

INSPECTION REPORT

HEALEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rochdale

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105850

Headteacher: Mrs S M Taylor

Reporting inspector: Mr C D Taylor
23004

Dates of inspection: 25 -28 November 2002

Inspection number: 246531

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: Foundation

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Earnshaw Avenue
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Rochdale
Lancashire

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr B Hayes-Burton

Date of previous inspection: 2 - 6 February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23004	Christopher Taylor	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an Additional Language Science History Music	What the school should do to improve How high standards are How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
19741	Trevor Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good curricular and other opportunities are How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents / carers
22881	George Halliday	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Design and technology Physical education Religious education	
29188	Gianna Ulyatt	Team inspector	Educational inclusion English Information and communication technology Art and design Geography	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Healey Primary School is a foundation school catering for boys and girls aged four to 11 years. The school is similar in size to most primary schools, with 239 full-time pupils. The school serves an area of private and local authority housing on the northern outskirts of Rochdale and has a broad social mix of backgrounds. The school is full and numbers have remained steady since 1997. Seven per cent of pupils - below the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils join the reception classes with levels of attainment roughly typical for their age. Six per cent of pupils - well below the national average - are on the special educational needs register. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Pupils with special needs include those with moderate learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties and behavioural problems. Seventeen pupils are from ethnic minorities, the majority being Pakistani. Only three speak English as an additional language and none is at an early stage of English acquisition.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Healey Primary is a very effective school. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour and relationships are very good. Consequently, they make good progress as they move through the school and standards are well above the national average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Attendance is well above the national average. The school benefits from good leadership and a good shared commitment by the staff and governors to improve the school further. Although expenditure per pupil is just above the national average, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in literacy and numeracy, and in music, are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good, overall, especially in the reception classes and in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, overall.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good and links with parents are very effective.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher, key staff and the governing body are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics are below national expectations for higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Standards in design and technology are below national expectations throughout the school.
- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) to assist teaching and learning across different subjects of the curriculum.
- The classroom accommodation is too cramped for older pupils in Years 5 and 6.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the previous inspection in 1998, the school has made good progress, overall, in improving the areas identified in the last inspection report. It has made good progress in improving pupils' compositional writing by providing more opportunities for pupils to write regularly and ensuring staff have appropriate training and support. It has developed and updated suitable schemes of work that reflect the National Curriculum programmes of study. It has made good progress in ensuring that the curriculum for reception age children leads towards the early learning goals for young children, but has not yet ensured that higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 are always challenged sufficiently, especially in mathematics. It has made significant progress in developing the role of subject co-ordinators, although

their role still needs developing further. In addition, teaching and learning have improved and standards in the reception classes and by the end of Year 6 are higher. Assessment of pupils' skills has improved and is generally used well to set work appropriate to pupils' needs. Accommodation has improved with the building of an extension to the Year 1 and 2 teaching area.

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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	A	B	B
mathematics	C	A	A	A
science	D	B	C	C

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

Inspection findings show that attainment in the current Year 6 is well above the national average in English and mathematics, and broadly in line with the national average in science. Standards are in line with national expectations in all other subjects except in music where standards are well above expectations, in physical education and in art and design where standards are above expectations, and in design and technology where standards are below expectations. Standards continue to be high in English and mathematics as lower-attaining pupils receive good support from classroom assistants while higher-attaining pupils benefit from extension classes. Attainment at the end of Year 2 was above the national average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics in the national tests in 2002. Standards were broadly in line with the average in the teachers' assessments in science. In the current Year 2, standards are above average in reading and writing, close to average in science, but still below average in mathematics. In mathematics, most pupils perform in line with national expectations and make sound progress, but higher-attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently and do not achieve as well as expected. Standards in all other subjects are close to those expected nationally except in art and design, music and physical education where standards are higher than expected and in design and technology where standards are lower than expected. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the additional support they receive. Suitable targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very keen to learn and are well motivated. They are enthusiastic and involved in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite and helpful and behave well in class and around school. There were no exclusions during the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between pupils and with members of staff are very good. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to take initiative and to carry out responsibilities around the school.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national average. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Teaching is good, overall. It is good in the reception classes, satisfactory with much good teaching in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills in English and mathematics and across other subjects of the curriculum is good throughout the school. Strengths in teaching include good subject knowledge, very good class management and effective use of support staff and resources. As a result, pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Very good use is made of specialist subject teachers in music, science and physical education, and of well-qualified classroom assistants in art and design and ICT. However, most teachers do not use ICT enough to assist teaching and learning across different subjects of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs receive all the help they need. Where teaching is occasionally less successful, this is because there has not been sufficient systematic recording of science investigations or work in mathematics has not been matched closely enough to the individual needs of pupils of different ability. This is particularly so in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 where work for higher-attaining pupils is not always challenging enough. Homework is used effectively to reinforce pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, overall. The curriculum is broad and benefits from the addition of French in Years 5 and 6. All the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Agreed Syllabus for religious education are met except in design and technology where there is insufficient time spent on the subject. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities including a strong tradition of musical activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils receive good assistance and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Only three pupils speak English as an additional language and none is at an early stage of English acquisition.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good, overall. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, with clear teaching of right and wrong. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good, including visits to the theatre, museums and places of historical interest.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for the personal support and guidance of pupils and for promoting good behaviour and attendance are effective. The school has sensible strategies in place to check how well pupils are doing. Teachers generally use these assessments well to plan work that is appropriate for pupils of different abilities and different ages.

The school encourages good parental involvement and receives the valuable support of a strong parent-teacher association.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good, overall. The headteacher and senior management team provide good leadership. They ensure that the school moves forward with clear educational direction. Subject co-ordinators check teachers' planning, but most do not monitor pupils' work regularly enough or observe and evaluate teaching in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors carry out all their statutory duties well. They play an effective role in helping to shape the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good, overall. The headteacher, key stage co-ordinators and governors monitor and evaluate the school's performance well and have a good grasp of its strengths and weaknesses. Subject co-ordinators do not have such a good understanding of the shortcomings in their subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school supports educational priorities well through good financial planning. Specific grants, including funding for pupils with special educational needs, are used well. The school applies the principles of best value by comparing itself with other schools, consulting widely, and ensuring competition through tendering. The accommodation is generally satisfactory, though the Year 5 and 6 classrooms are very cramped. Resources are good, overall, but more resources are required in design and technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school. • They make good progress in their work. • Behaviour in the school is good. • The teaching is good. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem. • The school expects children to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just over two thirds of parents responded to the questionnaire. A fifth of those who responded felt that they are not kept well informed about how their children are getting on. • One in seven who responded felt that the school does not work closely enough with parents.

The inspection findings support the parents' very positive views. While agreeing that it is too long before the first parents' evening is held for most year groups, it is the inspectors' judgement that parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. The school's partnership with parents is generally very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children join the school, attainment is broadly typical for their age, though children's attainment on entry has risen over the past two years, and the current reception and Year 1 classes have a higher proportion of pupils with above average skills. All children, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress towards the early learning goals for young children. By the end of the reception year, most children have exceeded the levels expected for their age in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical understanding, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were reported to be in line with national expectations.
2. By the end of Year 2, inspection findings show that the overall attainment of pupils is in line with the national average in science, above average in English, and below average in mathematics. Attainment was found to be close to the standards expected nationally in all other subjects except in art and design, music and physical education, where standards are higher than expected, and in design and technology, where standards are lower than expected. This is similar to standards in science and most other subjects at the previous inspection. Standards were reported to be average in English and mathematics at the previous inspection and are now better in English but not as good in mathematics. Standards have improved in art and design due to the expertise of a specialist classroom assistant. Overall, standards are similar to the national tests in 2002 when attainment was above average in reading and writing, but below average in mathematics. Standards in teachers' assessments in science were broadly in line with the national average. There are no significant variations in attainment by gender or by ethnic background.
3. In English, inspection findings indicate that attainment in the current Year 2 is above the national average in all areas. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are better than those expected for their age and most pupils make good progress in developing confidence when speaking. Teachers have good communication skills and use questioning well to encourage pupils to speak in whole class situations. In reading, standards are above average for their age. Most pupils make good progress because they are taught effectively and have plenty of opportunities to read at school and at home. Standards in writing are above average as teachers show pupils how to construct stories and write for a variety of purposes. Most pupils use appropriate punctuation, and are able to spell simple words correctly. Standards in handwriting are good, and suitable attention is given to neatness and overall presentation. Extra assistance provided for pupils with special educational needs helps them to make good progress.
4. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment in Year 2 is below the national average. Most pupils perform in line with national expectations and make sound progress, but higher-attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently and do not achieve as well as expected. There is a good focus on basic numeracy, counting and mental calculation skills, as well as solving simple word problems. In science, inspection findings indicate that attainment by the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations. Pupils have a good understanding of materials and living things, and are given plenty of opportunities to carry out their own investigations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in science. Pupils'

attainment in ICT is in line with standards expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and pupils use the mouse and the keyboard with increasing confidence.

