

INSPECTION REPORT

FLIXTON INFANT SCHOOL

Flixton

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106319

Headteacher: Mrs Irene Cooke

Lead inspector: Mr A J Dobell

Dates of inspection: 26 - 28 January 2004

Inspection number: 256141

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Infant |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 3-7 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 227 |
| School address: | Mardale Avenue Flixton Manchester |
| Postcode: | M41 5SA |
| Telephone number: | 0161 748 2871 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr Brian Potts |
| Date of previous inspection: | July 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This average sized school serves a well-established area of Flixton on the western edge of the Manchester conurbation. Most pupils are from white, Western European backgrounds, but a minority are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is above average. Many parents who do not live in the immediate area choose this school for their children. The socio-economic circumstances of the community served by the school are average overall. Children's attainment and learning skills when they enter the Nursery vary from one year to another, but are broadly average.

There are 227 pupils on the school's roll. Of these, 38 attend the Nursery, some part-time and some full-time, and another 70 are in the Reception Year. There are three classes in the Reception Year and two classes in Years 1 and 2. Due to pressure of numbers, four Year 2 pupils learn in Year 1 classes for part of each week. The number of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is average, but no pupils have statements of special educational needs. The nature of special educational needs includes social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and moderate learning difficulties. The school achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark and a Schools Achievement Award in 2003. The school has created a partnership with a local 'Beacon School'.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 10373 | Mr A J Dobell | Lead inspector | English, music, physical education, English as an additional language. |
| 31718 | Mrs D A Shields | Lay inspector | |
| 28009 | Mrs R Allen | Team inspector | The Foundation Stage, mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design, religious education. |
| 12605 | Mrs C Crowther | Team inspector | Special educational needs, science, design and technology, geography, history. |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an **effective** school which provides a good standard of education and gives very good value for money. The school has a number of significant strengths and, overall, its pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. They leave the school as confident young people, with a positive self-image. However, their writing skills and opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning are less well developed than they should be.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school has improved well since its previous inspection because the headteacher, very well supported by her deputy, is providing very good leadership.
- Effective teaching means that all pupils are included in learning, make good progress and achieve well overall.
- The quality of pupils' writing is not as good as other areas of their work.
- The level of resources for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory.
- Most pupils have good attitudes to learning, behave well and are secure and confident because the school provides very good quality care.
- The curriculum is of good quality and provides pupils with good opportunities for enriched learning.
- Parents hold the school in very high regard and support their children's education very well.

The school reacted positively to its previous inspection and good progress has been made in meeting the issues for action identified in the previous report. The headteacher is developing the school systematically and has achieved good improvements, for example, in reading. The school is in a good position to improve further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| Reading | A | A | B | C |
| Writing | B | B | C | D |
| Mathematics | B | A | A | B |

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Most pupils make good progress and achieve well. Standards of attainment are generally above average. This school is in the category of schools with the lowest proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and so is being compared with schools in which pupils attain high standards overall. Evidence from the inspection is that children in the Foundation Stage are on course to exceed the standards expected nationally in each area of learning. By the end of Year 2, standards are likely to be above average in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science, and average in writing. Overall, they make less progress in writing than in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets and those who speak English as an additional language achieve equally well.

Pupils' personal development is good. They have good attitudes to school and to learning, and these are reflected in above average attendance. Most pupils behave well in and out of class. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good** overall and their cultural development is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides an education of good quality.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, but ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage and in Year 2. Teaching is better in Year 2 than in Year 1, because it is more challenging. There are good systems for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress, and assessment is used well to promote progress for individuals and groups of pupils. Teaching assistants support learning effectively. Throughout the school, the curriculum is of good quality. As a result, most pupils work with interest and often with enthusiasm. Pupils are very well cared for and this is reflected in their self-confidence and independence. The school has very good links with parents, the community and other schools, and these links support learning very effectively.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good overall.

The headteacher is providing very good leadership and is very well supported by her deputy. She is perceptive and clear-sighted and is developing the school systematically and to good effect. The Foundation Stage is led very effectively and other subjects are led well overall.

The school is managed well. The school's routines are straightforward and help pupils to feel secure. Finances are managed efficiently and the school observes the principles of best value well. Governance is satisfactory. There have been a number of recent changes to the governing body, and longer serving governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors ensure that the school complies with legal requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the good start that their children receive in their education. Pupils feel secure and valued, and most enjoy learning and put in a good level of effort.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the standard of pupils' writing;
- improve the quality of teaching in Year 1 to at least the quality of that in Year 2;
- improve opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good overall regardless of gender, level of attainment or special educational needs. Standards are above average in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to attain above the expected standards by the end of the Reception Year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment in reading, mathematics and science has improved since the school was inspected previously.
- Standards in writing have not improved in the same way as standards in other subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well.

Commentary

1. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003, attainment was above average in reading, close to the average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science show standards to be above average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was above average in reading, mathematics and science, but below average in writing.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading | 16.8 (17.8) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| Writing | 15.0 (15.3) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| Mathematics | 17.6 (17.7) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 67 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Most children start school with average levels of attainment and learning skills overall. They make good progress and achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes and are likely to reach above the expected levels of attainment in all areas of learning. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers, the nursery nurse and the support assistant, are an effective team and take every opportunity to help children to explore new experiences and to articulate their thinking. Very good assessments track children's progress so that future learning can be planned to enable them to make further progress and achieve well. The Foundation Stage is led and managed very effectively, and the good curriculum currently in place is being developed and extended well. The Foundation Stage has improved well since the school's previous inspection. This is good provision and children get a good start in their education.
3. Pupils go on to make good progress and achieve well overall in Years 1 and 2. Achievement is satisfactory in Year 1 because pupils' progress is monitored less rigorously and they are not presented with consistent challenge to enable them to make good progress. In Year 2, the level of expectation and challenge is higher and pupils make good progress and achieve well. Overall, they build on their knowledge, skills and understanding systematically and so attain above average standards in reading, mathematics and science. This is because teaching is consistently good and their learning is well managed overall.

