

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NORDEN COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Rochdale, Lancashire

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 230802

Headteacher: Mrs A Wilkinson

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Raja  
6282

Dates of inspection: 17 – 21 June 2002

Inspection number: 230802

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 category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Shawfield Lane  
Norden  
Rochdale  
Lancashire

Postcode: OL12 7RQ

Telephone number: 01706 641013

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M O'Hare

Date of previous inspection: 1 December 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6282	Mrs P Raja	Registered inspector	Art and design Religious education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
11072	Ms S Elomari	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22644	Mrs B Hill	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Foundation Stage curriculum Special educational needs	
20007	Mr T Neat	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20707	Mr D Brettell	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
21816	Mrs B Thomas	Team inspector	English Geography History	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Norden Community Primary School is bigger than the average primary school. It is situated in a village on the outskirts of Rochdale. It draws mainly from the village community, large newly-built private estates and increasingly from a wider catchment area that includes families from diverse ethnic backgrounds. There are 406 pupils between four and eleven on roll with 212 boys and 194 girls. A further 44 children attend the Nursery part-time, which opened in September 2001. Nearly all the children on entry to the school have attended Nursery or had some pre-school experience. A very small percentage of pupils are entitled to free meals. Approximately ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below the national average of 23 per cent. Pupils with special educational needs generally have moderate learning difficulties, and three pupils have a statement of need. Most pupils are from white United Kingdom backgrounds. Thirty-six pupils come from Pakistani background, three from Chinese and one from Bangladeshi background who speak English in addition to their home language. A few of these pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Some families are transient and some pupils move to private education, 21 pupils joined the school at other than the usual time of admission during the last school year, while 20 left. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is above nationally expected levels. The school has experienced a high number of staff changes in the past two years. However, the staffing situation is now stable.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school provides a sound education overall. It is effective in providing for pupils' personal, social and moral development. The aims and values of the school are demonstrated in practice by the very good relationships between staff and pupils. Most pupils have very good attitudes and are eager to learn. Most of the teaching is good, with some incidence of excellent teaching and a significant percentage of very good teaching resulting in most pupils learning well. Most pupils by the ages of seven and eleven attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The school teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education but as yet does not have systems in place to ensure an even coverage through the age range. Consequently, the statutory requirement for design and technology are not met in the junior classes. The range and quality of activities provided in English and mathematics is good. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and the key staff. It includes all the pupils in everything it does and has a purposeful and caring environment. This helps the pupils to take advantage of the educational opportunities provided. It manages its resources efficiently and gives satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils are taught well.
- The school has very good systems and methods for developing literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils' attitudes to work and school, their behaviour, and the quality of their relationships with each other and with their teachers are very good.
- It provides very well for pupils' social and moral development.
- The community makes very good contribution to pupils' learning and their personal development.

### **What could be improved**

- Standards in design and technology by the age of eleven.
- Systems for checking pupils' progress.
- The amount of time allocated to all the subjects to ensure provision of a balanced curriculum.
- Procedures for checking how well the school is meeting the needs of all its pupils by tracking their progress across the school.
- Identifying and meeting language development needs of pupils with English as an additional language.

*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. Since then improvement has been satisfactory overall. The school has experienced an unusually high level of staff changes over the past two years, which has impeded the rate of progress in addressing some of the issues raised in the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is much better than at the time of the last inspection, with a few lessons being excellent and higher incidence of very good teaching. There has been a major improvement in the teaching of English and mathematics but this has not fully affected standards as yet. Standards have improved in writing, mathematics and science by age seven and maintained at above average in English, mathematics and science by age eleven. The provision for information and communication technology and its teaching have improved well. Pupils attain average standards in information and communication technology by the end of Years 2 and 6. The school has recently adopted national guidance for most of the subjects and has planned to modify the guidance to match school needs. Teacher assessments of what pupils have learned in English and mathematics have improved. However, the school is aware that this good practice needs to be extended to other areas of learning. The school has established effective systems for checking the quality of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy and is well placed to further develop this system to involve other subject leaders. The governing body has managed the school finances adequately and is aware that it needs to be more actively involved in school improvement planning. The school's staffing situation has stabilised. There is a very high degree of commitment to raise standards and the school has very good capacity to improve further.

## 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			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A*	A	A	B
Mathematics	A	A	B	C
Science	C	B	B	D

<i>Key</i>	
very high	A*
well above average	A B
above average	
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The 2001 National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds show that the school has attained well above average results in English and above average results in mathematics and science when compared to all schools. It has attained above average standards in English, average standards in mathematics and below average standards in science when compared to similar schools. The school was close to meeting its original challenging target of 86 per cent of pupils reaching the expected level in English but missed the challenging revised target of 90 per cent reaching the expected level. In both English and mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was above the average for all schools. Over the past four years, the school's level of improvement has been broadly in line with the national trend. The school has maintained standards in challenging circumstances and is striving for better standards, particularly in science.

By the end of the Reception Year, children are likely to attain standards above those expected nationally in reading and speaking and listening, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are likely to attain standards in line with those expected nationally in writing, and in creative and physical development. Children settle in the nursery and reception classes quickly; they participate in activities with interest and enjoyment; they play and work together well and make satisfactory progress overall.

Results in reading, writing and mathematics for Year 2 pupils over the past four years have been consistently well above average when compared to all schools and similar schools. The end of Year 2 National Curriculum test results for 2001 were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics in comparison with all schools and similar schools. Pupils' results in science based on their teachers' assessments were below average compared to all schools and well below average compared to similar schools. This is due to less of a focus on this subject's development and insufficient focus on providing regular opportunities for pupils to carry out practical work. These weaknesses have been addressed successfully, particularly in the infants.

Inspection evidence shows that progress in Year 1 is slow and reflects the higher than usual incidence of staff changes. This has adversely affected the standards achieved by the end of Year 2

although progress is accelerated in Year 2 as a result of stimulating and challenging work and most pupils, including those with special needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. Standards achieved by the end of Year 2 are not as high as the previous years. During the inspection, the standard of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' work in English, mathematics and science was above average, showing good improvement in science. Pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6, attain average standards in information and communication technology, art and design, geography, history, physical education and religious education. Year 2 pupils achieve average standards in design and technology but as a result of insufficient teaching time given to this subject in the junior classes, by Year 6 standards are below average. No judgement is made on standards attained in music by the end of Year 2 as only one lesson was seen.

The school has set challenging targets for 90 per cent of the pupils to reach the expected levels in English and mathematics for the current year. It is taking appropriate action such as providing booster classes and offering teaching at Level 6 in mathematics to the very able pupils. However, due to the unusually high number of changes in the teaching staff it is unlikely that the school will achieve these targets. Starting with above average attainment, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve above average standards.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They approach their work with a high level of interest and enthusiasm and enjoy the activities they are presented.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well, both within the classroom and around the school. They are polite and friendly towards each other and visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. They work co-operatively and collaborate well in activities. Pupils are eager to take responsibility and when given the opportunities they show initiative and independence in learning. Pupils make very good relationships with each other and with adults.
Attendance	Very good. It continues to be above the national average.

This area is a strength of the school. Pupils respond very well to the high standards of behaviour and self-discipline expected of them. Older pupils eagerly help in the activities provided for the wider community and are very courteous and helpful to the adults in these sessions.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Nursery and Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 - 2</b>	<b>Years 3 - 6</b>
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 good quality of teaching contributes effectively to pupils' learning overall. The recent improvement in the quality of teaching has not yet had time to make a significant impact on standards and the progress that pupils make. The school has very effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers use effective teaching methods and manage their pupils well, particularly in the junior classes. This results in pupils' very good behaviour and very good attitudes to work. Additional support is well targeted to individual needs of the pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. The talented Year 6 pupils are taught at the higher Level 6 in mathematics and literacy with the help of the local high school teacher. Teacher expectations are highest in Years 2, 5 and 6. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. Focus on grammar, spellings and vocabulary work from an early stage provides a secure foundation for building skills in reading and writing. Opportunities are used well to promote skills in number work. Class routines, rules and responsibilities effectively promote independence and contribute well to pupils' personal development. Teaching of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is good. Opportunities to consolidate basic literacy and numeracy skills are provided effectively in other subjects such as history and religious education. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers have good understanding of how young children learn. Good teaching generates enthusiasm and stimulates interest amongst pupils who work with sustained concentration. There are examples of marking of pupils' work which give clear pointers for improvement, but this good practice is not prevalent in all the classes.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a variety of good learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage. The quality and range of activities is generally satisfactory in the infants. Good quality activities are provided in the juniors but due to a lack of consistence in the amount of time given to subjects the range is narrow. The community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. A good range of extra-curricular activities supports the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school provides well for the children with special educational needs in the Foundation Stage. The provision for pupils in the infants and juniors is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The school targets additional support to ensure their learning needs are met. However, it recognises the need to develop strategies for meeting the needs of these pupils to ensure equal access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social and moral development. Opportunities for promoting spiritual and cultural development are good.

Aspect (continued)	Comment (continued)
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils. There are very good systems for checking and promoting good behaviour. However, whilst systems for checking how well pupils learn are good in English and mathematics, they are unsatisfactory in other subjects. The pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are very well integrated. The school is in the process of formulating its policy and procedures for racial equality.

The school has a productive partnership with parents. They make good contribution to their children's learning through homework and raising funds to improve resources. The school's very good systems for care effectively underpin very good standards of behaviour, fostering a strong sense of belonging to the school community.

### **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership. She has effectively promoted team building amongst the school community and has set high expectations of staff and pupils. The key staff effectively support the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. It is very supportive of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are good systems in place for checking the quality of teaching in English and mathematics. The school does not yet have rigorous procedures in place for evaluating pupils' performance so that it can take appropriate action to meet the school's targets.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of its resources and the school accommodation. It applies 'best value' principles in spending decisions and in planning development.

The school is well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff. The support staff are effectively deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The school is well resourced, and the computer suite is used well. The school accommodation is spacious and the community facilities enhance the opportunities afforded to the school.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Their children are taught well.</li> <li>• The school helps them to become mature and responsible and develop good attitudes, which results in good standards of behaviour.</li> <li>• Most parents feel that staff are approachable and they are kept well informed.</li> <li>• Most parents feel that the school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school provides an interesting range of activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few parents at the meeting and through the questionnaires returned indicated that they would like their children to have more homework.</li> <li>• A few parents would like more information about how their child is getting on.</li> <li>• A few parents would like the school to work more closely with them.</li> </ul>

The parents meeting was attended by 16 parents and 30 per cent of the parents returned the inspection questionnaires. The findings of the inspection confirm all the positive views expressed by parents. Inspection evidence shows that an appropriate amount of homework is regularly set, which increases progressively as pupils move through the school. Good quality information about pupils' progress is provided to parents in the annual reports. The headteacher and key staff have set procedures in place to ensure that parents are kept well informed of their children's progress. The new headteacher and the deputy headteacher are working hard to consult parents on all school matters.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Attainment on entry to the nursery and reception classes is generally above average. Attainment covers a wide range of ability with just over half the children admitted to the nursery and reception classes showing well-developed language and mathematical skills. Most children start with well-developed social skills. The school now serves a wider catchment area and the number of pupils from diverse ethnic backgrounds with English as an additional language is growing. At the time of the previous inspection, the school had 13 pupils for whom English was an additional language, currently it has 40 pupils from a similar background. The recent improvements in the quality of teaching throughout the school have not had time to affect standards at the different stages of pupils' learning in the school. The unusually high number of staff changes in the past two years has also had an adverse effect on the quality of provision, particularly in Years 1 and 3.
2. Children in the Foundation Stage have access to a broad curriculum, resources are used efficiently and most children make satisfactory progress. In the Nursery children are making good progress. Most children sort and match a range of equipment and materials when tidying up at the end of the sessions. They are developing an interest in books. By the end of the Reception Year most children will have exceeded the early learning goals in reading and speaking and listening, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social and emotional development. They will have reached the expected levels for this age in writing, physical and creative development. Children with special educational needs make good progress and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
3. On the basis of 2001 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for the seven year olds, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above average when compared to all schools and to similar schools. In the assessments conducted by the teachers at this age the standards of attainment in science were below average and the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well below average. This is because of a lack of focus on subject development and a lack of leadership, which resulted in pupils achieving lower standards. The high standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been maintained since the last inspection. Taking improvement in line with the national trends over time, it has remained consistently high. No significant differences in standards between girls and boys were evident during the inspection. Overall achievement has been good between the ages of five and seven.
4. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils make satisfactory or better progress and by the age of seven achieve above average standards in English, mathematics and science. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are judged to be above average. Pupils listen attentively to instructions and explanations in lessons and contribute ideas enthusiastically in class discussions. Pupils,

from an early age learn to use a range of strategies for tackling new words and read for pleasure. Standards in writing have improved markedly since the last inspection. Pupils write for a range of purposes in different forms with growing competence. The higher attainers and average attainers write well. Most pupils understand simple mathematical language and recognise symbols such as plus and minus; most add and subtract to 20 and higher attainers work with numbers to 100. There has been good improvement in science. The focus on developing experimental and investigational skills has provided pupils with a good range of opportunities to apply their scientific knowledge to solve problems. The consistent practical application of skills and understanding in science consolidates learning and generates enthusiasm for the subject, which enables pupils to achieve above average standards. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve average standards in other subjects. Due to insufficient evidence no judgements are made on standards in music.