5. By the end of Year 6, inspection findings show that standards are well above the national average in English and mathematics and are close to average in science. Attainment was found to be close to the standards expected nationally in all other subjects, except in art and design and in physical education where standards are above expectations, in music where standards are well above expectations, and in design and technology where standards are below expectations. This reflects the national tests in 2002 when standards in English were above average, mathematics was well above average and science was close to the national average. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress, and there are no significant variations in attainment by gender or by ethnic background.
6. Inspection findings indicate that, in English, pupils make good progress in their reading as there is a well-structured programme and pupils take books home regularly. Pupils make good progress in developing their speaking skills and often join in discussions, drama and role-play to develop their confidence. Standards in writing are much better than usual as pupils are encouraged to develop a wide range of vocabulary to improve their written work. Standards of handwriting and presentation are generally good.
7. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment in Year 6 is well above what is expected nationally. The adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy throughout the school has ensured that teaching is focused well on appropriate skills. In science, standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils make sound progress in their understanding of physical processes and living things, and they are given ample opportunities to carry out their own investigations. However, they do not always record their investigations systematically enough. Attainment in ICT is in line with national expectations. Pupils develop their keyboard skills and learn to use desktop publishing and *Powerpoint* presentations to enhance their work.
8. Suitable targets have been set for English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2003. To achieve these targets, the school has focused on providing additional assistance for pupils with special educational needs and on extension classes for higher-attaining pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Attitudes to learning were good at the last inspection and are now very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, are interested and ready to work, and apply themselves well to all the tasks they are given. They listen very carefully when their teacher or others are speaking, answer questions sensibly and contribute confidently in discussions.
10. Behaviour has improved further since the previous inspection and is now very good, both in and out of class. Pupils have high levels of self-discipline and clearly know what is expected of them. Bullying is not a problem. No incidents were observed or reported during the inspection. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
11. Pupils' personal development has also improved and, on balance, is now very good. Most pupils are confident learners who work well on their own and are fully able to research information for themselves. They have a clear understanding of the impact of their actions upon others and show due respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs. This was very evident in a Year 6 history lesson when a visitor talked to them

about her experiences during World War II. The youngest children are very settled and are starting to develop good work habits. Pupils willingly accept any responsibilities offered to them and carry out their duties well. Older pupils acting as *playground pals* is a good example of this.

12. Relationships are now generally very strong among pupils and between pupils and staff. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided. The school has a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere. Pupils are polite, helpful and work very well together in class.
13. Pupils who have special educational needs grow in confidence and show very positive attitudes to their work because of the good help they receive. They behave very well and this benefits how effectively they learn. They are fully integrated into the life of the school and form very good relationships with others.
14. Attendance is well above the national average, and is broadly similar to that reported at the previous inspection. Unauthorised absence remains very low. Punctuality is good. Almost all pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is good, overall. It is good in the reception classes, satisfactory, overall, with much good teaching in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. During the inspection, it was never less than satisfactory and was good or better in two-thirds of the lessons. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when teaching was reported to be good or better in a third of all lessons. Where teaching is particularly good, this often involves excellent subject knowledge, effective teaching methods, very good class management and good use of support staff and resources. Where aspects of teaching are occasionally less successful, this is because there has not been enough systematic recording of science investigations or work in mathematics has not been matched closely enough to the individual needs of pupils of different ability. Consequently, pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
16. Teaching for young children is good in the reception class and in the reception / Year 1 class. The teachers and classroom assistants have a good understanding of how young children learn, and make learning enjoyable. They have high expectations and constantly encourage the children in order to build their confidence. The curriculum is well planned and lessons have clear learning objectives that lead towards the early learning goals for young children. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection. Class teachers and other adults have very good relationships with the children and provide good role models. They place a strong emphasis on developing children's social skills, and often help them to make choices and to take decisions by providing a range of free-choice activities during lessons. They frequently check children's knowledge and understanding, and provide tasks that are well matched to individual children's needs. They provide good support and guidance for children with special educational needs, and these children make good progress as a result.
17. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, in Years 1 and 2. It is good in English, art and design, history, ICT, music and physical education. No teaching was seen in science and geography. Teaching is good, overall, in Years 3 to 6. It is very good in music, good in English, mathematics, art and design, geography, history, ICT and physical education, and satisfactory in science and religious education. No lessons were seen in design

and technology in Years 3 to 6. Teaching that is good or better is a major factor in ensuring that pupils make good progress.

18. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good, and is outstanding on occasions. This ensures that pupils acquire good techniques and accurate information. In a Year 6 English lesson, for example, one teacher used his excellent knowledge of *Macbeth* to suggest images that pupils might adopt when describing a storm. Teachers' knowledge and expertise are particularly well used when subject specialists teach their subjects to several classes. This occurs, for example, when the music co-ordinator teaches pupils in Years 3 to 6, the physical education co-ordinator teaches all classes except those in Years 5 and 6, and the science specialist takes lessons in Year 6. Occasionally, however, a lack of expertise or forethought results in less effective learning. This occurred, for example, in a Year 5 science investigation when the teacher suggested that pupils plotted their results on a bar graph when they would have been better displayed as a line graph.
19. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is sound in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers' planning is generally effective in English and mathematics and benefits from following the guidelines in the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers usually make the learning objectives clear at the start of lessons, and review what pupils have learned at the end. This helps pupils to consolidate their learning. Teachers' planning usually uses the results of assessments to ensure that work planned for pupils of lower ability matches their individual needs. In a history lesson in Year 2, for example, lower-attaining pupils were given a recording sheet with key words missing to help them record their observations more easily. Work for higher-attaining pupils is not always challenging enough, however, and, as a result, these pupils do not always make as much progress as they should. This occurred in a mathematics lesson in Year 2, for example, where pupils of higher ability were set the same tasks as pupils of average ability, and did not put enough effort into completing exercises that they found too easy. In most subjects, planning follows national guidelines and this helps to ensure that teaching builds on earlier work in a logical order.
20. Teachers employ a good variety of teaching methods. They usually commence lessons by referring to the previous lesson to reinforce pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of searching questions to make pupils think, and develop pupils' vocabulary by using the correct mathematical, scientific or musical terminology. In a Year 4 music lesson, for instance, pupils learnt the terms *crescendo* and *diminuendo* and practised increasing and decreasing the volume of their performances. In science, there is a good emphasis on pupils carrying out their own investigations. In Year 3, pupils discussed how to conduct their own investigations to test the absorbency of different papers, while in Year 4, pupils explored which materials would conduct electricity to complete a circuit and light a bulb. Teachers often use pupils' skills to demonstrate good practice to the rest of the class. In a Year 2 physical education lesson, for example, pupils with good expertise demonstrated how to bounce a ball on the spot. This helped other pupils to evaluate and improve their own work.
21. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils produce a cheerful and productive atmosphere. Very effective class management is reflected in high standards of behaviour and very positive attitudes to work. As a result, most pupils are very keen to learn and usually concentrate well. This was clearly evident in a Year 2 drama lesson where the teacher acted out the parts played by the dame and the principal boy in a pantomime, and the pupils joined in the fun sensibly without losing their self-control.

22. Teachers generally use time and resources well. They time activities well to keep lessons moving at a brisk pace and to maintain a good rate of learning. Teachers and support staff work closely together and provide good assistance to pupils with special educational needs and to those with English as an additional language. They provide them with work, especially in English and mathematics, which closely matches their needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress. Particularly good use is made of the specialist expertise of two classroom assistants to teach small groups of pupils in ICT and in art and design. The input of these specialists into class and small group activities ensures that pupils learn all the necessary skills in ICT and that standards in art and design are above average throughout the school. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of teaching resources, and this helps to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. In a history lesson in Year 2, for instance, the teacher made very good use of a video about Florence Nightingale, while the teacher in a Year 1 lesson used a variety of old and new toys effectively. There is insufficient use of ICT by class teachers, however, to assist teaching and learning across different subjects of the curriculum. Teachers mount attractive displays of pupils' work in classrooms to stimulate pupils' thinking. Homework is used well to reinforce and extend learning, while marking encourages and motivates pupils, and often includes helpful comments on how the work can be improved.

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

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good, overall. There is a wide and balanced curriculum in the reception classes that leads towards the early learning goals for young children. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum are satisfactory, overall, in Years 1-6, and the curriculum for older pupils is enhanced by the inclusion of French lessons in Years 5 and 6. The curriculum does not fully meet statutory requirements, however, as the scheme of work for design and technology does not match the National Curriculum. Insufficient time is spent on this subject, although the allocation of time to other subjects is broadly appropriate. Requirements in the Agreed Syllabus for religious education are fully met. Planning is generally thorough and includes clear learning objectives usually matched well to pupils' abilities. The National Numeracy Strategy and the National Literacy Strategy have been implemented well and there is satisfactory use of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, although the use of literacy could be extended much further. Class teachers do not use ICT enough to assist teaching and learning across the curriculum.
24. The school offers an inclusive curriculum for all pupils. Classroom assistants and volunteer helpers are used very effectively to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language receive full access to the curriculum and are able to work alongside their peers. Assistance for these pupils is at its most effective in English and mathematics. In English, pupils work towards the comprehensive targets set in their individual education plans. In mathematics, teachers set work which closely matches pupils' needs. In other lessons, pupils work towards targets relevant to their needs. Many of the difficulties pupils encounter are resolved through working towards their individual targets. As a result, they make good progress.
25. There is a good programme of personal, health, social and citizenship education that is taught as separate lessons as well as through other subjects, particularly religious education and science. The programme helps to develop pupils' abilities to relate to others, to work for the common good, to respond to opportunities, challenge and

responsibilities, and to cope with change. Sex education and drugs awareness are also incorporated and are underpinned by appropriate policies.

