

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**GEE CROSS HOLY TRINITY C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hyde

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106226

Headteacher: Mrs M Gormley

Reporting inspector: Mr T W M Comer  
15109

Dates of inspection: 2 – 5 December 2002

Inspection number: 246576

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Voluntary Controlled

School category: Infant and Junior

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Higham Lane  
Gee Cross  
Hyde  
Cheshire

Postcode: SK14 5LX

Telephone number: 0161 3682911

Fax number: 0161 3682911

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Rev Graham Osgood

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

<b>Team members</b>			<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
15109	Mr T Comer	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Design and Technology Information Technology Citizenship	The school's results and pupils' achievements  How well are pupils taught?  How well is the school led and managed?  What should the school do to improve further?
9504	Mrs S Gurney	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22740	Mrs M Leah	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and Design Music Physical Education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
29504	Mrs S Herring	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious Education Equal Opportunities	

The inspection contractor was:

North West Education Services  
Cheshire House  
164 main Road  
Goostrey  
Cheshire  
CW4 8JP

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>24</b>

**PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a small primary school with 189 boys and girls on roll in roughly equal numbers. The school has strong links with the church and local community and serves a socially mixed area which has both prosperous areas and areas of economic hardship. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is broadly average. The proportion of pupils on the school’s register of special educational needs is below average but the proportion with formal statements of need is above average. Of the pupils with statements, three have severe learning difficulties, and three have behavioural difficulties. Some children have attended nurseries or play groups before joining the Reception Class but many others have no pre-school experience and this is a disadvantage. The results of the school’s ‘baseline tests’ of its annual intake of pupils to the Reception Class indicate a broadly average overall attainment though there are weaknesses in speaking and listening and in social development. The very large majority of pupils are of white UK origin. Although 10 pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, none have English as other than their first language. The school has been awarded ‘Healthy School’ and ‘Eco School’ status.

**HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school. Its strong Christian ethos permeates all that it does. Pupils achieve well because they are well taught, they have good attitudes to school and because of an effective home-school partnership. The school is very capably led by the headteacher; it is efficiently managed and gives good value for money.

**What the school does well**

- Good teaching throughout the school
- Pupils’ good progress and their good overall achievement
- The school’s provision for pupils with special educational needs
- The school’s provision for pupils under five (Reception Class)
- Standards in English, science, information and communication technology, and religious education
- Pupils’ personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- The outstanding range of extra-curricular activities
- The effective home-school partnership
- The way in which the school looks after its pupils
- Very good and effective leadership

**What could be improved**

- Standards in mathematics
- The lesson timetable
- Marking of pupils’ written work

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

**HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made a very good overall improvement since the time of the previous inspection in February, 1998, and has received an achievement award for improved national test results. Standards have risen considerably and the school has made good progress with the issues raised by the previous inspection, especially the teaching of music, information and communication technology, and the pupils’ behaviour.

**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	B	B	A	A
Mathematics	D	D	B	B
Science	C	C	A	A

**Key**

well above average      A

above average            B

average                    C

below average            D

well below average      E

Pupils make good overall progress in the Reception Class and are on course to reach nationally recommended standards by the time they start Year 1.

Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and overall standards of pupils' work are above average in Year 2. The results of the national tests of Year 2 pupils in 2002 were above average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics. The results over a period of time show that boys and girls do equally well in mathematics but girls outperform boys in reading and writing in a similar way to the national picture. The overall rate of improvement in the results is similar to the national trend but reading and writing results have improved faster than those in mathematics. The results of the teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment in science were above the national average.

Pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. In 2002, the national test results met the targets set by governors and were well above average overall. Over a period of years the results have risen faster than in most schools, nationally. The standards of the current Year 6 pupils' work are above, rather than well above, average and these pupils are not expected to achieve quite as well as the previous Year 6. Standards are highest in English, science, information and communication technology, and religious education. Standards are average in all other subjects but could be raised further in mathematics with greater attention to mental arithmetic and to solving real problems.

The school is very successful in competitive sport. Pupils representing the school must not only be good at the sport but must have a good record of behaviour.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to work. They participate enthusiastically in lessons and assemblies.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. There have been no recent exclusions from school. Although there are a small number of boys with behavioural difficulties, these pupils are managed very well and co-operate with their teachers.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between pupils are good. Pupils are mature, responsible, polite, friendly and helpful. They take pride in their work and are keen participants in the excellent range of out-of-school and enrichment activities provided for them by their teachers. Pupils take part in the School Council, which has genuine power to make decisions.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above average and there is no unauthorised absence. Pupils are punctual to school.

This is an 'Eco School' and its 'Eco-committee' makes decisions which benefit the school's environment. Older pupils take on a range of duties and responsibilities, for example, as librarians. They help to ensure that Reception Class children settle into the school and act as playground friends, encouraging younger children to take part in team games and try to ensure that no-one feels left out.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The teaching is good throughout the school. Lessons are planned to meet the needs of all pupils well and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as other pupils. The teaching of English and science is good throughout the school. Though the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory it could be improved further with wider opportunities to investigate number and geometrical pattern and to solve practical problems. The teaching of practical science is a good feature. Literacy is well taught and the teaching of numeracy is a good feature in Years 1



and 2; however, the teaching of numeracy in Years 3 – 6 should concentrate more on rapid recall of multiplication tables and mental arithmetic. The main strengths of the teaching are the teachers’ high expectations and their effective management of the pupils’ behaviour and learning. Pupils respond well and they try hard. They generally concentrate on their work and make good progress. However, the teachers’ marking of written work needs to show pupils more clearly how to improve their work.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. All statutory requirements are met. The outstanding range of extra-curricular activities is a strength of the school. Some lessons are 75 minutes long and pupils tend to lose concentration in these long sessions. More but shorter lessons would be an improvement.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils experience the same lessons as other pupils and are well taught. As a consequence, they make the same good progress as other pupils.
Provision for pupils’ personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. This is a strength of the school. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are all very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school looks after its pupils well. It assesses their academic and personal development and sets targets for all of them. The school monitors attendance and behaviour effectively and takes action whenever there is cause for concern.

The school has a very good partnership with parents. A considerable number of parents help in school and a strong Parent-Teacher Association raises funds to supplement the school’s resources.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school benefits from very good leadership and is well managed. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide clear direction for the school and set an excellent example for other staff to follow. The management of subjects and of the school’s provision for pupils with special educational needs are effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. All legal requirements are met. The governors have a clear understanding of the school’s strengths and what needs to be done to improve further. Governors are committed to the continued development of the school and have a wide range of valuable experience and expertise.
The school’s evaluation of its performance	The staff and governors compare the school’s performance rigorously with that of others, locally and nationally. This enables the governors to set realistic targets and to ensure that the school is competitive.
The strategic use of resources	The school does the very best it can with its teaching accommodation, which is poor. Staff are deployed effectively and resources are used efficiently.

Financial management is very effective. The headteacher and governors apply the principles of best value consistently well: they consult parents and pupils before making important decisions and changes, compare the school’s performance with that of others and ensure that money is spent wisely when placing contracts for goods or services. Staffing is adequate, teachers are well qualified and the resources for learning are good. The teaching accommodation is poor: many classrooms are far too small and this restricts what can be done in lessons. However, a building renewal programme is now in hand.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school is well managed and approachable</li><li>• Their children are well taught and make good progress</li><li>• Teachers' expectations of the children are high</li><li>• Children become mature and responsible</li><li>• Very wide range of out-of-school activities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A very small minority believe that the school needs to do more to eliminate bullying</li></ul>

The parents' views are very positive, overall, and the inspectors agree with the parents' opinions. A considerable amount of the inspection time was spent investigating the issue of bullying. The teaching staff and pupils co-operated fully in this investigation but no real evidence of bullying could be found.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

##### ***Reception Class***

1. The school establishes effective early links with families through pre-admission visits and discussions and these constructive links help to ensure that most children settle quickly into school. It is a disadvantage that a number of children have no experience of nursery education. Although their overall attainment when they join the Reception class is broadly average for their age in most respects, a significant minority of children are below average in their language skills and in their personal development.

