

INSPECTION REPORT

ELM WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rochdale

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105791

Headteacher: Mr A Torr

Lead inspector: Mr A Clark

Dates of inspection: 17th to 20th May 2004

Inspection number: 256052

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 409

School address: Elm Street
Middleton
Manchester
Lancashire
Postcode: M24 2EG

Telephone number: 0161 2870607
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Eric Barber

Date of previous inspection: December 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Elm Wood Primary serves the area of Middleton in Manchester. There are 409 pupils on roll aged three to 11 including 18 full time children and 16 part-time in the nursery. The school is larger than average and the number on roll has risen since the last inspection. The majority of pupils are from white British families with a low percentage of pupils from Asian, Caribbean and mixed race backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is very low and no pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is 16.4 per cent, which is broadly average. At the time of the last inspection the percentage was 30 per cent. The change reflects employment patterns in the community. Ten per cent of pupils are identified with special educational needs, which is below average. In previous years the percentage has been average. The pupils' special educational needs include specific and moderate learning difficulties and physical disabilities. There are 3.1 per cent of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, which is above average. The children start school with attainment below normal expectations for their age.

The school building is a Grade 2 star listed building. The school has the Investors in People Award, The Gold Standard Healthy schools Award and the Basic Skills Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| 21596 | Mr Andrew Clark | Lead inspector | Mathematics |
| | | | Information and communication technology |
| | | | Music |
| | | | Physical education |
| | | | Special educational needs |
| | | | English as an additional language |
| 19443 | Mrs Nancy Walker | Lay inspector | |
| 27679 | Mrs Sue Twaits | Team inspector | English |
| | | | Art and design |
| | | | Design and technology |
| | | | Religious education |
| 20326 | Mr Peter Clark | Team inspector | Science |
| | | | Geography |
| | | | History |
| | | | Foundation Stage |

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This is a satisfactory school with good features. The pupils' personal and social skills are very well developed by a caring staff and through a good curriculum. Leadership and management and the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good because of the respect shown to pupils by the headteacher and staff and the very good provision for personal development.
- Standards in writing are too low overall.
- The priorities for school improvement are too broad and not sufficiently followed through from agreement to classroom practice.
- The children get a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes).
- The use of assessments and marking to set targets for pupils' learning are not effective enough.
- The rich curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Links with parents are very good.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Strengths have been built on in the pupils' attitudes and behaviour and achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. However, standards are not as high, particularly in English, as observed at that time. There were no key issues for the school to address in the last inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| English | C | C | D | E |
| mathematics | C | C | B | B |
| science | B | C | C | B |

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. The new nursery class is leading to a rise in standards for the youngest children and achievement is good overall in the Foundation Stage with most children achieving the early learning goals for their age and sometimes exceeding them. Achievement in mathematics is good throughout the school and standards for current pupils are above expected levels by Year 2 and Year 6. There has been a downward trend in test results for English at Year 6 and current standards of writing are below national expectations overall. In the Year 2 national tests, standards of writing have been well above average and there has been an upward trend over the last three years. However, standards of writing are lower in the work seen for the current pupils, and below expected levels. The older pupils' achievement is hindered by weaknesses in the development of writing skills' and the school recognises that further work is necessary if this is to be remedied. Standards in science for the current pupils are at nationally expected levels for the pupils' ages. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards in most other subjects are at expected levels, although pupils' games skills are good in physical education.

Provision for pupils' personal development (including spiritual, moral social and cultural development) is very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is good but a small proportion of children in Years 1 and 2 do not always arrive on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in the Foundation Stage and for mathematics throughout the school. In the best lessons, teachers make learning enjoyable by brisk and purposeful questioning and imaginative and motivating methods. Learning objectives for pupils are clearly defined. However in Years 1 to 6 teachers do not have high enough expectations for pupils' basic writing skills. The strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work are not always sharply identified through marking and other assessment. Strengths are not consistently and progressively built upon and weaknesses sufficiently addressed. The pupils do not always take enough care over the presentation of their work.

The curriculum is rich, varied and there is a wide range of visits and after school activities, which contribute very well to pupils' personal development. There are high standards of care and very good relationships. The parents are well informed and make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has established sound procedures to monitor the work of the school and allows time for subject co-ordinators to evaluate standards and provision in their subjects. However, the senior staff do not make certain that the action required for improvement is consistently and robustly carried out and this hinders the progress made. The governors support the work of the school well and fulfil their statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school and support their children's learning well. Pupils enjoy school. They feel they have lots to do and are cared for well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Improve pupils' writing skills and the accuracy and care with which they write.
- Make certain that the action required for improvement in the school improvement plan and subject co-ordinators action plans is carried out as effectively as possible.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work more sharply and involve pupils fully in addressing them.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards achieved are satisfactory overall. Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Standards for the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are below expected levels in English and above in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children make a good start to their learning in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) and sometimes very good in reception.
- Standards in English have declined since the last inspection. The standard of pupils' writing is not high enough. They do not take enough care in spelling, handwriting and punctuation.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress towards the targets set for them.
- Pupils achieve well in games skills in physical education.

Commentary

1 Standards are lower than at the last inspection when they were very high for English, mathematics and science. However, they are rising again by Year 6 in mathematics and science and were above those of similar schools in 2003 tests. There has been a downward trend in English mainly due to pupils' writing skills. Although, there are signs of improvement particularly in Year 5, there remain weaknesses in the content of pupils' writing and their basic skills across the school, which have not yet been fully addressed. By Year 2, standards were average for reading and mathematics in 2003 tests. They were well above average for writing in 2003 and follow an improving trend. The standards for the current Year 2 pupils are not as high as this in English for the reasons given above. The weakness in writing means that high standards in national tests at Year 2 over the past three years are not evident in the work of older pupils. Overall achievement is satisfactory but standards of writing need to be raised further. The school has recognised the need for this but improvements have yet to have an impact through the whole school. The few pupils from ethnic backgrounds and those with English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls overtime.

2 The children achieve well in the Foundation Stage as a result of a well-planned curriculum and good quality teaching and learning. The nursery has only been open for two years, but it is clear that this provision is helping to raise standards. By the time the children start Year 1, a significant proportion of children are working above expected levels in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development and aspects of communication, language and literacy. They are working at expected levels for other areas of learning.

