

INSPECTION REPORT

GRESWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Denton

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106219

Headteacher: Mr D Hammond

Lead inspector: Mr R S Moseley

Dates of inspection: 14-16 June 2004

Inspection number: 256290

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary and Nursery
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 411

School address: Percy Road
Denton
Tameside
Manchester

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs G Rankin

Date of previous inspection: May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the town of Denton and most pupils come from the surrounding area. The school is very popular; numbers have grown and the school cannot take all the pupils that apply. There are 357 on roll, with another 54 children attending the nursery part-time, either for mornings or afternoons. Overall, the school's socio-economic context is below average. Most children enter the reception class with skills in all areas of learning that are below the level expected for this age group. There are six pupils who speak English as an additional language, but these pupils do not need extra support. 86 per cent of pupils are white and 14 per cent are from other ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 18.4 per cent, is average. Twenty-six per cent of pupils are identified as having a variety of special educational needs, which is above the national average. Of these, two pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is below the national average. The mobility of pupils is low.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16886	Mr R S Moseley	Lead inspector	Science, design and technology, geography, history, physical education.
9970	Mr J Acaster	Lay inspector	
23319	Mr V Leary	Team inspector	Music, the Foundation Stage.
22046	Ms J Jolliffe	Team inspector	English, art and design, special educational needs.
32943	Mr D Townsend	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, religious education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Greswell Primary and Nursery school is a very good school, which gives very good value for money. Its main aim is to provide a climate for learning where all pupils develop confidence and independence. This it does very effectively and pupils achieve very well by the time they leave the school. Standards are above average as a result of the high quality provision. Teaching and learning are very good overall. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, who has developed clarity of vision, a shared sense of purpose and high aspirations in all staff.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievements are mainly very good in all subjects, and in mathematics, science and art and design, standards are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Good, very good and excellent teaching is characterised by excellent relationships between staff and pupils, which promote very good attitudes and very good behaviour.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are very good by the time they leave the school.
- The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is very good. They have raised the profile of the school very well since the previous inspection in terms of inclusiveness, standards, ethos and effectiveness.
- Some good assessment arrangements are fairly new. These need consolidating in order to plan work that matches pupils' needs even more effectively.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.
- The curriculum is very well planned to provide a very wide range of well-integrated and well-enhanced activities.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning across a wide range of subjects is satisfactory but needs more development.

Since the school was last inspected in 1998, its improvement has been very good. All the key issues have been dealt with successfully through a wide range of appropriate activities.

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

Key: A - very high; 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.

Achievement is very good overall. The table shows that results for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 were very high in mathematics, putting them in the top five per cent of all schools. Good achievement is evident throughout the school, so that by the time pupils leave, they have achieved at least very well in most subjects when compared to their attainment on entry to the reception classes.

Current standards in Year 6 are well above average in mathematics, science and art and design and above average in English, religious education, design and technology and physical education. Standards in Year 2 are above average in most aspect of English. They are above average in mathematics, science, religious education, design and technology, physical education and art and design. Standards in ICT are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. By the end of the reception year, most pupils have attained the expected goals in all areas of learning.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. They are very well behaved and have very positive attitudes to their work. Pupils are very highly motivated by the school; their interest and participation in school life and the range of activities are very good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good. Teaching is very good overall.** Very good aspects of teaching and learning are common to most classes. For example, there are excellent relationships between adults and pupils. Nearly all teachers plan lessons that allow pupils to be deeply involved in their own learning, discovery and research, developing their independence and confidence very well. Teachers use a very positive, enthusiastic and encouraging approach with pupils. This promotes very good behaviour, motivates pupils very well and brings out the best in them. The use of ICT to support learning in subjects is still underdeveloped. Some new assessment arrangements need further consolidation in order to make lesson planning even more effective than it is at present for individual pupils.

