 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.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. During the inspection, of the 68 lessons seen, three were excellent, 16 were very good, 47 were good and 28 were satisfactory. Three lessons were unsatisfactory.

The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught throughout the school. The teachers have a good understanding of the national strategies and most provide a good balance between whole class and group activities. Occasionally, progress is inhibited where groups of pupils share a classroom and the opposing noise levels are distracting. The strengths in the teaching include the way teachers manage the pupils, ask questions, share learning objectives with pupils, demonstrate good subject knowledge and make very effective use of the bilingual support staff. Activities in the Nursery and Reception classes are well prepared and the consistently good teaching in these classes ensures the pupils have a good start to their education. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is also good and builds effectively on what has been taught previously.

The teaching is particularly good in Years 5/6 where the teachers have high expectations of the pupils. The pupils respond accordingly and achieve well. Occasionally, the teachers in other classes in the juniors present the pupils with mundane and poorly prepared worksheets, resulting in underachievement. There are examples of very good marking in the best lessons that indicate how the pupils might improve their work and all teachers need to aspire to this level. The teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory.

The teaching of pupils with special education needs and those who are learning English as an additional language is effective. They make good progress overall. However, the school has difficulty in recruiting teachers skilled in teaching English and is utilising an additional classroom assistant on a temporary basis for pupils in Years 5 and 6.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory. The children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a good range of activities. The school gives high priority to literacy and numeracy and this is helping to raise standards. More emphasis needs to be devoted to the teaching of history and geography skills and to improving the music provision. After school activities, supported through the New Opportunities Fund, where the pupils can do homework tasks and develop their skills in art, ICT and football, are popular with the pupils. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. The provision for pupils with special education needs is good and ensures that these pupils are quickly identified. They are given good support and participate in all aspects of the school's work. |
| Provision for pupils with | Good. The level of support enables the pupils to make very good |

| | |
|---|--|
| English as an additional language | progress in learning English in the early years. Although the school is unable to acquire sufficient experienced teaching staff, the bilingual support assistants are effective in helping the pupils make progress. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good overall. Good provision is made for the pupils' moral and social development. The provision for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory although the school does makes good use of the pupils' heritage. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school is a caring community and the pupils' welfare has a high priority. This is a factor in the pupils' positive attitudes and in helping to raise standards. Assessment procedures in English and mathematics are good. |

The school works hard to foster links with parents. They are kept well-informed about what is taught and of the progress their children make.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Satisfactory overall. The headteacher, supported by the deputy, provides the school with good leadership and has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and how these should be addressed. A number of the subject co-ordinators have only recently taken on their responsibilities and need to be more effective in monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Unsatisfactory. A small number of governors carry a heavy load. Due to recruitment difficulties, the Governing Body has not functioned effectively during the last 12 months. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Satisfactory. The school evaluates National Curriculum test results well and implements plans to address areas of development such as literacy, numeracy and science. As a result, standards are improving. |
| The strategic use of resources | Satisfactory. Funding has been used well to provide satisfactory levels of teaching and support staff. The principles of best value are implemented well in order to make optimum use of available funding. |

There are sufficient teaching and support staff to meet the needs of the pupils, although teacher recruitment difficulties have resulted in a number of temporary staff being employed. The accommodation lacks an appropriate outdoor learning area for children in the Foundation Stage. The hard play area is in poor condition and there is no sports field.

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. • The teaching is good. • Their children make good progress. • The school encourages good behaviour and is helping the children to become more mature. • The school cares very well for the children. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. |

Inspectors endorse the positive views expressed by the parents. They do not share their views on the amount of homework. The level of homework is appropriate for the age of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The pupils' performance in the national tests indicate that standards at age seven and eleven are very low when compared with all schools and well below average when compared with similar schools. Taking into account the very low attainment of the pupils when they start at the school, and the fact that almost all of them are learning English as an additional language, the inspection evidence points to the pupils making sound progress overall, with room for higher achievement by the average and more able pupils.
2. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of both key stages, attainment in English is well below the national average, but the pupils are achieving well and make sound progress. The school places considerable emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills and good support is provided by the bilingual support assistants to enable the pupils to make good progress. This good progress continues in Key Stage 2, and particularly in Years 5 and 6 where the pupils are provided with good opportunities to ask questions and to justify their responses. Reading skills are below average at the end of both key stages. The school's successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on developing the pupils' reading skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, they are responding well to books, retelling stories and describing characters and events. The pupils make good progress but by the end of Key Stage 2, a significant minority have not achieved the expected standards. Most pupils are learning to read in other languages and whilst parents support their pupils' reading, many of them are not confident enough in English to help their children. The staff work hard to overcome these difficulties and after school clubs, providing the pupils with additional time and support, is beginning to make an impact. Standards in writing are below average at the end of both key stages. By the age of seven, some pupils are beginning to sequence events in their writing but only a small minority are using punctuation consistently and accurately. From a low starting point the pupils make good progress throughout the school. At the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils are writing for a range of purposes and in a range of styles. However, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to practise their writing skills through other subjects. Although some teachers provide opportunities, the activities are not consistent throughout the school.
3. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in mathematics is below average at the end of both key stages. However, the pupils generally make good progress and achieve well. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented effectively and its success is showing in the improved standards in Key Stage 1. The pupils enter the school with low levels of mathematical skills but by the end of the key stage they are achieving satisfactory standards in their numeracy skills. They lack confidence in solving problems and need guidance to help them understand questions. Their improved mathematical knowledge is linked to their improved English skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, older pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of multiplication tables and can divide and multiply by 10 and 100. However, their ability to apply these skills and certain aspects of mathematics, such as shape, space and measure, are less well developed. This is due in part to cultural and language differences and also to the lack of opportunities for the pupils to practise and apply the skills learned in mathematics in other subjects. Average and more able

pupils need to be presented with more challenging work in Years 3 and 4 to ensure they achieve the best possible standards.

4. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in science is below that expected at the end of both key stages. The quality of teaching seen in most classes enables good progress to be made throughout the school and the pupils achieve well. In Key Stage 1, the pupils show a great deal of curiosity and enjoyment and this helps them to form scientific ideas when comparing growth and the life cycles of plants and animals. Investigative skills are built on effectively in Key Stage 2, although the pupils' limited scientific vocabulary inhibits the progress they make. The average and higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 need to be presented with more challenging work to enable them to achieve higher standards. Occasionally the pupils would make better progress if they were given more or clearer visual prompts to enable them to write up the results of investigations.
5. Attainment in information and communication technology is below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and well below at the end of Key Stage 2. In both key stages the pupils' achievements are low. The school has recently established a computer suite which is being used to provide all pupils with regular computer lessons. However, it is too soon to determine the impact this will have. Many teachers lack confidence in using computers and the pupils are provided with too few opportunities to improve their skills. Overall their progress is unsatisfactory.
6. Standards in art and design, design and technology and physical education are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards in history, geography and music are below expectations. Standards in history and geography could be higher. The pupils need more opportunities to develop their understanding and skills in these subjects and the teachers need to ensure they are building on what has been taught previously. The school recognises it needs guidance on how to improve standards in music if the pupils are to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
7. The school exceeded the English and mathematics targets it had set itself for 2000 but failed to meet them in 2001. These targets were significantly more challenging.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The pupils' behaviour, attitudes and personal development are good and a strength of the school. The pupils' attitudes, both to their work and to their fellow pupils and teachers, is good. A very small minority of the pupils display challenging behaviour in the classroom or in the playground and there has been only one fixed term exclusion over the past two years. Where the teaching was good or very good the pupils were quick to respond to the challenges set and in the vast majority of cases they demonstrated a consistently positive attitude to their work.
9. During the inspection, there were many examples of the pupils displaying positive responses to teachers' instructions and in one excellent mathematics lesson the pupils demonstrated their ability to work at an electrifying pace with concentration to match. Good behaviour was also observed in a Key Stage 2 assembly in which the Headteacher produced a very interesting account of a recent visit to Bangladesh. The pupils also displayed good and consistent behaviour when walking around the school and also when in the dining hall and playground.