3 The school has analysed weaknesses in the structure of pupils' writing. It has introduced new teaching methods drawn from national strategies to address these and there are some indications of improvement. However, the teachers do not consistently expect enough from the pupils and, as a result, writing, even by the more able, still lacks imagination and sentence structure is often too immature. Teachers do not always identify the ways in which pupils can make appropriate improvement. The focus on content has led to some deterioration in pupils' basic skills and, again, teachers do not expect enough in terms of fluid handwriting and accurate spelling. The school has recently identified this problem but has not yet addressed it sufficiently. There are examples, of more mature and organised writing by both Year 2 and Year 6, but it is not consistent.

4 Achievement in mathematics is good. The school has an effective strategy for numeracy and teaching is generally good. As a result pupils have good capabilities in mental and written

calculations and apply their knowledge well. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are at expected levels and good for aspects of communication as a result of good use of the resources of the local technology college. Pupils' games skills are good in physical education because of the extensive curriculum opportunities and good skills teaching.

5 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Pupils with a statement for special educational needs make particularly good progress towards targets set for them. This is because their needs are identified early, sharp targets are set for them to achieve and pupils and parents are involved well in their own learning.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 15.9 (16.3) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| writing | 16.4 (15.7) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| mathematics | 16.7 (16.8) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 25.5 (27.2) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| mathematics | 27.9 (26.3) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| science | 29.3 (28.7) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is good. The pupils' personal development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are treated with respect and this encourages very good attitudes and behaviour in their work and play.
- There is a lack of urgency to establish a prompt start to the school day in some classes.

Commentary

6 Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They respond well to all the school provides for them and show an interest in their work. Homework is well supported. Where teaching is exciting, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and they enjoy their lessons because they are well planned, challenging and capture their imagination. The only weakness is in the presentation of pupils' work. Most pupils work independently and in pairs enthusiastically. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes; this is because they are well supported in the classroom. Pupils behave well both in the classroom and in the playground. Playtime pals and courtesy counsellors play a large part in ensuring purposeful play for younger children and are there to support pupils who may feel lonely. Teachers set, and insist on high standards of manners and good behaviour and there are fair rewards systems in place which the pupils' value. A high proportion of those parents who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the meeting also had positive views on the behaviour of their children. The school welcomes pupils who have been excluded from other schools and provides good support for them. Occasionally, the school takes strong action to

ensure behaviour remains at a high standard, such as short fixed term exclusions or close lunchtime supervision.

7 Pupils get on very well with each other and with adults in the school. Older pupils take on responsibilities with confidence and contribute to a ‘family’ atmosphere. Younger pupils help by tidying away resources and pupils from all year groups are represented on the school council. Pupils have a very good understanding on the impact of their actions on others and a similar respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.

8 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Children’s personal, social and emotional development is very good in the Foundation Stage. Provision for spiritual development in Years 1 to 6 is good. In religious education lessons, pupils consider their own emotions and the feelings of others. Acts of collective worship provide opportunities for prayer and reflection and displays give pupils’ plenty to think about. There are well-established systems of rewards for good behaviour and academic performance, celebrated in assembly. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and feel secure in school. Pupils clearly know right from wrong. Personal development is very good mainly due to the very good personal, social and health education programme that is in place. Provision for pupils’ social development is very good. They show respect, courtesy and are friendly to visitors. Adults in the school provide very good role models and this has a positive effect on pupils’ social development. The schools’ very good links with initial teacher training mean that pupils have many experiences of working with different adults. The school supports charities such as Christian aid and local animal charities. The school council has representatives from all year groups and they meet monthly to discuss a range of school issues. Provision for pupils’ cultural development is very good. Religious education lessons introduce pupils to the culture of a variety of world religions. The school makes use of visiting musical groups such as ‘Travelling by Tuba’ and pupils study other cultures in a range of residential visits both abroad and in local museums and galleries such as the Lowry. Pupils discuss important issues such as racism in personal, health and social education lessons that prepare them well for life in a modern multi-cultural society.

9 Levels of attendance have been improved since the last inspection and attendance is good. They are currently above the national average. This improvement is due to the regular support provided by Local Education Authority agencies and the school in following up absences and the careful monitoring of registers. Punctuality to school is satisfactory overall, however there is often a lack of urgency on the school’s part in establishing a prompt start to the school day. This is particularly so in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.2%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.6 |
| National data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.2 |
| National data | 0.4 |

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British |

| No of pupils on roll |
|----------------------|
| 306 |

| Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2 | 0 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black African | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 1 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Although assessment systems are satisfactory overall there is a lack of rigour in their use and in the pupils involvement. The curriculum is good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and for mathematics through the school. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of writing, particularly pupils' basic skills, is not good enough.
- The management of behaviour is good. The teachers make good use of teaching assistants to support learning for pupils of all abilities.
- Mathematical skills are taught well.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well.
- The teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils' capability to match work closely enough to pupils' needs and expectations are sometimes too low.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 7 (15%) | 18 (38%) | 21 (45%) | 1 (2%) | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

10 The teachers have consistently high expectations for pupils' behaviour and this creates a good ethos for learning. They establish friendly relationships based upon respect and firm discipline. The headteacher takes a leading role in establishing this ethos through his own teaching and presence around the school. Many teachers present lessons which motivate and engage the pupils' interest from the start. In the best lessons, the pace is crisp and purposeful and the objectives for the lesson are clear to pupils. The pupils work well both independently and in groups because of the teachers' expectations for them to get on. In the ICT suite and the technology college pupils are particularly motivated by on-screen presentations from the teachers.

11 Teachers do not regularly expect enough of the pupils, especially for the accuracy and presentation of their work and this limits achievement in several areas. Pupils do not use a fluid handwriting style and often are uncertain how to find correct spellings and this affects their learning. In a few cases writing is almost illegible even amongst the older pupils. This affects work in several subjects such as geography and history as well as English. There are also occasions when pupils' work in mathematics is affected because pupils do not set out their sums with enough care. The teachers often ignore these features because they are focusing on other aspects of the pupils' work. However, this gives a misleading impression to the pupils of the overall standard of their work. The presentation of pupils' work is not consistently good enough in Years 1 to 6. This is partly because the teachers have placed a strong emphasis on the content of written work at the expense of careful handwriting or spelling. However, this sometimes leads to a lack of care and does not necessarily produce an improvement in standards especially for the less able. There are generally exceptions to this in work in Years 1 and 5.