4. However, this level of progress is not achieved in writing, although the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level is at the national average. In the national tests in writing in 2003, only seven per cent of the school's pupils attained the higher Level 3 compared with 16 per cent nationally. This is because teachers do not expect enough of pupils in Years 1 and 2 with regard to what they can achieve in writing. There is insufficient emphasis on spelling and grammar, and pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length in other subjects. The presentation of pupils' work and the quality of their handwriting are below average. The school is in a good position to improve standards in writing, as it has done in reading.
5. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their teachers and by support assistants. This enables them to make good progress and achieve well. Some are likely to exceed national expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive effective support and make good progress. They achieve at the same rate as other pupils. The learning of these two groups of pupils is managed effectively.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development is good. They have good attitudes to learning and most behave well, both in and out of class. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance is above the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is good.
- Attitudes to school and behaviour are good.
- Relationships between pupils are good; they co-operate well and support each other both in and out of class.
- Pupils have high levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils are very willing to take responsibility and to contribute to the school community.
- Pupils have a very good appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions.

Commentary

6. The school is working closely and effectively with parents to maintain high levels of attendance. Initiatives such as class certificates for attendance encourage good attendance and are valued by pupils. Absence for holidays is actively discouraged. A new policy has been introduced to reinforce this, and any requests for absences longer than ten days have always been referred to the governing body. The school has good systems in place to monitor and promote attendance. Most pupils are punctual so that lessons start on time and without fuss. These measures are having a positive effect on standards and pupils' achievement.
7. Pupils show a good level of interest in lessons and in other school activities. They engage with tasks and work productively. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, pupils were keen to take part in discussions about how they could devise a 'fair test' to find out about forces. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language participate fully and eagerly in the life of the school and are well motivated to succeed. These positive attitudes result in effective learning in most classes.
8. The school is an orderly community where most pupils behave well. Pupils understand the routines and follow them sensibly. Pupils recognise the importance of rules for using the playground equipment at lunchtime and use the equipment sensibly. They play together co-operatively, helping and supporting each other well. This attitude is also seen in lessons, where pupils work well in independent activities and co-operate well with each other. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils supported each other's learning successfully by challenging each other to justify their opinions in an appropriate manner. Children in the Nursery classes are very

good at working together, for example, with learning games or on the computer. Children are likely to exceed the standards expected in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Reception Year. The development of good learning skills in most classes is enabling pupils to achieve well and make good progress.

9. Any instances of bullying or harassment are dealt with very well. Parents feel that bullying is unusual and, if it does occur, it is dealt with effectively. The school has a clear bullying policy which is adhered to strictly. Any instances are fully investigated by the headteacher, who records the incident in a bullying log. Parents of all pupils who have been involved are invited into school to discuss the issue and parents are very supportive and work well with the school to resolve such issues. This effective management means that pupils develop confidence in a secure learning environment and so make good progress.
10. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are developing well. For example, pupils in Year 2 take turn to be assembly helpers. They show considerable confidence in reading the introductions and prayers in the assembly. Awards assemblies are also used to reward good behaviour at lunchtime and to celebrate success during the week. The school tries to ensure that the achievements of all pupils are recognised over a year. This has a positive effect on their personal development.
11. Members of the school council show a high level of involvement in the school and a commitment to improving the school for the benefit of everyone. The school council has made suggestions that have led to improvements in the learning environment and better provision of equipment at lunchtime. Pupils are enthusiastic about the way in which the school council is run, with agendas and minutes. Members are confident and inform other pupils about school council decisions in assembly. The members of the school council are justifiably proud of their achievements. This is developing a good early appreciation of citizenship.
12. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. There is scope for more opportunities to be provided for pupils to reflect on their ideas and to develop an awareness of the world around them, for example, in assemblies. The school promotes good relationships, including racial harmony, very well. For example, the school has been involved in a multicultural dance festival which included African, Chinese, and American dance, as well as traditional English dancing. Opportunities for encouraging pupils' awareness of their own and others' cultural traditions are fully utilised. For example, the Chinese New Year has been celebrated, with children in Nursery participating in role-play and Chinese dance, and parents being invited into school to cook traditional Chinese food. As a result, pupils have a very good appreciation of their own and others' cultures.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.7 |
| National data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National data | 0.4 |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British | 213 | 0 | 1 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Pakistani | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| No ethnic group recorded | 5 | 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 provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning and the curriculum are good. Pupils are very well cared for, and receive good support, advice and guidance. There are very good links with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and, in most cases, assessment is used well to promote pupils' progress and achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are consistently good in the Foundation Stage.
- Teaching and learning in Year 2 are predominately good.
- Teachers do not develop pupils' writing skills effectively throughout the school and the limited number of computers inhibits the use of information and communication technology to support learning.
- The school successfully includes all pupils in learning, and pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well.
- Assessment is used well to promote learning, but marking does not consistently indicate to pupils how they can improve their work.
- Overall, pupils' learning is secure and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 1 (3%) | 22 (71%) | 7 (23%) | 1 (3%) | 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.

13. Teaching and learning are consistently good in the Nursery and Reception classes. As a result, children in the Foundation Stage are making good progress and achieving well. Teachers and

support assistants work effectively together. All adults have a clear understanding of how young children learn. They provide them with stimulating learning experiences and take every opportunity to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding by questioning them and encouraging them to think things through for themselves. This is effective provision.