2. The children achieve well in Reception because they are well taught and because they experience a rich and varied curriculum. The vast majority are on course to reach the nationally recommended early learning goals by the time they are ready to start Year 1. Effective provision is made for children with special educational needs so that good progress is made towards individual targets.

##### ***The Infants (Years 1 and 2)***

3. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and the overall standards of Year 2 pupils' work are above average. Pupils with special educational needs are making the same good progress as other pupils because they receive effective support in lessons and because of their good attitudes to their work.

4. In 2002, the results of the national tests of the previous Year 2 pupils were above average in reading, well above in writing and average in mathematics. The results of the teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment in science were above the national average. Taking the results over the period 1999 – 2002, the performance of boys and girls is broadly equal. The overall trend in the results is similar to the national trend.

5. Standards of the current Year 2 pupils' work are above average in English and science and pupils are achieving well in these subjects. Standards are average in mathematics and pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards are above average in number work but they are less good in other aspects of the subject, such as using and applying mathematics, shape and space and data handling.

6. Pupils achievement is at least satisfactory in other subjects and good in religious education and information and communication technology. Standards are above average in these two subjects and average in other subjects.

##### ***The Juniors (Years 3 – 6)***

7. Standards are above average, overall and pupils achieve well. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress towards the clear targets in their individual education plans.

8. The results of the national tests of the previous Year 6 pupils, who were a very capable group of children, were well above average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. When compared to those of similar schools the results were very good. The standards currently being achieved by Year 6 pupils, who have lower targets than those of the previous year but which realistically reflect their capability, are above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Investigation and practical work is a strength of the pupils' work in science. In mathematics, there are some weaknesses in mental arithmetic and paper-and-pencil calculation. As in Years 1 and 2, the pupils' learning experience in mathematics tends to be narrow and more work needs to be planned in some

aspects of the subject, especially using and applying mathematics, and in shape and space and data handling.

9. Although no work of Year 6 pupils could be seen in information technology, the work of the Year 5 pupils is clearly above average in this subject. Standards are above average in religious education and are average in other subjects.

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

10. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and almost all parents agree that their children like coming to school and attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy the extra attention they receive in class; they respond positively and, with help, sustain concentration well.

11. Most pupils are polite, friendly and helpful; they are enthusiastic about lessons, participate sensibly and answer questions eagerly. Older pupils, especially, often work responsibly and independently, enabling the teacher to teach small groups, for example, for guided reading. They are attentive, conscientious, take a pride in their work and are keen participants in the excellent range of out-of-school and enrichment activities provided for them by their teachers.

12. Behaviour is good overall and often very good in lessons. There have been no recent exclusions from school. The achievement of a small number of boys with emotional and behavioural difficulties is occasionally hampered by their behaviour. In the main, however, they are managed well and are learning to co-operate in small group activities.

13. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good and parents' views indicate that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. Every class elects a representative to the School Council and these representatives are given genuine power to make important decisions for the school, such as which charities they support or how money donated to the school might best be spent. The school is an 'Eco School' and its 'Eco-committee' makes decisions which benefit the school's environment and that of the surrounding area. For example, with the help of two sixth-form college students, pupils designed and painted the colourful playground shed. Older pupils take on a range of responsibilities, for example, as librarians. Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' to Reception Class children for their first few weeks in school. A successful new initiative is for older pupils to act as 'playground friends' who encourage younger children to take part in the game of the week and try to ensure that no pupil feels left out or lonely. The school is very successful in competitive sport. Pupils representing the school must not only be good at the sport but must have a very good record of behaviour. All these activities and responsibilities make a very positive contribution to the pupils' maturity and self-esteem. Relationships between pupils are good. A Year 3 pupil said that most people get on well together and are kind to one another.

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

14. Overall, teaching is good throughout the school and accounts for pupils' good quality of learning and good overall achievement. The strengths of the teaching lie in the teachers' high expectations of pupils' achievement, good management of pupils, effective lesson planning and teaching methods, and good teaching of pupils with special educational needs. Amongst subjects, the most effective teaching is in English, science, information and communication technology, and the teaching of religious education throughout the school.

15. The teaching of music and information and of communication technology has improved since the previous inspection, mainly because the teachers have taken further training.

16. The teaching of mathematics, though satisfactory, could be improved further. Other areas for improvement are the efficient use of lesson time and the marking of pupils' written work.

### ***The Reception Class***

17. The teaching is good in the Reception Class and is consistently good in each of the six areas of learning. The teaching has a number of strengths and, in particular, it shows considerable depth of knowledge and understanding of the way young children learn. Their learning is planned effectively to include a wide range of practical activities, which interest and motivate the pupils. The teaching staff could place more emphasis on practical mathematics and applying the children's ability to use number in mixed activity sessions and play. Rigorous assessment of the children's progress is used effectively to plan work for them and which meets their different learning needs, including the needs of those with learning and behavioural difficulties. Learning support assistants are well deployed and make a valuable contribution to learning. In response to the effective teaching that they receive, children enjoy their learning, apply themselves to their work and make good progress

### ***Infant and Junior Classes***

18. The teaching of English is good overall and is particularly effective in Years 5 and 6. Throughout the school, the teachers develop language and literacy skills systematically. Writing, reading and speaking are well developed, both in English and also in a range of subject lessons and the teachers are successfully making the development of pupils' speaking skills a priority. Pupils learn at a good rate; they take pride in the appearance of their work and their handwriting is well formed.

19. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory and many good lessons were seen during the inspection. The strengths of the teaching are the good management of pupils and the effective development of pupils' basic number work in Years 1 and 2, which gives pupils a good foundation for subsequent work. However, the range of work tends to be too narrow throughout the school and pupils need more opportunities to explore numerical patterns and different plane and solid shapes. There are weaknesses amongst the older pupils in mental arithmetic and basic computation. Although pupils would benefit from wider opportunities to use their knowledge to solve real problems in mathematics lessons, they apply their knowledge effectively in other subjects, especially science.

20. The teaching of science is good: it has improved considerably since the previous inspection and has led to above average standards. The strength of the teaching lies in investigational science in Years 3 – 6, which is particularly well developed. Pupils enjoy their work in science, especially their practical work, and concentrate and work with interest.

21. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs. They plan work specifically to help pupils meet their targets; tasks are modified to meet individual needs so that all can learn equally well and make the same progress. Teaching assistants work skilfully with small groups of pupils. Visiting support teachers and learning support agencies work closely with school staff to ensure that their time with individual pupils is used purposefully.

22. The teaching of information and communication technology, as seen during the inspection, is good and pupils are making good progress in their learning of the associated skills, such as presenting and recording information. Teachers are using information and communication technology well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different subjects of the curriculum, especially in mathematics, history and geography. However, this is less effective in English, music and religious education. Pupils are confident in their use of computers and work independently. This aspect of the school's work has greatly improved since the previous inspection.

23. The teaching of religious education is good. Pupils develop a secure basis for their own beliefs and are beginning to understand the beliefs of those of other faiths. Teachers take every opportunity to use religious education lessons to develop pupils' literacy skills, especially speaking and through writing, for example, about bible stories and Christian rites.

24. Some lessons last well over an hour and do not sustain pupils' interest. This was noted particularly in morning literacy and numeracy lessons but also in other subjects, such as science, physical education and art and design.

25. The marking of written work is inconsistent. It is generally good in science throughout the school and spelling and grammatical errors are corrected and teachers identify pupils' difficulties and their comments help the pupils to improve. In mathematics and English, marking often consists only of ticks or crosses and few suggestions for improvement. In other subjects, marking and routine assessment to diagnose how pupils can improve their work and to check their progress are also general matters for improvement.

26. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning when pupils work in groups, though better use could be made of this support during the introduction to lessons. On some of these occasions, which can last a considerable time, the support staff listen with the pupils to the teacher and make no contribution to this part of the lesson.