12 Mathematics is taught well overall. There is a good concentration on developing numeracy skills, particularly the more difficult aspects such as fractions and division. Most lessons are fast paced and motivating with good use of technical vocabulary. There are strengths to the way in

which a rich vocabulary is developed in other areas. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall because the needs of young children are understood well and lessons, particularly in the reception classes, reflect this.

13 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The pupils have detailed individual education plans, which set clear targets for pupils to achieve. The pupils' needs are well known to teaching assistants who generally provide good support. For example, they question the pupils closely to make certain that they understand what they need to learn and then guide them appropriately.

14 Although work is marked regularly it does not lead to sufficient guidance for pupils to improve their own work and only the oldest pupils are clear about the main targets they are working towards. Sometimes, lessons do not challenge the most able pupils because teachers have not accurately assessed their previous achievement. This occurs in several subjects throughout the school.

15 Slightly more good or better, rather than satisfactory, teaching was observed during the inspection. However, the inconsistencies in teachers' expectations, assessment and marking were spread throughout the school and particularly evident in the scrutiny of pupils' work for the year. As a result teaching is satisfactory overall. It is clear that the school has identified many of the weaknesses and has procedures in place to address them. However, they are not always pursued rigorously enough to overcome them.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good and suitably enriched by a very good range of worthwhile experiences. Overall, accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- The school makes good provision for those pupils with learning difficulties and emotional needs.
- The school is inclusive; equality of access is good for boys and girls from different backgrounds.
- The curriculum is good and enrichment is provided through a very well chosen visits and visitor programme that enhances pupils' experiences.

Commentary

16 The curriculum provides worthwhile experiences across most subjects and for the full age range from nursery to Year 6 including teaching German in Years 5 and 6. The provision for religious education fulfils the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Planning sets satisfactory expectations overall for all age groups. The school is effective in providing additional work for lower attaining pupils but is not giving the same levels of attention to ensuring that planning, provision and resources drive forward the achievement of higher attaining pupils at a consistent pace, particularly in writing.

17 The school's strategy for teaching numeracy is good and has a positive impact on raising standards, especially where mathematics is linked to problems encountered in everyday situations. There has been some resistance to the implementation of national and school strategies for literacy and has led to a decline in English standards over recent years, especially writing. The use of ICT can be seen in pupils' work in most subjects. For example, there is good use of ICT for pupils' research in ongoing work during lessons in Year 5 and Year 6 and this is a success story compared with the last inspection. The application of knowledge and skills to problem solving, investigation and research in science is gradually receiving a higher profile throughout the school. However there are

limited opportunities for higher attaining pupils to undertake and record their own scientific investigations.

18 The school provides a very good range of opportunities for pupils to have experiences outside the normal taught lessons. There is a very good range of trips and visitors into school to support and enhance a whole range of subjects. Pupils have good opportunity to undertake a series of residential visits. A number of local projects that connects the school to transferring schools successfully link with the local community. There is a very good range of extra-curricular clubs with a variety of sports for boys and girls. All pupils benefit considerably from these. Pupils' personal, social and health education figure very highly in the overall fabric of the school and all these activities are conducted very well. There are carefully planned courses for sex education, healthy eating and the dangers of drugs and smoking. These involve the local community such as the Local Health Authority and police force. The school has fostered good links with the local secondary school. This enhances the curriculum and prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education.

19 At the time of the inspection new classrooms were being built that will, in time, accommodate the classes presently housed in temporary buildings. The ICT suite is too small, not particularly inviting and shares space with a small suite of computers, meaning its availability, as a teaching resource is limited. This is counter balanced to some extent by the regular planned visits to a technology college to use their excellent facilities by pupils in Year 5 and Year 6. The staff at present make the best use of what is available. Internally the space is not generous for the number of pupils who use it. However, alterations are severely restricted by historical covenants.

Care, guidance and support

Standards of care are very good. The pupils are given good guidance for personal development and satisfactory guidance for their academic progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures for child protection and health and safety.
- Pupils' opinions are highly valued and acted upon. The school seeks pupils' views well.

Commentary

20 The school has built successfully on previous high standards. There are very good arrangements for identifying and recording any child protection concerns and staff are very aware of these. The policies for promoting good behaviour and addressing any concerns of bullying and harassment are very effective. There have been no racist or sexist incidents and good procedures for managing this are in place. Lunchtime and other supervisory staff are trained well and this helps to make breaks and lunchtimes a safe and pleasant experience for pupils and staff. There are good procedures for monitoring racial abuse and other forms of harassment, which are very rare.

21 There are very good systems for ensuring pupils are safe on the many visits and trips they make and there is a dedicated co-ordinator for this who fulfils his responsibility well. The special educational needs co-ordinator and governor for this are also very aware of the physical needs of several pupils and ensure all those responsible for such children are well trained and resourced to handle any concerns.

22 A strength of the school is the way in which pupils' opinions are sought and valued. There is an active school council representing opinions from across the school. They are involved in many aspects of school life ranging from supporting other pupils at playtime through a 'playground pals' scheme to taking part in an interview panel for new staff.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There is a very good partnership with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information for parents is very good. Some parents would welcome more opportunities to comment on progress in homework and reading.
- Parents and other relatives provide practical support for the school.
- Good links with other schools contribute to pupils' learning, especially in ICT.

Commentary

23 The parents have positive views of the school and appreciate the support given to their children. The school keeps parents well informed about the pupils' progress and events affecting their children. The information for parents from the school prospectus and annual governing body is presented in a friendly and direct way and makes a good contribution to the warm and respectful ethos. The annual pupils' reports help parents to understand the strengths and weaknesses in their children learning and suggest the most important areas to address. There are useful target books shared with parents at open evenings. The links with parents contribute to the close relationships and good ethos for learning.

24 Parents provide very good support to pupils' learning in numerous ways. They ensure that pupils adhere to the school's policies on uniform, behaviour, attendance and homework. They also contribute generously to fundraising. A significant number of parents, grandparents and even teachers' relatives give generously of their time to helping around school supporting learning in the classroom and managing the library.

25 There are good procedures to welcome the children into school when they first start. There are also well-established links with the secondary schools which ensure a smooth transition from Year 6. The school makes particularly good use of the ICT suite in the technology college for learning in the subject. The school makes good use of the local and wider community through regular visits and visitors into school to support the arts and sport.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Governance is good. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and senior staff successfully promote pupils' personal and social development well.
- The schools priorities for improvement are not always carried out with enough rigour. The expectations for success are not always sufficiently demanding and this allows lesser issues to limit change.
- The governing body provides good support to the school and fulfils its statutory duties well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed.
- Management of the Foundation Stage is good.