The school works very hard and succeeds very well in linking subjects together. This motivates and interests pupils considerably. For example, in the history topic about the Tudors, pupils practise their extended writing skills, as well as making models of Tudor houses in their design and technology work. A very good range of additional activities enriches the curriculum and widens pupils' knowledge and interest in the world around them. The school cares for its pupils well and gives all its pupils, including those with special educational needs, very good and equal support. It is a very good, inclusive school, where all pupils matter. The good links with parents and very good links with other schools and the community enrich pupils' learning well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. His vision and high aspirations have helped to provide a very good quality of education. He has ensured above average standards, very good achievement, a highly committed staff, a strong climate for learning and a school where all pupils matter. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the senior management team. School management is very good. The school works efficiently. The work of the governing body is very good and is very well led by the chair. Governors help shape the vision and direction of the school. They have a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, and ensure that all statutory requirements are fully met. The school improvement plan is a good document, which outlines clearly what needs to be done next. It is evaluated well on a regular basis. The budget is very carefully managed by the governors' finance committee and they have a very good long-term view and they plan accordingly.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very positive about the school, particularly about the quality of the teaching and the progress their children make. Pupils view the school as being very good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Consolidate the fairly new assessment arrangements quickly in order to be able to plan work that closely matches the needs of pupils even more effectively than at present.
- Extend the use of ICT in a range of subjects in order to make learning more effective and to further develop pupils' ICT skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. Children achieve well and enter the reception classes with below average attainment. Most children are likely to reach the goals expected at the end of the reception year. Pupils continue to achieve well and reach above average standards at the end of Year 2. This good achievement is maintained so that by the time pupils leave the school, they attain standards which are above average in most subjects. Achievement is therefore very good when compared to their attainment on entry to the school. Boys and girls do equally well throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards for this year's pupils in Years 2 and 6, in most subjects where a judgement could be made, are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils do particularly well in mathematics, science and in art and design, and standards are well above average at the end of Year 6.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.2 (16.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.6 (15.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.7 (16.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 59 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	27.5 (27.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	30.4 (27.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.4 (29.1)	29.6 (28.3)

There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The 2003 national test results for pupils in Year 2 in writing were above average, and in reading and mathematics, well above average. Inspection shows that for the current Year 2, standards are not quite as high in mathematics and reading, although they are still above average. This still represents good achievement, since the class has a few more pupils with special educational needs. In writing, standards are also above average. Pupils are developing their listening skills well and their speaking skills are average. Standards are above average in science. These test results compare very favourably to similar schools with a similar number of free school meals. In addition, standards are above average in religious education, design and technology, art and design and physical

education. Standards are average in ICT. There was insufficient evidence to make firm judgements on history, geography and music.

2. The 2003 national test results for pupils in Year 6 in English were average, well above average in science and very high in mathematics. The result in mathematics put the school in the highest 5 per cent of all schools. School records indicate that the writing aspect of English is the area that many pupils find more difficult. Nevertheless, these English results represent good achievement when compared to pupils' attainment on entry. The teachers work very hard to develop pupils' writing skills, not only in English lessons but also in other subjects like history, geography, science and religious education. When compared to schools with similar numbers of free school meals, English was above average, science was well above average and mathematics was very high. Comparisons were also good when compared with schools whose pupils had a similar average prior attainment when they were in Year 2. This clearly demonstrates the progress pupils are making. The inspection evidence shows that the current Year 6 have attained above average standards in English and well above average standards in mathematics and science, and are achieving very well.
3. In other subjects, standards by the end of Year 6 are above average in religious education, design and technology and in physical education. In art and design, they are well above average. In ICT, standards are average, an improvement on the standards attained in the last inspection when they were below average. Pupils are now making good progress in ICT because of stronger teaching and very good facilities. However, pupils do not practise their ICT skills enough to support learning in other subjects. The well above average results in art and design are mainly because of the talented leadership of the headteacher and the cross-curricular approach, whereby many teachers use pupils' artistic skills in many subjects. The results in all subjects throughout the school are not only due to the quality of the teaching, but also to very good subject leadership. Leaders create many opportunities for the evaluation and monitoring of pupils' work and teachers' planning.
4. Children do very well in both nursery and the reception classes, where provision is very good. All the practitioners are very able in implementing the Foundation Stage curriculum. This results in children making rapid progress and achieving very well, from their well below average level of attainment on entry to the nursery, to the end of the reception year. Most children are likely to reach the goals expected in all areas of learning.
5. Pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans (IEPs) with clear targets for improvement, based on the careful assessment of their learning needs. Most pupils' IEPs focus on improving literacy skills. Teachers address these needs in their teaching. Together with the additional support from teaching assistants and nursery nurses, this enables pupils to achieve very well and by the time they reach Year 6, many achieve the national average in a number of subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, value and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities, such as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and behaviour, are very good. Attendance is satisfactory and the overall standard of punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school very successfully promotes extremely harmonious, supportive relationships, using these to foster very good academic and personal achievement.
- Most pupils participate in the very extensive extra-curricular opportunities provided.
- Punctuality is good and attendance is satisfactory, but recording does not allow unauthorised absence to be picked out with certainty.