10. The day-to-day relationships between the pupils and between staff and pupils are good. The pupils are able to work together and in one PHSE lesson they worked very well together when they took turns to relate both happy and sad experiences in their lives. The school provides a range of opportunities for the pupils to develop their social skills through speaking, listening and taking responsibility for undertaking tasks such as taking registers to the office and tidying up the classrooms. Older pupils also take on the occasional responsibility of helping the younger pupils. The pupils were observed to respond in very positively to this provision. Issues of concern are raised by the pupils at meetings of their school council. For example, their views on school uniform were taken into consideration.
11. The overall attendance at the school is unsatisfactory and is below the national average. The main cause of the low attendance figure is the extended holidays in Bangladesh taken during term time by many families. For its part, the school discourages long absences of this nature. Although there is some evidence of occasional pupil lateness, the majority of the pupils come to school and lessons on time. School registers are correctly marked and absence is consistently monitored. The reduction in the number of pupils' unauthorised absences has been acknowledged through the award of a national certificate.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. During the inspection, three of the 68 lessons seen were excellent, 11 were very good, 32 were good and 19 were satisfactory. Three lessons were unsatisfactory. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when there was more unsatisfactory teaching and significantly less very good or better teaching.
13. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Lessons are planned well and all areas of the curriculum are given good coverage. The teachers' planning ensures there is very good transition between the Nursery and Reception classes. Most children enter the Nursery with little understanding of English and the activities are well-planned to take this into account. The staff know what the children are learning and match their next steps in learning effectively. The learning support staff and bilingual assistants carry out their roles very well and make a positive contribution to the children's achievements. The teachers do their best to ensure the pupils have access to outdoor learning facilities to develop personal and physical skills. They make good use of the indoor facilities to compensate for the poor outside facilities, which are beyond the school's control and which do inhibit progress in these areas. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures the children have a good start to their education.
14. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in Years 1 and 2. Of the 20 lessons observed, 12 were good and eight were satisfactory. The teachers plan lessons well and they have a good understanding of the subjects to be taught. They assess the pupils appropriately and use this information to plan learning to meet the needs of the pupils carefully. This is particularly so for English and mathematics where improved teaching is helping to raise standards. The teachers are good at sharing the learning objectives with the pupils. Occasionally, there are too many learning objectives set and this results in a lack of direction in the lesson and inhibits progress. There are also some missed opportunities to reflect on what has been learned at the end of the lesson.
15. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in Key Stage 2. There are examples of very good and excellent teaching in Years 5 and 6 and in these lessons

the pupils make rapid gains in their learning. In the best lessons the teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve, how the pupils will behave and clearly communicates these expectations to the pupils. In an excellent Year 5/6 literacy lesson, the pupils' understanding of prepositions was considerably enhanced through the teacher's clear match of work to their ability. This match of work challenged the pupils to achieve well and the quality of work matched the teacher's expectations. Other teachers in Year 5/6 have similarly high expectations and the pupils respond accordingly. Another strong feature of these better lessons is the quality of marking which encourages the pupils to improve their work. The best marking sets targets and informs the pupils how they might improve their work, and there is an expectation that the pupils will present work of good quality. Some of the teachers in other junior classes accept work that is below what the pupils are capable of achieving. This, together with mundane or poorly presented worksheets, does not encourage the pupils to produce their best work.

16. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is generally good throughout the school. Work is usually challenging and matched closely to the pupils' level of ability. The arrangements for setting the pupils according to their prior attainment are successful in helping the pupils to achieve their potential. There are occasions however when a small number of teachers, particularly those employed specifically for additional language support, do not demonstrate the same level of literacy and numeracy knowledge as their colleagues. This is resulting in some underachievement by the more able and average pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4. The school is aware of this and has arranged for additional training to be implemented.
17. All of the pupils are learning English as an additional language and the staff work hard to ensure they make good progress. The teaching staff are skilled in ensuring bilingual staff play an integral role in the teaching process. Considerable emphasis has been rightly placed on teaching English through literacy and numeracy activities. This has resulted in a lack of clarity about developing language skills through subjects such as history and geography. However, there are examples of some very good teaching in history, particularly in Years 5 and 6. In a lesson which required the pupils to gather evidence for the reasons for the outbreak of World War Two, the teacher's skilful handling of a discussion between the pupils and a visitor enabled them to elicit much valuable information for their research. The teaching of information and communication technology has been weak due to the teachers' insecure subject knowledge and the lack of equipment. This has resulted in the pupils not achieving the standards of which they are capable. However, the teaching seen during the inspection week was always at least satisfactory and there are indications that some of the pupils are now making good progress. The home/school liaison staff visit families each week to celebrate pupils' achievements, give up to date information and raise awareness of school events and activities.
18. The teaching of those pupils with special education needs is good. Again, the setting of pupils according to their prior attainment enables those pupils with special education needs to be taught in smaller groups for English and mathematics. This ensures they receive more attention and guidance and ensures they make the progress of which they are capable. Where appropriate, additional learning support is provided to help them make better progress.

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

19. Overall, the quality and range of the learning opportunities provided for the pupils, including those with special educational needs, are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the school has implemented the guidelines provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), although these are not used consistently by all staff. Weaknesses in the curriculum for geography remain from the previous inspection. Here, the cycle of topics results in the subject not being taught for half of the year and this results in the pupils forgetting much of what they have learned. More time needs to be spent on teaching information technology, history and music to ensure that the pupils have access to the full programmes of study for those subjects.
20. The children in the Foundation Stage are given a good start to their education. There is a strong emphasis on the development of literacy skills, particularly in enabling them to learn an additional language. The teachers' planning is good although outdoor play is limited due to the poor facilities.
21. The school has implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy effectively and the development of these skills is given a high priority. The guidelines are well understood and clearly followed and this is having an impact on improving standards. However, there are too few opportunities to develop the pupils' literacy skills in other subjects, for example in geography and history. The introduction of a new computer suite has enhanced the facilities on offer, but it is too early to judge its impact on standards and the quality of the curriculum provided. The use of homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning.
22. The school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills outside of the formal curriculum, including clubs for art, information and communications technology (ICT), football and a study club where they can complete homework tasks. Out-of-school activities are popular with the pupils.
23. There is satisfactory provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). Sex education is taught largely through the science curriculum and the school nurse assists with the teaching of this aspect of health education. A co-ordinator for PSHE has recently been appointed and there are appropriate plans to introduce a formal programme that will include drug awareness. The newly established School Council is beginning to raise pupils' awareness of citizenship, for example by considering ways of eliminating litter at school and in the local community. The school provides other opportunities for the pupils to develop initiative and take responsibility and they respond well. A small group of pupils took part in the Oldham Schools Council, which helped to extend their experience beyond the immediate locality. The school is actively involved in supporting the 'Schools Under the Sky' project, which raises money for a community in Bangladesh. These initiatives have a positive impact on the pupils' personal and social development.
24. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. The support from the bilingual staff is a particular strength. All the pupils speak another language at home. Because of this high priority is placed on the pupils acquiring the necessary skills in English to enable them to learn as effectively as possible. This aspect of education is embedded in all that the pupils experience in school. The staff are committed to enabling individual pupils to learn the English as quickly as possible. Throughout school many pupils make good progress in this area of their learning.

25. There is good provision for those pupils with special education needs. In literacy and numeracy, putting pupils in classes based on their prior attainment enables those with special educational needs to receive additional support in small classes. The acting co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the needs of these pupils. The co-ordinator, teachers and bilingual staff make home visits to parents, many of whom are reluctant to visit the school, to ensure they are kept up to date with reviews and are kept fully informed of their children's needs.
26. Links with the local community are satisfactory and they support the classroom activities available to the pupils. Visits, including to Oldham Athletic and further afield to Blackpool and the 'Eureka Park', help to enhance the pupils' understanding of the wider community and contrasting areas. There are effective links with the local police and the headteacher and members of staff have visited Bangladesh regularly to improve their understanding of the community. The school is working hard to develop links that will support their recruitment of governors from the locality. A grant from the Paul Hamlyn Arts Foundation led to work on ceramics with the local partnership centre. The good quality results of this collaboration are displayed effectively in school. Sports coaches from Oldham Athletic contribute to the school's after-school provision. Links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer are good and make an important contribution to the quality of education provided. Liaison and induction procedures are good and aid the smooth transfer of pupils to the school. Funding from a national grant has supported the introduction of a study club, based at the secondary school, which is assisting this process. Good links are also established with a primary school in a contrasting area and this is having a positive effect on the pupils' awareness.
27. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection.
28. There is satisfactory provision for pupil's spiritual development. Assemblies encourage the pupils to reflect on world issues and the needs of others, as well as their own attitudes and response to others and the world around them. For example, in one assembly the teacher assembled a collection of autumn fruits, firing the pupils' imaginations by using phrases such as 'exploding seeds' and 'brown shiny seeds with spiky green hedgehog cases'. A 'thinking candle' at the end gave the pupils a focus to reflect on the story's theme...not to give up. In another assembly the teacher provided the pupils with a moment to pray for help for all people who are suffering as a result of the events in America. The school has adopted a very sensitive approach to the needs of Muslim pupils and to the portrayal of poverty in other parts of the world.
29. Assemblies recognise a supreme being and, although the school is an Anglican Church school, the approach is entirely appropriate as the school population is mainly Muslim.
30. On occasions, the pupils are asked to write about their wishes and feelings. For example, the children in the reception classes have 'wished upon a star'. Older pupils were transported back to wartime Britain as their teacher donned a headscarf and showed them her weekly rations. In another class there was some shock as a visitor who was in the war described the blitz. However, there are few planned opportunities for the pupils' spiritual development throughout the curriculum beyond the study of different religions within the religious education syllabus.