Commentary

26 The headteacher and staff work hard to provide an environment in which pupils' personal development is given high priority and pupils grow in confidence and self-awareness. The good relationships between staff and pupils contribute well to this. The school's very good involvement in initial teacher training means that pupils regularly work with many different adults and this broadens their social experiences. The aims for this are clear and central to the good features of the school.

27 However, there are important weaknesses within the school's management of change and development. This has an impact on academic standards achieved, which, although satisfactory and now improving, are not as high as they were or could be. The school has taken good initiatives to allow staff time to evaluate and assess strengths and weaknesses in subjects and to manage

their workload. However, there is not enough consistency in the way in which steps are taken to address the identified concerns, and priorities for improvement are not translated into clear and precise enough targets for all staff. Consequently, steps taken to improve standards in writing, for example, are unsatisfactory. Not all staff are clear about their role in meeting the targets that are set, and how this relates to planning and their work in the classroom. Subject co-ordinators have appropriate plans for improving standards in their subjects but these are not always sufficiently applied and followed thoroughly enough. The headteacher and senior staff have a good knowledge of the overall needs of the school through sound procedures for evaluation. However, they do not consistently translate this into clear and precise enough success criteria that are met soon enough.

28 The management of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator and governor for this area are both well informed and experienced. They work together with staff and outside agencies such as speech therapists to make certain pupils receive the best support they can get. The special educational needs co-ordinator works closely with the headteacher to monitor progress of pupils effectively.

29 The mathematics co-ordinator fulfils her role well by closely focusing on weaknesses in assessment and taking quick action to make changes to planning.

30 Leadership has maintained several strengths from the previous inspection in the care for pupils and links with parents. However, the measures to raise academic standards are not always sharply focused, realistic and demanding enough. As a result, some staff feel they have an undue weight of responsibility and others are unclear what their role is in improving the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 961 037 | Balance from previous year | 49 896 |
| Total expenditure | 972 742 | Balance carried forward to the next | 38 191 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2316 | | |

31 Governance of the school is good. There are well-established procedures to ensure that statutory responsibilities are fulfilled and committees are effective. The chair of governors provides considered and valued support to the headteacher. A particular strength of the governors is their working relationships with subject co-ordinators in several key areas where they offer constructive support. The governors recognise the strengths and weaknesses of the school through good information and their own observations. Financial management is good in most respects and funds are matched to recognised needs. For example, good consideration has been given to managing the workload of teachers and other staff. However, monitoring is not always sufficiently critical and focused to make certain that this is reflected in the improvements to learning. A significant amount of the governing body and the headteacher's energy and resources have been channelled into important building issues, which have taken sometime to resolve. The success in this is now coming to fruition in the major building work currently being undertaken. Whilst subject co-ordinators use the money available to them wisely, they do not always express the need for further funds to bring resources and other aspects of provision up to the highest standards. The school's administrative support is good and ensures the smooth day-to-day running. The school is not yet making full use of ICT capabilities to manage some aspects of its provision such as managing assessment and attendance monitoring, but plans in these areas are underway.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in both the nursery and reception classes is **good** and a strength of the school.

32 The organisation of learning has changed significantly since the previous inspection with the addition of a nursery unit with 18 full time children plus 16 children attending part time and two reception classes now working in tandem in the main school building. The curriculum is now providing well for individual children's needs. There is a good balance between adult led tasks and those that the children plan and do themselves. All staff work well together as a team alongside the children, intervening at just the right moment with a prompt or a question to take learning forward. As a result, most children are confident learners and are already well prepared for learning in Year 1. The school is currently very aware of the need to monitor curriculum coverage in the nursery to ensure that the full time children receive a different subject diet in the afternoon to the one they received in the morning. Induction procedures are good and parents have clear information about what their children will be doing in school. Some parents come into school on a regular basis. They are given good guidance and so make a good contribution to the children's successes. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and information is noted in an easy to read format. However, the school is aware of the need to refine present systems to enable records to indicate clearly the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year to include personal and social development. Nevertheless the present information is used well in the reception classes when planning additional activities in literacy and numeracy, enabling learning to be well matched to the needs of individual pupils. When children join the nursery their personal, social and communication skills are lower than is typical for the age range. The good teaching they receive enables most children to achieve well.

33 A number of areas of learning are linked so the children are developing a range of skills, knowledge and understanding through one activity. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. The relative weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection regarding limited opportunities for children to initiate their own activities has been successfully addressed. These good improvements to provision are due to the good leadership and management by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good levels of independence because of the well structured, warm and friendly atmosphere.
- Relationships are very good and this boosts children's confidence.
- Children with special educational needs have good support that enables them to achieve well.

Commentary

34 On entry into the nursery a few children have underdeveloped social skills and find it hard to conform to the high expectations set by staff. However, clear boundaries ensure children settle very quickly and learn the correct way to behave. By the time they leave the reception classes the majority are on course to exceed the goals expected. Well planned daily routines in both nursery and reception classes enhance children's confidence and self esteem. Adults are good role models and children copy them to good effect. Behaviour is very good, and children regularly take turns and show respect for each other. Nursery children are expected to take an increasing personal responsibility when dressing, clearing away or selecting the next activity and they rise well to the challenges set for them. Reception children develop their independence further when they get ready

for physical activities in the hall. The arrival of pet rabbits in the nursery encourages a love of animals as well as developing awareness of the needs of their pets. Staff take every opportunity to extend and develop children's personal development. This is the main reason that achievement is good for children of all capabilities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading, writing, speaking and listening skills are boosted successfully in both nursery and reception classes.
- Children's achievement is good overall and very good in writing.
- Teaching assistants work closely with children who need extra help. This enables them to make good gains in their learning.