5. On the basis of 2001 National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds in English the pupils' performance was well above average when compared to all schools and above average when compared to similar schools. In mathematics and science pupils attained above average standards when compared to schools nationally. When the results in mathematics and science are compared to similar schools, standards in mathematics were average and standards in science were below average. No significant differences in standards attained by boys and girls were evident during the inspection. Trends in attainment over the last three years show that attainment in English, mathematics and science has been improving in line with the national picture. The school has set challenging targets for raising even higher the standards it has achieved in English and mathematics. The number of pupils who left the school in the final years of their schooling and the difference in ability of the pupils who were admitted to the school at other than the normal time has adversely impacted the school's performance. The school is unlikely to reach its targets for both English and mathematics.
6. Inspection evidence shows that eleven year olds attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The school's emphasis on literacy and numeracy, setting in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and targeting additional support together with providing booster classes has helped to maintain standards in English, mathematics and science over what has been a challenging period for the school. Pupils systematically question one another to improve the quality of their work and justify their ideas. They speak to large audiences confidently, adapting their style and speech accordingly. Pupils read a range of demanding texts from different sources with fluency, accuracy and understanding. They are able to appreciate emotive content and metaphor style in poems and draw inferential meaning from texts. Most pupils write creatively, can sustain a story line and most make accurate use of punctuation. In mathematics, pupils can represent information in a graph form. They form accurate predictions and use prior mathematical knowledge to solve problems. Most show good grasp of mathematical skills. In their discussions pupils use scientific vocabulary to form hypotheses. The increased focus on experimental science has contributed well to pupils making observations with growing precision, concluding with accuracy and generally classifying against pre-determined criteria.
7. Throughout the school standards have improved in information and communication technology. Pupils now have access to quality resources, good teaching and effective

support from the co-ordinator have had a positive effect on pupils' learning, progress is good and standards are now in line with the expectations for the seven and eleven year olds. Standards in other subjects are average. In the absence of accurate assessments in the foundation subjects, teachers plan work related to the age range, which results in some under achievement by the higher attaining pupils. Moreover, with continued emphasis on the core subjects, teachers spend more time than is usual on teaching English which leaves less time for pupils to learn the other subjects. By the end of Year 6 standards in design and technology are below average.

8. Pupils with special educational needs in both the infants and the juniors make good progress in relation to prior attainment and within their developing capabilities. The pupils for whom a statement of need exists make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. This is due to the good contribution by the support staff and the attention teachers give in the lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language are very well integrated in classes, where specific learning needs are identified, they benefit from the same targeted support as the special educational needs pupils and make satisfactory progress overall.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. These aspects of the school's work are a major strength. In the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils' attitudes to learning were very good throughout the school and were particularly strong in the junior classes. Behaviour in lessons and around the school was very good overall. Pupils understand what is expected of them and respond very positively to the encouragement, praise and rewards given to them. Attendance is well above the national average and unauthorised absence is low.
10. From their early days in the Nursery through to Year 6, children are very keen to come to school. They are enthusiastic and enjoy their lessons and other activities. Pupils come to school prepared to learn. They listen very attentively to their teacher and to one another and settle quickly to work. Pupils concentrate very well and try hard to complete the work they are given. They take a pride in their work and in their achievements, valuing the house points, certificates and other rewards they receive. Children in the nursery and reception classes and pupils with special educational needs share these positive attitudes. Pupils with special educational needs and those with, English as an additional language are fully included in every aspect of school life. They grow in confidence and self-esteem and contribute significantly to the school community. Throughout the school, the very positive attitudes to learning have a significant effect on the pupils' progress in lessons. The school has been successful in maintaining the very high quality of attitudes to learning since the time of the previous inspection.
11. Behaviour in lessons is very good overall. Pupils respond very positively to the high expectations of staff. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory behaviour was observed in any of the lessons. In the nursery and reception classes behaviour was judged to be good overall. Children understand the classroom routines very well and in the reception classes, are confident and eager to talk about their work. The very high quality of behaviour leads to

a brisk pace in lessons, ensuring that pupils learn well. Pupils develop a high level of respect for the feelings of others as they move through the school and learn to value opinions that may differ from their own. Often they display very high levels of maturity as, for example, in a Year 6 personal, health and social education lesson, where pupils used role-play and discussion to explore bullying behaviour and ways of dealing with it. Pupils look after the school's resources very well. They take good care of their own and other people's property.

12. Behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes is very good. Pupils play very well together in the playground and show an awareness of others when running around. Pupils look after one another well, for example by helping when someone falls over or has lost something. Lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion where Year 6 pupils help to serve and supervise. Movement around the school is extremely quiet and orderly. There is calm, purposeful atmosphere in the school. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
13. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils' personal development. The youngest children settle quickly and are encouraged to grow in self-confidence, particularly through the very good relationships they develop with staff and the way that their contributions are valued. All classes have a range of tasks, such as table monitor and register monitor, which are allocated in turn. Pupils are also expected to share in tidying up the classroom and do so willingly. Two pupils from each of the junior classes are elected to represent the class on the school council. Pupils take this responsibility very seriously. They are proud of their school and of the achievements of the council. In each class, pupils help to write the classroom rules and they understand the school rules; both class and school rules are well displayed around the school. Pupils benefit from and enjoy the many opportunities they have to work together in pairs or small groups. They work very sensibly together, share equipment well and frequently help one another with their work. Pupils' mature attitudes enable them to benefit from the many opportunities they have to work independently, as for example in a Year 2 numeracy lesson when pupils were fully involved in organising their own learning and had a clear understanding of what they were doing.
14. Relationships throughout the school are very good. There is a high level of mutual respect between staff and pupils. Teachers and other staff support pupils' personal development very well. Pupils respond positively to teachers' consistent use of praise. Pupils co-operate well together and develop a mature understanding of the impact of their actions on others as they move through the school. No incidence of bullying was seen during the inspection period. Pupils work in an environment free from oppressive behaviour such as sexism and racism. The very good quality of the relationships makes a significant contribution to the very high standards of behaviour achieved.
15. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to help others. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 help to run the luncheon club and enjoy their contact with the elderly members of the community. Year 6 pupils serve as house captains. The house system encourages pupils to form relationships with those in other year groups. Older pupils also act as sports captains. Pupils raise money for a variety of charities and help to organise the events. The school council has a meaningful voice in the school; for example, it has been consulted about the imminent

improvements to the external environment.

16. Attendance is consistently high and well above the national average. The school has successfully maintained the very high levels of attendance since the time of the previous inspection. The majority of pupils routinely attend on time in the morning.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

17. Pupils are organised in single age groups in all the classes. Class teachers are responsible for teaching all the subjects with the exception of some variation in the teaching of science, geography and physical education. Pupils in Year 5 classes are taught English, mathematics, science and geography by the same teacher. The community education leader teaches physical education for three half days to Year 2 and the junior classes. Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are set by ability in higher and lower sets for English and mathematics. The year group teachers in Years 5 and 6 share the responsibility for teaching a subject to both the classes, which benefits the pupils in terms of continuity and the subject expertise of the teacher.
18. During the inspection the quality of teaching was judged to be good throughout the school. Teaching was excellent in eight per cent of the lessons observed, very good in 20 per cent, good in 42 per cent, satisfactory in 29 per cent and unsatisfactory in one per cent of the lessons seen. Examples of excellent and very good teaching were seen throughout the school. This represents a good improvement over the previous inspection when the quality of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in 16.7 per cent of the lessons. The incidence of very good and excellent teaching is also higher. The most significant strengths are demonstrated in Year 2 and Years 4, 5 and 6. Some of the teaching seen in Year 6 was excellent. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Teachers have good subject knowledge in English and mathematics and have developed good expertise in the teaching of information and communication technology through the in-service training provided by the specified grant. Due to insufficient evidence no judgements are made about the quality of teaching in design and technology, history and music in the infants.
19. The quality of teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection when it was mainly satisfactory with some incidence of unsatisfactory teaching. The implementation of the national guidance has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The improvement in the quality of teaching has not had time to fully impact on the standards children achieve. Planning is securely linked to the Foundation Stage curriculum. These plans clearly identify what children are expected to learn and often link well to activities for basic skills development, but not as effectively to structured play. Expectations are high in the nursery and reception classes. Time and resources are used effectively and support staff make good contribution to children's learning. Teachers demonstrate a good understanding of how young children learn. The level of collaboration and trust between teachers and support staff is very high and ensures good interaction with children. When teaching is satisfactory rather than good it is because activities do not always have a specific learning focus. This results in some children completing the task very quickly or being unaware of what they should be doing.

On these occasions, some children do not make the progress of which they are capable.

20. In the infants the quality of teaching is good. In the 23 lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, teaching was excellent in one lesson, very good in four, good in ten and satisfactory in eight lessons. All the very good or better teaching was seen in the Year 2 classes. In Year 1, teaching is mostly satisfactory and pupils attain standards that are in line with what is expected for their age. In the lessons where teaching was good in Year 1, lessons moved at a brisk pace and expectations were high. When teaching is satisfactory, pupils are given general instructions, and they spend a long time thinking through what to do. However, on occasions there are missed opportunities in concluding sessions for pupils to know how well they have performed. For example, in a literacy lesson pupils were asked to 'write anything you know about space'; most pupils found it difficult to make a start. In Year 2 classes, pupils are provided with very stimulating and challenging activities, expectations are high, lessons mostly move at a brisk pace and most pupils make good progress. Teachers use very good questioning techniques to check prior learning and deepen understanding. In both Years 1 and 2, teachers manage their pupils well and channel their energies into productive work, which results in good standards of behaviour. They work well with support staff and voluntary helpers, who are kept well informed and subsequently make effective contributions to pupils' learning.
  
21. The quality of teaching is good in the juniors. A few excellent lessons were seen in Year 6 with an excellent example of work on poetry in Year 3. In the 47 lessons observed, teaching was excellent in four, very good in eleven, good in 18, satisfactory in 13 and unsatisfactory in one of the lessons. Most of the very good teaching was seen in Years 4, 5 and 6. The highest number of satisfactory lessons were seen in Year 3. Teachers have high expectations in core subjects. They use their knowledge of the subjects to plan a range of stimulating activities that are well matched to learning intentions. Teachers are particularly skilled in promoting language skills. However, they generally spend more time focusing on the language aspect of the work. There are some missed opportunities to extend the learning in other subjects. For example, in religious education lessons, as a result of the emphasis shifting to the quality of writing and presentation when recording their work rather than developing pupils' ideas and understanding of 'forgiveness' as part of their learning in the subject. Teachers manage their pupils very well. They show respect and expect a high level of maturity in their discourse during lessons. This was particularly evident in lower set lessons. This motivates pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and maintains very good attitudes and standards of behaviour, subsequently lessons move at a brisk pace. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics effectively set high expectations and high standards of teaching and learning by example and provide very good role models of professional practice.
  
22. The school has established the National Literacy Strategy well and this is having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and on the achievement levels in literacy. Teachers have developed confidence in teaching the basic skills of reading and writing. The school has targeted additional teaching support to further enhance the development of basic skills. The school has focused on raising standards in writing and teachers now use a range of strategies for pupils to develop their skill in writing for different purposes in a variety of situations,

showing some good examples of writing in different forms. Teachers use a variety of effective methods to extend pupils' vocabulary and provide good opportunities for them to practise their language skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening. For example, Year 5's work on persuasive writing based on persuading parents that school meals are a healthy option was very impressive, they use descriptive vocabulary such as 'nutritious, healthy, home-made meals...fresh succulent chicken'. Throughout the school teachers encourage pupils to apply these skills in other subjects. For example, writing true to life pieces convincingly about school life in Victorian times, living in Ellis Fold and a travelogue of driving through Chambakoli.

23. The National Numeracy Strategy is well launched, throughout the school teachers use the framework to guide development in mathematics and in particular, numerical skills. Teachers' confidence has increased and their subject knowledge is good. They use this knowledge well to provide well-planned work in all the classes. The introductory activities give due regard to pupils' mental and oral work and to developing mental calculation strategies. Teachers use their knowledge of their pupils and assessment activities to check learning. However, there is still a lack of systems for tracking progress over time.
24. The quality of teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is due to the sound knowledge and understanding of the teachers and effective support from the classroom assistants. Planning ensures that the learning activities are matched to the pupils' needs. Targets are set, reviewed and reported in the pupils' individual education plans. Support is mainly within the classrooms. Occasionally there is limited withdrawal for small groups learning the basic skills. The one-to-one support for the pupils with a statement of need is used well. However, too often the individual education plans that teachers provide are general, broadly based and lack a sharp focus. However, they ensure that the pupils have equal access to the activities and target the additional support. Similarly, teachers target the extra support in the class to help those bilingual pupils who experience some difficulty in accessing the range of activities on offer. In the absence of policy, procedures and a clear guidance on early identification of language development and strategies to meet and assess their English acquisition, teachers do the best they can by giving extra attention. This results in most pupils making satisfactory progress. The pupils who join the school at other than the usual time are integrated well in classes. They are supported well to settle in quickly
25. Teachers know their pupils well and use this knowledge to adapt their teaching and response to the different levels of attainment in the core subjects. They use appropriate methods to assess pupils' progress in English and mathematics and use this information as a basis for future planning. However, this practice is not extended to other subjects currently, which results in some of the higher attainers not being sufficiently challenged in these subjects. Verbal feedback in lessons is effective in helping pupils to improve their work. Marking is generally kept up to date but mostly amounts to correction and praise. A few good examples of evaluative and detailed comments were seen in pupils' books. These showed clearly the strengths and weaknesses, giving good indications where pupils could improve.

26. Homework is used satisfactorily in all the classes and more effectively in the top classes. Information and communication technology work is planned consistently in most subjects and teachers are beginning to use a range of software. There is now a systematic and progressive development of information and communication technology skills and the use of these skills to support learning more widely.

### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

27. The Foundation Stage curriculum for the under fives has improved since the last inspection and provides a good range of opportunities for all areas of children's learning. The recently opened nursery class provides well for the needs of these children. Overall, the curriculum provides the children with a good education that promotes their intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares for the next stage of their education in the school. The planning in the nursery and reception classes is based on the national guidance and meets the requirements as outlined in the Foundation Stage Curriculum.
28. The quality and range of the curriculum is satisfactory for pupils in the infants. The quality of the activities provided in the junior classes is good but the range of the activities is narrow due to a high proportion of time being allocated to the teaching of English. This along with preparation for end of Year 6 tests has created an imbalance in the curriculum for the junior pupils. Consequently the design and technology units of study are not fully taught in Year 6 and subsequently standards are below average in this subject by the end of Year 6. The curriculum in the infants fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum but in the juniors these requirements are not met overall. The requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are met satisfactorily. Good provision is made for personal, social and health education, including sex education and the dangers of drug abuse. The school acknowledges the need to produce a policy setting out its approach to this area of learning. Although some aspects of citizenship are taught, a structured programme of work and guidance for teachers to help them plan are not yet in place.
29. The school has responded to the issues raised in the last inspection adequately. Since the last inspection the weaknesses identified in the planning process have been addressed successfully. The school has developed an effective framework for planning which is used consistently through the school. There are relevant updated policies for all the subjects except art and design. Appropriate guidance has been introduced fairly recently to help teachers to plan the different subjects of the National Curriculum by adopting national guidance for all the subjects except for music and physical education. The school now plans to modify the schemes to suit school needs. Planning builds steadily from term to term and year to year in English, mathematics and science. The school is at an early stage of developing continuity and progression in other subjects. Most curriculum planning is matched to the age range in each class because assessment practice in the foundation subjects and religious education is underdeveloped.
30. The school has a satisfactory overall curriculum plan that shows when each aspect of the different subjects will be taught to the pupils. However, it does not have a satisfactory

overview of the time allocated to different subjects in each year group. The time allocated to English is higher than in other schools. As a result, the time available for other subjects such as art and design, music, geography and design and technology is lower than the average. This has resulted in an imbalance in the curriculum, with a lack of clarity in how teachers decide what they will teach when in each class. Information and communication technology is taught systematically through the school. All pupils, including the nursery and reception children have regular opportunities to work with computers in the computer suite, which contributes well to most pupils making good progress in developing information and communication technology skills.

31. The school fully meets the requirements of the new Code of Practice for special educational needs. The pupils have equal access to the full curriculum and are included in all the school's activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in the Foundation Stage, and satisfactory for those in the infants and juniors. Throughout the school there is good support for pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are identified at an early stage and are well met by teachers and support assistants. However, individual education plans are not consistently clear and well focused to ensure that pupils are able to make very good progress. The school works closely with outside agencies, such as the speech and language service, to ensure that specific needs of pupils are met. All pupils are equally valued and those with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. They are regularly assessed and detailed records of individual educational plans are kept. These are reviewed, progress noted and new targets set. A summary of concerns from teachers is included.
32. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established. Good strategies support the teaching of these skills and are a strength of the school. These have raised standards of teaching and learning and also have been used successfully in endorsing the setting of group targets for the different ability range in classes. There is a strong emphasis on classroom support in literacy and numeracy. Good organisation of guided reading and writing and regular booster classes enhance this work. In these lessons, sensitive and skilled support to pupils with English is an additional language and those with special educational needs, has a positive effect on pupils' learning.
33. A good range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits, including a residential opportunity, enrich and support the curriculum. Pupils of all ages gain valuable historical, geographical, scientific and cultural stimulus and experience from visits locally and further afield. The teachers provide good opportunities for them to get involved in sporting and musical activities. A few take good advantage of the opportunity to learn French. The development of the school's work with the community has greatly increased the scope for learning after school and in the evening. Pupils from all the local schools take advantage of what is provided, but those from Norden form by far the largest contingent. Very good facilities and opportunities are available, especially for participation in sports such as gymnastics and trampolining. Pupils also take part in the largest soccer school in Europe. The community benefits from the provision made for 60 groups that meet at the school. The pupils also reap the rewards of meeting adults who contribute very effectively to their learning, for example, by talking in history lessons about their recollections. Meeting

disabled people and children who will join the same secondary schools contributes strongly to pupils' overall development.

34. There are good links with local schools and institutions. More able and gifted and talented pupils have gained significantly from being taught literacy and mathematics at Level 6 by a teacher from a local secondary school. Students following child-care courses benefit from spending time in the school.
35. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils is very good overall. Teachers are sensitive to pupils' needs and help them to deal with situations and events that arise in their lives. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, are encouraged to feel a strong sense of identity within the school community. Since the last inspection, spiritual development has improved and is now good.
36. The provision for spiritual development is good. Well organised assemblies and acts of collective worship provide many opportunities for pupils to reflect on what they have heard and seen. Daily acts of collective worship meet requirements. Pupils are actively involved in their preparation, and this provides additional opportunities for them to think about the themes being presented. Music makes an effective contribution to spiritual experience in assemblies and sometimes in lessons. As pupils progress through the school, they are taught to respect the traditions of a range of faiths, as well as those of Christianity. They experience awe and wonder in lessons; for example, when Year 6 pupils reflect on nature while writing about capturing the sound of the sea to put in a magic box.
37. Very good provision is made for moral development. Pupils are taught to have a good understanding of right and wrong. The school provides a structured and caring environment in which clear moral principles are promoted. Pupils are involved in formulating their class rules and helped to consider carefully the reasons for what is or is not included. They take decisions as representatives on the school council by carefully considering the issues and benefits and consequences of their decisions; consequently, pupils show confidence in acting in accordance with the sound principles they develop as they pass through the school. The rewards for good behaviour help to support pupils' awareness of right and wrong. This is effectively supported by the positive approach to discipline in which all pupils are valued.
38. The provision for social development is very good. The inclusion of pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs is reflected in a high degree of empathy and consideration shown to them by others. This is reflected in very good relationships around the school. A wide range of incentives, awards and ways of celebrating achievement, together with the school's encouragement of pupils to work co-operatively, act very well to make them more socially aware. There are very good opportunities for pupils to learn musical instruments and use these skills at community events. There are many fund raising and social events. During school visits, inter-school competitions and events, pupils learn valuable inter-personal and social skills. Confidence is gained through the many social and competitive events pupils attend to sing and play to various members of the community. The extent of the school's involvement with the community adds considerably

to social development, for example, the village carnival is based at the school.

39. The provision for cultural development is good. The school provides well for pupils' exploration of their own culture. They have good opportunities to take part in music events such as the Norden Festival and to perform in school productions. Visits to places such as nearby museums and visits, for instance, from theatre companies enhance this aspect of learning. Pupils' understanding and appreciation of other cultures are developed effectively in religious education, geography and art and design as seen in displays such as one of Ugandan masks. However, the school acknowledges that it can do more to increase awareness of the cultures represented in the immediate communities, for example, by increasing its contact with members of the Muslim community.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

40. Overall the school provides a very good level of care for its pupils and has maintained the high standards noted in the previous inspection report. Teachers and support staff are keen to spend time helping pupils; they are accessible, caring and considerate of pupils' welfare. However, procedures for assessment in the foundation subjects are unsatisfactory and, although they have improved since the time of the previous inspection, the school does not make sufficient use of the information gained from assessments when planning the next stage of learning for pupils.
41. The arrangements for ensuring the welfare of pupils are good. The very good quality of relationships throughout the school helps to ensure that staff know the pupils very well, which promotes high standards of care for all pupils. The procedures for child protection are very good. The school has a male and a female member of staff who are fully trained to take this responsibility. The school has comprehensive policies and procedures covering health and safety and makes the pupils aware of the safe use of the internet. Staff pay good attention to issues of health and safety both in lessons and when pupils go on school trips. Regular health and safety checks are carried out that involve governors, senior staff and caretaking staff. The school has dealt successfully with a number of issues identified in a recent health and safety inspection by the local education authority. Clear procedures are in place for first aid and medication in school.
42. The school promotes the importance of prompt, regular attendance well, so that, parents understand what is expected of them. Absence is monitored regularly, ensuring that any developing patterns of absence are quickly identified. All unexplained absences are followed up, but in almost all cases parents inform the school about the reasons for absence. Lateness is also monitored. The school involves the education welfare officer promptly in cases of unexplained absences or persistent lateness.
43. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very successful. The behaviour policy provides a clear framework for achieving and maintaining very good behaviour. Pupils understand what is expected of them as the school rules are well publicised throughout the school, and in each class pupils were involved in writing their own class rules. They are well motivated by the high expectations placed on them and respond positively to the praise,

stickers and certificates they receive. Pupils are very knowledgeable about the range of rewards but are less aware of sanctions. They know that house points can be taken away but other sanctions are rarely used and pupils cannot remember what they are. Teachers monitor behaviour and consult early with parents when there are concerns. Teachers and other adults provide very good role models for pupils. Procedures for eliminating bullying, sexism and racism are very good and are securely based on the respect pupils are encouraged to show towards others. Pupils and their parents are confident that bullying is dealt with promptly and effectively when it does occur. The school is at a very early stage of developing its race equality policy and taking steps to implement effective procedures and practice explicitly.

44. Procedures for assessment are generally satisfactory to meet all the statutory requirements. Sound procedures are in place for assessing English, mathematics and science but practice in assessment of other subjects is unsatisfactory. Regular assessments to inform weekly and half-term planning are an inconsistent feature of general practice throughout the school. In the nursery and reception classes tests to judge attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage and to Year 1 are administered well and data is used effectively to inform planning. The school's current arrangement for end of Years 2 and 6 assessments and reporting to parents meet statutory requirements. However, there is little effective monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress. There is little effective moderation of pupils' work. Although there is a comprehensive English portfolio with annotated pieces of work, there are no other examples of annotated work to aid moderation. Evidence of pupils' work is kept in photographic form for art and design and design and technology but this work contains no evaluative comments. The school is aware of this weakness and has planned to address some areas on a rolling programme basis starting with science.
45. The school as yet does not have specific procedures and practice for assessing the language development needs of the pupils with English as an additional language on entry to the school. There is need to set clear criteria for screening language proficiency in first and second language and provide guidance to teachers in monitoring pupils' progress in their second language development.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

46. The responses to the parents' questionnaire and comments at the parents' meeting indicate that they are generally very supportive of the school. Around a third of parents completed the questionnaire and 16 parents attended the meeting. Almost all parents state that their child likes school and is making good progress. Most state that the teaching is good. Parents feel comfortable to approach the school with questions or problems; although a few stated that the recent staffing problems had led to them being less willing to approach the acting headteacher, but this was largely because they understood the pressure he was under. Parents value the way that their children are helped to become mature and responsible individuals and the high standards of behaviour in the school. Inspection evidence bears out parents' positive views.
47. Some parents expressed concern that their child did not receive the right amount of

homework, that the school did not work closely with them and that they were not kept well informed about the progress their child was making. Inspection evidence shows that an appropriate amount of homework is regularly set and that the amount increases as pupils move through the school. The recent staffing difficulties resulted in some pupils being taught by temporary teachers and this, combined with the prolonged absence of the previous headteacher, has led to some disruption in the communication between school and home. The new headteacher and the deputy headteacher are actively addressing this situation. The information parents receive about their child's progress is of good quality overall, with some very good features. However, some temporary teachers may not be as fully informed about every pupil's progress as parents have come to expect.

48. The school has established a number of effective links with parents. An appropriate home-school agreement is in place. Younger pupils have reading record books that are taken home regularly and form a useful channel of communication between home and school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a homework diary that keeps parents informed of what their child is expected to do. Parents are encouraged to help children at home and are provided with information about the curriculum every term to ensure that they know what their child is studying. Parents have a range of opportunities to consult with their child's teacher; there are two consultation meetings each year and an open day when parents can come in to see their child's work. Attendance at these is very high. However, a small number of parents, feel that these meetings are not held early enough in the school year and some also state that the time is insufficient to allow for a full discussion. Parents are also welcome to talk to the teacher at any time, by arrangement. The school holds a number of meetings for parents about the curriculum, for example for parents of children in Reception there is a meeting about the changes they can expect when their child moves into Year 1. Teachers keep parents informed of any concerns regarding learning, behaviour or attendance. Recently the new headteacher sent a questionnaire to all parents to gather their views about the school, but few parents responded
49. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a successful group that holds events throughout the year and raises a significant amount of money to support the work of the school. Support for the events is very good. The PTA is involved in decisions about how the money is spent. Recently they provided some new play equipment for pupils to use outside at break and lunchtime; this was in response to a request from the school council.
50. The school provides a good range of information for parents. The school prospectus is a useful informative document. However, there are a few omissions, such as number on roll and attendance data, and the section on special educational needs does not contain the full range of required information. The Governors' Annual Report to parents has a significant number of omissions. For example, there is no information about the staff development undertaken during the year or admission arrangements for disabled pupils. In particular, the governing body's targets for the percentage of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected levels or above in English and mathematics national tests are not included. All new parents are provided with a short version of the behaviour policy so that they are fully aware of the systems in place to reward or sanction behaviour. Regular newsletters are sent home and the school makes good use of the local press to celebrate their achievements and publicise

events. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed and involved at all stages. Parents of children with a statement of special educational need are involved in the annual review process. They are included in their child's learning review and are kept well informed. Individual educational plans are shared with parents at consultation meetings. Parents are advised on how they can support their child's learning at home. The school encourages a partnership between home and school. Parental involvement in reviews is high.