14. The quality of teaching is judged to be good overall, but it is generally better in Year 2 than it is in Year 1, where it is satisfactory overall. This is because teachers in Year 2 have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and, as a result, pupils make good progress. There is not the same level of expectation in Year 1, and pupils make satisfactory progress overall. In a very good lesson in Year 2, charismatic presentation to a class that was interested in the snow falling outside meant that all pupils became fully engrossed in their work and achieved very well. The teacher's high expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour were fully realised. In contrast, in a satisfactory lesson in Year 1, too much time was spent on the carpet so that pupils became fidgety and distracted. By the time that they went to group work, their concentration had declined and they had insufficient time to complete their written work to a good standard. As a result, pupils' learning and achievement were only satisfactory.
15. Teachers do not develop pupils' writing skills systematically throughout the school. The quality of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work are not as good as other aspects of their work, particularly for higher attaining pupils. The limited number of computers in the school means that pupils have relatively few opportunities to use information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. This adversely affects pupils' progress in understanding that computers and the Internet are going to be valuable sources of information for their future learning.
16. The school is effective in including all its pupils in learning and its different activities so that all have equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and achieve well, so that they make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also well supported and make the same good progress as the other pupils. Unequal numbers in different year groups means that four pupils in Year 2 are taught for part of the week with Year 1. The school manages their learning with great care. A teaching assistant ensures that they have full access to learning. They are achieving well because of the carefully thought out arrangements made for them.
17. The school is developing effective systems to track and evaluate pupils' attainment and progress. The results of national tests are analysed and the information derived is used to plan future learning so that weaknesses can be addressed. Plans are in place to develop assessment further, for example, in information and communication technology so that other areas can be brought up to the same level as assessment of pupils' progress in reading. Work in books is marked regularly and sensitively, but teachers do not consistently show pupils how to improve their work, for example, their handwriting. This is having an adverse effect on standards. However, the school's initiatives in tracking pupils' progress overall are improving standards.
18. Overall, effective teaching means that pupils are now more able to learn independently and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection. The school is in a good position to improve learning further as children increasingly leave the Foundation Stage with above average levels of attainment and well developed learning skills.

The curriculum

The curriculum is broad, of a good quality and meets statutory requirements. It enables pupils of all abilities to achieve well. Opportunities for enrichment throughout the school are good, and accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum adequately overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum, which is broad, balanced and effectively assessed, is implemented well.
- There are not enough computers to support effective learning and extension of skills across the curriculum.
- Support for learning outside the school day is very good and pupils have very good opportunities to experience the creative arts.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in spite of the low number of support hours available.
- Liaison in curricular matters between the infant and junior schools is good.

Commentary

19. The headteacher ensures that the basic curriculum is well planned. All subjects are given appropriate amounts of time and the balance between all subjects, including religious education and collective worship, is good. In most subjects, the school has adopted nationally recommended schemes, but subject leaders are now beginning to review, evaluate and adapt these to ensure that they meet the needs of all pupils, particularly in geography, physical education and information and communication technology. This means that the curriculum is in a state of continuous development as teachers strive to ensure that pupils' personal development is given a high focus throughout their planning. Links between different subjects are being developed, and the use of information and communication technology and numeracy across other subjects is currently being planned for. There is scope for literacy to be developed further in other subjects. Overall, pupils benefit from a stimulating curriculum which results in effective learning and good standards.
20. The curriculum is fully inclusive and the relatively small number of teaching assistants are used effectively to support learning in all areas of the curriculum. Their contributions enhance learning for all pupils.
21. The provision for pupils with special needs is good. The school promotes educational inclusion well. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is good and strategies are well matched to individuals so that their needs are met. Additional sessions provide extra support for some pupils who have been identified as needing extra help to improve their attainment. Additional, effective targeted support is also provided for pupils who speak English as an additional language and both groups of pupils make good progress.
22. Liaison between the Reception classes and Year 1 is beginning to develop well. This is having a positive effect on standards. Liaison between the school and the nearby junior school is good. Throughout the year, pupils in Year 2 share a number of learning opportunities with the nearby school. A number of initiatives ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
23. Support for learning outside the school day is good. Pupils have opportunities to attend a mini soccer club, a choir, a book-art club and dance club during the lunchtime or after school. Pupils from Years 1 and 2 have taken part in African singing and pupils in Year 2 have taken part in a music workshop and have gone out to visit the nearby war memorial as a support to learning in history. Visitors have included practitioners in music, dance and literacy who have supported pupils' learning and enhanced the curriculum. The local vicar leads many assemblies and the festivals of the Christian calendar are celebrated in school along with the festivals of other faiths. These initiatives enrich learning and result in higher standards.
24. Resources for learning are good in English, music, physical education, geography and history. However, the number of computers in the school is insufficient to meet the full requirements of the information and communication technology curriculum. Similarly, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use computers to support learning in other subjects. This means that, while pupils' skills in using computers are satisfactory, they do not have enough opportunities to

appreciate that information and communication technology is an increasingly valuable resource for learning in all subjects.

25. The headteacher ensures that the curriculum is kept under constant review so that the school is providing pupils with learning opportunities of good quality.

Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Pupils receive good support, advice and guidance. There are good opportunities for pupils to be involved in and to influence to the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's systems and procedures ensure that boys and girls of all ages are safe and very well cared for.
- Adults who work in the school know pupils well, and, in some instances, very well.
- Pupils' opinions are regularly sought and their views are valued.

Commentary

26. The school provides a caring and happy atmosphere in which pupils of all ages say they feel safe and secure. They also say that everyone in the school is friendly and that name-calling and bullying are rare. Pupils are secure and confident in their learning because the school makes very good provision for their care, welfare, health and safety. All adults give time to talking to pupils and this increases their self-esteem and willingness to work. Pupils know that there is an adult who will listen if they need help or are worried at school. One pupil commented 'you can talk to adults, they help you'. Staff monitor pupils' academic and personal development well and this ensures that all pupils make good progress overall.
27. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are happy and confident in their learning because they have access to effective support from their teachers and external agencies. This includes focused support for pupils with special educational needs and support from a visiting specialist teacher for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
28. Staff follow the agreed policies and clear practices relating to health, safety and child protection very well. These procedures permeate all aspects of school life and are very clearly understood by all who work or help in school. The very good links with parents of children starting in the Nursery or moving to the Reception class, and the sensitive arrangements for supporting them, help new children to settle quickly and to adjust to the routines of school life. This early partnership with families is built upon and strengthened as pupils move through the school.
29. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are very enthusiastic about the school council. They know how they can raise points for discussion at the meetings. Pupils feel that their views are listened to, and, where possible, acted upon. For example, this happened when governors were considering priorities for school improvement, such as the development of the playground. Most pupils spoken to know that they have targets in literacy and numeracy, which have been set for them by their teachers. These have been discussed with pupils but not formally reviewed. The school acknowledges that this is the next step to take so that pupils are more involved in understanding what they need to do to improve their work.
30. The school places a high priority on pupils' care and welfare. This, together with the effective guidance that they receive, means that pupils feel safe and valued in the school and so develop a good level of self-confidence which supports their learning effectively.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a very good partnership with parents. Links with the community and other schools are also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school very successfully involves parents in school life and their children's education.
- Parents and the community hold the school in very high regard.
- Links with other schools and the community improve the quality of pupils' education very well.