Commentary

35 Well-structured activities in the reception classes successfully stimulate children's interest in reading. In the nursery and reception classes they have many opportunities to handle books, look at them and talk about them, enjoying the antics of the characters as the story develops. Early reading skills are developed successfully as children learn words by sight as well as letter sounds and names. Standards improve rapidly and the majority are on course to achieve the goals that are expected by the end of the reception year and a significant proportion of higher attaining children will exceed these. Attractive writing areas capture children's interest and many are well on the way to writing for themselves. Well-focused very good teaching makes learning fun and children are encouraged to write and record their many experiences and there is a good balance of formal and informal opportunities to do so. The strong focus on developing speaking and listening skills in the nursery and reception classes is paying dividends. On entry into the nursery many children lack confidence in speaking, but good teaching ensures they progress well. Throughout their time in the reception classes children continue to develop in confidence because staff engage in continual conversation with them. The children often start conversations when they are engaged in their role-play in 'the post office' or in sand and water play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children experience a wealth of opportunities to use mathematics in practical ways and across other areas of learning.
- The strong focus on mathematical language extends children's understanding well.

Commentary

36 Nursery and reception staff take every opportunity to develop children's understanding of number, shape and space. Teaching is very good in the reception classes. Practical activities are very well matched to children's ability. Children's language skills were developed very well during an activity involving the simple proportions of two-dimensional shapes. Hiding a variety of well prepared two-dimensional shapes behind a piece of card, confident teaching gradually conjured shapes to appear as if by magic. Children were successfully challenged to guess the name of the shape as it gradually emerged. Most children did instantly, able to clearly describe the difference in properties between the rectangle and square. Practical counting sessions clearly indicate children's counting confidence to twenty and beyond. When given a range of numbers up to ten, most children quickly placed them in their correct sequence, linking the numeral with its correct name. Number rhymes,

songs and games actively encourage all children to join in counting and ordering activities making them fun for the children. Achievement is very good with a significant majority well on track to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned opportunities extend children's knowledge and understanding in a wide variety of areas.

Commentary

37 As a result of good teaching most children achieve well and will reach the expected levels by the end of the reception year. Staff, both in nursery and reception classes, plan a good range of interesting activities that help the children learn about the world around them and helps them develop a suitable vocabulary. For example, children observe two young pet rabbits and discuss their growth since a previous visit to the school and know that growth is dependent upon food and good care. During an observed session in the ICT suite, reception children worked confidently in pairs, able to select words to make sentences. They were adept at this, taking turns to control the mouse and keyboard. Very good relationships ensured that there was a purposeful working atmosphere with good gains in learning. In developing children's understanding of religious education teachers tell Bible stories and discuss the importance of celebrations to Christians and other world religions. Many of the activities are effectively interlinked so that children develop skills, understanding and knowledge as a big picture, for example, in the work produced to accompany the story of Noah and his Ark.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outdoor play for reception children is limited. The school has appropriate plans to improve this.
- Lunchtime activities that involve older children undertaking games activities with reception children positively enhance children's social development.
- Older children do not put out or tidy away their own equipment very often.

Commentary

38 When children join the nursery their physical skills are good. Most children run and climb with good levels of confidence. In the reception classes, these skills are developed further during rather formal sessions that require children to move around equipment in pre-arranged positions. There are missed opportunities for children to take responsibility for the arrangement of equipment during the lesson taking place and the putting away of equipment at the end of sessions. The school is aware of the need to review the present arrangements for outdoor physical activities for children. However, by the end of the reception year most children confidently climb over and through large apparatus as well as use small apparatus such as bats, balls and skipping ropes. Children learn how to use pencils, crayons and paint brushes successfully. Their dexterity is promoted well through carefully selected activities. They handle constructional toys well in the nursery and reception classes, all of which promotes good gains in their physical development.

39 Teaching is satisfactory and the children achieve soundly. Most are on course to achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because they experience a wide range of creative activities and they are well taught. They extend their skills well through role-play.
- Children enjoy making and drawing pictures.
- Early cutting and joining skills are developed well through a range of well-planned activities to design and make models and pictures.

Commentary

40 Children's creative work is well displayed in the reception classes and this lets children know that their work is valued and respected. The children work with a wide range of different media in both the nursery and reception classes, and most children are on track to achieve the targets set for them by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good and enables good achievement. The focus on imaginative role-play successfully extends children's speaking and listening skills very well as they act the roles of postal workers in the 'Post Office'. Music is thoroughly enjoyed and has a significant role in the day-to-day life of children in the nursery and reception classes. The sound of music being played in the nursery is the signal for children to tidy away. In the reception classes they sing enthusiastically and tunefully. They quickly learn new words to songs through repeated use.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

41 Year 5 and 6 pupils have lessons in German. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection so it is not possible to give a firm overall judgement on provision, therefore German was a sampled subject. Evidence was also gathered from observations of pupils' books.

42 There are no national standards for comparison. The pupils enjoy their **German** lessons and work hard. They are learning basic parts of grammar effectively. The pupils make good progress in writing and recording their work. They are eager to attempt new sentences they have learned and their pronunciation is sound. The teacher makes lessons interesting through the use of a good range of memory lotto games and relating the work to sports topics the pupils know well. Learning to acquire a modern foreign language adds a very positive dimension to the pupils' learning.

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are not high enough in most classes.
- Good opportunities are taken for speaking and listening across the curriculum.
- Teachers do not use assessment information effectively enough, especially through marking, to ensure they challenge and involve pupils to achieve higher standards.

Commentary

43 Standards achieved are below average by Year 2 and Year 6 overall. Writing is a weakness compared to the other areas of learning in English. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. The structure of pupils writing is too often below expected levels and sometimes immature. For example, older pupils do not often make good use of punctuation or use subordinate clauses in their sentences. Basic skills are too low. Exceptions to this are in a Year 5 and Year 1 class where standards were much higher. This is because pupils are reminded about the need for legibility and neatness and key word checklists are available for them to refer to and review their work. In the majority of classes' expectations for correct spelling, neat and legible handwriting and good presentation are not consistently demanded and pupils' work is often untidy, incorrectly spelt and hard to read. This has a substantial impact on all subjects. There is a good range of writing opportunities available to pupils to practice their writing in realistic contexts. ICT is used well to produce front covers and enhance the presentation of work using word processing.

44 Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, reach the expected standards in speaking and listening. The pupils listen carefully to their teachers and each other. They are confident in joining in class discussions and sharing their views. Teachers often question pupils effectively and provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to discuss their work. The pupils' vocabulary is developed well in mathematics because of the strong focus on this.