31. The provision for the pupils' moral and social development is good. The pupils know the difference between right and wrong. The adults in the school are good role models and the pupils know how they should behave towards each other and adults. There are sensible school rules and appropriate emphasis on good behaviour rather than dwelling on punishments or sanctions. The pupils are encouraged to earn 'crystals' as they move around school so that the whole class can be rewarded. Each class has its own class rules displayed on the wall.
32. The pupils are encouraged to take responsibility within the school. From their first days in the nursery the children are expected to tidy up and to take care of their equipment. They take the register to the office. Older pupils have school responsibilities. For example, the pupils in Year 6 ensure that the stairs are negotiated safely at the end of playtimes. The pupils earn 'Golden Time' on Fridays and in one classroom, they are reminded that they are responsible for their own actions. The pupils are involved in the Khasdobir project and regularly collect equipment and money for this community in Sylhet. The proceeds from the harvest festival this week will go to the homeless in Manchester, distributed through the Salvation Army. The school is beginning to develop discussion periods where the pupils air issues. The school council has an impact on the life of the school and they are attempting to resolve the problem of litter by involving all pupils. Teachers encourage the development of citizenship. Year 5, for example, have written letters to protest that they were not involved in the 'Crucial Crew' initiative with Year 6, designed to teach children how to keep safe. There is an emphasis on social issues in the history curriculum. The pupils have opportunities for residential visits as well as a range of other visits, all of which help them to become more independent and help them to relate to their teachers and each other outside the school routines.
33. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There are appropriate opportunities for the pupils to learn about the people and country in which they live. The school works hard to maintain links with the pupils' heritage, to the extent that teachers have visited Bangladesh and established links with a community there. The pupils learn about Western artists, authors and poets and about other religions. There are several extra curricular activities including an art club. Visits to a local church, mosque and museums and contrasting localities give the pupils first hand experience of the aspects they are studying. However, the provision for music is unsatisfactory and there are no longer the musical experiences that were in place at the time of the last inspection. The pupils do not listen to music during assemblies and there is no provision for instrumental tuition or a school choir.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The procedures for child protection and welfare are good, as are those for the monitoring of the pupils' attendance and behaviour.
35. Effective Child Protection procedures are in place. The teaching staff, well supported by a range of both internal and external support staff, provide a high degree of welfare support to individual pupils. The day-to-day pastoral and welfare provision for children at the school is particularly strong and a trained first aider records any minor accidents. In the classroom, teachers are quick to observe any personal difficulties and to take appropriate and remedial action. The school carries out regular Health & Safety audits of the site and full records are maintained. Fire drills are also a regular feature of school life and appropriate records are kept. A very

small number of Health & Safety issues came to light during the inspection and the school has already taken proactive action to review and amend relevant procedures as appropriate.

36. The school, together with the regular assistance of external agencies, is proactive in the monitoring of individual levels of pupil absence. The monitoring and promoting of attendance of the pupils is handled sensitively and with a high degree of resourceful management by senior staff at the school. Good reward systems are in place to encourage regular attendance at school. The school has developed a range of strategies for the monitoring and control of behaviour and they are effectively implemented. The pupils' academic performance and personal development is monitored carefully by the school and steps are taken to identify individual problems with a range of strategies which may include the preparation of Individual Education Plans for some pupils.
37. The high level of child protection and welfare support to the pupils at the school has a significant impact on their learning and personal development and it is a strength of the school.
38. The day-to-day personal support and guidance provided for the pupils is good especially in relation to behaviour. The pupils are valued as individuals and encouraged to do their best. These values underpin the work and ethos of the school and bring out the best in the pupils. They promote confidence, a desire to achieve and a willingness to learn. The school provides a caring and supportive environment where the children feel happy and secure. The headteacher and staff know the pupils and their families very well and provide a supportive and friendly environment for them to work in. Day to day personal support is good. Because of this, the pupils work confidently and grow in self-esteem; this makes a positive contribution to the standards they achieve.
39. The arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are effective. The teachers have a consistent approach to dealing with incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Because the pupils know the expectations of the behaviour policy and school rules, sanctions are only rarely used because self-discipline and respect for others is promoted well. Effort and achievement in all aspects of school life are frequently rewarded in school as well as at special assemblies. The pupils are offered quality time in some classes to discuss and reflect on their actions. Older pupils use School Council to raise issues that are important to them.
40. The school has good procedures to eliminate bullying and harassment. Strong relationships, trust and respect between staff and pupils and the value of co-operation, which are promoted well from the pupils' earliest days in school, all contribute to the success in this area.
41. The procedures for assessing and recording individual pupil's attainment and progress as they pass through school are good. This is helping the teachers to set targets for improvement in English and mathematics. In both these subjects, the pupils are taught in separate groups according to their ability. Teachers are also starting 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.

42. Assessment information for pupils with special educational needs is used effectively to plan future work. The information from the initial assessments when the pupils start school is used well to plan future learning experiences. Systems to monitor the achievements of different groups of pupils by gender are continuing to be developed throughout school. Information to identify any trends is being collected to enable the school to take action to improve the provision in the future.
43. The procedures to monitor and promote the pupils' personal development are good. Because teachers know their pupils well, they rely on informal communication and procedures to chart progress. There are no formal written records by which the pupils' personal development is monitored as they move through the school, although a detailed overview of each pupil is written for the annual progress report to parents. Teachers support and encourage the pupils in their learning and recognise their efforts and achievements. They ensure the pupils are given responsibilities from their earliest years in school. Because of this, the pupils want to do well in their lessons and are keen to carry out the responsibilities offered to them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents' views of the school are good, as are the school's links with parents. The impact of parental involvement with the school is developing and the school is hoping to improve it further.
45. The parents' meeting with the inspectors was not well attended and the parental questionnaire was returned by a relatively low percentage of parents. Based on this low return, a significant majority of parents are very supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. Parents feel that their children like school and that they are making good progress. Parents also feel that the teachers are good and that the school is well managed. Some parents feel that they are not always kept well-informed by the school. The information provided by the school through the prospectus, annual report to parents and via regular newsletters is of a satisfactory nature although the school reports do not include any sections on target areas for development.
46. All parents have been invited to enter into a home/school agreement that is designed to promote improved relationships between the school, parents and children. The bi-lingual assistants have been very proactive in helping to develop this home/school relationship. The school is welcoming and the Headteacher is proactive in his endeavours to further develop cultural ties between the school and the Bangladeshi community. There is also a satisfactory level of additional support provided to the parents of those pupils with Special Educational Needs and the provision is particularly good in the assistance provided by the bi-lingual support staff. This support also extends to occasional home visits.
47. The school's links with parents are satisfactory and developing. They provide a good contribution to the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher, well supported by the deputy, provides the school with good leadership and has a

clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The effectiveness of his leadership is reduced due to the lack of an effective Governing Body. There are a small number of hard working governors but committees have not been operating effectively and during the last 12 months the Governing Body has not been quorate. The effect on the headteacher has been reduced opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning and enabling other staff to undertake such duties. The senior staff have put considerable effort into developing a greater awareness of the pupils' cultural backgrounds and the school has been very successful in reflecting the school's aims in its work.