51. The quality of annual progress reports is good overall. The teachers' detailed knowledge of the pupils is evident in all reports. Pupils' strengths and weaknesses are clearly indicated. In the nursery and reception classes, reports cover the six areas of learning and provide a picture of the children's attitudes to learning and of the work covered. In Years 1 to 6, comments on English, mathematics and science are usually detailed and provide a clear picture of what each pupil knows and can do. Comments in other subjects are generally brief and do not consistently provide sufficient detail about the standard the pupils have achieved. Reports usually provide a judgement on progress in terms of it being good or excellent, these are rarely expanded to help parents understand the specific progress made by their child within each subject. Currently, personal, health and social education is not reported, which is a weakness. Parents have the opportunity to comment on the report and many take advantage of this.
52. Parents and grandparents are welcome to help in school in a variety of ways. A small number help on a regular basis in classes and many more are very willing to help on trips and visits or with specific tasks. Currently, for example, a parent is helping to update the school website. Parents are keen to attend events such as class assemblies and sports day. They also lend artefacts, for example Victorian photographs and objects, to support the curriculum. Almost all parents support the school by hearing their child read and helping with other homework. Parents of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are encouraged to participate actively in school matters. Notices and information including Welcome signs are displayed in the relevant community languages for their benefit.
53. Overall, the school has maintained the positive partnership with parents reported after the previous inspection.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

54. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the school has passed through a difficult period because of the headteacher's long-term absence. During this time, the acting headteacher moved the school forward well, ensuring that the staff was well supported and that standards of attainment were maintained. The new headteacher, appointed with effect from April 2002, has already established herself well and has introduced some significant school improvement initiatives. There is strong commitment to improvement and the headteacher, staff and governors have the capacity to succeed.
55. The headteacher, despite having been in post for a matter of a few weeks, has initiated

developments to build upon the good work of the deputy headteacher while he was acting headteacher. She has been well supported by other staff and the governing body, with whom she has forged a good partnership. The key staff who have management responsibilities are working well as a team. They are responding positively to the headteacher's vision for the school and are, themselves, providing good leadership and support through their work as subject or unit co-ordinators. The provision for special educational needs is managed well by the deputy headteacher, who is the co-ordinator. Support staff time is allocated effectively to ensure that appropriate additional help is given to pupils with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of learning English.

56. For much of the time since the last inspection, there was no development or improvement planning in place. On the initiative of the acting headteacher, an interim improvement plan was drawn up. Despite its limitations, it did give governors a useful opportunity to participate in planning and to take a more active role in the life of the school. The present school improvement plan has built upon the interim document and provides a more comprehensive analysis of the school's needs, presenting a clearer direction in which it needs to move. This school improvement plan, despite being a worthwhile advancement, remains weak in terms of its short-term view with no costing or clear order of priority. The process of consultation with staff, parents and governors in drafting the plan has, however, given senior staff a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher has already seen the need for greater consultation with parents and has initiated a questionnaire inviting parental views. She has also seen the need to improve the internal environment of the school and has made a good start by considerably enhancing the Year 3 classrooms with new carpets and furniture.
57. The school's aims are explicitly set out in the school prospectus. They set out clear intentions regarding attitudes, relationships and values. Equality of opportunity is embodied in the aims, which state that, pupils should be encouraged towards self-discipline, justice, fairness and respect for all people and property. Governors are aware of the school's aims but have reviewed them only once since the previous inspection. The school is aware of the need to develop its policy and practice in identifying and meeting more specifically the language development needs of pupils with English as an additional language. It has made a good start by seeking guidance and further information about this aspect from local authority consultants. It is also building a range of subject specific resources that represent the linguistic, cultural and religious norms of these pupils' backgrounds. The school has adopted a local authority's race equality policy and has planned to modify this policy to suit school needs. Whilst the school is fully aware that it needs to further develop strategies for language development of pupils with English as an additional language, it ensures that both the pupils with special educational needs and emergent bilinguals have access to all the activities provided. Teachers pay extra attention, pair the pupils with classmates who help them in activities and support staff offer targeted support to these pupils. This results in most of these pupils making at least satisfactory progress.
58. There is a strong senior management team, which is made up of the headteacher and deputy headteacher and unit co-ordinators. In the last inspection it was judged that there was

insufficient definition of the roles of senior management in terms of managing and monitoring the curriculum across the school. The evidence of this inspection shows that matters have improved considerably. There is now good and effective delegation of management responsibilities to the unit leaders, as well as to subject co-ordinators for the development of individual curriculum areas. A strength of the management structure of the school is the adherence to team work, its shared commitment to improvement and its determination to succeed in raising standards, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy. A weakness in the work of senior managers is their failure to provide balance for the curriculum, with appropriate and consistent allocation of time for foundation subjects.

59. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily. The previous inspection revealed that governors had little direct involvement with work in the classroom or in coming to judgements about the quality of education and standards of attainment. The present governing body, in order to be more involved in the day-to-day work of the school, has appointed link governors for all curriculum areas including special educational needs and the Foundation Stage. In addition, governors have established a number of committees and working groups, through which governance is more effectively carried out. For example, the special educational needs governor works closely with the co-ordinator, presses for early help, checks the register and reports progress to the governing body. The Governors Annual Report to parents and the school prospectus do not meet all the statutory requirements. Governors' involvement in the drafting of the school improvement plan has been minimal. However, they are aware of the plan, which was brought to them by the headteacher, and the chair of governors is monitoring the school's progress through the plan. Governors have responded well to most issues raised in the last inspection and have successfully implemented recent statutory requirements such as performance management. Despite their more active role in school, governors are aware of their need to:
- engage in further training to help them discharge their role;
  - have more involvement in the creation and monitoring of the school improvement plan;
  - be more involved in the school's drive to raise standards, and
  - have more personal involvement in the life of the school.
60. The school has put in place a number of effective strategies for monitoring and evaluating its performance. There are now focused observations of teaching in literacy and numeracy, with post-holders feeding back strengths and weaknesses to teachers. This has been carried out rigorously and sensitively. Post-holders now have allocated time to scrutinise of teachers' planning and analyse pupils' work. The unsatisfactory planning identified in the previous inspection has been addressed and is now satisfactory and in some areas, good. As a result, teaching, overall, is good and the unsatisfactory teaching reported in the last inspection has almost been eliminated.
61. The monitoring and analysis of standards are in an early stage of development. The school does take note of performance information from test results but has yet to introduce an effective process for checking on performance and progress as pupils pass through the school. The school is aware of this failing and some efforts are being made to track pupils' attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy. Until the school has addressed the

weakness in assessment, this area of management will remain unsatisfactory.

62. The school provides good support for new teachers to the school and for newly qualified teachers, despite a lack of policy for induction. Both newly qualified teachers have the support of a trained mentor and they are experiencing a good range of training and development opportunities. New teachers are provided with informal induction and are paired with experienced teachers. However, since these processes are not yet contained within a staff handbook, there are improvements needed in this area of management. Despite this weakness in induction, the school has sound potential for being an effective provider of training for teachers.
63. The governors have put in place appropriate arrangements for the appraisal, pay and performance of staff. The first round of teachers' appraisal has taken place, though there has been some slippage in the process, due to a number of staff changes and the appointment of the new headteacher. The headteacher's appraisal has yet to take place and targets have not been set. Governors are aware of the need to set the process in motion.
64. The key areas for school improvement, although not set in a clear order of priority are satisfactorily supported by financial planning. The governors' finance committee meets at least termly, to review spending decisions. Spending decisions have recently targeted resources for learning, and in most areas of the curriculum there have been good and very good examples of wise spending, benefiting all pupils. In literacy and numeracy, for example, very good resources have been provided to enhance learning in these areas.
65. The school's finances are well controlled and administered. The most recent local authority audit of the school's finances presented only minor suggestions for improvement and all these suggestions have been put in place. The day-to-day management of the school budget is very good, with oversight by the finance committee, the chair of which takes a keen, supportive and professional interest in the school's finances.
66. The weaknesses in information and communication technology, reported in the previous inspection, has been addressed. The new computer suite is being used well to teach computer skills and the co-ordinator for information and communication technology is making a positive impact on this area of the curriculum through his effective management. New technology is also being used well for administrative and financial management in the school office.
67. Specific grants are used wisely. The school has used its standards fund well, with substantial amounts being spent on providing additional teaching assistants for the summer term, additional resources for literacy and numeracy and staff training courses. A bequest of £20,000 from a member of the community has been very well used to attract a matched seed challenge bid of £20,000, which has been targeted for the development of the school environment.
68. The governors have an understanding of the principles of best value. The finance committee takes good care to ensure that competition is fair when purchasing resources or for buying

contracted-out services. However, the governors have some way to go in the application of best value when making comparison with standards being achieved in other schools. The school prospectus is a useful and informative document. However, there are a few omissions, such as number on roll and attendance data, and the section on special educational needs does not contain the full range of required information. The Governors' Annual Report to parents has a significant number of omissions. For example, there is no information about the staff development undertaken during the year, progress towards the Ofsted action plan or admission arrangements for disabled pupils. In particular, the governing body's targets for Level 4 and 5 in the Year 6 standard assessment tests (SATS) are not provided.

69. Teaching staff have a suitable range of qualifications and experience to match the needs of the curriculum. The deployment of teaching assistants to support booster classes has had a positive effect on raising standards. There is a strong commitment to teamwork in the way that teachers plan together in year groups. Pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language are well supported by teaching assistants and the school is making good progress towards its aim to provide a teaching assistant in every class.
70. The school's accommodation is good. Because the building formerly housed a middle school, many of the rooms are larger than found in many primary schools. There is good provision for practical subjects, with large craft and home economics areas. The school enjoys the use of a gymnasium with good changing facilities and there are very good outdoor areas for games and athletics. The recently opened Nursery unit has an excellent outdoor play area, providing a stimulating and safe area for children to learn and play. The school recognises the need to improve the playground area and developments are planned which take account of the views of pupils.
71. Resources for learning are good, with substantial, recent spending on books and equipment. Significant, new resources have been provided for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. The resources for physical education are impressive in quantity and range. The school is deriving considerable benefit from its status as a community school.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

72. **The following issues should form the basis of an action plan:**

- (1) Raise standards of attainment achieved by eleven year olds in design and technology by:
- Ensuring that the full National Curriculum programme for study is taught systematically through the junior age range.
  - Developing appropriate assessment procedures and practice in the subject to inform planning that builds on prior learning.

*(See paragraphs 7, 18, 28, 126, 128)*

- (2) Develop systems for checking pupils' progress by:
- Ensuring that the data gleaned from regular short-term assessments are used more effectively to provide work at the appropriate standard in all the subjects taught and to improve progress.
  - Making certain that teachers' marking identifies strengths and weaknesses that will help pupils to improve their work.

*(See paragraphs 7, 25, 29, 40, 45, 51, 104, 112, 116, 121, 125, 135, 142, 144, 152, 167)*

- (3) Ensure that the curriculum is well balanced by reviewing time allocations to subjects so that appropriate opportunities are provided for teaching and learning.

*(See paragraphs 28, 30, 58)*

- (4) Further develop the procedures and practice for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress across the school to evaluate school performance and to secure effective school improvement.

*(See paragraphs 61, 112, 115, 116)*

- (5) Develop procedures and practice to meet the individual needs of pupils with English as an additional language by:

- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying language development needs.
- Devising a range of strategies to meet the diverse language development needs of second language learners.
- Providing training and support for teachers to develop their expertise in teaching pupils with English as an additional language.
- Building a bank of resources to support this work.

*(See paragraphs 8, 14, 24, 45, 57)*

**Additionally, in order to address minor weaknesses the school should:**

- (a) Further develop governors' knowledge and understanding of school development so that they can effectively act as critical friends.

*(See paragraph 59)*

- (b) Ensure that the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents meet all statutory requirements.