26. Provision for extra-curricular activities is now very good and continues to make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Activities at lunchtime, or after school, include recorders, dance, wind band, choir, brass band, chess, computers, netball and soccer. Most are very well attended. Nearly 60 pupils receive instrumental tuition. A wide programme of educational visits is related to topics studied in class and provide good first-hand experiences for pupils. Older pupils also benefit from opportunities to take part in well-organised residential visits to Robinwood outdoor centre and Hollingworth Lake, as well as visits to France, where they experience life in a different culture.
27. Links with the local community have been developed since the previous inspection and are now good. In particular, the bands and choir regularly perform at local venues and festivals, and have also taken part in *Music for Youth* concerts at the Royal Festival Hall. Pupils planted bulbs on Syke Common to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. There are good sporting links with other schools through netball and soccer. Pupils give good support to a variety of charities, particularly those concerned with children, and entertain local senior citizens. This helps to raise their awareness of the needs of others. Business links are limited, however, although the Better Reading Partnership is well supported by the local Chamber of Commerce.
28. Links with other local schools and nurseries are good. There are well-organised induction programmes for pupils joining and leaving the school. These are greatly enhanced through visits to all the feeder nurseries by the reception class teacher and by liaison programmes with local secondary schools. The school has established close ties with Falinge Park High School where older pupils have regular opportunities to study subjects such as science and ICT. In addition, pupils use specialist science resources on loan from another local technology college.
29. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Valuing and caring for others are key features of the school's corporate life. In one school assembly, for example, pupils were asked to write their dreams and these were linked to the dream of Nelson Mandela. In another assembly, pupils were encouraged to think about the achievements of *Great Britons* before considering the lives of famous biblical characters including Jesus. Pupils who achieve awards outside school are applauded in assemblies. Teachers show pupils how much they value their efforts, by displaying their work to full advantage. Displays in support of science, for instance, value and celebrate the wonders of nature in the autumn season. Literacy lessons are sometimes linked to personal development and through well-chosen texts, pupils are encouraged to consider how it feels to be worried. There is a designated spiritual corner where, for example, Muslim pupils who are fasting can relax while their classmates have lunch. Discussions with pupils indicate that teachers value each one as an individual and pupils enjoy the good relationships they have with staff.
30. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school has a clear code of conduct and has high expectations of the way pupils should respond to each other. Moral themes are planned in subjects such as English, for example, when older pupils are asked to consider *good* versus *evil* in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Pupils analyse the characters in plays set in wartime Britain and discuss the moral issues involved. They are clear about the reasons behind right and wrong actions. They understand why certain standards are expected in school and respond with very good behaviour at all times.

31. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Relationships are firmly based upon mutual respect and staff provide good role models. Pupils care for one another and look after each other. Older pupils have been trained by the Children's Society to help younger children by becoming *playground pals*. They take on the responsibility very seriously by initiating games at playtimes and supporting those who feel alone. Pupils are very aware of those in need. At harvest time, they were encouraged to collect food for the drop-in centre at Manchester Cathedral. There are many lunchtime and after-school clubs to ensure that pupils from different classes and year groups can share common interests such as computing, drama, singing and music making. The school takes older pupils to the Robinwood centre for outdoor pursuits. This helps them to mature socially because, for some, this is the first time they have been away from home. They are expected to be quite independent and to take care of themselves.
32. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Visitors from different faiths are invited to school to share their cultures and traditions with pupils. Students from overseas sometimes visit the school and pupils interview them to find out about their way of life. Pupils visit local theatres, for example, to see a pantomime. Art and music further enhance pupils' cultural development. Many pupils learn to play a musical instrument and perform regularly in concerts and festivals. Pupils are encouraged to explore art from around the world and displays show the influence that native American and Aboriginal art has had on their work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school continues to look after its pupils well. Suitable health and safety measures are in place and are followed closely. Pupils are supervised carefully and the day-to-day working practices adopted by all staff are good. Arrangements for child protection remain secure. Two members of staff share responsibility for liaising with outside agencies and both are properly trained to carry out their roles. The school is also fully committed to promoting healthy living and has recently received an award for its participation in a national healthy schools programme.
34. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development remain effective. Teachers know their pupils well, have very good relationships with them and respond positively to their needs. High standards of behaviour are promoted successfully by all staff and, as a result, the school is a calm and orderly establishment with a good climate for learning. However, the underlying policy covering this area does not reflect current procedures and needs updating. Praise and rewards are used well to encourage effort, and significant achievements, particularly those recorded in the headteacher's *Book of Smiles* are celebrated in assemblies. The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities, but these could be extended further. The school council, for example, could be developed so that more pupils are included, members are elected regularly by their peers and pupils' views are fed back regularly.
35. The school provides good help for pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils receive good guidance for their learning difficulties from teachers and classroom assistants. Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development are good. Teachers use assessment information well to update pupils' individual educational plans and to set new targets for learning and personal development. The school makes good use of services, such as those supplied by an

educational psychologist and speech therapist, to promote pupils' learning and wellbeing.

36. Attendance is monitored thoroughly. Registers are maintained properly and there are suitable arrangements to follow up any unexplained absences. Attendance is already very high, but pupils are, nevertheless, actively encouraged to come to school regularly and are rewarded in various ways when they do.
37. The school has improved its procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' performance since the previous inspection. Procedures for assessing and recording what pupils achieve in English, mathematics and science are good. Pupils' progress is checked carefully through a variety of school and national tests. A thorough analysis is made of test results to identify trends in attainment and to look for gaps in the curriculum. An issue from the previous inspection recommended that teachers make better use of assessment procedures to plan work. This is now done well in English and mathematics where teachers use information to predict how well pupils will do by the end of the year and set targets for each pupil to achieve. A good variety of extra assistance is given to pupils who need it. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well by the school's procedures for assessing and monitoring their academic progress. A weakness in using assessments still remains, however, in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to set challenging work for higher-attaining pupils and this limits how well these pupils learn and make progress. Assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are less rigorous but nonetheless effective. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Parents express very strong support for the school. They rightly feel it is doing a good job in educating their children and are happy with the standards achieved.
39. The school's partnership with parents has improved since the previous inspection and is now generally very good. Pupils' annual reports are better. They provide a clear picture of pupils' achievements as well as setting suitable targets to help them do better. They do not, however, fully meet requirements because there is no specific distinction between art and design and design and technology on them. There are sufficient consultation evenings during the year, although inspectors agree with parents that the first of these is held far too late in the academic calendar in most year groups. Parents are kept well informed about events in school, including what is being taught in each class, through regular and informative on-going correspondence. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are well presented documents that fully meet requirements. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved and kept abreast of all developments. This leads to a close partnership between parents and teachers who work together for the benefit of pupils.
40. Parents give very good support to events such as school concerts and a significant number of them provide regular and reliable assistance in class, particularly with reading. They also help to run the school bank and library, and assist with school visits. Some have also recently helped to construct the Jubilee Garden. Home learning is very well supported. Homework is set regularly in all classes and homework diaries and reading record books are used effectively to maintain contact with parents and carers. The Parent Teachers Association remains very active and continues to provide very

generous support for the school. Recently, for example, it has provided outdoor play equipment for the youngest children and a music system for the hall.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The headteacher provides good leadership of the school. She has clear priorities and realistic plans for the future, and is committed to meeting the needs of pupils of different abilities and of those with special educational needs. She fulfils an important pastoral role and is regularly seen around the school informally monitoring teaching and children's efforts and encouraging pupils to take pride in their work. She has gained the respect of pupils and staff alike and has introduced new initiatives such as *playground pals*, links with local high schools and discussion times for personal, social and health education. She has very good relationships with parents and keeps them well informed with regular newsletters and details of work to be covered by pupils each term. The school also benefits from the effective support and assistance given by the deputy headteacher and a senior teacher who successfully oversee day-to-day matters and new developments in their roles as key stage co-ordinators. As a result, the school is moving forward with clear educational direction.
42. The school has good aims and values that are reflected well in its work. The school seeks to provide all pupils with a happy and secure environment in which they can reach their individual potential. It aims to equip them with the relevant skills, knowledge and attitudes to progress to the next stage of their educational life. It does this, for example, by emphasising the development of basic language skills and by fostering imaginative experiences through speech, drama, writing and literature. It is largely successful in these aims.
43. The management of the school continues to be good. The headteacher monitors teachers' planning and evaluative comments on lessons. Together with the key stage co-ordinators and the numeracy co-ordinator, she has observed teaching in each class and has fed back observations to individual teachers, making suggestions to raise pupils' attainment. Some of these visits form part of the performance management programme that is operating successfully in the school. Recently, she has also observed and evaluated the work of the support staff. The headteacher has a good grasp of pupils' standards. She analyses National Curriculum test results and optional test results to track pupils' progress from year to year and identifies weaker areas of the curriculum that need attention.
44. Since the previous inspection, the role of the subject co-ordinators has been developed substantially, especially in English and mathematics. Co-ordinators now seek to raise standards by monitoring teachers' planning and by evaluating pupils' work, though the latter is not yet done frequently enough. They regularly audit resources and draw up subject plans to be incorporated into the school improvement plan. Except in literacy and numeracy, however, subject co-ordinators have not yet been given opportunities to observe teaching in their subject areas. The school is aware that this restricts their capacity to raise standards, and is beginning to allocate time for co-ordinators to observe lessons in their subject areas.
45. The Special Educational Needs Manager carries out her duties well. She keeps teachers up to date with the Code of Practice. In consultation with teachers, she draws up effective individual education plans for pupils and updates them regularly. The school makes good use of classroom assistants trained to promote the learning, behaviour and welfare of pupils.