Commentary

31. Teachers greatly value the many contributions that parents make to the school and to their children's education. Parents are encouraged to come in or to telephone at any time, if there are issues to discuss. There are many informal opportunities for parents to talk to teachers both before and after school, and this means that any concerns are quickly addressed. Parents appreciate this very much. Information about all aspects of children's education is of very good quality, and is both practical and helpful. This means that parents are able to fully support homework activities and this has a positive impact on the achievement of their children. Discussions with parents, both before and during the inspection, indicate that they find the school welcoming and are pleased that their children flourish in a happy atmosphere.
32. Parents play a significant part in supporting the school, not just through the very active parents' association, but also by providing an extra 'pair of hands' in the classroom. Their views are regularly sought, both formally and informally, and are taken into account when the governors are planning school improvements. Parents of pupils with special educational needs work closely with the school. They are fully involved in regular reviews of their children's progress and discuss their individual education plans at review meetings. They are encouraged to play a full part in their children's education. Parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language also support their children's learning well. Effective support from parents has a positive effect on standards.
33. The wider community provides a rich source of visits and visitors. Pupils take part in local events, and regularly visit places of interest such as the heritage centre in Macclesfield. These opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and cultural experiences, and improve standards of attainment. Members of the community are frequent visitors to the school. The local vicar leads assemblies and pupils say, 'the Reverend Sue is a friend of the school'. This results in the school being an integral part of the community. There are very close links with the neighbouring junior school and these enable pupils to complete the transfer to the next stage of their education smoothly.
34. Very good relationships with parents and the local community are a strength of the school. They enrich pupils' learning and have a positive effect on their achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall and the headteacher, very well supported by her deputy, is providing very effective leadership. The governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is committed to continuing to improve the school and her leadership has enabled subject managers to fulfil their roles well.
- The deputy headteacher is providing very effective support and her very good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are helping children to attain above average standards.
- Learning for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good, and these pupils achieve well.

- New staff are successfully introduced to the school and receive very good support.
- Finances are managed well and the school evaluates its expenditure carefully.

Commentary

35. The headteacher is providing the school with clear-sighted and purposeful leadership. As a result, the school has improved well since its previous inspection. The headteacher has improved the school's effectiveness systematically. Pupils now achieve well overall and attainment is generally above average by the time that they leave the school. As a result of the headteacher's leadership, the school is very effective overall in evaluating its work, monitoring performance data and taking appropriate action. For example, a focus on reading in recent years has raised attainment well. The headteacher has developed the role of subject managers well and subjects are now managed thoughtfully overall. However, there is still scope for subjects such as geography, history and religious education to be used more systematically to help to develop pupils' writing skills and for information and communication technology to be used more effectively to support learning.
36. The deputy headteacher is providing the headteacher with very effective support. She provides very good leadership for the youngest children in the Foundation Stage. She has established a cohesive team of teachers and assistants who work effectively together. As a result, children in the Nursery and Reception classes are achieving well because of the rich provision made for them. In addition, the deputy headteacher plays a full role in a range of areas in the leadership and management of the school, and is making a major contribution to its clarity of vision and high aspirations.
37. The role and responsibilities of the special educational needs co-ordinator have been clearly defined. She is providing effective leadership and managing the learning of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language well. The headteacher monitors the progress of all pupils termly and this information is then shared with the special educational needs co-ordinator, who uses it when reviewing the progress of pupils in her care. This enables her to plan the next stages of their learning well and ensures they all make good progress. She gives her colleagues effective support. The number of support assistants is limited, but they are deployed carefully to match pupils' needs and have a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. Parents of children with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, are involved well in their learning, and this has a positive impact on the progress they make. Regular reports are provided for governors so that they are well informed about the strengths of the provision and the areas for development.
38. The school is very effective in introducing new members of staff to its routines and procedures. As a result, they settle in quickly and soon feel secure in their roles. They are given very good support and so are able to contribute well to teaching and learning.
39. The amount of money that the school receives per pupil is well below the national average. This has some adverse effects on provision. For example, the school does not have enough computers to support learning effectively. This problem is being addressed systematically, but pupils do not use information and communication technology routinely to support their learning. Limited finances mean that the school has to manage its budget prudently and the principles of best value are applied well. Spending decisions are related carefully to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan so that standards can be raised further. Given the quality of education provided by the school, the standards that pupils attain, the very good level of care provided for them and the school's very low costs per pupil, the school gives very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 428,564 |
| Total expenditure | 425,616 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,970 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Balance from previous year | 5,980 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 2,948 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is good and has improved well since the school's previous inspection. Levels of attainment on entry to the Nursery and Reception classes vary from year-to-year but overall the majority of children enter the Reception class with average attainment and learning skills. Progress and achievement throughout the Foundation Stage are good across all areas of learning. As a result, the majority of children easily achieve most of the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year and many are working well into Level 1 of the National Curriculum.
41. The Foundation Stage is led very effectively. The new co-ordinator has ensured that there is a clearer focus on planning for independent learning. There is closer teamwork between staff to organise the curriculum together in order to achieve this. This is resulting in good achievement and children are becoming confident and learning well.
42. Staff track what children know and can do in the Nursery and Reception classes very carefully and effectively. They use this information very successfully to plan activities which challenge all groups of children and to ensure that the curriculum is adjusted to meet all children's needs. This very effectively promotes good learning across all areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good systems in place to promote independence.
- The staff have very a good knowledge of each child's individual needs and support them well.
- Good links are established with parents before admission and during their children's time in the Nursery and Reception classes.