49. At the time of the last inspection the key issue was to raise standards in English, mathematics and science and this has been the main focus of the headteacher. Although still below the average for similar schools, standards have risen in line with the national trend. The staff are hardworking and determined to see standards raised further. The issues identified at the last inspection concerned with raising standards in music, history and geography have not been addressed effectively.
50. The management of special education needs is good. A temporary co-ordinator has taken on responsibility during the absence of the permanent co-ordinator. The pupils are identified early and they are provided with an appropriate level of support. Many parents are reluctant to attend meetings at school and the co-ordinator, and bilingual staff keep them up to date through home visits. The recommendations of the Code of Practice are fully implemented.
51. All pupils have English as an additional language and the school is generally effective in meeting their needs. There are difficulties in recruiting teaching staff, particularly those with expertise or a willingness to teach pupils who are learning English. The school has chosen to employ additional bilingual or learning support assistants to compensate and this has been effective.
52. A number of the co-ordinators have recently taken on subject responsibility. Whilst co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science are in post and working effectively, other subject co-ordinators are less effective. These co-ordinators are not fully aware of what is being taught in their subjects, particularly key skills. As a consequence, teachers are not always building effectively on what has been previously taught. There is also a lack of awareness of how key literacy skills can be developed through subjects such as history and geography. There needs to be a more systematic approach to co-ordinating and monitoring what is being taught in order to raise standards further.
53. The school is conscious of the need to have effective systems in place to help monitor and track the pupils' progress. These have been established since the previous inspection. However, the school needs to explore ways of using computer technology to reduce the time taken to produce this information.
54. The school ensures that its financial planning is geared to the educational priorities outlined in the School Development Plan. Staffing and the use of support staff is a key element of the school's financial planning. The impact of this planning can readily be seen in the classroom where the provision of bi-lingual support, particularly at the lower end of the school, is a major priority. Linked to financial planning, the school also has satisfactory procedures in place to ensure that the principles of best value are applied to all significant purchases. The school has implemented the main recommendations of the latest auditor's report.

55. The provision of teaching and support staff matches the requirements of the curriculum. The school accommodation is unsatisfactory for effective delivery of the curriculum. The range and use of resources is satisfactory.
56. The school staff work effectively as a team and they are well supported by a wide range of classroom assistants, some of whom are also able to provide additional bi-lingual support. This provision in particular is very strong and is well utilised for both educational and welfare purposes. The induction arrangements for new staff are good.
57. Some of the classrooms are too small for the number of the pupils being taught and storage space for resources is very much at a premium. The nursery is a good example of the unsatisfactory provision as there is no suitable outdoor learning area available. The provision for outdoor sport is also unsatisfactory for Key Stage 1 and 2 and during the inspection one whole week's external provision was cancelled due to the weather. On the positive side, the school has a separate dining room but unfortunately, the adjacent school hall is too small to hold all children for a whole school assembly. Teaching resources are satisfactory overall.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. The governors, headteacher and staff should now:
 1. Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by;
 - improving the quality of teaching to the level of the best;
 - ensuring all teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve;
 - improving the quality of the teachers' marking to the level of the best so that the pupils are clear about what they have to do to improve;
 - reduce the reliance on mundane worksheets;
 - providing more opportunities for the pupils to develop their literacy skills in subjects such as history and geography.

(paragraphs 1 – 4, 14 – 16, 21, 73 - 99)

2. Raise standards in information and communication technology by:

ensuring all teachers complete the training for the subject;
ensuring planning identifies opportunities for using computers in all subjects;
ensuring there is an adequate range of software to support the work.
(paragraphs 5, 17, 19, 116 - 120)

3. Develop the role of the co-ordinators by:

providing training so that they understand what their role in relation to raising standards;
providing training that will help them to monitor teaching and learning and provide constructive feedback to staff.
(paragraph 52)

4. Improve the effectiveness of the Governing Body by:

ensuring there are sufficient governors;
enabling governors to undergo training to better understand their role.
(paragraph 48)

5. improve the pupils' attendance rates by:

pursuing the initiatives already instigated.
(paragraph 11)

The governors, headteacher and staff should also consider the following issues in compiling the action plan:

Exploring ways in which the parents can have a greater impact on the work of the school;
(paragraphs 44 – 47)

Looking at improving the outdoor learning facilities for the children in the Foundation Stage;
(paragraphs 13, 57, 69)

Improving the quality of music provision and teaching.
(paragraphs 6, 19, 33, 49, 121 – 125)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 68 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 42 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 3 | 11 | 32 | 19 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 5 | 16 | 47 | 28 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 29.5 | 306 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 0 | 153 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 1 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 4 | 110 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 335.5 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 2 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 4 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 8.3 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.1 |
| 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 (Year 2)

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2000 | 20 | 24 | 44 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 12 | 10 | 16 |
| | Girls | 20 | 19 | 20 |
| | Total | 32 | 29 | 36 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 73 (67) | 66 (72) | 82 (70) |
| | National | 83 (82) | 84 (83) | 90 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 10 | 14 | 12 |
| | Girls | 21 | 20 | 17 |
| | Total | 31 | 34 | 29 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 70 (72) | 77 (70) | 66 (43) |
| | 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 (Year 6)

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2000 | 14 | 23 | 37 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 3 | 6 | 6 |
| | Girls | 12 | 13 | 17 |
| | Total | 15 | 19 | 23 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 41 (58) | 51 (40) | 62 (51) |
| | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69) | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 3 | 6 | 6 |
| | Girls | 10 | 10 | 11 |
| | Total | 13 | 16 | 17 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 35 (42) | 43 (47) | 46 (40) |
| | 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 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 2 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 264 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 0 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 | 0 |
| Indian | 0 | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 1 | 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 – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 16 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 21.1 |
| Average class size | 30 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 6.9 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 190 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery0

| | |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 30 |
| Total number of education support staff | 2.5 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 80 |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 10 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 2000/2001 |
|----------------|-----------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 785,113 |
| Total expenditure | 792,768 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,325 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 52,516 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 44,861 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 5 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 3 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 2 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 2 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 175 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 68 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 84 | 15 | 1 | | |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 60 | 38 | 1 | | |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 68 | 26 | 1 | | 4 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 46 | 35 | 16 | | 3 |
| The teaching is good. | 63 | 37 | | | |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 51 | 40 | 3 | | 6 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 67 | 24 | 3 | | 6 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 76 | 16 | 4 | | 3 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 59 | 28 | 6 | 1 | 6 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 63 | 26 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 60 | 29 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 61 | 19 | 4 | 3 | 12 |

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by parents.

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

59. At the time of the last inspection the provision for the children in the nursery and the reception classes was good. This good provision has been maintained. The school has worked closely with other schools and the Local Education Authority to develop a comprehensive curriculum to meet the requirements of the areas of learning for children younger than six. The teachers are sensitive to the particular needs of the children in St. Hilda's school, the majority of whom have little or no English when they join the nursery. The teaching is almost always good and often very good. All the adults work together very well and know exactly what to do. They make notes about the children's attitudes and achievements that are used to decide what each child needs to do next and what support is needed. Children have good bilingual support to help them to understand and use English.
60. Many children enter the nursery class with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. The good provision enables the children to settle into school quickly. They make very good progress in their acquisition of English and good progress in all other areas of learning but by the time they start Year 1 many children do not achieve the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, although children's achievements in these areas are still below other children nationally, their progress is significant as they are working in English, a language they rarely use outside school. In their physical, creative and personal social and emotional development, the children's achievements are similar to others of the same age.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Many children have a very limited experience of other children or adults outside their family units when they join the nursery. The adults in the nursery gently encourage the children to join in the activities at their own pace. Even the youngest children work and play well together as soon as they feel secure. Some sustain concentration for long periods, especially when playing together in the home corner or when building towers with bricks. Almost all of the children enjoy working together. In the reception classes, the children's attitude to their activities is very good. They are eager to learn and to join in class discussions. Tasks are completed diligently and children are proud of their achievements. They are confident and willingly express excitement and delight when, for example, opening shiny boxes to find the 'treasures' inside, in a mathematics lesson.
62. Although the teachers are mindful of the cultural traditions for boys and girls, they ensure that all activities are open to everyone. As a result, both boys and girls answer questions and join in all activities. In the nursery, for example, the teacher ensures that the girls have the opportunity to use the tricycles and the climbing frame. The respect that the adults show towards each other and to the children in their classes provides a good role model for the children. As they mature, the children become more sensitive to each other's needs. The children with special

educational needs in the reception classes, some of whom have difficulties behaving appropriately, have very good support. This enables them to work alongside their classmates while establishing the principles of acceptable behaviour.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Almost all children join the nursery with little or no English. After four weeks, almost all understand simple instructions and are repeating words such as colour names and everyday objects. They are assisted by the bilingual assistant who translates into Sylheti where necessary. By the time the children enter the reception class, almost all are able to communicate using simple English and to understand everyday language. As soon as they are able, the children respond to stories and rhymes and listen attentively. This is very good progress as the children communicate in Sylheti at home and amongst themselves. Teachers use language that is appropriate to the level of understanding of the children, occasionally using Sylheti words. The older children recognise different sounds in words and the most able are beginning to read simple words. Children are constantly exposed to writing in school and most know that writing conveys meaning. The teachers link the language work to other aspects of the curriculum. For example, when learning how to recognise the sounds that make up simple three-letter words, children make hats, developing skills in cutting and gluing. Even the least able children enjoy looking at picture books and point to 'Biff' and 'Mum' in the school reading books although they do not understand that it is the print on the page that is read, not the pictures.
64. The children are beginning to learn how to use their pencils accurately in the nursery. One or two already trace over shapes with some accuracy. The most able children in the reception classes recognise and write most letters and their own names and some have a good attempt at writing labels and captions. Most children recognise a few letters while the least able trace over letters that begin familiar words. Everyone has his or her own writing target based on the teachers' detailed analysis of each child's achievements. In the nursery there are activities involving drawing and 'writing' every morning and afternoon. There are language and literacy lessons every day in the reception classes but the children rarely write independently as part of their play. Children with special educational needs are supported well and the teachers ensure that the stories are of interest to both boys and girls.