46. The governors provide good support for the headteacher and fulfil all their statutory responsibilities well. They have an effective working knowledge of the school and a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are kept well informed by detailed reports from the headteacher. Several governors, including the Chair, visit the school on a regular basis. Link governors for the Foundation Stage, literacy, numeracy, special educational needs and personal development have observed teaching throughout the school and have reported their findings back to the governing body. Committees meet regularly to discuss the curriculum, personnel, premises and the school's finances. Governors debate standards, performance management and budget issues, and help to determine the priorities facing the school. Several governors have taken part in training sessions to improve their effectiveness.
47. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning. The detailed school improvement plan identifies appropriate targets and ensures that resources are directed towards raising pupils' attainment. The personnel, resources and timings are identified clearly, and there are sound criteria by which the impact of these developments can be evaluated. New developments are linked appropriately to the annual budget. The school makes good use of resources allocated to assist specific groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs. The governors' finance committee monitors the school's budget regularly and satisfactory financial controls are in place. The large carry-over projected for the current financial year is earmarked for the extensions to the Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms. The principles of best value are applied well. The school seeks competitive tenders for all major spending decisions to ensure it receives good value for money. It assesses its performance in comparison with other schools, and consults widely to gain the opinions of parents, pupils and staff. Day-to-day administration is efficient and computers are used effectively for handling payments and for keeping pupils' records. Recommendations made in the most recent internal audit report have been fully implemented.
48. Staff and governors have a good shared commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning and the school has a good capacity to succeed. Appropriate targets have been set for raising standards in English, mathematics and science in the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2003.
49. The school is well staffed. Teachers are suitably qualified for their roles and provide a very good balance of experience and expertise. Curricular responsibilities are appropriately deployed among them. Teachers are very ably supported by a good number of suitably qualified classroom assistants, who have identified responsibilities, are well briefed for their roles and provide carefully focused help in lessons. The quality of administration and caretaking is also good and this ensures the school runs smoothly. Arrangements for the induction of new teachers work well and fully meet national guidelines.
50. The school has benefited from the building of an extension to the Year 1 and 2 teaching area since the previous inspection. Accommodation is still no more than adequate to meet the needs of the planned curriculum, however, as conditions in the Year 5 and 6 classrooms are very cramped. As a result, teachers are unable to move around the classrooms to assist individual pupils or to check their progress. The school is fully aware of this and is currently making arrangements to carry out extension work. The building is very clean and is maintained to a high standard. Classrooms are suitably furnished and the quality of display throughout is very good. Outside, the grounds are attractively laid out. They contain two good-sized playgrounds and a grassed area

suitable for sport, although this quickly becomes waterlogged and unusable in winter. To further enhance the site, pupils and parent volunteers have recently constructed a small Jubilee Garden.

51. Overall, the school is well resourced with materials to support pupils' learning, although they are unsatisfactory in design and technology. There is a good stock of books in the library and a wide range of computer equipment. Resources are used effectively, stored carefully and are easily accessible.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to improve the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 by:
 - (a) matching the work of higher-attaining pupils more closely to their needs.
 - (b) providing them with more assistance.

(see paragraphs 2, 4, 19, 37, 73, 76.)
- (2) Improve standards in design and technology in Years 1 to 6 by:
 - (a) developing a scheme of work that matches the National Curriculum programmes of study.
 - (b) ensuring there is a suitable time allocation in all classes.
 - (c) providing additional training to improve teachers' confidence in teaching the subject.

(see paragraphs 2, 5, 23, 92-96.)
- (3) Use ICT more widely to assist teaching and learning across all subjects of the curriculum.

(see paragraphs 22, 23, 68, 77, 86, 94, 100, 105, 106, 108, 120.)

- (4) Improve the classroom accommodation for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
(see paragraph 50.)

The school is fully aware of the need to extend the classroom accommodation and already has a suitable building programme in hand.

In addition to the key issues above, the school should consider including the following minor issues in its action plan:

- (1) The school should develop the role of subject co-ordinators to include more effective monitoring of pupils' work and more observation and evaluation of teaching and learning.
(see paragraphs 44, 86, 91, 96, 100, 105, 110, 120, 123, 125.)
- (2) The school should improve the systematic recording of science investigations in Years 4, 5 and 6.
(see paragraphs 81,82.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	9	21	16	0	0	0
Percentage	6%	18%	43%	33%	0%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	239
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	14

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	20	14	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	18
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	31	32	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (94)	94 (94)	91 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	19
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	31	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (94)	91 (94)	94 (94)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	8	22	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	24	26	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (87)	87 (90)	97 (90)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	25	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (87)	83 (87)	90 (90)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.
Where the number of boys or girls is ten or fewer the individual results are not reported.*

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
221	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
9	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
5	0	0
0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	174

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	532,033
Total expenditure	541,290
Expenditure per pupil	2,323
Balance brought forward from previous year	55,637
Balance carried forward to next year	46,380

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	239
Number of questionnaires returned	166

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	30	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	40	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	37	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	42	8	1	2
The teaching is good.	64	33	1	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	37	16	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	20	5	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	23	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	48	35	11	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	63	30	3	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	31	2	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	30	7	2	6

N.B. Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding

19 (11.45%) parents made additional comments

Strongest points in order:

- Very good attention is given to individual pupils.
- The school does a very good job.
- Staff are very approachable and helpful.
- There is an excellent range of school clubs and extra activities.
- Children enjoy attending the school.

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

53. The school provides a good start to children's education. The quality of teaching for children of reception age is good and the curriculum is well planned in accordance with the early learning goals for young children. Teaching has improved and standards are higher than at the previous inspection. Interesting displays, an attractive environment and good resources also help children to learn effectively.
54. Most children join reception at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. During the inspection, there were 34 children of reception age - 27 in the reception class and seven in the reception / Year 1 class. Most children have a range of skills broadly typical for their age when they join the school, though children's attainment on entry has risen over the past two years, and the current reception and Year 1 classes have a higher proportion of pupils with above average skills. Many children have attended local nurseries and have developed above average linguistic, numerical and social skills, though their pencil control is relatively underdeveloped. Seven of the more socially mature children are taught literacy and numeracy skills in the mornings in a class with pupils in Year 1, while the other children are taught in a single-age reception class. These seven children receive plenty of attention from the class teacher. In the afternoons, all 34 children of reception age are taught together, often working in small groups with a teacher or a classroom assistant. This arrangement works well and children make good progress. By the time they leave reception, most have exceeded the levels expected in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical understanding, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in physical development and creative development.
55. The teachers and the classroom assistants have a good understanding of how young children learn. They plan and work well together, manage the children very effectively and provide a good range of interesting activities. As a result, children are happy and enthusiastic, concentrate well and work with interest. They play happily together both indoors and outdoors, co-operate sensibly when sharing equipment, and are well motivated. Their attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good because the teachers' expectations are high, tasks are explained clearly, and work is well matched to the needs of individual children. The teachers regularly assess children's understanding and provide tasks appropriate to their development. Staff have very good relationships with the children and provide them with good role models. Children with special educational needs receive plenty of assistance both from their class teachers and from the classroom assistants. As a result, they make good progress. Several volunteers regularly provide valuable assistance in class, and parents generally help their children's learning effectively at home by reading with them and by encouraging speaking and observational skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

56. The class teachers and classroom assistants develop children's social skills effectively. Children enter the classrooms confidently in the mornings. They sit on the carpet and wait quietly for the session to begin. They quickly learn to put their hands up to answer questions and know they must take turns when sharing resources. Children are encouraged to make their own choices. In one lesson, for instance, two children chose to play counting games on computers, while others played happily together in the *clinic*. Another examined objects on the discovery table, and one girl drew a picture of

the sun and cut it out using scissors. Children put their own art aprons on sensibly and, at the end of the session, most put their coats on unaided. Children make good progress in developing social skills and their level of personal, social and emotional development is above average by the end of the reception year.

Communication, Language and Literacy

57. Teaching of language and literacy is good. Most children have good speech and language skills for their age when they join the school. The teachers and classroom assistants talk constantly with the children to widen their vocabulary further. They ask open-ended questions to develop children's fluency and confidence. Children are encouraged to explain the activities they are doing, and to discuss the books they are reading together. In one lesson, children discussed how the character in a story had made a birthday cake, while one boy was encouraged to talk about his own birthday party. Children went to the theatre to see *Aladdin*, and on their return discussed which parts of the pantomime they had enjoyed the most. Children are encouraged to take part in role-play activities to stimulate their language development. During the inspection, children acted out the roles of doctors, receptionists and patients at the *Healey Clinic*, while at other times of the year, the home corner becomes a garage, a nursery rhyme area or a sandy beach at the seaside. As a result, children make good progress, and their language development is better than usual at the end of the reception year.
58. Children listen to stories enthusiastically, and enjoy looking at books. In one lesson, children enjoyed hearing a story about *The Toys' Party*. They listened carefully, followed the illustrations well, and later joined in reading the text together. Children take reading books home every day to share with their parents and other adults. All children have a home-school reading record listing the books they have read. In addition, children tick smiley faces and draw pictures, while parents and teachers exchange comments and encouragement about children's progress. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to recorded stories. They are taught the sounds and the names of letters, and most can soon identify the initial sounds of common words. By the end of the reception year, most pupils recognise a wide range of words, and most read simple books confidently. Children make good progress, and most can read better than expected for their age.
59. Children are given many opportunities to develop their writing skills. At the beginning of the year, they systematically overwrite the letters of the alphabet and then write them freehand. They are also taught the sounds associated with each letter. During one lesson, for example, children suggested words beginning with *l* such as *lorry* and *list*. Later, children practised writing words such as *leaf* and *leopard*. Higher-attaining children copied a sentence that they had composed together. By the end of the reception year, most children can write short sentences such as *I am on my bike*, using letters that are reasonably neat, generally correctly formed and approximately the same size. Higher-attaining children can write longer sentences accurately. Overall, children make good progress, and standards of writing are above those expected nationally.