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

27. The school provides a curriculum which reflects its aims and meets the needs of all of its pupils effectively. Statutory requirements are fully met for the teaching of the National Curriculum and religious education.

28. Curriculum planning has improved considerably since the previous inspection: there are now whole-school programmes of work for each subject which plan for the longer term development of skills and knowledge. Teachers' short-term and individual lesson plans usually take account of the full range of attainment in their classes. In particular, the planning for information and communication technology and music has improved; teaching has improved in these subjects and pupils achieve higher standards.

29. The curriculum in the Reception Class is carefully planned to ensure the children's progress towards the national early learning goals. The children's personal, social and emotional development and their language, literacy and mathematical development receive priority. Pupils are enabled to make good progress in a rich and varied environment for learning based on practical activities.

30. Equality of opportunity is embedded in the school's aims, and all pupils follow the full curriculum. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good; individual education plans for these pupils are clear and relevant to their needs, and provide targets and criteria by which progress can be judged.

31. The school's commitment to the rounded development of its pupils is shown by its appointment of a co-ordinator for curriculum enrichment as part of the Excellence in Cities project. The school has identified gifted and talented pupils and seeks to enrich the curriculum to meet their needs. For instance, talented musicians, mathematicians and athletes are encouraged in class and through extra-curricular activities as well as by introduction to outside agencies. Master classes at the local high school provide extra support in several subjects and four higher attaining pupils recently took part in a challenging design and technology project.

32. The National strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are implemented in all classes. The school has a good system for teaching basic skills of literacy; the system for teaching numeracy is satisfactory overall but good in the infants classes.

33. The quality and range of the school's extra-curricular provision is outstanding. Regular clubs before school, at lunchtime and after school enhance the curriculum for many pupils. Lower attaining pupils receive effective support through a range of additional literacy sessions, extra mathematics, and booster classes. All pupils in infant classes may attend extra reading classes, and all junior classes may attend the

mathematics club after school. Boys and girls in junior classes have many opportunities to take part in a large number of team games and other sports; in musical activities such as recorder playing or choir; and in quieter pursuits such as chess or sewing. Extra-curricular activities involve a high percentage of pupils and most teaching staff. There is an annual residential visit for Year 6 pupils, which fosters their independence. Trips to the theatre, for instance, the recent visit to see *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, extend pupils' cultural experience.

34. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is very good and reflects the importance the school attaches to this aspect of its work. All pupils were involved in achieving the Healthy School Award and are well aware of the importance of diet and exercise. The school is justly proud of its 'Eco School' status and pupils learn to consider environmental issues, for instance, recycling of waste. Circle time or current affairs lessons provide a forum for exchanging ideas and considering issues of importance to children. In assembly also, pupils consider moral and social issues and learn to deal with emotions and feelings. Sex education and drugs awareness are taught according to the governors' policy.

35. The school's links with the community contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Particularly close links with the church and parish of Holy Trinity make valuable contributions to the curriculum in religious education, geography and history lessons. The vicar, who is the Chairman of the Governing Body, is a familiar figure in school. The school draws on a wide range of local expertise from football coaches and countryside rangers to enrich pupils' experience. Pupils join in local community events such as fêtes and the celebration of traditional local country customs, such as the decoration of village wells.

36. Links with other educational establishments are very effective. Student teachers and nursery nurses in training are regular visitors. The Reception teacher's links with pre-school settings help to ensure that new pupils settle quickly into school. Links with the local high school help to smooth the transition of pupils from Year 6 to Year 7.

37. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development which is in large measure responsible for pupils' good attitudes and behaviour. This represents a very good improvement since the previous inspection and is due to the priority now placed on it by the headteacher and her staff.

38. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good and is guided by a strong Christian ethos that permeates the work of the school. Religious education lessons provide a very good opportunity for pupils to consider their own beliefs and to explore those of other faiths. Assemblies are reflective occasions in which pupils learn about human qualities, such as perseverance, and to apply these to their own lives. Pupils experience quiet moments in assemblies when lights are dimmed and candles lit as well as times of vigorous singing of children's hymns.

39. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. Pupils are taught right from wrong. They learn to understand that different viewpoints can be valid, as seen in a well argued debate about homework in Year 6. Pupils also discuss their own behaviour and, for example, consider ways in which anger can be managed effectively. All adults in the school provide good examples, treating one another and their pupils with due fairness and respect. The school has a strong anti-racist policy which pupils understand.

40. Pupils understand the school's Code of Conduct and their Class Rules which are agreed between teachers, pupils and parents. Good behaviour and effort are rewarded systematically, through awarding stickers and through celebration in the school achievement assembly at the end of each week.

41. Social development is promoted very well through a strong sense of community. Pupils collaborate with one another in lessons. Pupils learn to take responsibility in many ways. They elect their own representatives to the School Council, which makes a good contribution to the social life of the school. In this way, pupils learn how democratic society works. Pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of social responsibility in caring for their world through the 'Eco-committee' and the school's commitment to



conservation. The school raises funds for national charities, such as Guide Dogs for the Blind, and Operation Christmas Child.

42. The provision for pupils' cultural development is also very good. Pupils learn about their own culture through, for example, literature, art and religious education. Pupils visit theatres, museums and galleries and study local architecture. The school also teaches its pupils about other cultures, presenting music and art forms from other lands. Pupils learn about the social and ethnic mix of modern Britain in religious education lessons and in circle time, which helps to prepare them for life in a culturally diverse society.

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

43. The school looks after its pupils well and its ethos is warm and caring. Overall the school provides a secure environment which enables children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered.

44. Teaching staff know their pupils and their families well and are dedicated to their pupils' welfare. Procedures to ensure child protection and pupils' welfare are very good: local authority guidelines have recently been reviewed and are followed strictly and the school receives very good support from the education welfare officer.

45. Health and safety measures are very secure and governors undertake risk assessment regularly. Procedures to ensure good attendance and behaviour are effective. As part of the school's programme of personal, health and social education, pupils experience lessons on friendship, which encourage them to be kind to one another and teach them to understand and respect the feelings of others.

46. Assessment procedures are very good in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science, and go beyond what is required by statute. Pupils are assessed in these subjects, not only at the end of Years 2 and 6, as expected, but also in all other years, and individual targets are set for all pupils. Assessment is less effective in other subjects, such as art and design, music, physical education and religious education.

47. Teachers keep good records of pupils' academic progress and personal development. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils' achievement files are passed on to their secondary schools at the time of transfer.

48. Statements and individual education plans show that progress of pupils with special educational needs is regularly reviewed and carefully monitored. Provision, as outlined in formal statements, is fully in place.

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

49. The school's partnership with parents and carers is very good. All parents interviewed, those who attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting with the registered inspector, and the great majority who completed and returned the questionnaire have very positive views about the school and the quality of education provided. Almost all agree that the teaching is good, their children make good progress and are expected to work hard. They feel the school is well led and managed, behaviour is good and that the school works closely with them.

50. Parents are well informed about events of the school calendar and about their children's progress. Formal consultation evenings are held twice a year and are well attended. Annual reports are very informative and are appreciated by parents and all parents are also sent a helpful mini-report in February. Teaching staff in the Reception Class compile pupils' profiles throughout the year, which include delightful photographs of children at work. These are sent to parents at the end of the year.

51. Parents feel comfortable when approaching the school with suggestions or concerns and say that the school is very supportive of families experiencing difficulties. The headteacher is always available to talk to parents when children are arriving and leaving school.

52. Parents of pupils diagnosed as having special educational needs are informed of the school's concern at a very early stage. They are fully consulted in the drawing up of individual education plans and advised on how they can help. Parents are invited to attend and contribute to review meetings.

53. Several parents help regularly in school and a number also give valuable assistance with out-of-school visits. There are always plenty of volunteers to help with special events, such as the Christmas fair. Parents' views are sought through questionnaires and have helped the staff and pupils to formulate school policy, for example, for behaviour. Other parents are involved in the 'Eco-committee' and in the healthy eating campaign. The reading diaries are completed regularly and are effective as a means of home-school communication. A small minority would like to see more homework set for Years 5 and 6.