45 Standards in reading are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Parents are involved in their children's reading from an early age and reading diaries form a vital communication link between home and school. Throughout the school, pupils become increasingly familiar with a range of books. Year 1 pupils recognise the characters in stories such as 'The tiger who came to tea' and can explain the emotions and feelings associated with them. In a Year 4 class pupils confidently read play scripts on 'James and the Giant Peach' with good expression. In a Year 6 class, pupils begin to predict events from clues that authors use in their text and very good questioning by the teacher challenges the thinking of all pupils.

46 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. In the majority of lessons, higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough to extend and develop their work and the unsatisfactory presentation and attention to detail detracts from their work.

47 Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and manage pupils' behaviour very well. The use of teachers marking is inconsistent throughout the school. Pupils are given insufficient feedback on how to improve their work. The introduction of group writing targets is beginning to improve the use of assessment to help match work to pupils' needs. However, there is inconsistent use of these and many pupils do not know what their target is or how to improve their work.

48 The leadership of English is satisfactory. There is a focus on raising standards of writing and procedures in place to measure success. However, not enough rigour is applied to making certain the standards are high enough. Although pupils' work is monitored, for example, the expectations for the effectiveness of new initiatives are not always high enough. The literacy development plan is too broad and is not broken down into clear and achievable steps. This means that it is not easy for the school to have a realistic view of its success and precise identification of where to go next.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49 Opportunities to promote pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed not only in English but also in all subjects of the curriculum through teachers' good questioning skills. However, expectations for the presentation of pupils' writing skills are not high enough in other subjects. Good links with other subjects have been identified and are incorporated into the curriculum planning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- The subject co-ordinator's role in evaluating achievement has a good impact on standards.
- Numeracy skills are taught well.
- Pupils' develop a good knowledge of all aspects of the mathematics curriculum.
- Pupils do not always present their work neatly and accurately enough and teachers' marking does not always challenge this.

Commentary

50 Standards had declined since the last inspection but are now rising well and by Year 2 and Year 6 are generally above average. This is a result of more rigorous assessment, the clear identification of strengths and weaknesses and improving teaching. A good proportion of pupils are working at higher levels and achievement is good.

51 There are good procedures in place to assess pupils' progress in key skills at various points through the year. The subject co-ordinator analyses the outcomes of these and national tests well to produce targets for driving up standards. For example, the school identified weaknesses in pupils' division and fraction work and took strong steps to improve them. As a result, these are increasingly strengths in the pupils' learning.

52 Pupils' numeracy skills are generally good because teachers involve the pupils in quick fire mental computation practice and set imaginative challenges for using their knowledge. In the best lessons, pupils practise facts they have learned through a variety of games, chants and tests. They often work against the time and are encouraged to beat their personal, or the class, best. As a result, pupils in Year 2, for example, are confident in their knowledge of the two and five times tables. By Year 6, pupils understand factors and multiples well. They also have a good understanding of place value, percentages and decimals.

53 The curriculum for mathematics is broad and interesting. There is a good focus on shape and pupils make good progress in extending their understanding of the properties of different shapes. For example, by Year 4, pupils have a good knowledge of the differences and similarities between scalene, isosceles and equilateral triangles. By Year 5, pupils investigate and understand the relationships between the vertices, edge and face of different pyramid shapes. There is generally a good level of problem solving and investigation. Pupils are often engaged in practical and investigative tasks.

54 The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. However, a common weakness is in the use of marking to guide pupils. Pupils are encouraged to comment on their own work and this helps their self-awareness. However, too many of the teachers' comments do not draw sufficient attention to errors. In particular, pupils of all ages do not take enough care to set sums out systematically and younger pupils often write numbers incorrectly. This has an impact on the standards achieved, particularly for some of the less able pupils.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55 This is satisfactory. There are opportunities in ICT for pupils to use spreadsheets to solve mathematical problems. Pupils use data handling well in science. In their personal and social education, pupils are learning about profit margins and using their knowledge of percentages.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving.
- Teachers do not use assessment procedures well enough to ensure planned work challenges higher attaining pupils.
- Pupils do not undertake their own investigations often enough and opportunities for pupils to record ideas in different ways are missed. They do not use English skills enough.

Commentary

56 Pupil's achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. The downward slide in test results as compared with all schools has been addressed with the inclusion of more practical based activities. There are very encouraging signs that standards are on an upward trend in Year 5. Scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations reflect standards to be broadly in line with the national average in Year 6. However, there is unevenness in pupils' achievements. Standards achieved in Year 2 are broadly average. Scrutiny of pupils' work clearly reflects a sameness about the tasks set for all the ability groups in the majority of classes. Pupils' opportunity to undertake and record their own investigations is unsatisfactory, with most work presented to pupils at present directed by the teacher.

57 Over the previous two years the school has rightly placed greater emphasis on the need to develop pupils' skills in using and applying science through a range of topics. Scrutiny of pupils' work clearly illustrates this approach in most classes throughout the school. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, they clearly understood the term 'fair test' and the need for recorded calculations to be written clearly and accurately. Pupils do not make enough use of their English skills in recording their work. There is still a need for the final conclusions related to practical experiments to explain in specific scientific terms why observed events happened and how the experiment, if repeated, might be improved to clarify results.

58 Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The strongest teaching was observed in Year 2 and Year 5 where teachers use a range of questioning techniques very confidently to challenge

higher attaining pupils. Teaching consolidates pupils' learning well with good pace and work given is both appropriate and interesting. Satisfactory teaching reflects limited opportunities for pupils to undertake their own investigations and too much time is spent sitting and listening at the start of lessons with a resulting loss of momentum and pupils becoming restless. Satisfactory opportunities exist for pupils to practise and consolidate their numeracy skills within science lessons. The planned use of ICT to support recording skills and investigation is satisfactory.

59 Subject management and leadership are sound. The school has made a positive start to analysing pupils' scores in national statutory tests, taking stock of particular strengths and areas for future targeted improvement. This is not yet translated into clear and achievable targets through monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning. At present the proportion of pupils who have achieved higher levels at the end of Year 2 are failing to achieve the higher levels at the end of Year 6, clearly reflecting that higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged as they move upwards through the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' basic skills are good by Year 6. The use of the ICT suite in the technology college makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The school's computer suite is small and pupils do not make much use of other aspects of technology.