Mathematical Development

60. Teaching of mathematical skills is good and children are given many opportunities to use numbers and to explore shape and size. During the inspection, good use was made of a number line to recognise and place 1 to 10 in the correct order. Children counted to ten and back and played games on the computer to reinforce their counting and matching skills. Children recognise 1p, 5p and 10p coins, identify numbers that are *one more than* or *one less than* and use weighing scales to measure objects that are *lighter* and *heavier*. They tasted a variety of crisps and drew a pictogram to show which was their favourite flavour. By the end of reception, most children write numbers to 20 accurately and add and subtract numbers within ten correctly. They recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes such as circles, squares, spheres and cuboids and use coins to add together small sums of money such as $4p + 3p$. The teachers and classroom assistants help children with special educational needs effectively so they are fully involved and make good progress. At the end of the reception year, most children have mathematical skills better than those expected for their age.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

61. Very good teaching ensures that there are many opportunities for children to learn about the world around them during lessons, outdoor activities and on visits in the local area. In one lesson, children tasted a range of fruits and learnt to identify some exotic varieties such as guava, mangoes and avocados. Children examine autumn leaves and learn how hedgehogs hibernate in the winter. They study a variety of creatures and identify the differences between living things and inanimate objects. Children examine different materials and sort them into those that are *hard*, *soft* or *rough*. They use a computer mouse to click onto the correct pictures to dress the teddy, and learn to use talking books effectively. Children use the school grounds to listen to different sounds, explore Healey Dell, and visit the local post office. They welcome visitors including the school caterer and the school nurse and enjoy learning about police horses and patrol cars. Children make good progress and their levels of knowledge and understanding are better than is typical at the end of the reception year.

Physical Development

62. When children join the school, their manipulative skills and co-ordination are usually typical for their age. There are many opportunities for children to develop better control by using pencils, crayons and paintbrushes. They pour water and make sandcastles, assemble construction toys and learn how to use scissors. Very good specialist teaching ensures that children have opportunities for more energetic activities. During one lesson, children ran and jumped around the hall, keeping their distance from each other and changing direction carefully. They followed instructions well when asked to travel across a mat by rolling, somersaulting, hopping or walking backwards. Outside, children developed better co-ordination and balance on the climbing equipment in the dedicated play area in the courtyard. They co-operated happily, taking turns to use the *waffle bricks* to build causeways and houses. Children make good progress and their physical development is better than that expected nationally by the end of the reception year.

Creative Development

63. Good teaching ensures that children make good progress in developing their creative skills. Children use a variety of paints, paper, card, fabrics and construction materials. They mix coloured paints and discover how to create different shades by mixing colours with white paint. They use a wide variety of techniques including sponges and rollers, block printing, stippling, and wax-resist paintings. During one lesson, some children printed in three colours using carrots, apples and pineapple leaves, while others mixed flour, butter and sugar to make star-shaped biscuits. In another lesson, two boys made *Aladdin's lamp* out of play dough. Others had previously made hedgehogs from modelling clay and matchsticks. Children use wool, felt and tissue paper to create collage pictures of themselves and make funny faces using paper plates. They cut out felt and red card to make models of Red Riding Hood, and use egg boxes to make junk models of her grandmother's cottage. Children sing nursery rhymes and enjoy playing percussion instruments such as drums and tambourines. They are beginning to join in the songs during whole-school assemblies, and enjoy watching a visiting theatre group and a Hindu dancer. As a result, children's artistic and musical skills develop well and are better than those expected by the end of the reception year.

ENGLISH

64. Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above the levels expected for pupils of this age. Over the last four years, pupils' performance has generally been above standards achieved in most schools. It is a similar picture for pupils in Year 2. Standards achieved by seven-year-olds in reading and writing are above the levels expected for their age. Pupils have consistently achieved above the national average for the past four years. Standards dipped for 11-year-olds in 2002 compared with the previous year. This was because more pupils than normal, some with lower standards, joined the school during Year 6. The school has made good improvements since the previous inspection. The joint co-ordinators have worked hard to analyse strengths and weaknesses in the subject and have taken appropriate action to improve teaching and learning. Teaching is good overall. Good emphasis is now given to writing strategies and pupils' work clearly reflects writing in various modes.
65. Pupils start in Year 1 with above average attainment. The school works hard to maintain the good standards. Consequently pupils make consistently good progress in Years 1 and 2 and very good progress in Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they have many good opportunities to work in smaller groups where they are well supported as they learn. Classroom assistants pay close attention to their individual education plans.
66. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good throughout the school. Younger pupils in Year 2 discuss their likes and dislikes when reading stories. They predict what might happen and describe how characters may feel. Overall, they use complex sentences and confidently seek to engage adults in conversation. Older pupils discuss a wider range of ideas. They explain why they have chosen their current book and which authors they prefer. In particularly good teaching, strong emphasis is placed on vocabulary development and pupils learn to use words such as *prejudiced* and *selfish* when describing characters in novels. The teaching of drama is excellent and pupils in Year 2 learn to speak out and use their voice expressively as they take on character roles. Older pupils learn poetry off by heart and recite good quality work in front of the school. In class, they freely recite short passages from Shakespeare. These good teaching strategies ensure that most pupils learn to speak out clearly, audibly and with

expression, and the very positive relationships between teachers and pupils encourage them to join confidently in whole-class discussions. Overall, pupils listen attentively and are willing to talk about books, poetry and Shakespeare's plays. However, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills further. In lessons, for example, pupils answer questions posed by teachers, but this means that some pupils do not get the chance to express more than one idea. Teachers do not encourage pupils to share their ideas with a partner before telling it to the whole class, so occasionally some pupils do not fully participate in class discussion and chances to develop speaking and listening skills are lost.

67. The teaching of reading is very good. This is because teachers adhere well to the school policy for teaching reading and the scheme ensures that pupils make progress in small easy stages, experience success and gain in confidence. Teachers of younger pupils make sure they learn how to break words into syllables to give them confidence in reading unfamiliar words. Teachers encourage pupils to read text together paying good attention to punctuation; this helps to make their reading expressive and reinforces reading for all pupils. In most classes, pupils read to an adult every day. Classroom assistants and other volunteers give pupils with special educational needs a high level of individual attention using Early Literacy and Additional Literacy support programmes. Pupils of all ages make good progress in these sessions. Teachers make very good use of information books and storybooks to develop pupils' understanding of how books work. Most pupils know how to use the contents pages and index pages to find information. The introduction of new reading record books encourages pupils to write or draw pictures about the books they read and enjoy. All pupils are encouraged to borrow books from the school library each week. Here they are well supported by volunteers in their choice of books. In Year 2, average and higher-ability pupils read fluently and confidently. Pupils talk easily about the plot in a story and explain why they like certain characters. One boy chose to read a poem because he liked the way the words rhyme. In Year 6, pupils read an extensive range of information books, poetry and fiction showing fluency and understanding. They are selective in the books they choose to read and have favourite authors. One pupil, for example, explained that she enjoys books by Gerber because he writes funny versions of well-known books. Older pupils know how to choose information books in the library. However, the library is not used enough for individual research and this limits the development of pupils' research skills.
68. Standards in writing have been well maintained since the previous inspection. The National Literacy Strategy, together with the school's focus on comprehension and handwriting last year, has had a positive impact on maintaining the very good standards. A strength of the teaching of writing is the way teachers focus on punctuation, handwriting, spelling and vocabulary development. In some lessons, particularly in Years 1 and 2, teachers make good use of computer programs to inspire pupils and reinforce spelling, but, overall, teachers do not plan enough opportunities for ICT to be used to support learning in English.
69. In Years 1 and 2, good emphasis is given to spotting patterns in words. Pupils learn to identify words that end in *ing*, for example, and because the teacher stresses the use of capital letters and full stops, pupils' work is accurate. By the end of Year 2, many pupils write for a variety of purposes such as *thank you* letters following a visit to Healey surgery, or instructions about how to make a cube. Teachers working with Year 2 pupils discuss their work with them on an individual basis, helping them overcome difficulties. These good strategies have a positive impact on the standards achieved. Regular handwriting practice and good role modelling by teachers result in pupils' work being well presented, with letters well formed.

70. A strength of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is the way pupils learn to extend their vocabulary through using synonyms. During some good lessons, teachers encouraged pupils to criticise words that authors use and to choose better ones. This method inspired pupils to think hard, and many suggested interesting words such as *bellowed*, *snapped* and *smirked* instead of *said*. In weaker lessons, plans lacked detail so the teacher was not able to extend pupils' thinking enough, resulting in work of a lower standard. In Years 5 and 6, where teaching ranges from good to excellent, pupils are inspired to produce work of a very high standard. *Macbeth* is used to inspire pupils and because of the excellent knowledge the teacher has, the text is alive and inspiring. Music from Wagner and Holst is used to create atmosphere as pupils write. Pupils are given very clear guidance for writing fiction and non-fiction passages and are clear about the difference. In fiction, for example, the teacher discussed images of death in terms of *people from the grave appearing* and *dead men walking*. In non-fiction, the teacher obtained good ideas from pupils and wrote an introduction to a report. Very good links were made to newspaper reports and the current school play. These ideas motivated pupils to concentrate well and to offer several ideas to the class discussion. In some very good lessons in Year 6, the work given to pupils matched their individual stage of development and so all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, made very good progress, enjoyed their work and clearly understood what they were learning. Well-planned *booster classes* are arranged for some pupils so they can learn in smaller groups.
71. Homework is set regularly, including reading, spelling lists and written assignments. The amount set increases as pupils go through school and it makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly and clearly identifies what pupils have done well and how they can improve further. Pupils are given time to check their marked work and to think how it could be better.
72. The joint co-ordinators provide strong leadership for the subject. By monitoring planning, pupils' work and teaching, the co-ordinators and senior management team continue to improve teaching and learning. The co-ordinators write a detailed action plan each year to improve and develop the subject. This ensures that the school is well placed make the further improvements needed.