Commentary

43. There is a very effective induction programme for parents of both Nursery and Reception children before they enter school. Children and parents are invited into school before they start school and an informative booklet is provided for parents on routines and expectations. During the Reception Year, parents have access to consultation evenings, curriculum evenings and regular curriculum newsletters covering literacy and numeracy. A number of parents help in the classroom and support particular celebrations such as healthy eating and Chinese New Year. Records of achievement are compiled using photographs to show each child's progression of skills. This carefully planned introduction to the school and sensitive support of children in the Foundation Stage ensures that their personal, social and emotional development is good.
44. Many very good systems and procedures both indoors and outdoors promote children's independence very well. From the outset children are actively encouraged to dress and organise themselves, take turns and share, care for and listen to each other, behave kindly and tidy up independently. Children are expected to take responsibility within their classroom. When children come into the Nursery, they have to find their name card and post it in the post box to indicate their arrival. In the Reception classes children take turns to be a 'job person' for the day. Expectations are high and good behaviour and effort are recognised and praised so that children are clear as to expectations and respond very well. Staff ensure that children have good opportunities to try things for themselves. For example, in the writing area and role-play areas, work is focused on wizards, witches and the enchanted forest. As a result the great majority of children are interested, have good attitudes to learning and are developing good

concentration and perseverance for their age. The majority of children are likely to exceed the goals set by the time they move into Year 1. This is because teaching is consistently good in this area of learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of literacy is good and children make good progress.
- Early reading and writing skills are taught systematically and effectively.

Commentary

45. The majority of children of all abilities make good progress and are on course to exceed the standards expected at the end of the Reception Year as a result of good teaching. In the Nursery, great emphasis is placed on modelling speaking and listening skills well for the children. In the 'Chinese restaurant', children were communicating well with each other and could clearly describe the purpose of the Chinese dragon parade. This was very good development of communication skills. Many children sit for long periods of time looking at and 'reading' storybooks to each other. The children regularly work with a member of staff to listen to and learn the sounds of letters, learn songs and to practise early writing skills. This is good achievement.
46. Teachers provide children in the Reception classes with daily literacy sessions focused during the inspection around a theme of 'the enchanted forest'. Through such topics as 'fairies, witches and wizards' children were responding enthusiastically and working well on individual tasks. The teaching of reading is effective and children make good progress. Letter sounds and blends are taught well, and the majority of children can sound out words and read a story with support. Early writing skills are taught well in the Nursery and are extended very well in the Reception classes through the use of big books such as 'Room on the Broom'. Most children write their own name and are learning to form legible sentences with full stops and capital letters. There are constant reminders to children around the classrooms of sounds and words of the week, book of the week and handwriting paths. These promote learning effectively and achievement is good.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good and children make good progress in their mathematical development.
- Numbers are used well in other activities to reinforce learning.
- Good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning.

Commentary

47. Teaching is very good overall and, as a result, children achieve well so that the majority are already working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Children of all abilities make good progress from their starting points. Many opportunities are provided in the Nursery both indoors and outdoors for children to count with 'Kipper', make simple animal bar charts and reorganise basic shapes. Staff plan these experiences very well and actively promote mathematical

understanding, for example, by counting the plates in the Chinese restaurant. As a result, learning is effective and children achieve well.

48. In the Reception classes, mathematical sessions are very well planned and organised. The activities provided are stimulating and hold children's attention. For example, through the topic on 'wizards and witches', children counted different numbers of creatures accurately to put into the wizard's spell and 'Meg and Mog's cauldron', incorporating skills such as counting backwards and forwards and putting in more or fewer objects. They show confidence in adding or subtracting to twenty, and identifying larger and smaller numbers.
49. There are a variety of areas within the Nursery and Reception classes to encourage the children's continual mathematical development through the use of number lines, number paddles and sorting activities. These are effective. In the Nursery, children are encouraged to describe the shape they have made with play dough, to say how many animals they have put in the jungle, and to sing a variety of number songs to consolidate their knowledge of number patterns. Additional opportunities are provided in the Reception classes by having a number challenge for the week, ongoing sorting activities and challenges such as counting ingredients for the wizard's spell and checking their results. These activities result in good progress and children achieve well. Although there is only one computer in each class area, they were in constant use during the inspection, and children are able to enhance their mathematical knowledge very effectively through the use of number games.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and provides extensive opportunities for children to acquire a range of skills.

Commentary

50. Throughout the Nursery and Reception classes, children of all abilities are provided with many opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. Effective teaching results in good achievement and most children are likely to reach the standard expected in this area of learning. In the Nursery, children have acquired significant knowledge of the Chinese New Year celebration through making a dragon and acting out the parade through the streets.
51. Children in the Reception classes are able to name physical features from the story of 'Room with a Broom' and mark them on a key for their maps of the witch's journey. Children are often taken out into the locality to look at the world around them and visitors come into the school to talk to them. These experiences result in good learning. For example, one father came to talk to the children about Chinese food. Children acquire good information and communication technology skills through their mathematical and literacy activities, and have constant access to sand, water and large construction toys to develop imaginative thinking and prepare them for future work in science, geography and history. Achievement in this area of learning is good because it is effectively planned.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and enables children to achieve well and make good progress.
- The outdoor area is well equipped and provides quality opportunities for learning.

Commentary

52. The majority of children in the Reception classes are likely to achieve the nationally expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. All children of all abilities make good progress as a result of good teaching. The new outdoor area is particularly well equipped and used extensively by all children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Here, they have access to large climbing equipment, grassed areas, large toys, sand and construction toys and an imaginative role play area such as the current 'wizard's den'. Staff ensure that children are questioned, challenged and encouraged to extend their physical skills through the range of activities provided outside. This results in good achievement.
53. Indoors, in all classrooms, a range of resources is provided to develop children's finer movements through cutting, drawing, painting and moulding. Staff encourage and support all individual needs and praise is used well to promote further effort. In the Reception classes children are developing good movement skills through the 'dance of the tooth fairy'. Interesting resources are used effectively to stimulate their imagination and encourage full participation in dance movements such as creeping, turning, climbing and twisting. Children are making good progress in their ability to control their movements.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, enabling children to achieve well and make good progress.
- An imaginative and stimulating environment is provided to support this area of learning.