Commentary

60 Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are similar to national expectations by Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils have positive attitudes. They see the potential for using computers in their research and investigations in history and other subjects. The pupils' basic skills are good. They know how to load, file and save their work by Year 2 and print off independently. By Year 6, pupils use an Internet search engine efficiently to find information for a good range of purposes. They understand the strengths and limitations of using computers. Word processing skills are generally good as pupils make regular use of computers for producing posters, for example on a lost toy in Year 2, and producing PowerPoint presentations in Years 3 to 6. The teachers provide realistic situations for the pupils to work on so that learning is more meaningful. The pupils' achievement in control technology is satisfactory. They progress from planning routes for floor robots to creating computer programs to direct events on a computer. The pupils discuss the relevance of computers to their lives and have a good understanding of the potential dangers of the Internet.

61 The quality of teaching observed in the computer suites was good. Pupils in Year 4 made good use of the computers in the suite and additional laptops to explore 'decision trees'. The teacher was well informed and set the task so that the more able pupils could extend their ideas to include more branches. Less able pupils were supported well by the teaching assistant who provides good technical support. However, the suite has limitations, which affect pupils' learning. It is small and several pupils have to work on the floor. It is badly ventilated and pupils and staff and inspectors slowed down as a result. The provision in the technology college is of a high standard and the teacher made full use of the projector facilities to motivate the pupils. Pupils' use computers in their own classrooms, but not regularly enough.

62 The subject co-ordinator provides good support for colleagues and has sound plans for further development. However, the resources available are not easily managed or used consistently. The pupils do not yet make much use of other aspects of technology such as digital and video photography. Teachers do not often use ICT as a tool for teaching. However, all staff make use of lap tops in their planning and recording. The school has a good website which is being developed by

an enthusiastic and knowledgeable member of staff and there are exciting plans for further development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63 This is satisfactory overall because teachers use learning in other subjects to make ICT meaningful to pupils. For example, they learn to use spreadsheets and data handling in mathematics and in science. Word processing and communication skills are developed in English and computers are used for research in several subjects. However, some opportunities were missed to support learning in several lessons seen and there is limited use with pupils with special educational needs.

HUMANITIES

64 No lessons were observed in **geography** and two lessons were observed in **history** both in Years 3 to 6. Whilst a good range of evidence was gathered from pupils' work, analysis of planning and discussions with staff and pupils, no firm overall judgement can be made on provision.

65 In geography and history, scrutiny of pupils' work clearly indicates that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average. There are clear examples in Year 5 that pupils are given well-planned opportunities to undertake writing at length and in depth. However, pupils' below average writing skills have a marked impact on the quality and content of pupils' written work in many cases.

66 Pupils have a satisfactory range of work and the quality of teaching seen is satisfactory in both subjects. Some good features are clearly evident in its focus on the ideas of chronology in past events and the similarities and differences across time and between different places in the world. In Year 2, pupils learn about famous people and events; for example, pupils study Florence Nightingale as she worked to improve conditions in wartime hospitals. In Year 1, very good use was made of a local resident to describe life, past and present, in Middleton and the many changes that have taken place since the demise of the cotton mills and associated factories.

67 Scrutiny of pupils' work in Year 5 clearly reflects that history and geography receive a high profile, successfully linking literacy in the form of extended writing into many of its well-planned activities. Pupils are given sound opportunities to use ICT to research information about Mexico, subsequently producing a holiday brochure extolling the country's virtues. Pupils confidently use map symbols to locate the journey from home to school, including the relative importance of the Manchester Ship Canal, in the past, present and future. Year 6 pupils undertake work related to Britain before and after the Second World War.

68 Although the school offers worthwhile experiences in both history and geography, they are not sufficiently planned to ensure that pupils' understanding and skills development is systematic and incremental as they move through the school. Although assessment is currently satisfactory overall, it lacks consistency across the school.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There are no consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school. This sometimes leads to a lack of challenge, especially for the more able pupils.

Commentary

69 Standards in religious education are broadly in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6, as at the time of the last inspection.

70 Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge of world religions including Christianity, Islam and Judaism as they move through the school. Pupils know that Jesus was a storyteller and can recall the Old Testament story of Lot. They consider how they feel when confronted with problems. Pupils make prayer mats and enjoy making Mehndi patterns. They study artefacts to find out about aspects of the Jewish religion. They learn about the value of prayer and write their own simple prayers. In a Year 4 class, pupils were involved in role-play and improvisation to explore their feelings and motives about Solomon and his judgements.

71 Whole class discussions play an important part in developing and modifying pupils' own beliefs and values, and make a good contribution both to pupils' religious education and to skills in speaking and listening. For example, pupils are encouraged to consider life experiences, and to discuss emotions, such as anger, sadness, and how their actions impact on others.

72 Teaching is satisfactory. However in some lessons the pupils are sitting too long listening to stories and their attention wavers. Teachers provide well planned learning opportunities such as visits to a local mosque, and visitors, such as invited clergy, who help to bring the subject to life and give pupils an insight into religions other than Christianity. This promotes pupils' cultural development. ICT is insufficiently used to support the subject. Overall attitudes to learning are good because most teachers try hard to make the subject interesting and relationships are good. However, work is not always matched to the needs of individual pupils and more able pupils are not challenged enough.

73 Religious education is secure within the school's curriculum and taught regularly in each class. There are good links with English, with drama and discussion used increasingly to extend learning. Pupils rarely record their work in written form and opportunities to write extensively and present their work clearly are not regularly taken. There is an inconsistent approach to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74 Design and technology and music were sampled. Only two lessons were observed in music, one was taken by a visiting group of musicians as part of a one-day project. It is therefore not possible to give an overall judgement of provision. Only one lesson was observed in design and technology so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision. However, a good range of evidence was gathered from a scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator.

75 Teachers place a correct emphasis on the designing and evaluation of the subject. This ensures that most pupils meet expectations in their ability to plan, label and list component parts. They continually evaluate their products through out the making process and complete a final evaluation. In a Year 6 **design and technology** lesson, very good teaching by the class teacher motivated pupils to plan a business project together. Teacher's good subject knowledge and good planning ensured that pupils were well motivated and gained a real insight into the world of business.

76 Year 1 children use junk modelling and construction kits to create a fairground with moving 'rides'. In a Year 2 class, pupils learn to make puppets with moving parts. Pupils use scissors with good control and use glue carefully to join the parts together. They make sound progress in using and consolidating existing skills.