MATHEMATICS

73. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is very high. This represents a good improvement on the previous inspection and is the result of strong teaching for most older pupils. However, standards for pupils by the end of Year 2 have slipped and are below those expected for their age. The reason is that teachers do not give higher-attaining pupils enough challenge and, as a result, a smaller proportion reach higher levels of attainment than in most schools. This is an issue which remains unresolved from the previous inspection.
74. The school's management has tackled a number of issues effectively since the previous inspection and the result of this is seen in the very high standards reached in Year 6. Teachers' successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy gives them a good basis for planning interesting lessons which build on pupils' skills and knowledge year by year. This has resolved the issue that previously caused problems with the logical development of pupils' skills, particularly between Year 2 and Year 3. The new strategy enables teachers to give a better focus to lessons, so pupils now have a clear awareness of what the objective of a lesson is from the outset. This gives

them a sharp focus for their learning. For instance, in a lesson in Year 2, the teacher told pupils they would learn how to place numbers as high as 99 in the correct place on a number line. The teacher kept pupils clearly focused on this objective during each stage of the lesson, so that by the end they were fully aware of the improved understanding they gained in ordering numbers.

75. As a result of improved procedures for assessing what pupils know and can do, teachers have an accurate picture of individual pupils' levels of attainment. This puts them in a good position to set challenging work which closely matches pupils' needs. Consequently, most pupils get work at the right level to enable them to make good progress. The school has been particularly successful in targeting higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6, who, as a result, benefit from special lessons in extension groups. In these lessons, pupils enjoy rising to the challenge of inspirational teaching and attain very high standards. In an extension group lesson for higher-attaining pupils in Year 5, for instance, the teacher's very knowledgeable discussion about the Pythagorean concept of the transformation of number and shape promoted excellent attitudes towards mathematical learning. In whole-class lessons in Year 3, Year 5 and Year 6, higher-attaining pupils get work that is consistently matched closely to their attainment. The very good level of provision for their needs results in a very fast rate of learning.
76. The effectiveness of teaching higher-attaining pupils is not as good as this in all classes. In Year 4, work for higher-attaining pupils in whole-class lessons is not consistently challenging and as a result they do not make progress as fast as in other classes. In addition, teachers in Years 1 and 2 have not resolved the issue of setting a good enough challenge for higher-attaining pupils. This was evident in each lesson, where work set for them gave little scope for extra challenge. In a lesson about *time*, for instance, higher-attaining pupils named the *hour* and *half-hour* very quickly because they already knew the concept well. As one pupil said, *This is easy*. Standards by the end of Year 2 are unlikely to rise until this issue is resolved.
77. The school's systems for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. This enables the headteacher and co-ordinator to identify strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, the recent provision of extra help from classroom assistants for higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 is likely to have a positive effect on standards. A continuing strength is the provision and support for pupils with special educational needs. Usually there is a good match of work for their needs. With the positive help given by teachers and classroom assistants, they make the same rate of progress as other pupils. Special arrangements are made for some pupils who are identified as needing extra assistance to boost their attainment to a satisfactory standard. All pupils are set homework that is geared to their needs both in challenge and in quantity. This, too, has a positive effect, particularly for higher-attaining pupils. Extra resources bought to match the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy give teachers a good supply of items for all lessons. The provision of suitable resources contributes, for instance, to the fast rate of learning in mental sessions. Pupils' learning about time in Years 1 and 2 benefited from the use of sand-timers and a mechanical clock. Teachers' use of ICT has improved since the previous inspection and more teachers use it to some extent to help pupils' learning in classrooms. However, its use is still making a limited impact on standards. There are few instances of ICT used in handling data, for example, although good examples were seen of pie-charts and graphs in Year 4.
78. The strongest teaching is in older classes, particularly in Years 3 and 6 and in all extension groups. The qualities which shone through the best lessons are the

teachers' high expectations and expertise in the subject. Such teaching sets pupils in Year 3 on the road to rapid progress. In a lesson on multiplication, for example, the teacher promoted the solid learning of tables to give pupils the knowledge and understanding to work out strategies for themselves. Teaching is at its best in Year 6 and in the extension groups, where it is very good. In a lesson in Year 6, for instance, the teacher expertly teased ideas and correct mathematical language from pupils when they discussed the probability of events. They thought very carefully, for example, about the likelihood that *all boys will become men*. Pupils' responses in lessons like these rises to very high levels and is sometimes excellent. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is sound and shows good features, especially in discussions leading from the good use of questioning. Consequently, most younger pupils make satisfactory progress. Teachers aim to make lessons interesting and maintain very good relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils are very enthusiastic about their work and behave very well. This makes a positive contribution towards raising attainment.

79. The strength of leadership and management in the subject puts the school in a good position to raise standards further.

SCIENCE

80. Standards in science are in line with those expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is similar to the previous inspection.
81. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, overall, with some good teaching, particularly when pupils in Years 3 and 6 are taught by the science specialist. As at the previous inspection, there is a good emphasis on pupils carrying out their own practical and investigative work. As a result, pupils sometimes make good progress during lessons. Too often, however, progress is no more than satisfactory as there is not enough systematic recording of pupils' predictions and the significance of their results is not fully explained. In an interesting Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils carried out their own investigations into the forces needed to stop a model car travelling at different speeds. Pupils discussed how to carry out their investigations and how to ensure a fair test. They predicted the effect of increasing the steepness of the ramp, but did not write this down, so were uncertain later whether their hypotheses had been correct or whether the tests had been fair. They recorded the distances travelled by cars of different speeds and plotted the results on graphs. Pupils worked sensibly and enthusiastically in small groups, but found it difficult to explain their results in terms of the different forces needed to stop the cars.
82. In contrast, pupils in Year 3 recorded their predictions and methodology carefully when investigating the absorbency of four different types of paper. They discussed absorbent materials used in the home before each group chose which materials to include in their experiments. They discussed which types of paper might absorb the most liquid and recorded their hypotheses carefully, often giving sensible reasons. Pupils cut the strips of paper to the same size and wrote down why this ensured a fair test. As a result, pupils learned more effectively by recording their investigations systematically.
83. It was not possible to judge the standard of teaching for younger pupils as no lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' exercise books, however, showed that they make at least satisfactory progress, with a good emphasis on investigative work. Pupils in Year 1, for example, plant cress seeds and keep a diary of their growth, while those in Year 2 conduct an experiment to discover whether seeds will grow without water or light.

84. Teaching has a number of good features. Teachers give instructions clearly and use correct scientific vocabulary. They ask relevant questions to get pupils to think and explain their observations. Teachers make good use of a wide range of resources to gain pupils' attention and to assist their concentration. In a lesson in Year 4, for instance, pupils used a variety of electrical components to test whether a range of materials conducted electricity and completed a circuit to light the bulb. Teachers monitor pupils' progress by assessing their knowledge and skills at the end of each topic. This information is then used to plan work that matches pupils' abilities.
85. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and this helps them to explain scientific ideas in a way that pupils can understand. Specialist teaching is used well to the advantage of older pupils. Pupils in Year 6 receive specialist teaching from the science co-ordinator, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 visit a local secondary school each term to extend their knowledge and skills by using resources that would otherwise be unavailable. On a visit to Falinge High School during the inspection, for instance, pupils in Year 6 used light boxes and a variety of mirrors to plot the paths of reflected rays and the patterns made by kaleidoscopes. In Year 4, pupils use specialist resources on loan from a local technology college. Teachers manage their classes well, and, as a result, most pupils concentrate hard, are keen to answer questions and have good attitudes towards their work. Attractive displays of pupils' work show pupils that their efforts are valued. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and classroom assistants and make sound progress as a result.
86. The subject co-ordinator provides clear guidance for other teachers, but her role needs developing further as there is insufficient regular monitoring of pupils' work and she has not yet been given the opportunity to observe and evaluate teaching in the subject, though this is planned for the forthcoming summer term. The school uses a scheme of work that covers the National Curriculum and ensures a logical progression in the teaching of scientific ideas. Resources for the subject are generally good, but there is only limited use of ICT resources such as CDs and the Internet to assist teaching and pupils' research. Good use is made of visits, for example, to a local doctor's surgery. Visitors, including a dentist and the school nurse, make a good contribution to pupils' understanding.