*(See paragraphs 50, 59)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	16	34	23	1	0	0
Percentage	8	20	42	29	1	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	22	406
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	21

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	44

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	40

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.6

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	36	23	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	35	36
	Girls	22	23	23
	Total	57	58	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (100)	98 (97)	100 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	32	32
	Girls	21	22	21
	Total	53	54	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (90)	92 (90)	90 (88)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	28	31	59

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	25	27
	Girls	25	25	28
	Total	50	50	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (89)	85 (84)	93 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	27	28
	Girls	25	26	28
	Total	48	53	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (81)	90 (87)	95 (92)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

*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	1
Pakistani	36
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	3
White	309
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.4 : 1
Average class size	29.1

**Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	8.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	165.25

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.0 : 1
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28.75
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.3 : 1

**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	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

**Financial information**

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	948890
Total expenditure	951992
Expenditure per pupil	2334
Balance brought forward from previous year	22602
Balance carried forward to next year	19500

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	451
Number of questionnaires returned	140

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	41	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	46	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	52	1	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	44	23	2	4
The teaching is good.	46	43	3	1	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	46	14	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	37	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	39	4	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	30	44	19	1	6
The school is well led and managed.	29	55	6	0	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	55	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	34	7	1	3

## **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**

73. Since the last inspection the school continues to make good provision for the children. The learning experiences provided for children in the Foundation Stage form a secure basis for children to move into the infants. A Nursery was established in September 2001. The school now admits children who will be four before the end of the academic year on a part-time basis. There are 44 children who attend the Nursery and 57 children attend the two reception classes.
74. Children enter the reception classes as full-time pupils in the autumn term prior to their fifth birthday. The school operates a staggered intake to allow time for younger children to settle in. Children are assessed on entry to the nursery and reception classes using teacher assessments and Rochdale local education authority tests for this age. Since the previous inspection, on entry to the reception classes, children have generally demonstrated above average skills. However, the school now admits children from a wider catchment area and the number of children from diverse ethnic backgrounds has increased. The tests used to judge attainment on entry for the present reception classes show 52 per cent with above average skills, 29 per cent with average skills and nine per cent with below average skills.
75. Good induction procedures exist, with nursery staff seeking to establish good relationships with parents through home visits and informative documentation. Staff encourage parents to be actively involved in supporting their children's learning. They are welcome to stay with the children and join in the activities. Links with the parents are strong in the Foundation Stage. The accommodation for the nursery and the reception classes is good. Outdoor facilities provide a wide range of opportunities for collaboration and experimentation as well as physical development.
76. On entry into the nursery and reception classes most children demonstrate above average skills. The nursery teacher assesses each child and uses the home visit to build comprehensive individual profiles for the children. Appropriate procedures are in place to monitor children's progress in the Foundation Stage. Whilst the quality of learning was good in most of the lessons observed during the inspection, progress through the Foundation Stage over time is satisfactory overall. This is due to the improvement in the quality of teaching not having sufficient time to impact on standards. Additional support is well targeted towards the children with special educational needs who make good progress. Children for whom English is an additional language make the same progress as their classmates. Inspection evidence shows that by the time children are ready to start Year 1, most will have exceeded the early learning goals in communication, language, and literacy, and in mathematics, personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards attained in the creative and physical development as well as writing skills, are in line with the expectations for this age.
77. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be satis

factory. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is now good. Teachers in the nursery and the reception classes have good understanding of how young children learn. A secure and stimulating environment is provided in which children can express themselves and relate well to adults and other children. Planning for the week takes account of the early learning goals and all prepared tasks are linked carefully to a theme. The curriculum is taught through a balance of direct teaching and structured play activities, including role-play. However, activities for developing writing skills are not always sufficiently challenging for the higher attainers. Occasionally some children engage in structured play activities for long periods without support from adults. The teachers, nursery nurses and classroom support assistants work very closely together. The work of support staff is well planned to provide opportunities for children to extend their ideas and understanding and well targeted to provide additional support where it is needed.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

78. The teaching and provision for the children's personal and social development are good. By the time children are ready to start Year 1 they will have exceeded the early learning goal. In the Nursery, routines are well planned and children know what is expected. For example, 'snack times' encourage sharing and consideration for others. Children are given opportunities to make choices resulting in them moving confidently and independently between activities. They learn to say "thank you" for the things they are given and are aware of their needs and sensitive to the needs of others. Most show well-developed skills in relating to other children and to adults. They handle equipment and resources sensibly. The adults listen carefully to the children and value their contributions. The child with a statement of need is very well supported by all staff, and has been enabled to settle well and make good progress resulting in the specialist teacher withdrawing the additional support much sooner.
79. In the reception classes an appropriate range of activities encourage the children to work independently. They use the materials sensibly, help each other and are well behaved. The children are confident and eager to talk about their work and to explain what they are doing. Very good relationships with the adults enable the children to talk about their feelings, Sensitive teaching gives the children rich experience in learning about other cultures. Interacting well together, they have to learn to share and work as part of a group or class.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

80. This area is particularly well taught and by the time children are ready to start Year 1 most will exceed the early learning goals in reading, speaking and listening with most children reaching the expected level in writing. The National Literacy Strategy is well launched in reception classes during the summer term and the quality of teaching is good overall. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported. For example, the emerging bilingual child at an early stage of learning English is effectively helped by the support staff in lessons to ensure they understand what is expected of the children.

81. In both the nursery and reception classes the children enjoy listening to stories and happily share books with each other and with adults. Good reading in the Nursery develops speaking and listening skills through effective questioning. For example, in reading *Handa's Surprise*, a book about fruit, the teacher linked the story to healthy eating. The children were keen to describe their favourite fruit as "oranges are juicier than peaches". They listen well and are confident in speaking within a group. Children in the reception classes enjoy discussions, such as on the differences between meals on plates and meals for picnics. The subjects are well linked to children's experiences, encouraging them to explore their ideas with others. The good subject knowledge of the teachers is evident in their questioning which generates good opportunities for children to develop speaking and listening skills.
82. Children show interest and enjoyment in books and shared reading sessions. Parents are involved in supporting their child's reading at home through books taken home from school. Story time is a special time in the Nursery when the children share in reading the Big Books by joining in the repeated phrases. Groups of children enjoy working with the teacher learning about characters; such as Biff and Chip from the early reading books. Labels in the classroom, such as 'come and write' are early steps in building up a sight vocabulary. The children in the reception classes progress well in learning and using sounds. The children blend letter sounds to make words. Direct teaching of the basic skills in reading is very good. Teachers plan activities to ensure that learning is fun. For example, in the 'Full Circle' game, children quickly change the middle sound and make a list of rhyming words. Elements of the literacy strategy are used well by the teachers so that a good knowledge of letter sounds is developed through effective word, sentence and text level work. Above average children read with reasonable fluency and expression. They have a good sight vocabulary and can build regular words through letter sounds. Early readers enjoy talking about the pictures and characters. They love reading to an adult and ask "can I read it again?"
83. In the Nursery the children enjoy mark-making in the writing area. They handle a pencil correctly and many write their own names accurately. Most children develop good awareness of the relationship between the spoken and the written words through the adults acting as scribes for children's news and stories. In the reception classes some children write unaided using their knowledge of phonics to develop plausible spellings. Many write to communicate for real purposes. For example, in follow-up work on the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*, the higher attaining children wrote a letter to the wolf asking him not to put Granny in the bin. The children write fluently, phonetically plausible, but with many misspellings since there is little use of word banks or dictionaries. Most children are on course to reach the early learning goals for writing. In speaking and listening and in reading, they have exceeded the goals.

### **Mathematical development**

84. Good teaching, with effective planning and organisation, enables the children to make at least satisfactory progress with some making good progress. By the time children start Year 1, most will exceed the early learning goals and are following the National Numeracy Strategy. The quality of teaching is good. Lively teaching keeps a good pace so that the

children in the Nursery are keen to join in the counting games. They can count numbers up to 10. Number games such as food lotto give the children a good understanding of number. For example, a boy used mathematical language when he said, "I've got ice-cream again". Very good use of number songs such as *Five Fire Fighters* helps the children to order numbers up to five. The colour displays in the classroom are used well to teach them the names of the colours. Planned activities include shopping, balancing, measuring and shaping.

85. In the reception classes the children can count and tap to 50. They enjoy counting forwards and backwards in twos to 20 and, moving on, they can count in tens. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of how to teach basic numeracy skills. The children add and subtract orally. A good range of resources makes the lessons fun. For example, the teacher used a plastic frog to jump backwards and forwards on a number line of lily pods. Number activities are well planned to hold the children's interest, such as skittles, bus monopoly, find the winner and dots-to-dots. Very good links with parents with some helping in the classroom, contributes effectively to children's mathematical development. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language make the same progress as their classmates.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

86. Provision and the quality of teaching in knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Most children are well on course to exceeding the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. The children investigate objects and materials by using all their senses. A good range of activities is provided to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. It lays secure foundations for future learning in science, history, geography and design and technology. For example, the teacher in the Nursery set up an interesting display of grasses for children to observe closely with magnifying glasses. One girl was thrilled to tell the visitor that there were bugs on the grasses. They have opportunities to explore sand, water, colour, shape and texture. Most children observe carefully, ask suitable questions, predict outcomes and test out their ideas. Children, for example, classify fruit and vegetables. They used their senses to find out properties, texture, taste and smell in different fruits and vegetables.
87. The children build and construct a wide range of objects, choosing suitable materials and adapting to improve their work. For example, in the Nursery, the children made rattles for the World Cup football match. They selected the objects, the tools and the materials to cut, assemble, join and decorate. The children use computers with confidence in the classes and in the computer suite. They learn technical vocabulary, such as 'disk' and 'mouse'. In the suite the children used the program, *Fresco*, to draw and paint a picture. They know how to move the cursor by dragging the mouse. In the Nursery, children work in pairs enjoying the program *Dress the Teddy*. Good use is made of daily routines and common daily experiences to develop a sense of time and sequence and to raise awareness of changes in weather conditions. For example, a boy in the Nursery made a card for his mother's birthday in July and knew that it was next month. The children talk about their environment, saying the features they like and dislike. They were very thrilled to go and look at the frogs in the school pond.



## **Physical development**

88. The quality of teaching and provision are good. Most children are on course to reaching the expected early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. The Nursery has a well equipped outdoor area with a wide range of apparatus, such as large wheeled toys, a wooden aeroplane, rockers, prams and 'road works' for outdoor energetic and imaginative play. There are very good opportunities for children to run, jump, push and pull trolleys. Children move with confidence, imagination and show regard for safety. Children demonstrate their ability to move in different ways and jump with controlled landing. The children use the large toys with good control and co-ordination. They are aware of space, of themselves and of others. Children in the reception class work well in the hall. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives, such as to travel around, over and under, through balancing. The children change for physical education and recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. Very good use is made of children's demonstrations to improve performance on balancing.
89. Attention is given to developing manipulative skills by providing a variety of activities and a range of small equipment. They use large and small construction kits imaginatively. They handle tools, such as pencils, scissors and brushes with growing skill. The nursery children cut up fruit for their healthy snacks. Teachers effectively plan small world equipment and constructional toys to improve skills in assembling. The reception class children construct a model of a healthy meal, involving cutting, gluing and colouring. Modelling with playdough contributes well in developing these skills.

## **Creative development**

90. In creative development the children are well on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. Children make sound progress in exploring colour, texture and space. The nursery children have made a collage of kites, involving three-dimensional paper sculpture. Children in the reception classes use a wide range of materials, including paint, paper, cardboard, textiles and foil.
91. The children know many songs which they sing tunefully, with good rhythm and dynamics. In the Nursery, the children enjoy playing the percussion instruments. Good teaching encourages the children to respond to things they can see, hear or touch. For example, the teacher intervened to support a boy playing bongo drums, asking him to listen carefully and describe the sounds he could hear. Excellent teaching in music in the reception classes stimulates the children's interest and develops skills in listening, singing and playing musical instruments. The children explore how sounds can be made louder/quieter and faster/slower. They are confident in performing before an audience. All pupils including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs are encouraged to join in.
92. Teachers encourage the children to use their imagination in dance, drama and in play. Good use is made of visitors' 'talks' such as the visit by the dentist about dental hygiene. In the Nursery, children express their ideas, thoughts and feelings in role-play in the 'Dentist's

Surgery'. Children's imaginations are developed well through the use of role-play such as the reception children dramatise the story *The Teddy Bear's Picnic* in their 'Storyland Cottage.' They play as teddy bears, using the language, the characters and the events from the story to create their imaginary roles which contributes well to language development. However, on occasions there are missed opportunities of using questions that challenge the children to explain and justify their choices and personal opinions in order to extend their initial ideas.

## ENGLISH

93. The school has maintained standards in English, which were judged to be above average at the time of the previous inspection. The weaknesses identified during the last inspection have been addressed successfully. The quality of teaching and the provision for the subject have improved considerably. However, the changes in staffing in some classes have adversely affected pupils' learning and the rate of progress in these classes has been slower. The improvements in the subject have not had sufficient time to drive standards further. Moreover, there is significant movement of pupils out of the school from Year 4 onwards, and although other pupils join the school, the attainment levels are adversely affected by this mobility. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average.
94. Pupils' work in English, analysed and seen during the inspection period shows that each year group has a wide range of ability. Satisfactory progress is made overall. The standards of the higher attaining pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 were above what is expected and they make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs work well and make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language have a wide ability range, some pupils' performance is similar to their peers, with a few attaining at an above average level. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning English and additional support allocated to classes is well targeted which enables them to make satisfactory progress.
95. By the age of eleven, standards in English as measured in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 placed pupils well above the national average when compared with all schools and above average when compared to similar schools. By the age of seven, in the 2001 National Curriculum tests for reading and writing, the school's performance was well above the national average when compared with all and similar schools. School data demonstrates that over the last four years the pupils have attained high standards consistently, exceeding the national average for their age groups. There was no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls, or other groups of pupils within the school. The school has set challenging targets of 90 per cent attaining the expected level and above but it is unlikely to achieve these targets.
96. The successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has helped to ensure a consistent approach to planning and teaching which is having a positive effect on pupils' learning and enhances work in phonics, spelling, vocabulary and grammar. The very strong focus on teaching basic skills, and the emphasis on guided reading and shared text work, has effectively contributed to a marked improvement in spellings and raising the skill level in

reading, in particular the fluency and expression with which pupils read a range of challenging texts. Teachers are confident and effective in teaching literacy and most provide good opportunities for pupils to apply and improve their skills in other subjects such as religious education and history. The school's agreed priorities and procedures for raising standards includes the introduction of setting challenging measurable targets for improvement for small groups in each year, and the school is aware of the need to develop its reviewing procedures.