Mathematical development

65. The activities available in the nursery class always include several tasks that encourage the development of mathematical understanding. For example, the children sorted teddies by colour and size, used shape jigsaws and played with different sized containers in the water and sand. The English words for colours and size were taught consistently and children were encouraged to repeat them. Children built tall towers and compared the size speaking Sylheti, although few girls joined in this activity. Every day an adult works with small groups of children to develop some aspect of the mathematics curriculum. They already have a good knowledge of individual's achievements and encourage the children to learn new skills.
66. In some lessons in the reception classes the class has two teachers and the more able or less able children work together. In some of these lessons the teaching was

very good. The teachers work together very well, designing challenging activities for each group, making them fun. The children are encouraged to use their initiative and the resources provided encourage them to extend their skills. For example, the more able children were asked to find ten different objects to fit into the boxes they were given. These boxes were different sizes so the children had to select objects that fit. Questions like 'How many more do you need?' ensured that even the cleverest children had to work hard. Children with special needs and the least able children benefit from the lower level of challenge and the smaller numbers while working with the other teacher and the special needs assistant. The achievements of all abilities are shared at the end of the lessons, promoting self-esteem. Boys and girls are eager to answer questions and the teachers make sure that all participate. In all lessons, all adults make sure that mathematical vocabulary is understood and practised.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Almost all children enter the nursery with little first hand knowledge of the world beyond their own families. The teacher understands this and makes sure that there is a range of experiences that introduce new ideas that do not overwhelm the children. A home corner is available and used avidly by both boys and girls. Sand and water, paint and play-dough are available to give the children experiences of different materials.
68. By the time they are in the reception classes, the children name different parts of the face and body and understand that exercise makes their heart beat faster. By the end of the year the children plan a route from home to school and make visits to, for example, the dentist. They have a good understanding of people who help them in the community and are visited by members of the police force. Children are aware of time passing and understand the relationships between themselves, their parents and grandparents. The computer in the nursery is readily available and children are learning how to control the mouse. In the reception classes the children use the computer suite, using the mouse to draw pictures and select colours. The more able children use the keyboard to type simple sentences. Access to the computers is very new and the children still have poor control over the mouse. Children find it difficult to talk about their experiences and have a limited understanding of their own environment. They are taught how to use tools safely but the nursery and the reception children do not yet select the most appropriate tools for their tasks. At all times, individual children are supported well and the children with special needs have physical support and plenty of encouragement to help them succeed.

Physical development

69. The children in the nursery have regular access to large wheeled toys and pedal and control these well. They use seesaws and understand that these take two children of similar weight to work well. However, the playground can only be accessed by climbing down steep steps and there is no permanent enclosed area for outdoor learning. This limits the equipment that can be used, as it has to be packed away after every session. A climbing frame in the classroom helps to compensate for this. Although many of the children have few opportunities to use parks and playgrounds before they join the nursery, by the time they are in the reception class they use large apparatus well, balancing, jumping and landing safely. They use space well showing awareness of others.

70. In the nursery the children are taught how to hold writing tools, cut out and have many opportunities to manipulate small objects. Teachers monitor children's progress carefully, noting, for example, trends towards right or left-handedness, making sure each child uses appropriate tools. A year later all but the least able children are confident and capable when cutting or mark making. Almost all change for physical education lessons unaided although there are still a few shoes on the wrong feet when dressing again. Boys and girls are equally adept in their physical education lessons and the classroom.

Creative development

71. Although the children have a very limited English vocabulary when they join the nursery, the teacher works extremely hard to ensure that they enjoy and respond to the stories they hear. She uses simple language full of words describing feelings. In one story session she used finger puppets to emphasise the content. The children instantly responded although the story had to be translated by the bilingual assistant. In the reception classes, simple counting songs often begin mathematics lessons.
72. The nursery children have opportunities to use paints or other media every day and the children take great pride in their creations, but do not mix their own colours. They make collages of one colour with feathers, powder, tissue and other materials to reinforce the colour names and draw members of their families and characters from stories. In the reception class children make hats and faces and are beginning to use the 'Paintbrush' on the computer with which to draw. In the home corner the nursery children play very creatively, acting out the role of family members. The children are very good at this, conversing in Sylheti and often interacting as family groups. They dress up, push the pram around the room and care for the 'baby'. Both boys and girls join in this activity, but the girls are more reluctant to drive the trucks around the room. The adults encourage the less confident children to participate with praise and by playing alongside them.

ENGLISH

73. The test results for 2000 at the end of Key Stage 2 were very low in English and were well below average compared to similar schools. Standards in the tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below the national average in reading and writing and below that found in similar schools. Provisional test results for 2001 are similar to the previous year at Key Stage 2 although there is a slight improvement in writing and Key Stage 1. Taken over recent years, the results of the national assessments show a steady improvement, in line with the improvement found nationally, although the results for 2000 were lower than the previous year. Inspection findings from the observation of lessons, the scrutiny of work and from hearing the pupils read, show that attainment at the end of both key stages is below average. Standards have improved since the last inspection in Key Stage 1 and they have been maintained in Key Stage 2. The pupils enter the school with very limited skills in English and, overall, they make good progress in all aspects of the subject.
74. Standards in speaking and listening are below average at the end of both key stages. Across the school, both boys and girls make good progress in listening to their teachers and to each other. They listen well to questions and explanations and respond well to the texts they share in whole class sessions in the literacy hour. Most of the pupils are eager to contribute to these discussions, although their

answers and comments are often limited to single words or short phrases. Better attainment is seen when the teacher encourages the pupils to expand on their answers, for example by asking supplementary questions. Towards the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils are acquiring a wider vocabulary to express their opinions and describe their enjoyment of particular stories. In Key Stage 2, this confidence continues to increase. The pupils learn rhymes and poems by heart and enjoy reciting them with their teachers. They think carefully when they answer questions and they respond particularly well to the consistently good teaching towards the end of the key stage. These older pupils are beginning to explain and justify their answers and opinions. A good feature of some of the lessons is the creation of glossaries containing words that are unfamiliar to the pupils. This is helping to extend the pupils' vocabulary and their understanding. Across the school and in other subjects, opportunities are given for the pupils to discuss their work in small groups, often supported by teaching assistants, and this contributes to the good progress made. Good use is made of the bilingual staff to ensure that all pupils are able to contribute to lessons.

75. By the end of both key stages, attainment in reading is below average. The school's successful implementation of the Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact upon standards and the pupils are making good progress in learning to read. They are introduced to a structured reading programme, supported by the systematic teaching of phonic skills. The younger pupils develop a range of skills to enable them to sound out unfamiliar words or recognise some common words by sight. By the end of Key Stage 1, some of them can understand and respond to books by retelling the stories and describing the characters and events. They have a satisfactory understanding of what they have read. By the end of Key Stage 2, the higher attaining pupils read fluently and expressively and they are independent and enthusiastic readers. They realise when they have made a mistake and know how to correct it. Most of the pupils in Key Stage 2 know how to use a dictionary and they have access to a thesaurus. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and the older pupils use an index and contents confidently to help them find information. Many of the pupils read at home and, where this is a regular feature, this contributes to the good progress that they make.
76. Standards in writing are below average at the end of both key stages. By the age of seven, some pupils can sequence events in a story and develop their ideas into a sequence of sentences. They write for some different purposes, for example, personal writing about feelings and a diary of a day. The higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to use capital letters and full stops to mark their sentences. In Key Stage 2, the pupils experience a wider range of writing for different purposes and they begin to use different styles to suit the purpose. By the end of the key stage, the pupils learn about the difference between fact and opinion and descriptive and persuasive writing. Many are able to recount the details of what they have read, for example in a book review, and they develop their knowledge and understanding of poems. Across the school, there are too few opportunities to consolidate and extend the pupils' skills through writing in other subjects.
77. By the end of Key Stage 1, many of the pupils write their letters with consistent size and spacing and the higher attaining pupils are able to join their writing. They are becoming aware of the significance of punctuation and some use it carefully. They are beginning to pay attention to the spelling of common words and some more able pupils can spell words that are more complex. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils develop a style of handwriting that is neat and legible and some join their

handwriting consistently. The pupils are becoming increasingly more familiar with the rules, conventions and irregularities of spelling. The higher attaining pupils produce work that is neatly presented with accurate spelling and punctuation.