Commentary

54. Children make very good progress and are likely to achieve the standards expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. This is because the teaching of music, art, drama and imaginative play is effective and is well resourced.
55. In the Nursery, children have the opportunity to experiment with sounds in the music corner and songs and number rhymes are used frequently to support learning particularly in their mathematical development. They have access to paints and crayons, and art resources are readily available for them to create pictures. There are plentiful opportunities for children to extend their imagination in the 'Chinese restaurant'. These very well planned learning opportunities result in good achievement.
56. In the Reception classes, the learning environment is effectively enhanced with an enchanted forest, a fairy grotto and a wizard's den, all of which encourage children to extend their imagination and support learning across all areas of the curriculum. Children were observed mixing their own shades of colour and large colourful displays show that a variety of skills are being very well taught to support children's learning. Children in the Reception classes have also taken part in Christmas assemblies and dance projects led by outside specialists which have resulted in good achievement.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A focus on reading has raised attainment well.
- Pupils' writing skills are not as good as their speaking and listening, and reading skills.
- When lessons are interesting, pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly, but marking does not consistently promote improvement.
- Other subjects are not used sufficiently to develop writing skills.

Commentary

57. In recent years, attainment in reading, as measured in the national test at the end of Year 2, has been consistently above or well above the national average. Over the last three years, the school has had a focus on reading and this has been effective in raising standards. Pupils now read fluently and confidently, and with good expression. For example, pupils in Year 2 confidently read out announcements and prayers in front of the whole school in assembly. This is evidence of good progress and pupils achieve well.
58. This is also an illustration of pupils' above average standards of speaking and listening. In class, most pupils listen carefully and are keen to respond to questions. However, pupils' writing is not as good as other aspects of English, particularly for higher attaining pupils. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher than expected Level 3 in 2003, was below the national average. Evidence from the inspection is that pupils' competence in spelling and grammar is insecure. While there are some examples of extended writing in writing books, written work in literacy books tends to be brief and illustrated by drawings and coloured pictures. These drawing and colouring activities use up time which could be devoted to improving the quality of writing. Overall, pupils' handwriting is immature and large in size. There is little evidence of handwriting improving systematically over time, although handwriting practice is timetabled regularly. Overall, pupils' written work is not presented well, and progress and achievement in writing are only satisfactory, while they are good in other aspects of English.
59. When lessons are interesting, pupils are capable of sustained concentration and work with interest and, sometimes, with enthusiasm. They co-operate well both in whole-class sessions and in groups, and often show initiative in managing their work. These good attitudes contribute well to learning. However, when learning tasks are less interesting, pupils lose concentration and learning is adversely affected. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, they spent some 45 minutes on the carpet in whole-class work. As a result, by the time they went into groups, they were slow to begin writing because they had lost concentration earlier. Since the time available for writing was short anyway, their progress was unsatisfactory.
60. Pupils' writing is marked regularly and there are many appreciative comments. However, comments do not routinely tell pupils how to improve their work and this is adversely affecting standards in writing. There is little evidence of strategies being in place to improve the quality of pupils' writing systematically. The school is aware that attainment in writing is lagging behind attainment in other areas of the curriculum. Now that a focus on reading has established good standards, the school is in a good position to raise attainment in writing by a similar whole-school strategy for improvement.
61. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and results in secure learning, particularly in Year 2 where pupils are given a good level of challenge. The same level of challenge is not routinely expected in Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teaching assistants and achieve well, as do pupils who speak English as an additional language. There

are examples of information and communication technology being used effectively to reinforce pupils' progress and achievement. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject manager has been effective in raising attainment in reading and agrees that a similar strategy is now needed for writing. Overall, standards in reading and speaking and listening are similar to when the school was inspected previously. Standards in writing are average.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

- 63 Opportunities for pupils to develop literacy skills in geography and history increase in Year 2, but there is scope for them to be developed further. There is less evidence of extended writing in religious education. Overall, speaking and listening and reading skills are developed more effectively than writing skills in the other subjects of the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by Year 2 are above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- There is effective leadership and management of the subject.
- The use of numeracy across the curriculum is underdeveloped and information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support learning.
- The use of assessment and target setting is good.
- Provision for higher attaining pupils has improved since the previous inspection.

Commentary

62. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average, which represents good achievement. This is the result of good teaching and good leadership of the subject. The above average standards found when the school was inspected previously have been maintained. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are supported well and they make good progress towards their individual targets. The provision for higher attaining pupils has improved. Their progress is now more closely monitored and work is now targeted to match the needs of this group of pupils, although this is still being developed further.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and this is helping pupils to achieve well. Teachers plan their lessons carefully in line with the National Numeracy Strategy and they make the learning intentions very clear to pupils. Teachers build on the solid teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes, where children are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning, making decisions and solving problems for themselves. This is particularly effective through the 'problem of the week', which is focused upon every day. This effective planning results in good quality learning and good achievement.
64. There are high expectations of pupils, particularly in Year 2, where pupils are expected to check on their own progress and understanding. For example, where pupils had difficulty in identifying a right angle they were able, and had the confidence, to find other ways of solving the problem. Teachers in Year 2 have high expectations of all pupils and provide different learning tasks which particularly challenge higher attaining pupils. For example this group was challenged to sort their shapes using a 'Carroll' diagram and to identify their own problems in preparation for discussing them with the teacher later. Pupils are not consistently challenged as effectively in Year 1.
65. Teachers make effective use of resources, particularly practical apparatus, to enhance learning. They organise their lessons well, matching tasks to pupils' varying needs and

challenging higher attainers effectively. This is particularly good in the Year 2 classes. Teachers mark work regularly and positively and often make comments which help pupils to improve, for example, 'check your work carefully', and 'take care counting on and back'. The limited number of computers means that opportunities to use information and communication technology to support learning are missed. This adversely affects achievement.