77 All pupils increase, their skills and techniques as they move through the school to Year 6. For example, pupils in Year 5 complete a design plan for making a musical instrument. They use a wide range of materials to make imaginative musical instruments to be shaken, beaten and plucked. They complete an evaluation of the finished product, which is of good quality. Year 6 pupils plan and

make slippers and as a result of careful step-by-step demonstration by teachers, pupils are able to go through the different stages and successfully make a template for a pair of slippers. They are able to identify properties and reasons for their choice of materials, for example, a warm, soft fabric for comfort and warmth. Year 6 pupils have links with Warburtons the bakers; pupils make bread and evaluate their efforts.

78 The co-ordination of design and technology is good. A scheme of work has been developed based on national guidelines and this supports teachers in their planning and ensures progression of skills. The co-ordinators role in monitoring teachers' planning, pupils' work and teaching and learning is developing. Teachers' assess pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 but ongoing assessment of pupils work is not in place. The co-ordinator has a very good school portfolio, and school staff meet to judge and award levels of attainment to pupils' work. Teachers make good links between English, mathematics and art and design, however insufficient use is made of ICT.

79 The school has a temporary **music** co-ordinator. Standards of singing seen in assembly are typical for the pupils' age. Resources are satisfactory and reflect a good range of cultures. The scheme of work suggests that all aspects of the subject are experienced.

80 In the work seen with the visiting musicians, 'Travelling By Tuba' pupils in Year 6 achieved well. They showed a good ability to retain a rhythm and maintain their part in the overall composition. They were very disciplined and behaved very well. The activity was very exciting and taught well; pupils were highly motivated by it. In Year 1, pupils composed their own accompaniment to a familiar poem. They added sounds to the words and overall the activity was successful. The school choir performed well in assembly. A significant proportion of pupils' learn a musical instrument. The Year 6 pupils use computer programs to compose dance music and thoroughly enjoy this.

Art and Design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good scheme of work ensures pupils' learn across the full range of the art and design curriculum.
- Lack of opportunities for pupils to make independent choices about the media they wish to work in.

81 Standards in art and design by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average and pupils make satisfactory progress, a similar finding to the previous inspection. In the lessons observed and from the range of pupils' work seen, teaching is judged to be satisfactory.

82 Teachers plan lessons in line with a clear, structured scheme of work and this ensures pupils experience working in a variety of media. Pupils' enjoy art and design and are keen to work practically. They handle artefacts carefully and work together co-operatively. By the end of Year 2, pupils' can make observational drawings of flowers using pastels and watercolours. Models of lighthouses and stippled paint effects are good. In Year 6, pupils study the work of 'Picasso', resulting in paintings influenced by his style. A range of artists is studied including Archimbaldo, Lowry, Millet and Monet and the curriculum is enhanced by visits to the Lowry and the Ribchester Museum to look at Roman mosaics.

83 On a number of occasions tasks were heavily teacher directed, work was not demanding enough and pupils had no opportunity to choose their media or consider different techniques. Sketchbooks are used inconsistently throughout the school and the standard of work is often careless and untidy and is not representative of the good work seen in the co-ordinators file. ICT is used satisfactorily and pupils can use clipart, PowerPoint, paint, as well as cut and paste techniques, to alter and create images on the computer.

84 The school does not have effective procedures in place for the assessing and recording of pupils' attainment and progress. The new co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor or evaluate standards.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Games skills are taught well and pupils are very active in their lessons.
- Opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their skills by observing others and making suggestions for improvement.
- There is an exciting curriculum with many opportunities for enrichment. Resources are very good.

Commentary

85 Only games lessons were observed during the inspection. Standards achieved were above expected levels for the skills developed. Indications from discussions with pupils and staff are that standards are at least satisfactory in other aspects of the curriculum. Pupils achieve well in inter-school sports and swimming events.

86 The teaching of games is generally good. Pupils are engaged from the start in active warm ups and are aware of the need for this. They take full part in the lessons and are rarely stood queuing or waiting. The teacher explains the main activity quickly and gives good opportunities for practise before moving on. Teaching points are strongly emphasised and revised during the lessons. As a result the majority of pupils have good throwing and catching skills for their age throughout the school. They show a good awareness of strategies for team games and are eager to compete. The less able are supported well by the positive comments of staff. Tennis skills are good. The pupils have a good knowledge of the vocabulary associated with gymnastic and dance movements.

87 The subject co-ordinator takes most of the teaching. He has a good relationship with the pupils who are eager to do well. Lessons are prepared well and there are good resources. The co-ordinator keeps detailed assessments of the pupils' achievement in terms of the quality of movements and skills attained. This is very unusual in a school of this type. Pupils are encouraged to try their best and more able pupils are given the chance to extend their work. However, too few opportunities are created to allow pupils to observe and comment on each other's movements to develop their own evaluative skills and so improve movements. In the best lessons, this is skilfully done without losing the momentum of the activity.

88 The curriculum is planned well with opportunities for unusual and interesting games such as lacrosse and croquet. There is systematic planning for pupils' skills development. Resources are very good for games and at least sound for other aspects.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

89 The pupils are treated with respect and courtesy and all staff value pupils' comments. The school council provides good opportunities for the pupils to influence the life of the school. As a result, pupils develop self-confidence and a good awareness of their own worth.

90 The school creates regular opportunities for pupils to discuss their feelings and emotions on a number of social issues. For example, they are well informed about the dangers of alcohol and drugs. They learn how to minimise risks involved in the Internet and how to keep safe in many situations. There are sound procedures for sex education.

91 The pupils are given good opportunities for taking responsibility. For example, pupils support lunchtime staff in the dining room. They are involved in editing a school newspaper and contribute to the running of the library and keeping the school tidy. The teachers ensure the allocation of responsibilities is fair and equitable. However, in some lessons in subjects such as science, the pupils are not given enough chances to work independently by planning and managing their own investigations.

92 In Year 6, pupils learn about the world of work through a design and technology project involving planning and running a business and selling their products.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 4 |
| How inclusive the school is | 3 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 4 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 4 |
| Overall standards achieved | 4 |
| Pupils' achievement | 4 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 2 |
| Attendance | 3 |
| Attitudes | 2 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 2 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 4 |
| The quality of teaching | 4 |
| How well pupils learn | 4 |
| The quality of assessment | 4 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 3 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 2 |
| Accommodation and resources | 4 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 2 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 2 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 4 |
| The governance of the school | 3 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 4 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 4 |
| The effectiveness of management | 4 |

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).