ART AND DESIGN

87. Standards have improved since the previous inspection and are above expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The improvements have come about because the school has employed a part-time art specialist to work with groups of pupils and alongside teachers in classes. This means that teachers discuss ideas in greater depth and pupils are better supported in lessons. However, there is an over-reliance on the expertise of the art specialist, and the school has recognised that the skill levels of teachers have to be developed if this good standard is to be maintained. Daily plans, produced by the art specialist, are easy to follow and show clearly the main skills, techniques and key words to be taught. The school acknowledges that the policy and planned schemes of work need updating to reflect new initiatives in teaching and learning. Teaching is good, overall, because of the excellent focused input of the specialist classroom assistant, and all pupils make good progress in their skills and knowledge of art techniques. Some pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress in art and design.
88. Teachers give younger pupils a good range of experiences to develop their knowledge and skills in art. They make sure that all pupils are included, by making good use of

classroom assistants to support individuals. They introduce pupils to paint, pastel, collage and printing. A major improvement since the last inspection is the way teachers use the works of artists from around the world to inspire pupils. Beautiful floral designs, in the style of Georgia O'Keefe, were created by pupils in Year 2 showing how well they have learned to mix colour. Teachers of pupils in Year 1 make good use of the strong colours in Aboriginal art to influence pupils. Pupils create a range of patterns and images using a variety of media such as pulses and string. Good demonstrations result in pupils learning the technique of painting with fine sticks so they can copy Aboriginal patterns. Pupils work on large three-dimensional projects using various materials and large cartons to make and decorate totem poles, based on the Native American style of art.

89. Older pupils develop their skills and knowledge further. Good teaching ensures that pupils are clear about what they are learning. Pupils in Year 5, for example, could explain that by using several shades of the same colour the image would be visually attractive and have more depth. Teachers provide interesting activities that inspire pupils to work hard. In small group teaching, for example, each pupil is offered individual tuition and clear instruction. This results in pupils creating very good pieces of work of which they are very proud. In Year 3, teachers review previous learning well so that pupils know what they are trying to achieve and understand which colours contrast, harmonise and tone. Through good demonstrations they develop the technique of overlapping tissue paper to create new colours. Pupils in Year 4 are influenced by the styles of Hundertwasser, Klimt and Lowry and produce interesting pieces of work. The school also uses the work of contemporary artists such as Goldsworthy to inspire pupils to create environmental art. Teachers use art to support other subjects. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for instance, work in three-dimensions when making a frieze depicting Ancient Greeks using papier-mache and plaster of Paris, and reproduce Picasso's *Guernica* when learning about the Second World War.
90. A weakness in teaching is that teachers do not allocate enough time in lessons for pupils to comment on their own work or the work of others. This means that opportunities are missed for pupils to become self-analytical and improve their own performances.
91. The school has recently improved the profile of art. Pupils' work is well displayed, making each area in school attractive and visually inspiring for all. The use of sketchbooks is not consistent across the school, but where they are used, pupils have good opportunities to practise and improve their skills and teachers can track progress over time. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The school has identified the need for assessments to show overall standards and to inform planning. Teachers can then plan what to teach next and improve future lessons based on what pupils can do. There are limited chances for the co-ordinator to observe work in other parts of the school in order to monitor teaching and learning and to identify what works well and what needs to improve.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. Standards have fallen since the previous inspection. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' attainment is below expectations for their age. This is because teachers do not give pupils a wide enough range of experiences in designing and making.
93. The curriculum for design and technology does not meet statutory requirements. The scheme of work does not cover the skills, knowledge and understanding recommended

in national guidelines for the subject and required by the National Curriculum. Much of it overlaps with art and design, and does not allow for the depth of study needed to build up pupils' skills and knowledge in design and technology. For instance, there are too many short-term topics, such as making Christmas cards and calendars, at the expense of in-depth work. This position is made worse because most teachers do not allot enough time to the subject to enable pupils to attain satisfactory standards, especially in the older classes. For example, in Year 6, the organisation of a rota of subjects gives far too little time for pupils to make reasonable progress. The low priority given to design and technology in some classes is exemplified by the neglect of planned lessons in Year 6.

94. As a result of shortcomings in planning and in time allocated to the subject, evidence seen of previous work in Year 6 shows that standards are unsatisfactory. Pupils do not draw designs suitable for the purpose of making a product. They do not produce step-by-step plans that identify the main stages of making, or list the tools, materials and processes needed. Finished products do not show due attention to the quality of joining and finishing. Pupils in Year 2 do not have enough opportunities to develop their design skills. They do not have a wide enough range of skills to make a variety of products to a satisfactory standard. Throughout the school, teachers do not show pupils how to use ICT to help them in the processes of designing and making.
95. Teaching seen in lessons in Years 1 and 2 was sound in one and good in another. The main difference between the two lessons lay in the good opportunities given to pupils in Year 1 to improve skills when drawing up a design brief. This gave them a suitable basis to start making a mobile. In a Year 2 class, pupils made a good effort to make a simple wheeled vehicle. The teacher's attention to setting a suitable task for pupils who have special educational needs and giving them extra help enabled them to learn at the same rate as others. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour in both lessons contributed positively to their learning.
96. The role of the co-ordinator does not include the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. Partly as a result of this, standards have slipped. Resources available for lessons do not match those needed to give pupils a suitable range of experiences as required by the National Curriculum for design and technology. The headteacher is aware that design and technology is an area for development and has plans to give the subject suitable priority.

GEOGRAPHY

97. The school has maintained satisfactory standards since the last inspection. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' work is typical for their age and their knowledge and understanding of all aspects are satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have improved the way they plan what pupils learn and do. They now use national guidelines which enable pupils to learn more effectively, step by step.
98. A good feature of teaching is the use of resources to support pupils' learning. In Year 3, for example, the teacher used a short video to illustrate differences in weather around the world. As a result, higher-attaining pupils were able to explain that temperatures relate to the height of the sun in the sky. Teachers of younger pupils plan fieldwork in the locality. Pupils learn about features of the area through traffic surveys and visits

within the area. They make simple maps of the locality and find out about the jobs people do. They locate Rochdale on a map of the United Kingdom, identify the main features in and around the area, and compare these to the Arctic region and to Kenya. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about the weather and its impact on humanity. Older pupils study earthquakes and volcanoes. Teachers of Years 5 and 6 encourage pupils to use newspaper articles to find out about major environmental changes. They discuss the recent earthquake in Italy and the volcanic eruption in Sicily. Pupils explain the impact these events have on the people who live there. Pupils' work is well-presented with a range of diagrams and illustrations to support learning.

99. Most teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of the subject, which they use to make lessons interesting. By using a globe and torch in the darkened room they consolidate pupils' understanding and teach geographical terms such as *equator* and *pole*. Good links are made to literacy when older pupils consider the impact stormy weather had on scenes in *Macbeth*. Older pupils view landscapes and explore the main physical features within the locality when they go on a residential visit. They also go on a short trip to France travelling by land and sea.
100. Subject leadership is satisfactory overall. The joint co-ordinators have taken suitable steps since the last inspection to develop the subject. Assessments are undertaken once a year and pupils' work is examined to check for curriculum coverage. Teachers' planning is checked regularly but there have been no opportunities to observe the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom to identify what works well and what needs to improve. As a result, there are some weaknesses in the teaching of geography. Teachers do not make enough use of numeracy or ICT to help pupils' understanding, and pupils have too few opportunities to research information linked to specific topics.

HISTORY

101. Pupils attain the standards expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is in line with the standards reported at the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs receive plenty of help from teachers and classroom assistants and make sound progress.
102. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers explain the aims clearly at the start of lessons and make good use of open-ended questions to reinforce previous learning. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, good questioning about the pupils' recent visit to a doctor's surgery revealed that there were no women doctors or nurses in the 1850s. Pupils are managed well and, consequently, have good attitudes to their work, concentrate sensibly and make sound progress.
103. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of historical source materials. When studying old and new toys, for example, pupils in Year 1 examined a range of old toys including a zoetrope and several dolls dating back to the 1950s. They took a questionnaire home to find out about the kind of toys their own parents played with as children. In an interesting lesson on Florence Nightingale, pupils in Year 2 watched a video programme reconstructing a visit to the hospital at Scutari in 1856 and then wrote an account of improvements made by Miss Nightingale. Pupils in Year 6 used contemporary photographs and advertisements for boarding houses to devise their own poster for a holiday in Blackpool in 1939, while those in Year 3 used a painting of a Tudor street scene to describe aspects of urban life in Elizabethan times.

104. Visits to museums and historical buildings within the local area are used effectively to provide first-hand learning experiences. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils visit the original co-operative store set up by the Rochdale Pioneers in Toad Lane, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 visit the Manchester Museum when studying the Ancient Egyptians. Visits by a drama group bring the events of Tudor England and Ancient Greece alive to pupils in Years 3 and 4. Those in Years 5 and 6 learned a great deal about life during the Second World War by asking a range of sensible questions when an elderly visitor gave a first-hand account of her experiences as a child in a concentration camp in Germany.
105. Management of the subject is effective. While the co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, however, she does not evaluate pupils' work regularly or observe the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The school has adopted a scheme of work based on national guidance and this ensures that pupils develop historical skills in a logical order. Resources are satisfactory, overall, and include a good selection of artefacts. Teachers supplement historical source books with loans from the Local Studies Library in Rochdale. Good use is made of video recordings, but too little use is made of CD ROMs and the Internet to assist teaching and learning in most classes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