54. The parents and teachers association (PTFA) is well supported and raises funds to supplement the school's resources and informs parents about improvements and changes. Its social events are popular and whole families participate in them.

55. A very small number of parents wrote to the inspectors to say that they were concerned about bullying. Although inspectors cannot investigate individual cases they took these letters very seriously and looked closely at this whole matter during the course of the inspection. The children are always closely supervised by the headteacher and other members of staff. It is true that there is sometimes some boisterous behaviour in the playground which, though not aggressive, can be rough when children let off steam and run about at great speed. The lack of space in the main building sometimes leads to pushing and shoving when children move from one room to another. Some pupils also said that there was some bullying but it became clear that their understanding of the meaning of bullying includes almost any unwanted physical contact, such as an accidental collision. The pupils are so strictly supervised at all times that the inspectors believe that it would be almost impossible for bullying, in the accepted sense of the word, to take place undetected and the inspectors' close observation of pupils in classrooms, in public places within the school and in the playground, found no evidence of bullying or other aggressive behaviour.

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

56. The school is very well led and well managed and successfully pursues its aims. The school benefits from the purposeful and effective leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, which provides clear direction for the school and concentrates on improving teaching and raising standards.

57. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established and maintained a very positive climate for learning which is characterised by high expectations of the teachers' work and pupils' effort, behaviour and achievement. They consistently set an excellent example for other staff to follow, for example, in the supervision of children at play and lunchtimes. Consequently, staff morale is high; pupils respond well to their teachers and to the school's expectations, and the vast majority of parents are very satisfied with the school's work.

58. The governors do their work very well and all statutory requirements are met. Governors have good relationships with staff and are committed to the continued development of the school and have a wide range of valuable experience and expertise. Regular meetings of the full governing body and reports provide a clear overview of the school's work and a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

59. Other management responsibilities are carried out well. Subject co-ordinators have a key role in the organisation of their subjects, especially in policy-making, curriculum planning, training and the provision of resources.

60. The special educational needs co-ordinator has ensured the full implementation of the new Code of Practice and statutory requirements are fully met. She manages the school's provision efficiently so that support is appropriately directed to meet specific needs. Learning support assistants give pupils the support outlined in their statements and individual plans.

61. The school compares its performance with that of other schools, locally and nationally. Assessment data helps governors to compare the school's performance with local and national standards and to set realistic targets for national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

62. The monitoring of teaching and learning is a strength of the school's management. A programme to improve teaching and pupils' learning, the curriculum, and the performance of individual teachers is in place. The headteacher monitors standards in all classes. Subject co-ordinators monitor standards in their subjects by sampling pupils' written work and teachers' planning. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science visit their colleagues' lessons and evaluate the quality of teaching in these particular subjects.

63. The school's plan for development is a clear and ambitious document which is drawn up by the headteacher in consultation with staff and governors. Although its time-span is one year only, it includes appropriate priorities, action plans, accountability, time-scales and costs. It concentrates appropriately on improving teaching and raising standards. Each term, the headteacher informs the governors about the progress made with the priorities identified in the plan.

64. Learning resources are good for all of the subjects of the curriculum. The school has spent a considerable sum of money to good effect on improving its resources for information and communication technology.

65. Classes contain 30 or fewer children. Teachers are well qualified and the teaching staff comprises a healthy balance of experienced and newly qualified teachers. There are sufficient learning support assistants for the school's needs. Accommodation is cramped and very unsatisfactory but a new building programme is expected to be under way shortly.

66. The expenditure per pupil is a little above the national average. Financial management is secure; the budget is in balance and the school has a useful contingency reserve which is earmarked to cover an expected increase in the school's running costs.

67. The school compares its performance with that of other schools so that it can identify how to improve and to set realistic targets. Parents and pupils are consulted about proposed changes and improvements; the school's resources are used efficiently. Money is spent on the particular purposes for which it is intended, such as the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The budget matches the school's priorities for improvement. The governors and headteacher ensure that money is spent in accordance with the principles of best value, which are rigorously applied, in particular when placing contracts and when making major spending decisions.

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

68. In order to improve the school's performance still further, the governors, headteacher and staff should take the following action.

- (1) Raise standards in mathematics, by
  - ◆ widening the range of pupils' mathematical work throughout the school,
  - ◆ improving the teaching of mental arithmetic and calculation.

*(paragraphs 5,8,16,17,19,77,91 and 92)*
- (2) Improve the lesson timetable, by

◆ planning for more, but shorter, lessons each day.  
(*paragraphs 24,89,94,97,101,110,117 and 121*)

(3) Improve the marking of pupils' written work in English and mathematics, and the routine assessment in other subjects

◆ so that pupils have a clearer understanding of what they need to do to improve.  
(*paragraphs 25,46,89,94,111,118,121 and 122*)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

52

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

24

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	29	21	0	0	0
Percentage	0	4	56	40	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. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

### 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)	n/a	189
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	24

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	13	15	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	27	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (96)	93 (96)	96 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	26	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (91)	96 (96)	96 (100)
	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	18	11	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	17
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	26	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (83)	86 (66)	97 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	18
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	27	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (86)	100 (79)	100 (90)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	179	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	27

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	141

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	425660
Total expenditure	407093
Expenditure per pupil	2066.46

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
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	189
Number of questionnaires returned	78

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	17	9	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	29	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	36	2	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	49	8	1	1
The teaching is good.	60	35	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	46	5	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	14	5	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	34	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	45	6	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	63	28	1	5	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	33	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	33	3	0	2

### **Other issues raised by parents**

A very small number of parents wrote to say that they believe that the school does not do enough to prevent bullying. This matter was investigated by the inspectors and their findings are reported in the main body of the report and the summary for parents.





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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

69. Children start school in the September of the school year before their fifth birthday. Gradual induction procedures are well organised to allow children to attend half-days at first, moving to full time attendance as they grow in confidence. Currently there are 29 full-time pupils on roll in the Reception class.

70. The teaching staff establish good initial links with families through short pre-admission visits and through introductory discussions. As result, most children settle quickly into school life. These first links provide a strong basis for the successful home-school partnership, which successfully supports learning as children move through the Foundation Stage and beyond.

71. The Reception class follows the nationally recommended curriculum and the early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage. This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or *Stepping-Stones* from which progress and standards can be measured.

72. The children's overall attainment when they join the Reception class is broadly average for their age. However, a significant minority of children are below average in their language skills and in their social development. The lack of a nursery at the school leads to a greater than usual variation in standards between individuals, as children have different pre-school experience, such as nursery or play-school, but some have none at all.

73. Reception children are currently working on the second *Stepping-Stone* and towards third *Stepping-Stone*. Overall, they achieve well, owing to good teaching and a rich and varied curriculum. The vast majority are on course to reach the early learning goals in each of the areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. Effective provision for children with special educational needs enables them to make good progress towards individual targets.

74. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. The teacher uses her considerable knowledge and understanding of the way young children learn, to plan a wide range of interesting practical experiences which motivate the children successfully. Assessment procedures are carried out rigorously. Information gained from tests and from regular and frequent observations of children at work is used very efficiently to plan tasks which closely meet the children's varying needs. Detailed pupil profiles are built up which are shared with parents. All staff work effectively as a team so that the best use is made of individual talents. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a valuable contribution to learning.

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

75. Children enjoy school. They choose activities independently and sustain concentration well to persevere and complete tasks. All are learning to share although some find this difficult and a few lower attainers are oblivious to the needs of others and are unwilling to share at all. With support, children wait their turn, for instance, at snack time, and are polite and well mannered, saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Higher attainers collaborate readily with others to achieve a common purpose, such as building with bricks. Most children respond positively to class routines but a few do not conform readily to the clear boundaries set by the teacher. For example, a significant minority are slow to follow instructions when taking part in physical education or drama activities in the hall. Through listening to the Christmas story, children are just beginning to become aware of Christian values. The teaching staff make their high expectations clear for co-operative attitudes and build positive relationships with the children. Staff consistently reinforce good behaviour and effort with praise and encouragement. They deal calmly and

successfully with challenging behaviour when it occurs. They provide opportunities for pupils to discuss issues such as fairness, right and wrong, and the need for apology when it is due. The children take responsibilities when demonstrating to others, for example, in physical education and music, and they tidy up at the end of sessions.