Commentary

6. Pupils are clearly happy in their work and play. Parents confirm that they are eager to come to school. Very few pupils arrive late. Many come in early, to share in the social pleasures of the breakfast club. Consequently, the school has few problems with attendance. Parents have strictly to apply for holidays wanted during term time. The education welfare officer calls fortnightly to monitor and follow up absences causing concern. School policy is to treat all absences as authorised unless the opposite is drawn to their attention. In the majority of classes, registers do not distinguish absences for which parents have given no reason.
7. The school sets exceptionally high expectations of pupils' conduct. Most staff have attended training for assertive discipline and consequently behaviour management is consistently very effective throughout the school. Children in the nursery and reception are led early into good learning habits. Teachers usually pitch their lessons well and make them stimulating for all. Pupils are often very well supported by teaching assistants. Classroom co-operation sets very good examples of pleasurable learning. As a result, pupils usually listen and respond well in class and address their work very conscientiously. Pupils are effectively motivated by classroom incentives, such as smiley face charts, weekly reward assemblies, and postcard surprises. They enjoy the challenge of using thinking skills to obtain and explain answers. They like practical activities and the frequent opportunities for working in pairs or larger groups. At break times and in the lunchtimes many activities are available for which equipment is provided, and pupils make extensive use of these. After-school extra-curricular activities are well attended. The school is consequently a hive of interest and activity.
8. Within this ethos, behaviour is very good. Pupils are often seen around the school being supportive of each other in a very friendly and natural way. Pupils' relationships are excellent. The school is outstanding in dealing with all forms of harassment. Pupils remark that bullying is virtually unknown. Pupils who have behavioural difficulties are carefully supported. Management is such that the school has had no recent exclusions.
9. Provision for personal development is thus very good. Circle time, established throughout the school, is effective in developing pupils' awareness of their own diversity and identity. Most children in the nursery and reception classes are on course to reach the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development by the time they enter Year 1. Daily assemblies often provide occasions when very good social and moral reflection takes place. An annual multi-cultural week, together with other inputs from curriculum subjects, has removed a weakness noticed at the previous inspection. Pupils show good self-knowledge and spiritual awareness and the school provides its pupils with an effective daily act of corporate worship.

10. Pupils have very caring attitudes towards others with disabilities or special educational needs and encourage them to join in activities.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. The teaching is very good overall. The curriculum is very good and is very well complemented by very good extra-curricular activities and enrichment opportunities. The school cares for its pupils well and has good links with parents. It has very good links with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good. This has resulted in pupils achieving very well by the time they leave the school, when compared to their attainment on entry. This is a good improvement since the last inspection because there is now more very good or excellent teaching. Assessment arrangements are good. The use of assessment information in some subjects is fairly new and needs consolidating to make lesson planning even more effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a strong command of their subjects and high expectations of all pupils.
- Planning is very thorough; lesson objectives are always carefully chosen and learning activities are imaginative.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, which promotes a very positive climate for learning.
- Pupils apply themselves very well in lessons and work both independently and collaboratively with real enthusiasm.
- The use of assessment information has not yet been in place long enough in some subjects to ensure that pupils' strengths and weaknesses are as clearly identified as they could be.
- Teachers use ICT to support learning in subjects but its use is not as widespread as it could be.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	14 (32%)	19 (43%)	9 (20%)	0	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.