106. Pupils reach the levels expected for their age at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is similar to the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn at a good rate because they are taught computer skills in small groups by a knowledgeable and experienced classroom assistant. In these small groups, teaching is good, overall. However, with the exception of pupils in Year 2, teaching within classes is limited and ICT is not used enough by class teachers to help teaching and learning in other subjects. This means that pupils are not given enough chances to consolidate the good learning that takes place in the small group sessions. Teachers tend to rely too much on the experience of the assistant. In recent weeks, teachers have begun an ICT training programme and this is helping them to improve their knowledge and confidence.
107. By the end of Year 2, pupils are familiar with the keyboard and the programs they frequently use. They are able to give instructions to the computer and to see the results. They can explain what they are doing and use ICT to present and organise their work. By the end of Year 6, they have a sound knowledge of how to use ICT to present information in a variety of ways. They send and receive electronic mail and are beginning to use programs to research and present their own information.
108. A strength in the teaching is the excellent use support staff make of new software packages to improve pupils' knowledge, skills and confidence. A weakness in the teaching is that assessments are not used enough to ensure that pupils are challenged sufficiently according to their ability. This means that higher-attaining pupils are not making as much progress as they could. The activities in the small group sessions are interesting and varied. Pupils are, therefore, very enthusiastic about ICT and concentrate well. They show pride in their achievements and strive to improve their work. Class teachers, however, are not linking the development of pupils' computer skills with other subjects, and, as a result, pupils are not using computers enough to enhance their understanding of other subjects. Where the teaching is good, pupils are encouraged to recall and consolidate what they know about the programs they are using. In Year 5, for example, pupils learn graphic modelling through the *Publisher* program. With careful direction at each stage, they succeed in producing a poster of

their own choice. In Year 6, with focused small group teaching, most pupils make good progress. They learn to research information and develop *Powerpoint* presentations which they deliver to the group. Although these activities are worthwhile in developing pupils' computer skills, they do not relate closely to what is being taught in literacy lessons. Pupils in Year 3, however, confidently use the computer to enhance aspects of mathematics as they perform addition and subtraction within 25.

109. The school has a computer club each week that is well attended, particularly by older pupils. This gives pupils good opportunities to extend their skills and computer knowledge. Good links are developing with the computer department in a local high school. The school takes pupils in Year 5 to visit the offices of a large company where they see computers being used in the retail trade. They observe how sensors monitor and measure external events, and gain insights into the use of computers in the business world.
110. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Teachers have recently begun training in the use of computers to develop their confidence. The co-ordinator has improved the curriculum to match national guidance and suitable schemes of work are now in place. Assessments have recently been introduced and pupils now keep records of their work. These will help teachers to track pupils' progress and to identify what pupils can do, so that work planned for the small group sessions can be better matched to learning needs. There have been too few opportunities for the co-ordinator to observe work in other parts of the school in order to monitor teaching and learning and to identify what works well and what needs to improve. Nevertheless, based on current action, the school is in a good position to move ahead and improve the provision further.

MUSIC

111. The school continues to have a very strong musical tradition. Standards are above those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and well above national expectations by the end of Year 6. These are similar to the standards reported at the previous inspection.
112. Music is taught by the deputy headteacher in Years 1 and 2 and by the specialist music co-ordinator in Years 3 to 6. Consequently, the standard of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3 to 6.
113. Very good use is made of a commercial scheme of work with appropriate recorded music, words and musical scores. This ensures that pupils develop musical skills in a logical order. In a lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils sang several songs confidently to a recorded accompaniment from *The Magical Nativity Tableau*. They explained how the mood of the songs differed, tapped out a steady beat to accompany a march, and moved their arms like snakes when dancing to Egyptian-style music. They enjoyed singing, joined in enthusiastically and concentrated well. Pupils listened carefully to a series of rhythmic phrases and copied the patterns accurately by clapping or playing on percussion instruments. The teacher took care to name the instruments accurately and to use correct musical terms such as *rhythm* and *steady beat*.
114. Pupils develop their own composition skills and enjoy performing together. In a Year 4 lesson, for instance, pupils worked sensibly in small groups to create music for a mythical dreamscape. One group composed sounds to represent the sea, while others used voice or body percussion to signify birds, forests or wind and clouds. Pupils

discussed eagerly which sounds to use, and then practised varying the dynamics by increasing and decreasing the volume to produce a gradual *crescendo* and *diminuendo*.

115. Pupils develop their musical appreciation by listening to a range of music from different times and places. In the Year 4 lesson, for instance, pupils listened carefully in order to identify the instruments playing *Me and My Shadow*. A variety of music is played as pupils enter and leave school assemblies and opportunities are taken to talk about the composer and the style of music. Pupils sing a selection of hymns and songs during times of collective worship. They sing tunefully and reverently, with good diction, and are actively encouraged to improve the quality of their singing.
116. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership of the subject. She monitors pupils' progress in lessons and enthusiastically encourages high standards of singing during hymn practices and choir rehearsals. The school has a good range of musical instruments and recorded music, and has a strong tradition of instrumental tuition. Approximately 27 pupils learn brass instruments and a further 32 are taught to play woodwind instruments by peripatetic teachers. Pupils receive weekly lessons and attend weekly band practices. As a result, many older pupils play very competently. Pupils compete successfully in local music and drama festivals, and in recent years have taken part in a number of concerts in the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester and at the Royal Festival Hall in London. In addition, the school choir rehearses weekly and performs in concerts both in school and elsewhere. Peripatetic musicians come into school regularly to perform for the pupils. Pupils also visit the theatre for a pantomime, sing carols in the community at Christmas time and entertain at a local home for the elderly. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' attainment is above national expectations for their age. This is because good teaching throughout the school enables pupils to make good progress. Pupils in Year 2 know how to improve their performance and control movement well. By the time they are in Year 6 they play team games with controlled vigour and show a highly developed sense of fair play. The school gives pupils in Year 3 intensive swimming lessons. Most learn to swim the statutory distance of 25 metres, which puts the school in a good position to ensure all do so by the end of Year 6. Pupils who have special educational needs are given suitable opportunities to make the same rate of progress as others.
118. The school gives high priority to physical education. This is reflected by the larger amount of time given to it than in most schools. All aspects of the curriculum are covered well. The regular replacement of resources maintains a good supply for lessons. Good use of specialist teaching in several classes makes a positive contribution to maintaining high standards. Improvements put in place since the previous inspection put the school in a good position to raise standards. Pupils are given more opportunities to take part in outdoor pursuits and extra-curricular activities. Boys, for instance, have the opportunity to play netball and a girls' football club has been started in Years 3 and 4. The school's links with the community are strong and continue to develop well. This gives a large number of pupils the opportunity to take part in competitions with other schools and to benefit from professional coaching.
119. In all the lessons seen teaching was strong. The subject co-ordinator teaches several different classes. This is an effective and efficient use of her very good expertise. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject. The effect of the co-ordinator's expertise and enthusiasm is reflected in high standards in a variety of team games and impressive success for school teams in local competitions. Lessons show a good balance between learning skills and putting them into practice in activities and games. Teachers use a mixture of their own demonstrations and pupils' expertise to show good learning and practice. This enables pupils to learn from evaluating their own and others' performances. In a lesson in Year 2, the teacher insisted that pupils *learn control*, when passing a ball and bouncing it on the spot. Over a short span of time, pupils clearly improved their control because they were determined to do so. In a dance lesson in Year 5, the teacher's good sense of rhythm and co-ordination gave pupils an indication of what to aim for and, as a result, they improved a sequence of steps well. Further strong teaching in Year 6 enabled pupils to consolidate their good progress and attain high standards.
120. The subject co-ordinator does a good job in maintaining a high profile for physical education and keeping standards high. Two areas are in need of development: teachers do not take advantage of ICT to help pupils learn, and the role of the co-ordinator does not extend far enough to enable her to monitor teaching and learning in lessons other than her own.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' attainment meets the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus. By the time pupils are 11-years old, they have a satisfactory understanding of Christianity, Islam and Judaism.
122. Teaching is satisfactory. As a result, pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make steady progress. Teachers use a new scheme of work to plan an interesting curriculum for pupils. They make good links with lessons which promote pupils' personal development. In a lesson in Year 2, for instance, pupils learned about the need for rules when they discussed *food rules* for healthy eating, including the consequences of not following the rules. The scheme is carefully structured so pupils learn in progressive stages. In Year 3, pupils look at similarities and differences between Christianity and Judaism when they study stories from the Old Testament. In a lesson in Year 4, the teacher emphasised differences between the true spirit of Christmas and today's commercial pressures leading up to Christmas. In Year 6, pupils learn about the concept of the Holy Trinity.
123. One important issue remains unresolved from the previous inspection. The present role of the co-ordinator does not put her in a good position to monitor standards of teaching and learning in other classes. Consequently, standards have not risen, because weaknesses have not been identified for improvement. The way pupils record their work, for example, is not good enough. Sometimes the recording they do is unnecessary and detracts from what the teacher intends pupils to learn. Although pupils' recorded work in all classes indicates satisfactory attainment, tasks that teachers set are often dull and do not challenge or interest pupils. This particularly limits how well higher-attaining pupils learn. In Year 2, for instance, all pupils worked on the same worksheets. Higher-attaining pupils finished quickly and spent the rest of the time colouring in their drawings. As a consequence of unimaginative tasks, pupils' attitudes and behaviour, although mainly good, are not as good as they are in other subjects.
124. The school's scheme of work was drawn up recently by the co-ordinator to match the local Agreed Syllabus. This gives teachers good opportunities to plan interesting lessons. However, they have not yet come to terms with how to use it to its best advantage. They do not use a wide enough variety of approaches and tasks to get pupils thoroughly motivated and interested. For instance, in one lesson, the teacher missed an ideal opportunity to promote pupils' spirituality when she introduced them to the meaning of *Advent*. Instead of lighting Advent candles to give meaning to the lesson which pupils could focus on, she made do with a question and answer discussion and eventually lost their attention.
125. It is unlikely that standards will rise until the role of the co-ordinator is developed to enable her to monitor the quality of teaching and learning effectively.