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

76. Almost all children enjoy listening to stories. Most children understand the plot and express their ideas confidently, making their meaning clear. A few children, however, have poor concentration and show by their response that they have not fully understood. The vast majority of pupils recognise letters by shape and sound and use this knowledge to build up simple three-letter words. Higher attainers continue a string of rhyming words accurately. Most children are developing very positive attitudes to books: they are beginning to recognise words in the first readers and enjoy taking books home to share with parents. Most children are beginning to hold pencils correctly and to form letters properly. They use letter shapes in their own writing, for instance, when writing a message in their Christmas cards, and copy on or under the teacher's writing with reasonable control. Teaching of basic skills, such as matching of letters to their sounds is particularly good. The teacher incorporates appropriate elements of the National Literacy Strategy and plans small steps of learning to build gradually and continuously on what children have already learnt. All teaching staff encourage positive attitudes to books and this helps to foster the children's interest. The teacher is a good storyteller and uses her voice expressively to create drama, tension and excitement.

### **Mathematical development**

77. Most children recite numbers to ten. The children put number patterns to ten in the correct order. They count one-to-one to five or ten, and higher attainers recognise patterns up to five without counting. Most are becoming familiar with positional words such as before, after and in-between. Most pupils are just beginning to link numerals to their values and higher attainers spot which one of a sequence of numbers is missing. They are beginning to solve number problems involving coins and higher attainers carry out simple additions when solving problems with up to 10 pennies. They notice pattern in the environment and use mirrors to show line symmetry. The teacher plans carefully to build up skills through effective use of practical counting and matching activities and effective and clear demonstrations. Teaching staff take opportunities in other areas of learning to reinforce number skills; for example, clapping beats in music or sharing out snacks one-to-one. Staff make good use of the outdoor play area to promote number skills, for instance, in counting and tallying, or in recording the number of goals scored in football. Occasionally they do not place enough emphasis on practical mathematics and give too few opportunities to use numerals informally in the daily mixed activity sessions which follow the whole class mathematics input.

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

78. The children are curious and enthusiastically investigate the world around them, for example, when exploring the properties of sand or water by sprinkling, smoothing, squirting and pouring. They use magnifiers well to observe patterns and textures in natural materials. When pummelling and rolling dough they appreciate properties such as hard and soft, and discuss best methods of cutting up or pulling apart. Most children build with construction toys to meet their own particular purpose. They are competent in using the computer to support their learning and control the mouse to move objects on screen. Resources are well chosen and efficiently organised to stimulate children's curiosity. The teacher uses questions skilfully to help children to develop their own ideas, draw conclusions from what they see and to ask questions of their own.

### **Physical development**

79. Children enjoy physical activities. They use the large space in the hall with awareness of others. Almost all move freely with appropriate co-ordination and confidence when running, jogging or skipping.

They negotiate space to travel over and under and control their bodies when balancing. Almost all are developing satisfactory control of paintbrushes and scissors but many still cannot hold a pencil correctly. Whilst the teaching staff make the best use of the resources available, the outside area is inadequate for the children's needs.

### **Creative development**

80. Children explore a wide range of media in their creative work, such as making Christmas cards. When playing alongside others, children collaborate to act out parts of stories, such as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. The children explore sound enthusiastically, for example, when playing simple percussion instruments. Pupils make suitable movements in response to a story, as when slowly 'climbing the stairs' or 'lying still in bed'. Teaching staff make particularly good provision for pupils' creative development through role-play, both in class lessons and through play and intervene to help children develop their ideas. Teaching staff show respect for the children's work and provide reassuring feedback for individuals which raises their self-esteem and confidence to explore new situations. Sometimes the pace of learning slows when the organisation of equipment in class lessons is inefficient. Occasionally, children are not given the opportunity to make choices, for example, of musical instruments for themselves.

## **ENGLISH**

### **Strengths**

- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6
- Systematic and effective teaching of basic skills in the infants
- Very good teaching in Year 5 and Year 6
- Good teaching of literacy skills in other subjects
- Good subject management
- Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress

### **Areas for improvement**

- Pupils' imaginative writing
- Standards achieved by boys
- Consistency in the use of computers in drafting and editing pupils' work
- Deployment of learning support assistants during introductory parts of lessons
- Marking of written work is inconsistent.

81. Standards have improved very well since the previous inspection, when they were broadly average, because teaching and the management of the subject have improved. In particular, the monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress is now more effective than it was.

82. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. The 2002 results of Year 2 pupils in the national tests results of reading were above average in comparison with all schools nationally and the results in writing were well above average. The standards reached by the current Year 2 are also above average overall. The 2002 test results of Year 6 pupils in English were well above average. These test results were achieved by a particularly able Year 6 class. Standards of the current Year 6 pupils are lower than those of the previous year but are still above average. Standards are lower than those of the previous year because the class contains a higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties.

83. Good teaching through the school enables pupils to achieve above average standards. Work is well matched to the needs of the pupils enabling them to make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as others with effective support. The needs of the more able pupils are now being met well in lessons through the Excellence in Cities and the Gifted and Talented provision. In

the past, boys have achieved less well than girls in Year 6. Efforts have been made to close the gap; for example, reading books now have more appeal for boys so that they are encouraged to read more widely, and boys have the opportunity to choose from a wider range of subjects for their writing. It is too soon to judge whether these measures have had a significant effect on boys' standards.

84. Speaking and listening skills are well developed throughout the school. Pupils listen well in lessons, whether listening to a story, to instructions or to each other. By Year 2, most pupils are confident in saying what they notice and what they know. Pupils respond well to the use of technical vocabulary, providing good examples when asked to suggest adjectives to describe the appearance of characters in a story. By Year 6, pupils have good ability to listen and respond well to each other. In a debate, they listen carefully to the cogent arguments offered for and against homework and pose interesting questions to their class mates, based on what they had heard. They adapt their language well, for example using Standard English in the context of the formal debate.

85. Pupils achieve good standards in reading by Year 2, owing to systematic and thorough teaching and regular opportunities to read aloud to the teacher and at home. Pupils read storybooks fluently and with understanding and expression and comment on their preference between poetry and stories. They recognise a large number of words by sight and also use their good knowledge of letter sounds to help read new words. Most pupils understand how to find information from non-fiction books and higher attaining pupils do so quickly and efficiently. By Year 6, standards in reading are above average. Pupils read confidently and expressively and offer interesting opinions about their favourite authors. One pupil contrasts the humour she appreciates in the Roald Dahl books with the more serious story in the Jacqueline Wilson book she is reading. Higher attaining pupils tackle quite difficult books such as *The Hobbit* with confidence and can describe various attributes of the characters. Lower attaining pupils read books from the reading scheme independently and can explain the story, and their regular reading practice and systematic development of phonic skills brings the vast majority of pupils to the expected standard. This good level of reading enables pupils to participate well in lessons in other subjects.

86. Throughout the school, pupils have good opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in the other subjects of the curriculum. By Year 2, pupils achieve standards in writing that are well above average and handwriting is legible and well formed and, during the course of Year 2, pupils regularly practise their joined-up writing. They write for a good variety of purposes, including poetry, instructions for playing card games, such as snap, book reviews, and narrative and descriptive accounts, such as their visit to the Lowry Museum

87. Although pupils receive guidance on structure and sequencing their ideas opportunities to develop imaginative writing are more limited. Year 6 pupils' writing is generally well organised and well punctuated. The quantity and range of written work has suffered this year owing to some disruption in teaching, but pupils have experienced writing in a range of styles, both in Year 5 and Year 6. Higher attaining pupils use language well in their written reports, for example, on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, describing Puck as dressed in his 'natural, earthy green colours'. The spelling of lower attaining pupils is usually phonetically correct and their writing shows secure use of capital letters and full stops. An area for improvement is the opportunity for writing more extended pieces of imaginative work and also more regular use of computers to draft and edit their work.