78. The pupils with special educational needs attain standards that reflect their individual targets. They are well supported, have full access to the curriculum and make good progress in all aspects of English.
79. The quality of teaching is good overall. However, within this positive situation, the teaching varies from excellent to unsatisfactory. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented successfully and the teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They manage the pupils very well in both key stages and, as a result, lessons are purposeful, have a brisk pace and enable the pupils to make good progress. The teachers expect the pupils to behave well and to concentrate on their work. They provide good opportunities to develop the pupils' speaking and listening skills and receive their suggestions and ideas sensitively. This encouraging approach helps to foster the pupils' confidence. Where the teaching is good, particularly in Key Stage 1 and upper Key Stage 2, the planning is very clear about what the pupils are expected to learn. These objectives are shared with the pupils and there is a consistent focus on learning throughout the lesson. As a result, the pupils progress at a faster rate in these areas of the school. In one excellent lesson seen at the end of Key Stage 2, the teacher had very high expectations of what the pupils might achieve, set challenging tasks and asked probing questions to extend their understanding. The pupils were highly motivated; there was a strong sense of enjoyment in the lesson and most of them made excellent progress. Teaching is less successful where there is insufficient focus on what the pupils are learning and where opportunities to clarify or extend their understanding are missed.
80. Teachers mark the pupils' work regularly, offering praise and encouragement. Where the marking includes suggestions of how the work might be improved, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, this results in the pupils making good progress towards their targets. The teachers make sound use of their daily assessments to plan future work for all levels of attainment. They know the pupils well and work hard to counter the effect of extended periods of absence taken by many pupils. Assessment is used to organise the pupils into groups of similar ability for 'extended English', although it is too early to judge the impact of these groups on the pupils' attainment. A system of specific target setting to raise the attainment of individual pupils in writing, is giving teachers a clear focus on what needs to be improved. These targets are readily accessible to the pupils. This is good although, again, it is too early to judge its success.
81. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good in both key stages and, at times, they are very good and excellent in the older classes in Key Stage 2. The pupils enjoy their English lessons. They are very well behaved, concentrate on their work and are keen to do their best. They are attentive during discussions, and listen respectfully to the ideas and opinions of other pupils. They settle quickly to their tasks and are enthusiastic about their work.
82. The English co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has built upon the introduction of the Literacy Strategy and has identified suitable priorities for development. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan regularly in year group teams. Some opportunities have

been provided for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school, although this is not a regular feature, and teachers' planning is monitored too infrequently. At present, there is too little time available to carry this aspect of the duties. The school's resources are satisfactory, with an adequate collection of reading and non-fiction books. The opportunity to use information technology to develop the pupils' literacy skills has improved with the introduction of the new computer suite. Resources to support the Literacy Hour are readily available and well used.

MATHEMATICS

83. The 2000 National Curriculum test results were well below average at the age of seven and eleven. When compared with similar schools, standards were average at age seven and below average at the age of eleven. The provisional test results for 2001 show standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 but there has been a slight drop at Key Stage 2. This was due in part to staffing problems which have now been resolved. Whilst standards are improving, inspection evidence shows that standards are still below average at the end of both key stages.
84. Generally, the pupils make good progress throughout the school but it is more variable in Key Stage 2, with consistently better progress made in Years 5 and 6. The average and higher attaining pupils need more challenging activities in Years 3 and 4. The children enter the school with low levels of mathematical skills and the good progress they make is linked to their improved understanding of English.
85. The younger pupils in Key Stage 1 can order numbers up to ten and have a satisfactory recall of addition and subtraction facts with these numbers. Few pupils have knowledge up to 100. By the end of the key stage, the pupils have a good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes but their ability to explain characteristics of three-dimensional shapes is limited due to their restricted vocabulary. They understand halves and quarters and can solve simple problems when the task is explained carefully. The higher attaining pupils spot patterns when adding numbers such as $80 + 20$ and $90 + 10$ and can accurately subtract one and two digit numbers from a hundred.
86. In Key Stage 2, the younger pupils carry out investigations using two digit numbers and the higher attaining pupils understand that division is the opposite of multiplication. However, they need much encouragement in applying their mathematical knowledge to problems as they lack confidence. By the time they are eleven, the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of their multiplication tables and can divide and multiply numbers by 10 and 100. They have a satisfactory knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes but their understanding of measuring using standard measures is weak. Few pupils have the opportunity to improve their understanding of what is taught in lessons outside of school and consequently their progress in this area is slow. Similarly with money, the pupils rarely get the opportunity to carry out purchases, thus inhibiting the rate of progress made by the pupils.
87. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory but was good overall. At the time of the last inspection much of the teaching at the end of Key Stage 2, was found to lack challenge. This situation has been rectified and lessons were well matched to the needs of the pupils. The system

of setting the pupils according to their prior attainment is well established and enables the pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. For example, in an excellent Year 5/6 lesson, the teacher's excellent organisation and subject knowledge and high expectations, helped to create an atmosphere in which the pupils were expected to achieve well. The pupils responded well to these expectations and made very good progress in their understanding of positive and negative numbers and in their ability to translate shapes into four quadrants and recording the co-ordinates. The setting procedures and the quality of teaching generally ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special education needs, make the progress of which they are capable. On a small number of occasions however, teachers in lower Key Stage 2 do not demand sufficiently high enough standards from the pupils and this results in underachievement. The use of mundane or poorly presented worksheets and mediocre marking causes the pupils to produce work that is well below that standard of which they are capable. The school generally utilises effectively the teachers employed for supporting pupils with English as an additional language. Occasionally, the strategy of using two teachers to lead different groups of pupils within the same classroom is counter-productive due to the noise level and lack of expertise.

88. The pupils enjoy mathematics and throughout the school they show good attitudes towards the subject. They are supportive of one another and wherever possible help their peers. This is particularly noticeable when those pupils with a stronger understanding of English language skills interpret what the teacher is saying for those who are having difficulties.
89. Sufficient time is devoted to the teaching of mathematics and there is a good emphasis on the development of numeracy skills. The teachers are all familiar with and secure with the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. The school is aware of aspects of the pupils' cultural background that inhibits their acquisition of mathematical skills, for example opportunities to use metric measures and money. Additional shape, space and measuring activities are introduced into the curriculum to compensate for this problem.
90. The mathematics co-ordinator provides good leadership. She has a clear understanding of how the pupils learn and of the particular difficulties faced by large numbers of pupils who have little understanding of English when they enter the school. There are good assessment procedures in place that enable the school to keep track of the progress made by individual pupils. Where appropriate, individual education plans are in place for those pupils with special education needs and the school provides an adequate level of support. The co-ordinator has monitored planning and the teaching and learning throughout the school. However, there have been a number of staff changes and it is important that this monitoring continues on a regular basis, particularly of short-term planning, to ensure that where teaching and learning is not as good, it is improved. Good use is being made of New Opportunities Funding to provide additional mathematical activities, including after school and homework sessions as part of a project with the feeder secondary school. The school is also receiving additional support from the Local Education Authority and this is being used effectively to give more intensive numeracy training to some members of staff. Information and communication technology is only just beginning to have an impact on the pupils' numeracy work and the school has begun to make good use of its new computer suite to help improve this aspect of the curriculum.

91. At the time of the last inspection, the teaching and learning of older pupils in Key Stage 2 was a concern. The successful implementation of the numeracy strategy and improved teaching has improved this situation. The pupils get a good start in the Nursery, Reception and Key Stage 1 and there is a need to build on this start in the lower Key Stage 2 classes.