11. The headteacher has ensured that teachers provide a strong lead for pupils in lessons. The level of challenge for all pupils is high, because teachers know the subject matter being

explored very well and promote learning as a process. Explanations are well structured and often develop pupils' understanding on a step-by-step basis. They ask questions very effectively. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, individual pupils were invited to answer thought-provoking queries, then given time to think and respond. These responses were explored further by follow-up probing questions. Questions are also used to check and secure the understanding of less able pupils. Pupils are engaged and enthused by lessons, because teachers take care to involve all learners. For example, in mathematics, pupils are frequently asked to consider ideas using their own small whiteboards and to discuss class issues with their 'response partners'. Teachers are well aware of the needs of more able, gifted and talented pupils. They are continuously challenged in lessons because the pace of learning is often very brisk. Due emphasis is placed on offering these pupils extended problem-solving activities of an open-ended nature; they are given the opportunity to select their own methods of recording their own thoughts.

12. Lessons are very carefully planned and prepared. Teachers select and share learning objectives very clearly with all pupils. Whole-class discussion, follow-up pupil activities and lesson reviews are all closely linked to these objectives. Teachers are very successful in meeting the needs of less confident learners. They carefully adapt tasks, so that these pupils can still explore the central learning objective, but with more information or resources to hand. Teachers use planning very well to identify imaginative activities that inspire pupils. The necessary resources, which are always ready for use, are of a good quality. For instance, in a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher gave pupils photographs of themselves with their own teddy bear, to encourage them to write with confidence about a 'character' familiar to them. To help them further, writing frames and word banks were provided, all modified according to pupils' writing needs.
13. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and promote well pupils' confidence in themselves. Teachers regularly encourage pupils to share ideas and explain their thoughts. As a consequence, pupils are very confident learners by the time they reach Year 6 and discuss their learning openly and honestly. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Communication with teachers is effective and teaching assistants are always well briefed about lessons. This enables them to provide continuous, well-focused support for groups of learners and individuals. For instance, in a numeracy lesson for pupils in Year 6, a classroom assistant reinforced teaching points to a small group of less able pupils very intensively, offering these learners support with the written language involved with mathematics word problems. Consequently, the pupils were enabled to be included in whole-class discussions about calculation methods.
14. The teachers' insistence on high standards of behaviour is apparent in all classes. The high expectations of all staff with regard to what can be achieved by each pupil have had a positive effect on attitudes to learning. Pupils listen very well in lessons, treat each other's ideas with respect and work very well co-operatively. All pupils apply themselves well; in lessons where teaching is very good or better, they concentrate for long periods and work independently with real effort. Teachers make good efforts to set homework linked to learning in class. The headteacher has plans in hand to develop a homework club at school in order to increase the impact of study beyond lessons on pupils' learning.
15. There are comprehensive assessment procedures in place. Assessment is more effective in English and mathematics. Formal assessments of pupils' learning are carried out regularly and teachers constantly observe and check pupils' understanding informally during lessons. The progress of younger pupils' reading and writing is systematically monitored and targets for future learning are agreed with all pupils in mathematics. These procedures contribute to the very good progress pupils make in these subjects. However, in other subjects, the assessment information obtained is not consistently used by all teachers to plan work that closely matches the needs of all pupils. For instance, in science, whilst useful procedures are in place to review pupils' progress, these