88. Teaching is good overall. It is very good in Year 5 and Year 6, leading to acceleration in learning in the latter half of the junior years. A strength of the teaching throughout the school is the way in which teachers seize every opportunity to develop language and literacy skills in all lessons; for example, in religious education when Year 3 wrote thoughtful pieces about what upsets them. Reading is taught very well in the infants through the systematic teaching of phonic skills and the regular reading practice in class sessions, in groups and at home. A very effective feature is the reading club that takes place each lunchtime for Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Pupils take pride in the appearance of their work. Teachers manage pupils well and pupils generally behave well in lessons.

89. In some less successful lessons, the introductory sessions are too slow. In some lessons, the teacher talks for too long; there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to contribute and they become restless. Some lessons last well over an hour which is too long to sustain pupils' interest. Marking of pupils' written work is inconsistent: it is good in some classes, where it diagnoses pupils' difficulties and teachers' comments help pupils to improve, but in others, marking consists mainly of ticks or crosses, with few suggestions for improvement. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning when pupils work in groups, though better use could be made of them during the introduction to lessons because they sometimes listen passively with the pupils in these sessions.

90. The subject is managed well and the monitoring of teaching and learning has led to improvements. The co-ordinator monitors lessons, lesson planning and checks pupils' work. In this way she is well aware of standards and areas for development are discussed and clearly identified. For example, the development of literacy in other subjects was identified as a priority for improvement and this is having a good effect on standards. The school has identified the lower attainment of boys in the juniors as an area requiring attention.

## MATHEMATICS

### Strengths

- Good standards of number work in Years 1 and 2
- Good use of ICT
- Popular and well-attended maths club

### Areas for improvement

- Mental arithmetic and paper-and-pencil calculation, particularly in Year 6
- Lower standards than in English and science
- Teachers' marking of pupils' written work
- Some lesson introductions are too long

91. When pupils join Year 1, their attainment is broadly average and they make satisfactory progress over Years 1 and 2. The results of the National Curriculum tests are rising in line with the national trend. They were average in 2002, both in comparison with all schools and with similar schools. Overall standards of the Year 2 pupils' work are average and are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. Although this is a satisfactory achievement for these pupils, standards are lower in mathematics than in English and could be raised further with a broader range of work, to include more practical activities involving the solution of real problems. Standards of basic numerical knowledge, however, are above average and nearly all pupils have at least a satisfactory understanding of addition and subtraction of whole numbers, and are beginning to deal with multiplication.

92. The results of the national tests taken at the end of Year 6 have improved at a faster rate than the national trend of improvement over the three-year period 1999-2002. The boys' results are similar to those of the girls, unlike those in English. The results were above average in 2002 and were also above average in comparison with those of similar schools. The results met the targets set by the governors. The standards of the current Year 6 pupils work are lower than those of the previous year because of differences in ability between the two year groups and these differences are reflected in lower targets for the 2003 tests in this subject. Standards of Year 6 pupils' work are average and represent a satisfactory achievement although they are lower than in the other two main subjects, English and science, and there are some points for improvement. Overall, the great majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of place value, fractions, decimals, ratio and proportion although, in Year 6, pupils' mental arithmetic and paper-and-pencil calculation could be improved. Pupils make satisfactory progress in geometry and higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of line symmetry. Pupils can calculate the area of plane shapes composed of rectangles. Higher attaining pupils know the formula for the area of a right triangle. The work in data handling is satisfactory overall and higher attaining pupils collect data, construct a frequency table and can draw a frequency diagram to illustrate their findings.

93. Pupils have good attitudes in their lessons; they behave very well and co-operate with their teachers. They collaborate very well with one another when in pairs or small groups and work independently and productively.

94. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school and a number of good lessons took place during the inspection. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils equally and pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as others. However, teachers need to plan more work for pupils to investigate numerical and geometrical patterns, and to solve real problems. Nevertheless, pupils' knowledge and skills are applied effectively in other subjects, especially science, to measure, and to draw graphs and illustrate their findings in charts and tables. The use of information technology to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge is effective; for example, when making a spreadsheet of the ingredients of a cake, Year 5 pupils made good progress in their understanding of algebraic formulae, the use of brackets and the order of operations. A good feature of the school's work is the Mathematics Club, which should be strongly encouraged. The strengths of the teaching are the good management of the pupils and, most notably of pupils with behavioural difficulties, and in Years 1 and 2 the effective teaching of basic number work. On occasions, however, lessons are too long, particularly introductions to lessons, and pupils tend to lose interest and concentration. Learning support assistants teach small groups effectively; however, they are not always efficiently employed during long introductions. The marking of written work is inconsistent and, in some classes, consists of little more than ticks and crosses. Pupils need more guidance to show them how to improve their work.

## SCIENCE

### Strengths

- Above average standards
- Good teaching
- Pupils' work on life processes and living things
- Well developed practical science in Years 3 – 6
- Good improvement since the previous inspection

### Areas for improvement

- Use of lesson time

95. The teachers' assessments of Year 2 pupils in 2002 indicated that an above average proportion of those pupils reached the nationally expected standard and an average proportion reached higher standards still. The standards of work of the current Year 2 pupils are also above average and represent a good achievement for these pupils. Pupils have a good understanding of living things and what plants and animals need to thrive. They observe and write accurately about what they see amongst living things, for example, differences in behaviour and nutrition. Their work includes a strong emphasis on healthy lifestyle, for example, in their study of the growth and care of the teeth and they know the physical changes that they have undergone since their birth. Pupils understand that a force is necessary to increase or to decrease speed or to change the direction of a moving object.

96. The results of the National Curriculum tests of Year 6 pupils in 2002 were well above average. Current Year 6 pupils' standards of work are above average but lower than the most recent test results indicate because of differences in the characteristics and potential of the two year groups concerned. Nevertheless, these pupils are achieving well in this subject. Standards are above average in all aspects of the subject but work on life processes and living things is a particularly strong feature and the higher attaining pupils' work on photosynthesis is well above average for their age. Pupils' work on food chains shows that they understand how different types of animals are classified, the role of producers and consumers, and of prey and predators. Their practical work is well developed, as seen, for example, in a Year 4 lesson, when pupils used effective methods to separate different solids from a mixture. Good work

was also seen in a Year 5 lesson when pupils investigated sound and deduced that sound is produced when objects vibrate and showed an understanding of pitch and volume in this context. Pupils have a good understanding of a scientific ‘fair test’.

97. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers manage pupils well and the school is fortunate in having considerable expertise in this subject. Science lessons help to develop pupils’ literacy skills effectively and, for example, afford many good opportunities for pupils to talk and write about their practical work. The pupils’ written work is marked well throughout the school and spelling and grammatical errors are corrected. This is helpful to all pupils but especially to those with special educational needs who are well supported and make the same good progress in lessons as other pupils. Pupils enjoy their work and are diligent. They concentrate well and apply their mathematical skills effectively to illustrate their findings in graphs, tables and charts. A good example of this is a graphical illustration of a survey undertaken by Year 2 pupils in connection with favourite and healthy foods. Pupils enjoy their work in science, especially practical work, and concentrate and work with interest. On occasions, when the activity lasts too long, pupils can lose interest and attention and it will be important for the teachers to ensure more effective use of lesson time. Pupils have good attitudes to science and behave well in lessons. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils’ personal development, especially through healthy eating and care for the environment.

98. The subject is very well managed. The curriculum is planned so that the teachers know what they are expected to teach, and appropriate support and resources are available. Standards and teaching have improved well since the previous inspection.