SCIENCE

92. Attainment at the end of both key stages is below that expected nationally. The results of the national at age seven in 2000 show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment (Level 2 or above) was well below average. The percentage reaching the higher level was also well below average. The results show that the school is performing well below most schools, and well below the average of similar schools.
93. The provisional results of the statutory assessments in the summer term of 2001 show an improvement on previous years. Taken over the last four years, although the pupil's performance is still below average, since the previous inspection there has been a steady improvement at both key stages. Inspection evidence shows that the school is continuing to improve.
94. During observed lessons, there was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls and the teachers showed high awareness of the need to offer equal opportunities to all pupils as they learn.
95. The pupils have a range of opportunities to experiment, think for themselves, and predict what might happen in order to form their own conclusions. This good provision is beginning to have a marked impact on the pupils' learning at both key stages. It is enabling them to understand how to transfer their knowledge as they solve problems in every day situations. For example, when studying their senses, Year 2 begin by walking in the environment to observe, touch, listen and smell. In the following weeks in class, they experiment and 'test' their original ideas and findings in order to arrive at a firm conclusion. These ideas are extended in Key Stage 2 as Year 6 find out about how their bodies work and what happens to their hearts during exercise. The pupils form theories based on known facts. They set about checking their theories having discussed how to ensure the tests are fair.
96. Teaching is good throughout the school and this enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when teaching was mainly satisfactory. There are high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and teachers show secure subject knowledge, prepare their lessons thoroughly and stress the importance of learning through structured practical tasks. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are offered many opportunities to be involved in practical activities to develop their scientific knowledge as they find out more about themselves and the world around them. Teachers make sure the pupils discuss what they do as they learn how to handle scientific equipment carefully and safely. Strong emphasis is given to teaching the pupils the basic skills to carry out an investigation. As a result, they show a great deal of curiosity and enjoyment when involved in practical work and are keen to answer questions. This helps them begin to form scientific ideas about aspects of topics, such as when comparing growth and the life cycles of plants and animals. First hand experience of growing seeds and plants leads to a better understanding of what animals and human beings need in order to grow

successfully and keep healthy. The higher attaining pupils identifying water as a common requirement for plants, animals and human beings to live. 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 their skills of being able to talk about their work in a suitable manner. Many pupils also have difficulty in recording their findings in writing. Consequently, by the time they are seven, although most pupils show appropriate skills in carrying out a simple fair test, many are limited in their ability to communicate using correct scientific terminology or in recording their findings in appropriate ways.

97. Within classes, attention is paid to the individual learning needs of the pupils. This often includes aid with English language skills or bilingual support. Lower-attaining pupils and those who have special needs are well supported. This enables them to participate fully in activities and share in discussions. Throughout both key stages, a particular strength is the pupils' attitude to their work. The high level of co-operation that exists and the way they value and support each other as they participate in collaborative group tasks impacts significantly on their learning potential.
98. In Key Stage 2 the teachers encourage responsible and independent study and ensure that those with higher abilities benefit from opportunities to devise their own ways of experimenting and investigation. The pupils respond enthusiastically to their work and share equipment well. Their scientific knowledge develops quickly because of this. The pupils of all abilities benefit from good questioning to explore and develop their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas. In Years 3 and 4 sensitive questioning helps lower attaining pupils gain a raised awareness of the types of food needed to make up a healthy diet. However, average and higher attaining pupils need to be presented with more challenging work. In Years 5 and 6, the teachers provide very good opportunities for the pupils to work together on well-structured practical activities. This enables them to make good progress in their investigative skills as they decide which type of exercise makes the heart speed up the most. They are encouraged to make evaluations and form conclusions based on what they have learnt previously. Older pupils are keen to make notes of what they have found out, but some pupils still find recording skills difficult to master. Sometimes, insufficient visual writing aids and prompts are offered to these pupils when they write up their findings. This hampers their progress over time as they have few good written examples to help them revise previous study topics. Throughout the school there is some evidence of the pupils using information communication technology to enhance their work. This aspect of the curriculum is already recognised as an area for development.
99. The new co-ordinator has a clear vision for the further development of this subject. His curriculum audit has given a clear view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. A plan for action to further improve provision and move the subject forward is in place. The effective additional bilingual language intervention and support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress. Assessment procedures are fully in place and target setting for groups and individual pupils is developing well.

ART AND DESIGN

100. Standards in art and design are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The work that the pupils produce in lessons and on display around the school indicates that they make good progress. This good progress owes much to the good quality teaching and the wide range of techniques to which the pupils are

introduced. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. The teaching assistants ensure that all pupils are included in the activities. There is a good balance between the development of specific skills and the acquisition of knowledge and appreciation of the work of artists. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when the pupils were judged to making satisfactory progress.

101. The pupils in Key Stage 1 work with a range of media, including pencils, paint, pastels and collage. They develop their observational skills by drawing fruits and vegetables and are encouraged to improve their work, for example, by showing more detail and contrast in the colours they use. They study the work of L. S. Lowry and this inspires them to recreate the style using oil pastels. The pupils use their skills to provide illustrations and models for their work in other subjects, for example when making pipe cleaner skeletons for their work on 'the body'. They make good progress, successfully build on their skills and improve their pencil control and representational drawing. Planning for the subject shows that there are satisfactory opportunities to work with three-dimensional materials, including junk modelling and clay.
102. In Key Stage 2 the pupils show an increasing attention to detail and experience a range of media. Early in the key stage, the pupils produce good quality collages, using seeds in the style of Arcimboldo. They observe faces to create portraits and paint pictures and they make observational drawings to support their topic on the Victorians. In one lesson seen, the pupils in Year 3 and 4 used well-developed observational skills to sketch a skull, using pastels to show light and shade and they made wire and foil models of a human figure. Older pupils in the key stage show a good understanding of facial proportions and they use their knowledge to produce portraits in the style of artists including Picasso. These pupils are developing a sound understanding of the varying styles of the artists they study and some produce work of a high quality. Children were observed using an art package on a computer to help extend their understanding in the subject.
103. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well organised and a good range of resources is made readily available. The teachers' secure subject knowledge ensures that the planning focuses on what is to be learned and they give good guidance on how the work might be improved during lessons. This was seen to good effect in one good lesson in a Year 5/6 class. Here, the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject and clear focus on improving skills led to a very brisk pace and a fast rate of learning. Good opportunities are taken to develop the pupils' skills of speaking and listening during the many discussions that take place. Across the school, relationships are good and this makes a positive contribution to the quality of learning. The teachers work hard to celebrate the pupils' achievements by displaying their work in classrooms and corridors.
104. The pupils are enthusiastic about art and design and take pride in their finished product. They behave well, listen attentively and concentrate on their tasks. They are respectful of each other's efforts and handle materials and equipment safely and sensibly. The subject co-ordinator has developed a curriculum that links art and design to a two year cycle of topics to support teachers' planning and there is clear guidance on the techniques to be learned as the pupils move through the school. There are no opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning across the school. The subject is well resourced.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. Standards attained at the end of both key stages are in line with those expected nationally. This is an improvement at Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection. Tasks are now carefully linked to the school's topic planning and display the two main components of the subject, designing and making.
106. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have used a wide range of materials including construction kits, recycled materials, textiles and food technology. The older pupils in both key stages, including higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, progress well in their learning because the chosen activities match their abilities and offer challenges. One particularly good feature of the work is the pupils' ability to design, make and, where necessary, produce ongoing adjustments in order to either match the original design or improve the quality. For example, when Key Stage 1 made finger puppets, following given instructions, then adapted the original design to accommodate their own requirements. Similarly, when Year 5 pupils made a World War 2 figure, their original design was adapted to fit the materials used and to enable the finished product to be pleasing to the eye.
107. In both key stages, the pupils show they have gained a good understanding of the purpose of a design as they discuss their models made from different materials. The younger pupils want to achieve a 'whole' end product and know the importance of moulding from a complete piece of clay, or layering sufficiently when using papier-mâché as they make models of bears. Older pupils transfer their knowledge by identifying the need to apply a specific technique in order to achieve the required end product, as when designing masks, making models, or preparing different types of packages. They understand the importance of having an attractive finish, for example, when completing their clay structures, coil pots or Tudor houses. They are encouraged to compare their ideas and talk confidently about how their original design was modified and adjusted in order to improve it.
108. The pupils of all abilities across school have the opportunity to work collaboratively. They show extremely positive attitudes towards this subject, working with concentration and care. They are encouraged to think for themselves. In Key stage 2, they have plenty of opportunity to work independently, clarifying misconceptions and talking about how to improve their designs. They learn from the experience and expertise of the oldest pupils, share in the more complex design ideas of the higher attaining pupils and aid those with special educational needs to produce the desired end product.
109. This subject is included most successfully in aspects of the art, science and humanities curriculum. For example, when older Key Stage 1 pupils produce a simple design and talk about their intentions when making a range of jointed models to experiment with forms of movement. This cross-curricular idea is extended in Key Stage 2 as older pupils construct a jointed arm to investigate how muscles work.
110. The new co-ordinator is developing and organising curriculum changes competently in order to provide the teachers with a scheme to fit the particular needs of the pupils. This is already having an extremely positive impact on this subject area and improving the attainment and progress that the pupils make.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