97. Standards in listening and speaking skills are high. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress and continue to attain standards that are above those expected nationally. Most pupils speak and listen well to the teachers, to visitors and to one another, and do so with sensitivity and increasing confidence. By the age of eleven, pupils listen with increased attention, sustain longer conversations and make mature contributions to class discussions. In discussions with pupils they put forward their own points of view clearly and show good understanding of the protocol of discussion and debate. Teachers expect pupils to use appropriate specialist vocabulary and this enables pupils to express themselves accurately. Throughout the school pupils listen attentively and with appreciative humour to poems. They enjoy limericks, action poems, and puzzle poems and recognise humour and technique used in *Flu* by Tony Langham. The school has successfully addressed the weakness identified in the previous inspection and provides sufficient opportunities for pupils to speak at length, to evaluate and reflect on their own and others' talk. Pupils perform in school productions, which offer valuable opportunities for pupils to use spoken language.
98. By the age of seven and eleven, standards of attainment in reading are above the national average with a significant percentage of pupils at both ages seven and eleven attaining well above average standards. The high standards in reading have been maintained because of the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, good teaching and pupils' efforts and enjoyment of reading. The school continues to place emphasis on individual reading as well as opportunities presented in the literacy hour. By the age of seven, higher attainers read with fluency, accuracy and growing understanding. They have a range of strategies for reading new words. They read books for pleasure and for information. Average attainers are able to segment words and use the structure of the sentence to determine the type of word needed to make sense. Lower attainers read simple texts with some accuracy and try hard to sound out words. Pupils at the age of eleven can talk about a wide range of authors and texts they like reading. They know why they like their books, and talk about their work in depth. This is due to the quality of work covered on structured book reviews from Year 2. In Year 5, pupils make thoughtful predictions of what will happen next in, *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*. By Year 6 pupils outline the plot well and are able to write good character studies of Oberon and Titania in, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. They use non-fiction texts well. Many Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils are reading demanding texts. Reading attainment is high. The reading skills and those needed to read with deeper understanding are sufficiently well developed by the average attaining pupils to enable them to cope with most texts. They show understanding of a range of texts, select essential points and can use inference and deduction appropriately. Reading attainment for these pupils is good. Pupils who have reading difficulties are supported individually and achieve well. When they leave, the majority are able to scan articles, select and summarise

information. Many are able to present this information in their own words

99. The whole school target to improve the purpose and organisation in pupils' writing, and boys' literacy has been successful in improving standards. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to write at length for a range of purposes and audiences. They offer books that appeal to boys. They employ good strategies and techniques to develop writing skills. This targeted approach has contributed effectively to raising standards in writing across the curriculum.
100. Standards in writing by the ages of seven and eleven are above average. On entry to Year 1, pupils have average skills in writing. Progress through Year 1 is inconsistent, with most pupils making good progress in Year 2. The most able and average seven year olds write well. In Year 2 pupils use good adjectives and extended sentences in their work on, *The Willow Pattern*, and *the Coral Reef*. Year 2 pupils know not to write lengthy character descriptions in their non-fiction writing. They extend their ideas logically into a short story. More able pupils work independently, but less able pupils need support from adults. Spelling is good and pupils use their growing knowledge of different letter combinations to write short sentences and pieces of work. Handwriting presentation in most books is good and letters are evenly formed. A few less able pupils have yet to write with consistency and fluency. By the age of eleven, pupils' standards of writing are good. The writing on display by Year 6 pupils sequences and describes events well and clearly conveys opinions of their memories of life at Norden. Pupils are encouraged well to apply their own writing skills appropriately and effectively in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, empathetic writing and writing true to life pieces convincingly about school life in Victorian times. Pupils plan, draft and edit their work carefully. Pupils write in a variety of forms for different purposes and their writing is varied, interesting and imaginative, as in 'we watched in sorrow as one by one they died'. They write factual reports and express their point of view as seen in accounts expressing a set of problems in *Shawfield Road*. Pupils use imaginative vocabulary to respond imaginatively to poems. Pupils' writing is well organised into paragraphs, and punctuation and spellings are generally correct. Higher attainers and average pupils use grammatically complex sentences and their work is well presented in a joined, fluent style. The standard of spelling and grammar has risen with the systematic approach adopted through the National Literacy Strategy and the improved teaching. Most pupils' books are neat and presented well, reflecting effort, and an interest and enthusiasm for handwriting.
101. Outstanding, high quality, interesting and exciting work is achieved in Year 6, as pupils undertake the 'What's in the Box,' project aimed at a smooth transfer to the secondary school. This project draws together and uses all the skills acquired throughout the pupils' schools life. The well written pieces, retelling the events of *Pandora's Box*, show how well they understood the many gifts of charm, passion, wit, anger, despair and grace. Excellent teaching helps all pupils make links between their reading of fiction, plays and poetry and the choices they make as writers and, to adopt reading approaches to engage with and make sense of texts. In Year 6, pupils reinforce their understanding of prefixes, suffixes and roots. As yet procedures to assess each pupil individually, therefore improving their achievement in spelling, has not been introduced. Computers are used to enhance pupils' writing in both

infants and juniors.

102. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and their achievement is good. They receive good assistance from the support staff. The higher attainers are given challenging work. Pupils with English as an additional language seen to be struggling with making sense of the work are provided with additional adult support and work in small group situations and subsequently make satisfactory progress.
103. The quality of teaching and learning in the 14 lessons observed was good overall. There was some very good teaching observed in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5, with excellent teaching in Year 6. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the literacy strategy has been in part responsible for this high standard. Teachers have great enthusiasm for the teaching of English. Teachers use a wide range of effective strategies. This shows a marked improvement over the last few years when teaching was only satisfactory and there was some evidence of unsatisfactory teaching.
104. Day-to day assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' progress in English are effective. Samples of pupils' writing are periodically assessed according to national criteria, which aids moderation. Regular homework is set in most classes to reinforce and extend what is learned in school. Pupils also take books home regularly and learn spellings, and most enjoy the competitive element. Parents are generally supportive of homework. Pupils' books are marked regularly. A few contain helpful comments on how they can improve.
105. The library is used well to develop knowledge and understanding of fiction and non-fiction texts. Favourite books are on display in classrooms, in Year 1, for example, '*The Lost Kitten*,' was the book of the week. There are many, well kept, up to date books for the pupils to choose from in the libraries, classrooms and on display around the school. Each class is timetabled for one lesson a week in the library area and pupils borrow the books they need for research work. Pupils act as librarians, they look after and run the library well. Pupils spoken to were able to use the library confidently and effectively. The use of the library contributes well to meeting the National Literacy Strategy objectives.
106. The leadership and management provided by the co-ordinator are excellent. She presents a very good role model of professional practice. She has very good subject knowledge and is highly skilled in a very good range of strategies and methods for teaching of English. The National Literacy Strategy framework forms a good basis for the detailed scheme of work, which is consistently, implemented across the school. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning in both infants and juniors. The monitoring and evaluation of lessons provides useful information about the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and in pupils' performance. Subsequently this has contributed well to improving the quality of teaching. A suitable literacy action plan is in place to raise standards further. Resources acquired to promote the introduction of the literacy hour and to help reading are of good quality and have been carefully chosen.

## MATHEMATICS

107. Standards in mathematics have improved significantly since the previous inspection when standards in mathematics were judged to be 'broadly in line' compared with schools nationally at both ages seven and eleven. Evidence from this inspection, shows that pupils attain above average standards by the ages of seven and eleven. Overall, in the 2001 statutory tests, standards in mathematics were judged to be well above those typical for seven year olds, when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. When using similar comparisons for pupils by the age of eleven, standards were above average when compared with schools nationally and based upon pupils' prior attainment, standards were average when compared to similar schools.
108. The tests used to judge attainment on entry to Year 1 show that pupils have above average skills in mathematics. Whilst the quality of learning in the lessons observed during the inspection period was satisfactory, scrutiny of work and standards of attainment by the end of Year 1 indicate that progress over time is slow. Most pupils attain average standards in Year 1. In Year 2, expectations are high, pupils are provided with a stimulating range of challenging activities and progress is good. With accelerated progress in Year 2 lifting standards to above average level. Pupils who have special educational needs or who use English as an additional language also make good progress.
109. By the age of eleven, pupils' performance is above what is expected for pupils of this age. Satisfactory progress is maintained through Year 3, with accelerated progress showing through Years 4, 5 and 6. Evidence shows that there is significant movement of pupils out of the school from Year 4 onwards, and although other pupils join the school, the attainment levels are adversely affected by this mobility. The school has an impressively large number of pupils who attain the higher Level 5 in the tests and this year, there is a group of pupils in Year 6 who are working at a very high standard, towards Level 6. Booster classes have been established to work with those pupils who are displaying above average potential and the local secondary school is providing support and advice to help provide for those pupils of high ability.
110. By the end of Year 2 pupils understand place value of number to thousands, hundreds, tens and units. They count in number sequences of 2, 5 and 10. They recognise odd and even numbers. They are able to measure accurately in centimetres. In solving money problems, all pupils are able to give change to £1 in multiples of 10p, while the more able pupils can give change from amounts to £5 and involving smaller value coins. Pupils are familiar with, and describe regular two- and three-dimensional shapes, including cylinder, pyramid, cuboid, pentagon, hexagon and octagon. They have an understanding of time measurement in both analogue and digital forms. In addition to their understanding of hour, half hour and quarter hour divisions, the more able seven year olds express time in terms of five minute divisions, understanding, for example, that 7:35 is the same as twenty five minutes to eight. Pupils have had experience of solving real life problems using appropriate mathematical strategies. They use accurate mathematical vocabulary and are confident to explain how problems are solved.

111. By the age of eleven pupils have developed considerable confidence in the way they use the best strategy for them when dealing with a calculation. They have learned a variety of approaches, including standard and non-standard methods. They use short and long multiplication and division strategies to solve problems. Eleven year olds have learned calculator skills and make effective use of calculators where appropriate. They use fractions and percentages confidently, recognising the equivalence between the decimal and fractional forms of a half, quarter, three quarters, tenths and hundredths. The more able pupils are able to convert a fraction to a decimal by using division. Pupils understand how to reduce large numbers to factors. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils engaged in an enjoyable game activity, which required them to factorise amounts up to one million. Pupils have a good level of understanding of mathematical vocabulary and are able to explain their working using accurate terminology.
112. Teaching of mathematics is good throughout the school. There were no observations of unsatisfactory teaching, and there were a number of examples seen of good, very good and excellent teaching. Since the last inspection, teachers have successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. All teachers are showing good subject knowledge, which helps them to plan their teaching effectively. Very good use is made of the mental and oral part of the lesson, with teachers using good questioning strategies to challenge pupils and to drive the lesson at a good pace. Teachers are particularly good at making clear what pupils are expected to learn in the lesson, so pupils have a good understanding of what they are doing and it enables them to start taking responsibility for managing their own learning. Teachers manage pupils well, projecting high expectations of behaviour as well as quality and quantity of work output. This, in turn, is reflected by very high standards of behaviour, good attitude to work and effort by the pupils. The effectiveness of the teaching of mathematics is manifested in the very good levels of interest, concentration and independence shown by pupils. During the lesson, teachers assess pupils' progress well, giving them helpful advice and encouragement. However, an area of weakness that needs to be addressed is assessment over time. The school is introducing a method of tracking individual pupils and their progress year on year and from infants to juniors but this is at a very early stage of development.
113. Mathematics is led and managed by two enthusiastic and confident co-ordinators, who have a good vision of what is needed to develop further what is already a very sound curriculum provision. They are, in fact, carrying out this role on a temporary basis while the substantive co-ordinator is away on secondment until September 2002. They have used the 'springboard' strategy to help pupils with special educational needs and have put in place booster classes to provide appropriate challenge for the group of high ability pupils in Year 6. With the support of the local education authority Numeracy Consultant they have produced an effective school's mathematics policy. The co-ordinators have attended a number of courses provided by the local education authority and they, in turn, have led in-service training for their colleagues in school. They act as advisers when teachers request help, and they carry out effective monitoring through observation of lessons, scrutiny of teachers' planning and analysis of pupils' work. As part of their assessment of pupils' progress they use the tests provided as part of the school's chosen commercial scheme and the optional national tests. The results of tests are used to help plan lessons and organise

groupings for ability sets. Despite the presence of these assessment procedures, there remains a need to improve the school's tracking of pupils progress, year on year and from infants to juniors.

114. Resources for mathematics are very good. The school has spent wisely in its purchase of a commercial scheme to support the delivery of the numeracy strategy. Classroom resources are plentiful and of good quality. It was clear from the inspection evidence that resources are well used and there is a good measure of independence shown by pupils in the way that they use and care for the resources. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning and there is a good range of software programs to consolidate mathematical skills.

## **SCIENCE**

115. Standards of attainment by the ages of seven and eleven have improved since the last inspection. Standards are above average by the end of both ages seven and eleven. The results of teacher assessments made in 2001 showed that the standards of seven year olds in science were below average. The changes in staff in Year 1 and a lack of leadership over the period resulted in standards being lower. In the national tests that year, eleven year olds' standards were above the average for all schools and below average compared to similar schools. Since the last inspection improvement in the accuracy of teachers' assessments has brought about a significant rise in the standards attained by seven year olds which are now above average. The implementation of national guidance, a focus on providing regular opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment in scientific ideas as well as the leadership provided by the co-ordinator have contributed well to raising standards by the end of Year 2 and improving the provision for the subject generally. Records kept by the school suggest that the standards of the current eleven year olds are slightly lower than last year's group due to more pupils moving into and out of the school during term time. Inspection evidence supports the school's picture of current standards. Trends over the past three years show that pupils' performance by the end of age eleven has exceeded the national average. The school is in the process of introducing tracking of pupils' progress through the school but this is at an early stage of development.
116. The school is aware that some pupils are capable of achieving better standards and has set raising standards in science as a key priority. For a number of years the subject had not been funded well enough, and lacked co-ordination and development. Recent improvements have yet to be reflected in the results achieved by pupils. A committed and conscientious co-ordinator has been appointed and has made a good start, by finding out what needs to be done, collecting data and beginning to analyse information about what pupils know, understand and can do. Annual budgets are now allocated to fund development.
117. Much of the work done by pupils aged seven is above average. In investigations such as one to find waterproof materials for Percy Pig's umbrella they make predictions before testing. They express opinions about whether the tests they do are fair and begin to draw conclusions about their results. When working on changes to materials they can identify

which ones can be reversed and which cannot. They know that ice can become steam and when condensed can be frozen again. They can say whether simple electrical circuits will work or not, but do not test different devices with the circuits in them.