66. The subject manager leads the subject well. She regularly checks the quality of planning and samples pupils' work in order to gain an overview of standards. This promotes achievement well. There is a clear action plan which seeks to develop the subject further, particularly in changing the strategy to meet the needs of pupils in more depth. Regular assessments are made of pupils' knowledge and understanding, and information gained from these assessments is used well to plan subsequent work and set appropriate targets for groups and individual pupils.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. The school has begun to look carefully at the development of numeracy skills across other areas of the curriculum and is beginning to identify these opportunities in planning. For example, in Year 1 pupils are organising and collecting data on hair colour and size of feet in science, and scoring points in physical education lessons. In Year 2, pupils are using data handling skills to carry out a survey of favourite food, and in art and design they are considering lines and patterns in natural objects. These are examples of effective planning reinforcing understanding well. Opportunities planned for are limited, however, and there is scope for developing this area further.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in their learning as a result of good teaching.
- Good use is made of practical investigations, which challenge pupils and extend their learning.
- Pupils' progress is tracked rigorously and the outcomes are used well to guide future planning so as to raise standards further.
- Opportunities for pupils to work independently have increased since the previous inspection and pupils work well together to support their learning.
- Writing skills need to be planned for and developed further through science.

Commentary

68. Standards in Year 2 are above average. Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, particularly where teachers use a range of questioning strategies which suitably challenge pupils of all levels of ability. Time is provided for pupils to reflect on their answers and they are encouraged to offer explanations for their responses. Imaginative approaches are used to help pupils to see the links between scientific concepts and everyday experiences. This stimulates their interest and motivates them to work hard.
70. Teachers have high expectation of pupils. Pupils in Year 2, for example, are able to describe what they have to do to carry out a 'fair test' and apply their ideas appropriately when carrying out an investigation. In one class, for example, when they were exploring forces, pupils in Year 2 were asked to pull different fabrics a number of times to see how far they would stretch. They had to work out how they could make this test fair. The teacher's challenging questions helped

pupils to understand the importance of carrying out a 'fair test' in investigations and their ability to do so. It also developed their understanding of forces.

71. Pupils are now given good opportunities to work independently, particularly when carrying out investigations. Pupils co-operate well together, share resources sensibly and discuss what they have learned together. They support each other in developing their understanding. However, some pupils find it difficult to record their ideas without adult support and the skills developed in literacy, such as report writing, are not used efficiently. When it is used, information and communication technology enables pupils to apply their learning effectively, but the school is not able to provide enough opportunities because the number of computers is limited.
72. The subject leader has a good overview of standards in science and of the progress that pupils are making. Assessment tests are carried out each half term, or at the end of a unit of work, and pupils' progress is tracked carefully. From this, an analysis is carried out and the outcomes are used to guide future planning with a view to raising standards. This has led to an increased focus over the past year on the aspects of science dealing with materials and their properties and physical processes. As a result, attainment in science is improving and the school is in a good position to raise standards further

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection. Judgements are made based on the scrutiny of work, teachers' planning, assessment records and discussions.

73. The evidence available suggests that standards are average. There are only one or two computers in each classroom, which limits access, although eight new laptop computers are currently being prepared for use across the school.
74. Despite these limitations, the co-ordinator has a very clear vision for developing the subject across the school. She is extremely supportive of her colleagues and monitors all planning. At present the curriculum is based on nationally recommended guidelines. As a result of staff consultations, the school is beginning to amend these in order to match the needs of all pupils. Planning is sharply focused on developing key skills and raising standards.
75. In spite of the low number of computers, they are all regularly in use and pupils show a good and confident knowledge of basic information and communication technology skills when they have an opportunity to use them. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are all able to access a program and use the mouse very confidently. Pupils in Year 2 are able to word process work, edit a piece of writing, and change font and colour to enhance their work. The co-ordinator encourages all staff to use information and communication technology for planning their work and ensures that they are confident when doing this. New systems have been put in place to monitor pupils' progress and all staff make evaluations on these and assess the skills learned in each study unit. The co-ordinator has ensured that there is sufficient software to meet requirements and is confident that all staff work hard at updating their own skills to keep abreast of all initiatives. In discussion with pupils, it is clear that they enjoy using the computers, but feel that they should have easier and more frequent access to them. This said, all pupils observed were working at a satisfactory level to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. There has been a clear focus on providing sufficient software to support information and communication technology across other areas of the curriculum. Year 1 pupils use software programs to draw self-portraits and handle data and to search for appropriate key words. Conversations with pupils and examples of work show that many pupils are confident in writing simple texts and in accessing the Internet for research. They are clearly enthusiastic about the

use of information and communication technology. The planning for each year group makes clear reference to other areas of the curriculum.

77. Although skills being learned are satisfactory and planning for and monitoring of the subject are now in place, there are still not enough computers in the school for good quality use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. Very few pupils have sufficient opportunities for ongoing, 'hands on' experience and the majority say they use computers more at home than they do at school. Pupils with special educational needs say that they have equal access to the computers in classrooms.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are interesting, so that pupils are well motivated.
- The use of experience and enquiry, including the use of the locality, reinforces the development of geographical skills well.
- There is insufficient emphasis on the development of writing skills through geography.

Commentary

78. Standards of attainment in geography are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils are interested in and enthusiastic about geography so that they make good progress and achieve well.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall but is more consistently challenging in Year 2 than in Year 1. In the better lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to test and extend pupils' previous learning and to reinforce their understanding. Resources are used well to support learning based on experience and enquiry, and this enlivens the subject and promotes pupils' enthusiasm for the subject well. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, good use was made of maps and pictures to identify the different types of transport that might be used in a particular environment. Pupils responded to this task with interest and this resulted in good achievement. A range of visits and the local area are also used well to reinforce learning, and to make the work interesting and relevant. For example, teachers' planning clearly shows how work on routes will be developed to look at routes around the school grounds and in the locality.
80. Since the school's previous inspection, provision for higher attaining pupils has improved well. Work is graded so that pupils at different stages of learning are challenged appropriately. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, higher attaining pupils had an additional task to interpret maps as part of their investigation, which meant that all pupils worked productively and with a good level of effort, and all made good progress.
81. Pupils have a good range of geographical vocabulary and skills. In Year 1, pupils are able to describe a route and distinguish physical and human features. By Year 2 pupils are able to compare places meaningfully. They are able to identify different forms of transport and to explain when and where these would be used. An analysis of pupils' work over time shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress during Years 1 and 2. Opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas through extended writing are increasing in Year 2. There is scope for this to be developed further in order to provide opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills and to support their learning in geography. There was little evidence of the use of information and

communication technology skills to help pupils to develop their geographical understanding and this was adversely affecting achievement.