111. Four history lessons and a geography lesson were observed during the inspection. There was no evidence of the pupils' work before this term available but discussion with the pupils in Year 6 and the evidence from the lesson observations indicates that the pupils' attainment in both subjects is below that normally expected. This reflects the findings at the time of the last inspection for history. There was not enough geography for the inspectors to make a judgement about standards last time.
112. The school teaches both subjects through a series of topics. The pupils in Year 6 remember very little geography and their understanding of some geographical skills, for example, map work, environmental issues, climate and geographical features is very limited. They have a good recall of some aspects of the history topics they have covered but are unable to place these events in time. For example, they talked about the Spanish Armada and Elizabeth 1st but did not know if this period was before or after the Victorian era or World War 2. They know how to find out about the past but not that written sources after the event can be unreliable. This is a weakness in the curriculum and planning for each subject. There is no way to make sure that the pupils build on their skills from year to year because there is no overall plan for learning from year to year. Large time lapses between the teaching of each subject means that the pupils forget what they have learnt. This was a weakness at the time of the last inspection that has not been addressed.
113. However, the pupils learn interesting facts in their lessons and make good use of books, photographs, artefacts and some Internet sources to find things out. The history teaching observed during inspection week was at least satisfactory and in half the lessons it was very good. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 are studying World War 2 at present. In one lesson, the teacher donned a headscarf and a 1940's cardigan and brought her weekly rations into school. The pupils were delighted and listened very carefully as she described her life. Next door, the pupils formulated questions to ask a visitor who had been in the war. Some of the questions were quite searching and the pupils showed some understanding of what the blitz must have been like. The teacher skilfully added and clarified facts as the interviews continued, praising individuals, especially those with special needs, for their astute questions. The pupils learnt a great deal in both lessons.
114. In their geography lesson, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 followed up their walk in the local area by looking at maps and identifying features. The pupils found Bangladesh on a world map and used small photographs to pinpoint features in the locality. Their understanding of these features was limited. For example, the pupils had trouble with their own addresses and in identifying a church. They took care over the map they were given and made a good attempt at identifying features and road names. This was a good lesson, with the teacher giving the pupils relevant information to increase their knowledge.
115. Some attention is given to developing literacy in history lessons. The pupils write in the role of characters from the past and give opinions about, for example, why the war started. In general, however, there is little formal planning for the application of literacy and numeracy within either subject. The subject coordinators now need to ensure that the curriculum develops the pupils' historical and geographical skills from year to year and that the subjects are extended through literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. The school has recently improved the provision for information and communication technology. Each class has a computer linked to the Internet and there is a computer suite that can accommodate half a class. The pupils from the reception classes to Year 6 have a weekly lesson in the suite. This has only been operational for four weeks but the pupils are already making good progress in acquiring information and communication technology skills throughout the school. However, there has not been time for the resource to have an impact on the standards. The pupils in Year 2 have below average skills in information and communication technology while in Year 6 standards are well below average.
117. The pupils in both the infants and the juniors are learning how to control the mouse and to use drawing and word-processing programs. Throughout the school the pupils change the colour, size and style of their writing and are learning how to use the keyboard and program options. From Year 1 to Year 6 they are learning how to save their work to floppy disk. They are beginning to combine print and graphics and in Year 5 and 6 are designing a cover for their information and communication technology folders. As half a class at a time works in the computer suite the pupils with special educational needs have good support. In some classes, the pupils of similar abilities work together and in others, the pupils of the same age combine. Even in mixed age and ability groups the small numbers enable the teachers to give support to individuals. The computers are not yet linked together to enable the teachers to instruct the whole group at once and the room is very small. This makes it difficult for the teachers of the older pupils to demonstrate skills.
118. The computers in the classrooms are occasionally used to find information from the Internet or to draw or type. Some of the pupils practise the skills they have learned in the computer suite. There has been limited use of a database in one class but very little information and communication technology has been taught before this term. As a result, the whole school is starting to learn the basic skills together. There is a new scheme of work for the subject that will be used throughout the school, but at present, aspects of the curriculum have not been taught. Although some of the pupils have used a programmable toy there have been very few opportunities for the pupils to control events or to solve problems. They do not store and retrieve data and are not yet conversant with e-mail. There are CD-ROMs in school but their use in other subjects, for example, geography, has been very limited.
119. Although not all teachers have yet had appropriate training to support their information and communication technology teaching, all the lessons observed during the inspection were at least satisfactory. Of the three lessons observed in the infants and juniors, one was good and one was very good. In the very good lesson, the teacher gave very precise instructions to enable the pupils to learn the processes needed for them to complete their work. She then allowed them to apply these skills to a challenging task, supporting and teaching new skills as they were needed. More able pupils (those who have computers at home) produced some good designs. The teacher used these, and other pupils' work, to help the rest of the class extend their skills. Where teaching was less effective, the teacher did not give the pupils sufficient instruction and the pupils had to wait for their teacher to come and help them. In all lessons the pupils enjoyed their work and took great care of the equipment and the smart new chairs.

120. There has been insufficient improvement in the standards in information and communication technology since the last inspection. However, the priorities for the development of the subject are appropriate and there is now the potential for the pupils to make good progress.

MUSIC

121. Standards are below those expected at the end of both key stages. There has been no significant improvement in this subject since the previous inspection. Few music lessons were observed but discussion with the co-ordinator, teachers and pupils indicates that the pupils do not experience the full range of the National Curriculum programmes of study. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 2.
122. In Key Stage 1 the pupils use their voices expressively when singing songs and rhymes. They maintain a good pulse when clapping to accompany songs, although they showed less ability when beating different tempo as they played a range of untuned instruments. Whilst playing percussion instruments, they are beginning to recognise and explore ways in which sounds can be arranged in order to interpret mood and rhythm effectively.
123. The pupils are enthusiastic and have positive attitudes to their singing and music making. They sing competently as a group, listen carefully and respond well to the teacher's guidance or accompaniment. They behave reasonably well in lessons, listening to instructions and sharing instruments responsibly. Increasing confidence is shown as they perform. There are fewer opportunities to evaluate and improve their performance during music-making sessions.
124. The teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory. Because there is no musician on the staff, some teachers lack confidence in their ability to teach the subject. The school does not have a scheme of work to support staff. There is little evidence that younger pupils are able to create and develop musical ideas through their compositions and performances so that these skills can be developed and extended in Key Stage 2. There are few opportunities to use information communication technology to recall, identify and make improvements to sounds using different equipment.
125. The co-ordinator endeavours to provide the pupils with an appreciation of music from different traditions and cultures as they participate in lessons and daily assemblies. Resources are adequate to enhance the skills of composing and performing. Some opportunities arise for the pupils to perform throughout the year. These include whole school performances, class assemblies and participation in a local festival. The celebration of these special times with the local community impacts significantly on the pupils' personal development and positively aids their learning. Overall, however, the provision for music is poor.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. The average standards reported at the time of the school's previous inspection have been maintained in both key stages. At Key Stage 1, the pupils demonstrate ways of curling and stretching using mats and benches. They follow instructions carefully and demonstrate

confidence in moving round the hall by hopping skipping and striding. They do however, lack imagination when performing movements, often relying on imitating their peers. At Key Stage 2, the pupils in Year 5/6 develop their gymnastic skills, producing a range of symmetrical and asymmetrical balances on the floor. The pupils carry out these activities correctly, and a few attempt to improve the quality of their movements. The pupils work successfully with partners to create a balance and they practise and repeat the movements. These skills are developed satisfactorily as the pupils move on to using apparatus. The pupils in Years 3/4 attend swimming lessons and by the time they leave the school at age eleven, most can swim the expected 25 metres.

127. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is at its best, the pupils are challenged to do their best, the pace is rapid and the teacher's enthusiasm motivates the pupils well. The pupils were keen to demonstrate their skills to other pupils. Planning for individual lessons is satisfactory with clear learning objects shared with the pupils. However, there is less evidence that the teachers' planning builds on what has been taught previously. The newly appointed co-ordinator, has only a limited awareness of what is taking place in physical education throughout the school and recognises the importance of monitoring planning to ensure the subject is taught systematically and effectively.
128. A good range of out of school activities has been introduced and these have a positive impact on the progress made by the pupils. Their confidence is developed through participation in basketball, football, cricket and hockey.
129. The hall is adequate in size and there is a satisfactory range of equipment. Outside, there is a satisfactory sized hard play area, although this is in urgent need of resurfacing. The surface has broken up in a number of places and, after heavy rain, water stands for long periods due to inadequate drainage. The pupils are taken by coach one afternoon per week to use a playing field for games. This does mean however that games lessons are dependant on good weather on that particular day. If, has happened during the inspection week, it rains, the session cannot be rearranged and the pupils miss the games for the week.