118. By the age of eleven a good deal of pupils' work is above average. They systematically record observations made in experiments such as investigating what happens when a rubber band is loaded with increasing number of weights. They record their results in different ways, including in the form of line graphs. Although pupils often say which elements in an investigation they will keep the same, they do not identify what they will vary to achieve their aims. In work about the human body they know the location and function of the main organs, but not enough work is done about how living things adapt to their habitats.
119. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that broadly similar progress is made in each year group. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language receive effective support in lessons and consequently they make good progress in relation to their capabilities. Teachers do not always plan effectively to meet the needs of different ability groups and as a result, more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. However, the school has recently taken steps to raise the standards attained by these pupils, including extra teaching using significantly more demanding material. Pupils enjoy science lessons very much. They respond well, producing neat work, which is carefully set out.
120. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. This is an improvement on the teaching seen during the last inspection when some lessons were unsatisfactory. It is likely to take time for the better teaching to be reflected in higher achievement at the end of the junior years. The main features of the teaching seen are:-
- [a] teachers plan together in year groups. This is very effective in providing the same opportunities for pupils of the same age in different classes;
  - [b] teachers often take opportunities to link science work with aspects of pupils' personal development such as healthy eating;
  - [c] good questioning and clear explanations ensure that pupils know what to do;
  - [d] sometimes not enough responsibility is given to pupils for suggesting what could be investigated and how it could be done. This reduces the challenge provided for more able pupils.
121. The leadership and management provided by the co-ordinator is good in some areas but the monitoring aspect needs development. It is satisfactory overall. Science is benefiting from the high profile it has been given and further development is planned. The school is aware of the need to refine the way in which it assesses pupils' attainment and progress, in order to ensure that pupils' tasks are matched as closely as possible to their learning needs. The co-ordinator has not yet had appropriate opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The use of information and communication technology is at an early stage of development, the school is aware of the need to increase the software programs. There is an appropriate range of good quality books in the library for pupils to research for information and use for reference.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

122. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection and made some improvement in the quality of the provision for the subject. This improvement is fairly recent and has not had sufficient time to impact on standards. The school has adopted national guidance but this has as yet not been modified to match the school needs and there is no school policy for the subject. Inspection evidence is based on one lesson observation in Year 1 and the other in Year 4, displays of pupils' work in classrooms and around the school, a scrutiny of work folders and photographs of pupils' work over a period of time. It shows that standards are in line with what is expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. Standards in painting are satisfactory throughout the school, showing an appropriate use of brush control and effective skills in colour mixing, understanding tone and shade, as seen in the portrait work done by Year 2 pupils. Some good examples were also seen in observational drawings; the detailed images are lively and vibrant. Pupils use a range of media such as pastels, pencil, charcoal, ink and paint to recreate objects and features in the immediate environment.
123. Pupils in both infants and juniors are introduced to the work of well-known artists, and create their own compositions using the same style as, for example Year 6 create portraits of the Queen in the style of David Hockney. Pupils are introduced to a range of styles and are taught techniques directly in some classes. Pupils explore moral and environmental issues through their artwork such as exploring environmental art by planning their compositions and using a range of natural materials. However, very few examples were seen of three-dimensional work. Whilst a few examples of artwork from other cultures were seen, there is need to further develop pupils' experience and knowledge of art work and work of artists from other cultures. Work throughout the school supports other subjects through, for example, illustrations in literacy, religious education and history.
124. In the two lessons observed in Year 1 and Year 4, teaching was satisfactory. In these lessons, teachers made the lesson objectives clear through detailed explanations. Resources were well organised and easily accessible. Pupils had good opportunity to choose their own materials from a range of suitable resources. Teachers monitored the use of time to ensure that pupils were engaged in productive activities. Adults were deployed effectively. In the concluding part of the session, pupils shared their work with others and made evaluative comments such as "I like it because it's pretty".
125. The art and design co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. He has carried out a detailed audit of what is taught and monitors teachers' planning to ensure appropriate coverage. The co-ordinator has made a start in formulating an early draft as part of the action plan for the next academic year. The school has recently started linking planning for the subject with the units from the national guidance but the scheme of work is not yet fully in place. Sketchbooks are effectively used in Year 6; the school has planned to introduce these in all the classes. Some use is made of computer programs to create compositions. The co-ordinator is well aware of the need to further develop the subject in school. The action plan for the forthcoming academic year is based on the audit, is well thought out and focused on addressing the weak areas in the subject and shows good insight into school needs, high level of commitment and capacity to succeed. The school is aware that the assessment of art is unsatisfactory and is appropriately identified as a key area for

development in the action plan. Resources for the subject are adequate.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

126. Pupils aged seven attain average standards. The standards of eleven year olds are below average. The standards of seven year olds have improved since the time of the last inspection and those of pupils aged eleven have deteriorated. A whole school programme of work has been adopted in the interim period, but there are still no agreed procedures for assessing and recording how well pupils are learning, although the school has plans to address this weakness. Due to an uneven coverage of the National Curriculum units of study in the junior classes, in particular in Year 6 the statutory requirements are not fully met. This has resulted in insufficient opportunities for pupils in the junior classes to extend their knowledge and understanding and practise the appropriate range of designing, making and evaluating skills to attain standards that are in line with expectations for eleven year olds. The introduction of national guidance and a focused approach in the infant classes has impacted well on pupils' progress and consequently standards in the subject have improved.
127. Pupils in Year 2 attain good standards in design drawing. Their recorded work in preparation for making a wheeled vehicle includes annotated sketches in which they label parts such as the axle and the chassis and make choices within a given framework. For example, one pupil chose to create a wedding car. Effective teaching ensures that after making products such as card figures using sliding parts, pupils evaluate their work appropriately. One pupil wrote, 'I will try to make it easier to move.' 'Dingle Dangle Scarecrow' stick puppets made by Year 2 pupils show that they work with satisfactory accuracy when cutting and joining components. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language have the same access to activities, they are well supported and make the same progress as their classmates.
128. A strong feature of the work done in the junior years is the good attention that pupils pay to consumers. In Year 4, pupils produce purses, which include a pocket in which loose change can be kept. In lessons for Year 5, pupils are helped to realise that products are made with different consumers in mind. Work in English is linked well to design and technology, with pupils using persuasive writing to mimic a marketing campaign. Pupils in Year 6 were seen testing the structural strength of beams in preparation for designing and making shelters. Good quality teaching ensured that pupils began to understand the need for rigidity in most structures. However, discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of teachers' planning show that they have too few opportunities to design and make during the school year. As a result, their standards are below the level expected for their age group.
129. The quality of teaching and learning in the two lessons seen in Years 2 and 6 was good. Due to insufficient evidence no judgement is made on the quality of teaching overall. In the lessons seen, teachers tell pupils clearly at the start of the lesson what they are expected to learn. This helps pupils to work more effectively. Visual prompts such as sheets listing useful words help with recording tasks. Teachers pay appropriate attention to pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language to ensure they work at a brisk pace. For example, the Year 2 pupil at an early stage of English acquisition

was paired with a peer who explained the instructions and helped with the work. Although the use of pupils' first language may have deepened understanding and made the task more accessible.

130. The lack of a co-ordinator for more than a year has reduced the attention paid to the subject, but two newly qualified teachers have taken subject management responsibility a few weeks before the inspection. They have produced a good plan to bring about improvements and have already assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the present provision. They realise the importance of working with teachers to improve the programme they follow when planning lessons and ensuring that sufficient time is given to the subject. The school has planned support from the link beacon school headteacher to ensure quality support for subject development and developing the role of the co-ordinators.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

131. Standards are in line with expectations and progress is generally satisfactory for most pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous report. Mapping skills continue to be developed but there is still limited knowledge of places. The school has adopted national guidance for geography recently. This has been adapted well in some units of work but as yet not adapted sufficiently to cover the National Curriculum 2000 in depth.
132. Mapping skills are developed well throughout the school. Year 1 pupils listen attentively to the story, *Rosie's Walk*, identify the main features and explain the journey she made. Pupils build on this and draw their own imaginary maps using several physical features appropriately. Year 2 pupils identify similarities and differences between physical and human features in Norden and Blackpool. This helps them to understand that these places have similar characteristics, learn new features and develop awareness that not all places are the same. They use the *My World*, software program to identify other holiday resorts in England on the map. Earlier work in Year 2 based on *Katie Morag and her two Grandmothers*, identified many of the similarities and differences between the Isle of Struay and the Mainland. Pupils' work shows an understanding of how an island is formed and how contours are used to show the height on mountains. Grid references using a 'Pirates treasure map,' are beginning to be used and by Year 4, pupils are using co-ordinates well.
133. In the juniors, Year 3 pupils continue to identify features of Norden matching an aerial photograph with that of a local map. Resources are not good enough for these pupils to develop their skills in this area further. Year 4 pupils are beginning to understand land use and how the environment affects people. This is explained well by the teacher using, *Window* as an example. The book reinforces pupils' understanding of how immediate some of the changes are, helps individuals to see how the environment is influenced by the actions of individuals and to consider what could be done by them to protect the environment. These pupils have a good understanding of many charity organisations that are working to develop understanding of environmental problems across the world. Art and design lessons are used well to deepen this understanding. For example, Year 4 pupils design and compose environmental art pictures and discuss the related issues. The pupils use atlases

well to plot a journey from Norden to India. In their study of Chembakoli pupils begin to understand weather and climate, comparing the wettest and driest months, the coldest and hottest temperatures and most and least rain between London and Bangalore. The work shows some understanding of life in the Nilgiri Hills, of the Adivasi and the forest.

134. Pupils in Year 5 build on what they know about the local area. They are very involved with an issue very close to school, Shawfield Road. 'Should it be closed to traffic?' This year group has access to good maps and photographs of the area. They had been to the road to find first hand information about what the problem is. They had completed a traffic census of vehicles entering and leaving, counted the parked cars outside the terraced houses and seen how narrow the road is. In groups they have worked out suggestions as to how this could be resolved, and drawn large sketch maps. However, pupils soon realised that their solutions often created other problems. They have decided to complete a questionnaire, listen to the views of a number of local people before writing to the council with their ideas.
135. The quality of teaching is good in most of the lessons seen. Teachers use the school's location well to consolidate geographical concepts. Years 4, 5 and 6 have good opportunities to experience orienteering activities during their residential field days. Fieldwork away from school enhances the geographical curriculum providing opportunities to extend learning through practical work in different areas. The pupils thoroughly enjoy these experiences. However, analysis of work shows that teachers generally plan whole class lessons that are age-related, which constrains the progress that some pupils are capable of making. Marking does not always contain evaluative remarks that help pupils to improve their work.
136. Co-ordination of the work is satisfactory. As yet there is no clear overview of how each unit develops the pupils' geographical skills. The co-ordinator is aware that there are no formal assessment procedures in place and that more resources and information communication software is required.

## **HISTORY**

137. Only two history lessons were observed in the juniors during the inspection. Further evidence was taken from teachers' planning, pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. Standards of attainment for pupils aged seven and eleven are in line with expectations. This reflects the judgements made in the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language. Some higher attainers are capable of achieving more. The school has made some improvements in the quality of provision for the subject since the last inspection. It has reviewed the curriculum, developed a new policy, and adopted the national guidance, which is used to inform teachers' planning. However, this development is fairly recent and there has not been sufficient time to impact standards of attainment. Chronology is developed well. Pupils make appropriate use of the time lines displayed in the classrooms to place events, people and changes into the correct periods of time and make accurate use of historical dates and vocabulary in discussions.

138. The visit to Shibden Hall helped Year 1 pupils to understand how the people used to live in this house a long time ago. The hands-on experience and the displays of relevant artefacts in the classroom reinforce this learning. There is accelerated learning in Year 2 through the study of significant people and events, for instance, Florence Nightingale and the Gun Powder Plot. Pupils use effective diagrams to begin to understand how their family fits into the local community and how important all the people are in the life of the community, for example, the doctor, dentist and the police.
139. In the juniors, pupils show greater understanding of the way the past is represented and develop a deeper sense of chronology, using time lines and researching the features of previous civilisations and societies. Year 3 pupils use a wide range of sources to develop their understanding of life during World War Two. First hand experiences are planned to include, for example, the use of visitors who share their wartime experiences with Year 3. Pupils in Year 4 have studied the Romans, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings. Their work in their books shows good coverage of this period with good attention to detail. There are good explanations for the reasons why people invaded Britain and the effects of their arrival and settlement here. The work in Year 5, linking Victorian life to the study of life in the local area of Norden is good. Visits from the local librarian enhance this project. They learn how to interpret census information using the Howarth family as their example. They draw a graph well comparing the birthplaces of people shown on Census returns for Ellis Fold in 1851 and 1891. Sources on Dr Dam Cottages in 1900 and inside a Rochdale weaving shed in 1900; further develop understanding of life during this period. These experiences add significantly to the quality of pupils' writing, including diaries, note-taking and bullet points. By the age of eleven pupils accurately link study periods such as the Tudors, Victorians and Britain in the 1930s. Displays contribute well to an interesting environment and are often used well to extend teaching and learning by posing questions. In discussion, pupils showed good knowledge of Tutankhamen in their study of Egyptians.
140. Links with information and communication technology have improved since the previous inspection and the school is beginning to provide relevant CD-ROMs relating to the work being studied. Visits to Manchester museum and other places of historical interest are used satisfactorily to enhance the curriculum. The library is used well by pupils to research for information.
141. The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen in Year 6 classes was satisfactory in one and good in the other. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Analysis of pupils' work shows that teachers generally plan activities appropriate to the age group they teach and that planning is not generally informed by on-going assessments. This impedes progress over time. In the most effective lesson the teacher's good subject knowledge was evident in the range of searching questions which helped the pupils to make links with prior learning. Activities were challenging and well supported by appropriate research materials. In the satisfactory lesson, work was planned to match a range of abilities. Questioning and tasks were particularly well targeted to meet the needs of the pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. In both lessons teachers maintained a brisk pace in lessons. However, whilst the lesson was satisfactory, a disproportionate amount of time was focused on developing literacy skills, overlooking the historical element of the key

objectives.