82. The leadership and management of geography are good. The subject manager has a good understanding of the requirements of the geography curriculum. She has adapted planning so that the needs of pupils are met and the opportunities in the local environment are fully exploited. She has established links with a geography co-ordinator in a beacon school in order to explore opportunities for the further development of the subject. Her work is enhancing standards and pupils' achievement.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginative and challenging approaches to teaching engage pupils' interest so that they achieve well.
- The use of artefacts and first-hand sources help pupils to develop skills of historical enquiry.
- Speaking and listening skills are developed well, but there are insufficient opportunities to develop writing skills through history.
- The subject is led and managed well.

Commentary

83. Standards of attainment in history are in line with national expectations. Pupils enjoy their work in history, make good progress and achieve well. Good teaching results in effective learning.
84. Teachers use a range of styles to meet the varying needs of their pupils, particularly in Year 2, and this results in good achievement and positive attitudes to learning. Skilful, whole-class questioning helps pupils to consolidate previous learning. Targeted questioning means that pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, are challenged and participate fully in lessons. As a result, they achieve well. Opportunities for extended responses enable pupils to begin to link cause and effect, and to make inferences. Pupils are also given the opportunity to work independently in pairs or groups and this has a positive effect on their social development. In a good Year 2 lesson for example, pupils worked well together, prioritising the impact of changes and then justifying their opinions. They not only developed their speaking and listening skills well, but, challenged each other to give better reasons for their choices. Opportunities to develop reading skills are exploited effectively. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were asked to evaluate whether the new information answered any of the key questions. This made them evaluate their learning and enhanced their progress.
85. Artefacts are used to stimulate pupils' interest and to help them to recognise the differences between 'then and now', and to describe how and why things are different. This engages pupils' attention so that they work productively. Visitors have also brought artefacts, such as childhood toys into school, during the year and this has stimulated pupils' interest. Pupils are encouraged to use different sources of information, including pictures, and this helps them to develop their skills of historical enquiry and so improves their achievement. However, there is little evidence that pupils used their information and technology skills to help to develop their historical understanding, which adversely affects the quality of their learning.
86. An analysis of pupils' work shows that they are now making good progress and are beginning to be given more opportunities for independent writing in Year 2. Pupils at all levels of ability were given identical work at the beginning of the year and this limited the progress that some pupils made. However, there is now greater matching of work to pupils' needs. For example, tasks

given to higher-attaining pupils ask them to make inferences and give reasons for their views, whereas other pupils are asked to describe features. Weaknesses in writing skills, including poor spelling and sentence construction, restrict the development of some pupils' skills of enquiry.

87. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has adapted planning to devise a curriculum which exploits local resources. She has provided a good role model for other colleagues in developing classroom practice, and she has reviewed the planning in order to focus on developing speaking and listening skills through history. She has developed a useful collection of artefacts, materials and books to support each topic. As a result of this work, the school is in a good position to improve attainment further.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables pupils to learn well.
- Pupils are encouraged to apply religious doctrine to their every-day lives.
- Opportunities to develop writing skills are limited.
- Pupils' social skills are encouraged in school assemblies.
- There is currently no use of information and communication technology in this subject or monitoring of teaching and learning and assessment procedures are limited.

Commentary

88. Standards of attainment are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards were found to be above expectations when the school was inspected previously. Teaching and learning are good and achievement is good. This judgement is supported by the examples of work displayed in the school portfolio. Teaching was good in the lessons observed because effective and sensitive questioning reinforced pupils' understanding of biblical stories such as the parable of the Good Samaritan. Pupils' responses were valued and this encouraged some very sensitive and thoughtful discussion. As a result, pupils were able to relate the story to their own lives and understand the moral and social implications of the parable.
89. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to take part in assemblies, for example, by announcing the theme and reading the prayer or parts of a story. This encourages the development of spiritual and social skills effectively and values the pupils for the contribution they can make to whole-school assemblies, an important part of the school day. This is effective in helping pupils to appreciate that the concepts that they have been considering in religious education have a relevance their everyday lives. The school also places a high focus on other cultures and their contribution to religious education.
90. At present there are no assessment procedures in place or opportunities for monitoring the teaching and learning in the subject. There are plans to develop this in the future. The subject leader has only taken on the role recently and is beginning to analyse pupils' work with a view to raising attainment. There is little evidence of information and communication technology being used to support learning in religious education and opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills by completing pieces of extended writing in religious education are infrequent. These limitations are adversely affecting pupils' achievement. The school is aware of these weaknesses and the subject leader is determined to develop the subject further.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only a few lessons were seen in these subjects, so it is not possible to make a firm overall judgement about provision.

91. No lessons were observed in **art and design**. Evidence from wall displays and portfolios of completed work shows that pupils have good opportunities to explore a wide range of media. This work was of good quality. Art and design are linked successfully to topic themes such as the Chinese New Year and 'Wizards and Witches'. The subject manager supports learning effectively and has researched the Internet for suitable links to enhance pupils' learning. In **design and technology**, no lessons were observed and a display of completed work in Year 1 suggested a generally satisfactory picture. In **music**, whole-school singing is good. Pupils sing tunefully and with a good sense of rhythm, whether to a CD or unaccompanied. Only one lesson was observed in **physical education**. Enthusiastic teaching resulted in good progress and effective learning. Standards were average.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled, as it was not possible to observe any teaching during the inspection.

92. Pupils' personal, social, and health education is given a high priority. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to take responsibility and so to develop self-confidence in different situations. For example, school performances at Christmas and other times involve all pupils and Year 2 pupils support the headteacher in assemblies. They announce items and read the prayer confidently and audibly. These opportunities develop pupils' confidence well. Throughout the school, pupils develop good social skills and interact well both in and out of class. The need for a healthy life style is emphasised by the provision of fruit at break times. Many areas of provision in this aspect of the school's work have improved since it was inspected previously.
93. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their work on the school council and what they have achieved. This is giving them a useful insight into citizenship, because they are having to appreciate that rules are necessary for the common good and that limited resources mean that not everything that they would like can be put into place immediately.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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