## ART AND DESIGN

### Strengths

- Well developed skills of direct observation
- A good contribution to pupils’ spiritual and cultural development
- Well-planned educational visits

### Areas for development

- Teachers’ expectations of higher attaining pupils
- Assessment of pupils’ work to check on the development of skills

99. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average but are lower than found at the time of the previous inspection, when they were above average. This is due in part to the school’s priority to raising standards in English, mathematics and science and in part to the absence of a key member of staff. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils follow a scheme of work which plans for the step-by-step development of skills and knowledge over time. In some classes, however, opportunities are missed for higher attainers to work to their full potential. In Year 3, for example, work on pattern is not developed as well as it could be and results in some work which does not challenge the higher attaining pupils. All junior pupils have sketchbooks but the effectiveness of their use varies from one class to another. Skills of direct observational drawing are developed effectively throughout the school and some high quality work was seen in Year 5.

100. In Year 2, pupils use their knowledge of the work of L S Lowry to draw pencil sketches of his *Portrait of A Man with Red Eyes*. Their drawings in the main show appropriate use of line and shading, good detail and control. They build on this experience when closely observing a partner to draw a pencil portrait. They record detail in shape of face, hairstyle and eyelashes, and higher attainers use a simple shading technique to produce a desired effect. Very few make a relevant evaluation of their work or suggest improvements other than where work is obviously unfinished. In discussion, pupils’ knowledge of the work of artists, crafts people and designers from different times and cultures is weak. Little work has been done in Year 6 this term because the subject timetable is organised in units which alternate with



units of design and technology and, therefore, no Year 6 lessons could be seen during the inspection. However, Year 6 pupils' work in their sketchbooks is of a broadly average standard: pupils have been studying the ways movement is shown in visual form and have looked closely at photographs and pictures to familiarise themselves with body shapes in different poses before attempting to communicate movement in their own drawings of figures and forms. In discussion about their work, most pupils use correct terms, such as 'tone' and 'shape' when describing their work. They are aware of typical artwork from the Ancient Greek civilisations, for example, in terms of the style, colour and patterns of vases and pottery. They have a good idea of the styles of Monet and of Van Gogh because they have studied them, but are unable to talk about a wider range of artists.

101. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good teaching leading to high standards in Year 5. Teachers use their secure knowledge and understanding to plan an appropriate range of work. Resources are plentiful and well organised to allow pupils to make choices. In Year 5, for instance, pupils explore a range of pencils with varying degrees of hardness to choose the one most suitable to their purpose. The range of artefacts prepared for their still life drawing provided very good stimulation for their work. Teachers use individual samples of pupils' work effectively to demonstrate good practice, so that others can see how to improve. Plenary sessions are used well to promote self-esteem and confidence through positive feedback. In some lessons, teachers' expectations are not high enough and pupils work at too slow a pace when they are given too long to complete their task. This results in satisfactory rather than good progress.

102. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The curriculum co-ordinator checks teachers' plans but assessment is not in place to check on the development of skills over time.

103. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development especially in opportunities for shared co-operative work, for self-evaluation, and in the way pupils' self-esteem and confidence are developed. In Year 4, some interesting work on Aboriginal art is raising pupils' cultural awareness. Good cross-curricular links are made with literacy. Links with mathematics and with information and communication technology are not fully developed. Well-planned educational visits like those to the Lowry Centre or to Styal Mill (textiles) make an effective contribution to learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **Strengths**

- Standards of work in Years 4 and 5

### **Areas for improvement**

- Design and evaluation work in Year 6

104. Only one lesson could be observed during the inspection because of the way in which the lessons are planned. There is, no reliable evidence of standards achieved in the infants. However, samples of pupils' work in the juniors indicate that standards are average and that Year 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and usually attain the standards which their teachers expect of them.

105. Pupils make steady progress in Years 4, 5 and 6. Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory grasp of planning their work and making objects but their design work needs to be presented in more detail, judging from models of temporary storm shelters, and their evaluation of their work needs to be more convincing. However, Year 5 pupils' design work is good and pupils carefully investigate the purpose of artefacts to see how they are made before planning their own designs. For example, when they designed and made fancy biscuits, they evaluated different recipes, decorations and packaging before making decisions about their final products. Year 4 pupils studied the working of children's pop-up books before designing and

making their own books to an impressive standard. Other Year 4 pupils designed and made articulated models of clowns from stiff card; these were well made and were actuated by levers and sliding bars.

106. Although only one lesson could be observed during the inspection, evidence from an examination of past work, from photographs and from discussion with pupils, indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory and that pupils' attitudes towards the subject are positive. The subject is managed satisfactorily and teachers appear to have a sound understanding of the subject. Some of the pupils' work indicates that the teachers plan carefully to provide interesting and purposeful lessons and, as a result, pupils enjoy designing and making their products. The standard of work is restricted in some classes by insufficient space for practical work.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

### **Strengths**

- Good opportunities to develop literacy skills
- Good use of information and communication technology
- Effective use of artefacts

### **Areas for improvement**

- Assessment procedures
- Development of numeracy
- The slow pace in some lesson introductions

107. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They acquire skills of geographical and historical enquiry at a steady rate and develop their knowledge of places and the past. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively in class and this enables them to make the same progress as their peers. The previous report found that standards were above average in history in Year 6. However, the high priority the school has rightly placed on raising standards in English, maths and science means that standards in history are now about average.

108. In geography, Year 2 pupils are learning about places around the world, receiving imaginary postcards and locating their origins on a map. Pupils explore the area around the school and, for example, consider how to make their environment safer. They also compare significant features of life in different locations, such as an island and the seaside, and contrast these with their own environment. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of geographical features of the local area. They understand the water cycle and how it affects everyday lives, and have gained first hand knowledge of a river and mountain region through a field trip to Snowdonia. They use subject vocabulary such as delta, estuary and tributary accurately. The junior pupils' written work shows that they have a range of geographical skills, such as map-reading and drawing maps using appropriate symbols.

109. In history, Year 2 pupils gain insight of the past when they read and hear about the lives of famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, and contrast the clothes she wore with the uniforms worn by present-day nurses. Pupils gain an understanding of the past by studying the differences in children's toys from past times and the present. Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of aspects of Victorian England and discuss Victorian working practices and contrast their own lives with those of Victorian children, following a trip to a former cotton mill. They have a sound understanding of past civilisations, including the Greeks, Romans, Vikings and Tudors. They also understand the more recent past through studying the plight of children in the Second World War.

110. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good features seen in the lessons observed. Teachers' planning has improved since the previous inspection. Artefacts and field trips are used effectively to enrich lessons. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology in geography for research and collating information, for example, when Year 5 pupils researched the Internet to illustrate the importance of clean water in areas of shortage such as Ethiopia. The weakness in

some lessons is the slow pace of the extended introductions, which cause some pupils to become restless and lose interest. Opportunities are taken to develop pupils' literacy skills well through researching information and written work. However, the planned development and use of numeracy skills is less effective.

111. The subjects are well managed. The co-ordinators monitor teachers' plans and pupils' work regularly and so are well aware of the standards achieved. Resources are good and well organised so that they are readily available. The area for improvement is to develop assessment procedures to track the progress of individual pupils.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

### Strengths

- Good teaching
- Above average standards and good achievement
- Good resources
- Substantial improvement since the previous inspection

### Areas for improvement

- The use of computers in English, music and religious education lessons

112. Standards are above average by Year 2. Although Year 6 pupils' work could not be seen, the current Year 5 pupils' work is at a higher standard than expected from a Year 6 class. Standards are considerably higher than they were at the time of the previous inspection and pupils are now achieving well. This is because the subject is well managed, most teachers now have the essential knowledge to teach the subject, and because the school now has sufficient computers. Pupils with special educational needs are covering the same ground as other pupils and are also achieving well because they are motivated and interested and because of the effective support they receive in lessons.