142. The recently appointed co-ordinator is a part-time teacher. She is keen to raise the standards of history further by improving subject knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum 2000, for instance, the study of the Tudors is broader than events in this country and includes Britain and the wider world. As yet there have been no opportunities to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning and she is aware that procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress in history are still at an early stage of development.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

143. Standards for pupils aged seven and eleven are in line with expectations for this age. This shows good improvement since the last inspection when standards in information and communication technology were below average and provision for the subject was unsatisfactory. The school has benefited well from the additional grants and support in developing the provision and practice in information and communication technology. The staff development programme has been implemented effectively and consequently teachers' knowledge has improved. There has been good improvement in the detail of the planning and the management of the subject and the quality of teaching is generally good. The demands of the subject and the provision of computers and computer programs have moved on rapidly since the previous inspection and the school has caught up with current developments in terms of knowledge and expertise. The amount of software has increased to cover the requirements of the National Curriculum. There are sufficient computers for the number of pupils, and the school is continually increasing appropriate programs for supporting other subjects. Teaching is good and subsequently most pupils make good progress through the school. All pupils have opportunities to use the computer as an integral part of the everyday life in the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with learning English as an additional language make good progress.
144. Almost all pupils aged seven use aspects of a painting program to create and express their ideas. For example, when making a poster titled 'Norden Puppets present Cinderella', the pupils used the program *Fresco* to draw, colour and decorate their illustrations. Clear guidance from the teachers gives pupils the confidence to select and draw thick and thin lines. They have the skill to drag rectangular shapes across the page, modifying their work until they are pleased with their design. Using the cursor, they can select colours and fill in the spaces. Work in the pupils' books shows the wide range of their computer skills. Working with a partner, they word-process their news and make greeting cards. Note-taking shows that the pupils work independently to find information. They download pictures and maps, including the key from the internet. Supportive teaching provides the pupils with a guide and an information sheet on the parts of the computer. Personal assessment is encouraged by the teachers so that the pupils have a good self-knowledge of their learning. Pupils tick off all the things they can do in information and communication technology
145. Pupils in Year 2 know how to make a spreadsheet. For example, they made a graph

showing where the class had been for their holidays last year. The pupils save the work to be used for the following week, generating questions based on a graph. Using the *Talk Write Away*, the pupils, working with a partner, enter questions, such as 'Where did most people go for their holidays?' Effective teaching ensures that the pupils know exactly what to do. For example, resources of cards showing the key symbols for shift and question mark are used to show the pupils how to use the 'question mark' on the computer. Teachers use effective strategies to teach the basic skills of information and communication technology.

146. By the age of eleven pupils confidently access the internet. They create electronic records by selecting from a range of stored photographs or pictures. They then add their own spoken commentary and by using 'timing tag', add animation, so that the words appear in sequence to match the pictures. Pupils' skills in using computer technology are successfully built up by good teaching in the preceding years. For example, pupils in Year 3 send e-mails with a photograph attachment to another friend in the class or school. They check on their success in order to get 'message arrived'. In Year 4, pupils use software programs such as *Word* plus *Clip Art* to produce persuasive advertisements for a fruit based drink. Since most pupils have computers at home, teachers make good use of homework. For example, pupils research fruit drink products on the website address given to them. Year 5 pupils use a spreadsheet to load information, such as the amount of money spent after shopping. Using *Microsoft Excel* they know that, in order to add up numbers, they must first go to formula by clicking on to 'tick'. Skilful teaching guides the pupils' learning by supporting them individually as they work. Through effective questioning, pupils realise that they are changing the spreadsheet into an adding machine. Year 6 pupils record in their notebooks the work they have done, including methods and assessment. They make good use of programs such as *Revise Wise* to get information on how to study. Good teaching encourages the pupils to work independently, such as learning about the Aztecs through using the internet and CD-ROMs.
147. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator keeps a file of the planning for what teachers will teach over the half-term and plans now to monitor teaching. 'Tick off' skills sheets are passed on from class to the next class. Cross-curricular links with other subjects are a strength. For example, pupils use their research skills to find information in history and create pictures in art and design. Plans for the future are to build up a portfolio of work across the school, showing progression in skills and for the co-ordinator to have time-release in order to train teachers and to work alongside colleagues.

## MUSIC

148. Too few lessons were seen in Year 2 to reliably judge the standards attained by seven year olds. The standards attained at age eleven are average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Tuition from visiting specialists greatly enhances the provision for older pupils and enables more able pupils to improve their standards in guitar, strings, woodwind, percussion and keyboards. The pupils who play instruments attain good standards in their ability to read and perform. Regular opportunities to play as pupils enter and leave assembly help to raise the standards they attain.

149. Pupils in Year 2 were only observed during one lesson, in which their attainment was well above average. They produce music to accompany their own singing, playing tuned percussion instruments and reading traditional notation. Pupils suggest compositions in which they use rests appropriately. They sing with enthusiasm, varying the intensity and style of their performances. Most understand terms such as 'dynamics' and 'tempo'.
150. Year 6 pupils sing in harmony, maintaining the correct pitch and performing with enthusiasm. They sing two-round versions of songs such as *Good News*, *Chariot's Coming* effectively, although they occasionally lose the rhythm. They experiment confidently in improvising performances based on a theme of 'space soundscapes', using a variety of instruments including tuned percussion and keyboards. Pupils recognise the atmospheric nature of their performances and evaluate each other's work constructively, making comments such as: "They could use that to lead on to something else" and "It would be better without the amplifier". However, their appraisal does not often include the use of appropriate musical terms. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language participate enthusiastically in lessons and make the same progress as their classmates.
151. The quality of teaching and learning was very good in one lesson and satisfactory in the others. It is satisfactory overall. The music co-ordinator teaches classes in the infant part of the school and a visiting local education authority teacher takes the junior classes. The single lesson seen in Year 2 was of very good quality. The teacher's excellent use of praise, together with his enthusiasm and commitment, resulted in pupils involving themselves very well and sustaining concentration for long periods. His high expectations and highly appropriate approach to teaching younger pupils promote very good behaviour, much enjoyment and very effective learning. In other lessons, the teacher generates and maintains good pace and involves pupils well in improvising performances. He intervenes well to move them from experimenting into making decisions about the form their music will take. Sometimes time is lost when pupils do not respond quickly enough to the teacher's instructions to listen.
152. The work of the co-ordinator has a good effect on standards. He gives the subject a high profile in the school and the community, using assemblies as a platform for performance and giving all pupils regular opportunities to appraise the work of a wide range of composers and music from many cultures. Performances in the local shopping centre and at nearby nursing homes have a very strong input to pupils' musical and personal development. He has worked hard to develop the school's participation in competitions such as the Rochdale Youth Festival of Music, Speech and Dance, and to increase the number of pupils receiving individual instrumental tuition. Further work is needed to ensure that the ways in which pupils' learning is assessed and recorded are fully effective, especially in the junior classes. The coordinator is aware of the need to develop the use of information and communication technology.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

153. During the inspection, seven physical education lessons were observed. There were discussions with the acting co-ordinator and pupils. Resources were scrutinised and additional evidence about extra-curricular activities was considered.
154. Standards of attainment by the ages of seven and eleven are typical of those expected nationally. The previous inspection report indicated that pupils were able to use basic skills in gymnastics games and dance. The findings of this inspection are that standards have been maintained in these areas and in addition, pupils are developing skills in games, athletics and swimming. In addition, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 undertake residential, educational visits where a number of outdoor and adventurous activities are experienced. The full range of activities contained in the National Curriculum physical education breadth of study are delivered in both infants and juniors. Attainment in swimming is very good, with an expectation that all pupils will complete the requirement to swim 25 metres by the age of eleven.
155. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and who use English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress through the school, while a number of pupils achieve well through their participation in competitive games, athletics, swimming and cross-country running.
156. Pupils work hard, are enthusiastic and behave well. Most pupils work independently or as a member of a pair or group for activities requiring either co-operation or competition. They listen patiently to explanations and evaluate their own and others' performances well.
157. All pupils change for their physical education lessons. There is a school requirement in the prospectus in terms of appropriate clothing for physical activity.
158. Teaching of physical education is satisfactory overall and examples of good teaching were observed. However, unsatisfactory teaching was observed in one lesson. The good teaching is characterised by effective management of pupils with good relationships between the teacher and pupils. The lesson has brisk pace with pupils active throughout. It has good structure, effective teaching of skills, with warm up and down at the beginning and end. There are high expectations of pupils giving their best performance and opportunities are planned for them to evaluate their own work and that of others. Apparatus and equipment are carried or moved by pupils. In the unsatisfactory teaching, pupils are not engaged in the lesson and there is significant wastage of time in lengthy explanations. There are half classes sitting passively watching, and there is insufficient physical activity throughout the lesson with pupils making little progress in learning or consolidating skills. The teacher, rather than the pupils, moves the apparatus.
159. The last inspection report states that too much time in lessons is used watching others perform. In this respect, there has been insufficient improvement. However, the report goes on to describe the lack of a detailed scheme of work. In this respect there has been significant improvement and the school uses a well-respected commercial scheme. The scheme gives good coverage of all aspects of physical education in the National Curriculum and provides a sound basis for teachers to carry out their planning.

160. During the absence of the co-ordinator for physical education, the management role is being carried out well by the part time specialist physical education teacher. He shares his 0.3 teaching position with his duties as the director of community activities. Although employed for a short period of the week, he is able to provide good quality, professional advice and support where required. He oversees planning and ensures that it reflects the scheme of work. He observes teaching and where required, is able to offer his particular expertise. His principal strengths are the management of extra-curricular activities, of which there are many, and the delivery of specialist coaching in individual activities such as trampolining and team sports such as football and cricket.
161. Resources for physical education are very good. The school derives considerable benefit from the resources provided by the community. Apparatus and equipment for physical education, games and athletics are impressive and in good order. There is a large, well-equipped gymnasium and outdoor facilities are extensive.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

162. The provision for religious education has improved since the last inspection. The school now has a scheme of work based on the locally agreed syllabus. The co-ordinator checks teachers' planning to ensure that the appropriate curriculum time allocated for teaching the subject is used to cover the scheme of work.
163. The school has maintained standards in religious education since the previous inspection. Standards attained by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the expectations set in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. During the inspection much of the work focused on learning about Islam in most of the classes. Assemblies make an effective contribution to religious education, as do the personal, social and health education lessons.
164. In Years 1 and 2, pupils understand the idea of belonging to a family and to a community such as the school. They recognise the different Islamic artefacts and know the purposes for which they are used. Over time pupils develop a satisfactory factual basis of the topics they study, and knowledge of Christianity. Pupils are encouraged to respect and care for each other and empathise with the less fortunate, and many classrooms had displays suggesting ways in which this might be carried out on a practical day-to-day basis. By the age of eleven, pupils discuss and name some of the key events in Christianity. They discuss some similarities and differences between Islam and Christianity. Pupils from both these religious groups share their beliefs, customs and traditions with each other in an atmosphere of mutual respect and a keen interest to learn about other people. Throughout the school progress in historical, comparative and factual study of religions is satisfactory. Religious vocabulary is progressively introduced and pupils throughout the school show a growing confidence in using specific vocabulary in their discussions.
165. Pupils take pride in presenting their work. Their work makes a valuable contribution to the overall development of literacy skills, which are of a good standard. Links are established

with other subjects such as geography when Year 4 pupils locate the countries where Buddhism is the most predominant religion. Pupils use their skills in art and design well to illustrate their recorded work in much detail. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and are keen to learn about Christianity and other faiths. They enter into discussions enthusiastically and share their ideas and feelings with others. Pupils show a good level of respect and tolerance for those that hold different beliefs and faiths.

166. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was generally good. Evidence from scrutiny of work, however, indicates that the quality of teaching over time is satisfactory. Lessons, teachers' plans, the work displayed and pupils' books show that in the main, teachers provide a generally balanced religious education programme based on sound subject knowledge, although there is relatively more focus on knowledge about religions and not as much opportunity to reflect on religious issues. When teaching is most effective, teachers employ strategies which generate eagerness to learn and curiosity to find out more. This was evident in the Year 6 lesson where the Muslim pupils brought their special clothes and talked about special occasions in their religion and acted as experts on Islam. These pupils showed good knowledge and understanding of their faith and shared it confidently with the rest of the class. However, overall teachers miss opportunities to build links with the diverse faith communities and visit places of worship representing the religions pupils study. There are examples of effective marking of pupils' work where learning is enhanced because of the clear pointers for improvement that are made. This good practice is not prevalent in all classes.
167. The implementation of the scheme of work has ensured that appropriate guidance is in place to support teaching and learning. The recent implementation means that it is not fully embedded in school practice and has not yet had time to make a significant impact on standards and the progress that pupils make. The subject is not a priority area for development but the co-ordinator monitors colleagues' planning. When provision for the subject is to be reviewed in the near future, it is intended to provide the co-ordinator with opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The co-ordinator's action plan based on a recent review of the provision, ensures that the quality is maintained but lacks a sharp focus on what is to be developed. The school is aware that the assessment of the subject is underdeveloped and is reviewing the guidance in the locally agreed syllabus. Resources for the subject are adequate. Junior pupils use the library and the internet to research for information about different religions.