113. Year 2 pupils' work, as seen during the inspection, is above average and represents a good achievement. Pupils use computer programmes effectively. When they control the movements of a simple programmable toy and enter instructions for it to follow a given route, they show that they understand the need to give instructions in the correct order. Pupils also give correct instructions to a computer to draw specified shapes on-screen, such as a rectangular spiral. Although no Year 6 lesson was seen during the inspection, Year 5 pupils were reaching above average standards in work connected with mathematics and the use of spreadsheets. These pupils are achieving well.

114. Teaching and learning are good, overall. Although teachers still need to extend their use of computers in English, music and religious education lessons, most of them make effective use of the school's resources. The lessons observed were all good and showed that the teachers concerned have high expectations of their pupils and that they are secure in their knowledge of new technology. Pupils have good attitudes towards learning and are well behaved in lessons; they are confident in their ability to use computers and have many opportunities to work independently.

## MUSIC

### Strengths

- Teaching has improved
- Pupils' enjoyment of making music.
- A good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.
- Very good extra-curricular provision

### Areas for improvement

- Slow pace in parts of some lessons.
- Teaching assistants not always used efficiently.
- No consistent system to assess and record progress.

115. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are average and this is a good improvement on the below average standards found in Year 6 at the time of the previous inspection. The pupils' achievement is now

satisfactory because of improved teaching, which is also satisfactory, better lesson planning and subject expertise. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress.

116. In Year 1, pupils choose and make sounds, for example, to illustrate a story. They know that some instruments are more suitable than others to create specific effects. Most pupils make thoughtful choices, for instance, the triangle to make a clock-chiming sound and tapping knees to represent someone climbing the stairs. They listen with pride to a recording of their work. In Year 2, pupils build on this experience to consider how different sounds can be arranged. They are beginning to appreciate changes in pitch, and contrast high and low notes. Their ability to use symbols to represent sounds is not well developed. In Year 6, pupils are very enthusiastic to perform the *Minibeast Rap* they have composed. They perform as a class keeping a common pulse. They are aware of the way parts fit together to achieve an overall effect. In groups, pupils create a simple melody to a given set of words using the pentatonic scale. They use their own notation to record changes in rhythm and pitch. Higher attainers add an ostinato accompaniment. All are enthusiastic to perform their composition for the rest of the class. Very few are perceptive in their evaluation of their own or others' work or able to suggest improvements.

117. The improvement in teaching is due to in-service training, which has increased the teachers' expectations of pupils' work rates and achievements particularly in the junior department. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use their secure knowledge and understanding to plan lively lessons based on first-hand music making experiences. As a result, pupils are developing positive attitudes to the subject. Pupils in Year 6 for example, work hard at their compositions and are proud of their achievement. Teachers make good use of subject technical language, such as pentatonic scale, ostinato and composition, which extends the pupils' ability to describe and discuss each other's work. Teachers are skilled in asking questions purposefully to help pupils extend their own ideas. Pupils are managed well, with praise and encouragement which gives them confidence in their work and in their ability to perform for others. Sometimes lessons proceed at a slow pace and when insufficiently challenging, pupils lose interest. In some lessons, teaching assistants are not well deployed. Their valuable time is not used to best advantage when they do not play a significant part in the lesson.

118. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The curriculum co-ordinator is beginning to check on standards and coverage by monitoring teachers' plans. However, assessment procedures are not in place to check on skills or plan work.

119. Links with literacy and numeracy are satisfactory but opportunities to use information and communication technology effectively are missed. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development particularly in the opportunities for collaborative group work, and for appreciating music from a range of cultures. Extra-curricular activities like the recorder club and the choir, together with peripatetic music lessons enhance the curriculum for some pupils.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### Strengths

- Good achievement in games
- Outstanding range of extra-curricular activities

### Areas for development

- Slow pace in some lessons
- Ineffective use of assessment

120. Standards in Year 2 are average and similar to those found in the previous inspection and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. No physical education lessons were taught in Years 5 and 6 during the inspection and, therefore, no overall judgement can be made of standards in Year 6. The school's performance in competitive team sports indicates that games skills are at least equal to those of most

other schools. Attainment in swimming is average and the vast majority of Year 6 pupils are on target to meet the required standards by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress alongside their peers.

121. Year 2 pupils show increasing control and co-ordination, for example, in balancing activities and work successfully with partners to make mirror images of each other's movements. Most pupils are just beginning to evaluate their work and that of others and are trying to improve. Year 4 pupils have sound skills in dance and move imaginatively in time to music when portraying the relationship in movement between a puppeteer and a puppet, and making very good use of different heights throughout the dance. When they evaluated their work, the pupils made sensible suggestions for improvement.

121. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers use their secure knowledge and understanding to plan appropriate warm-up and cool-down sessions and show good awareness of safety aspects. They give clear instructions and explanations so that pupils know exactly what is expected and usually apply themselves energetically to their tasks. Whilst good use is generally made of pupil demonstrators as examples of good practice, teachers do not always make clear exactly what is good about their work. In some classes, lessons are too long. Pupils cannot sustain their efforts and the pace of learning slows.

122. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The curriculum co-ordinator checks teachers' plans but no assessment procedures are in place, apart from those for swimming.

123. The subject makes an excellent contribution to pupils' social and moral development as pupils learn to play by rules and to appreciate fair play. Year 3 pupils, in particular, are taught how to collaborate in small groups in order to solve problems. The range of extra-curricular activities is outstanding and affords pupils frequent opportunities to represent the school in competitive sport. Talented pupils are encouraged to extend their skills further. For example, some pupils attend Saturday classes in gymnastics, and one girl attends Tameside school of excellence in football. School teams have recently been very successful in local competitions.

124. Links with literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. Information and communication technology is used appropriately, for instance, use of the digital camera helps children assess their own work and improve.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Strengths

- Above average standards throughout the school
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different world faiths
- Good teaching
- Good use and development of literacy skills
- Good contribution to pupils' personal development

### Areas for development

- Use of information and communication technology to support learning

125. By Year 2 and by Year 6, the standards of pupils' work are above average in relation to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. A strong feature is pupils' knowledge and understanding of the major religious faiths which makes a very good contribution to their personal development by teaching tolerance and respect for others. Pupils of all abilities achieve well because of the thorough way in which facts are taught and the good opportunities pupils have to contribute to discussions.

126. Pupils respond well in lessons and in assemblies and are keen to contribute to discussions. Pupils collaborate well in groups and are happy to take responsibility for keeping their group on task and to report back to the whole class.

127. Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of Judaism and Christianity and are familiar with many Bible stories from the Old and the New Testaments. They are aware that societies need rules for living and are thoughtful when considering rules which would improve the quality of life, linking their suggestions with the Ten Commandments. They know that people from different religions regard certain books and places as special, and talk knowledgeably about churches and synagogues, emphasising similarities as well as differences.

128. Year 6 pupils extend their knowledge of world faiths to Islam and Hinduism. They know that most faiths value pilgrimages and they treat differing customs and beliefs with respect. Pupils participate in mature discussions about difficult subjects, for example, the existence of God. They know that the world has many problems that have so far proved insoluble to man, such as cruelty, starvation and racism.

129. Teaching is good throughout the school, enabling pupils to make good progress. Teachers' questioning gives pupils a forum in which to express their own ideas confidently, for example, in a Year 3 lesson on relationships, in which Jesus had been described as a peacemaker, one pupil pointed out that Jesus was not always a peacemaker as shown when he got angry and cleared the temple. Teachers make effective use of a range of artefacts to enliven lessons, such as the Jewish Shema, menorah and pictures of the Shabbat meal. An extensive range of visits and visitors and workshops adds to the quality of the pupils' learning experience. The close links with the local church enriches the school's Christian celebrations and pupils find similarities in the celebrations of Hannukah, Eid and Divali. Teachers use the subject well to develop pupils' literacy skills through writing about different stories, such as *The Good Samaritan*, examining the meaning of Baptism and comparing this to the Moslem ceremony for babies.

130. The subject is well managed. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly through the scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' work, and this helps to ensure that pupils make good progress. An area for improvement is the use of information and communication technology to support learning, especially to help to develop written work and for research.