procedures are new and the information is not yet transferred fully into teachers' planning. Similarly, in ICT and religious education, teachers have due regard for pupils' different levels of ability, but planning is not consistently informed by pupil assessment. However, teachers know their pupils well, so work planned is usually suitably challenging to all abilities. Systems for agreeing individual learning targets and promoting self-assessment by pupils are under-developed across the curriculum. Pupils are occasionally involved in discussing targets with their teachers, in subjects where they are set. Lesson endings are used soundly as an opportunity for pupils to review their own progress. On occasions, they are too brief for learning to be fully consolidated. Teachers' marking in books is mainly good, so teachers' comments do give good guidance to pupils.

16. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is very good. The teachers have high expectations of the children, reflected in the quality of the activities provided for them. Activities are practical and often great fun, such as the work on mini-beasts. Children look at caterpillars closely, role-play, and sing songs about them and share stories like 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. Time is very well managed, providing a balance of direct teaching and the chance for children to work in groups or through play. Adults place great emphasis on developing communication skills in class lessons and activities. There is hardly a moment when some children are not engaged in talking with adults about what they are doing. Routines are well established and encourage those children lacking in confidence to acquire independent, collaborative skills. Formal and informal assessments are of a high quality, resulting in planning being strongly focused on individual children's needs and abilities.
17. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs very well, both in the classroom and in small groups outside the classroom. They are well deployed, so that those pupils with special educational needs receive the extra support needed, enabling them to improve their skills well.

The curriculum

The school has a very good curriculum that meets the needs of pupils very well. Enrichment of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities are very good. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is very well planned and organised.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum gives children a very good beginning to school life.
- The curriculum is very well enriched by visits, visitors and after-school activities.
- There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to deliver the curriculum.
- High quality displays add stimulus to learning.

Commentary

18. The leadership has ensured that the school provides a relevant, well-structured curriculum that places strong emphasis on English, mathematics and science. As a result, pupils' achievement in these subjects is very good. The school has begun to improve the curriculum further by developing pupils' ICT skills through good teaching and improved learning resources. Literacy and numeracy skills are used and extended well through other subjects. For example, in science, teachers encourage pupils to discuss their ideas,

predictions and conclusions during their investigations. This is an important element in the improvement of standards, in both science and literacy. However, the use of ICT in other subjects, although satisfactory, is inconsistent. The rest of the curriculum has a satisfactory balance. It is planned very well.

19. Children have a very good beginning to their school life, because of their rich, varied experiences in the nursery and reception classes. There is a strong focus on children learning through play. This approach results in enthusiastic, confident and motivated learners.
20. The curriculum is enriched further by visitors and well-organised visits. For example, pupils visit Manchester museum, Styal Mill and local farms. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from two residential visits to Edale and the Lake District. There are numerous visitors to the school, such as theatre groups, artists in residence, clergy and ministers of different faiths. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizen ship is good. There are good curriculum links with other schools and especially the local high school. These prepare pupils well for the later stages of their education.
21. There is a very good match of teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. The sense of joint purpose that binds all staff is a strong feature and a key factor in the school's success. Accommodation is good and improved since the previous inspection. There is a dedicated music room, a well-equipped computer room and a library. Teachers present pupils' work thoughtfully in the high quality displays that add considerably to the lively learning atmosphere within the school. There is a good range of resources in all subjects. The external accommodation is extensive. It has a good range of climbing structures that develop pupils' physical skills and small gardens for extending the science curriculum and pupils' knowledge and awareness of the environment.
22. The school provides a very good range of sports and other clubs beyond lessons. These opportunities include football, rounders, samba band, drama, music and chess. Pupils participate in inter-school activities and competitions. For example, the school's samba band regularly participates in local festivals and enjoys considerable success. This rich, varied provision is effective in developing pupils' self-esteem and social skills. Parents spoke positively about the commitment of all the staff in providing these activities. Teachers include all pupils in all aspects of the school day. The school has made good progress in improving its curriculum since the last report.
23. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Their individual education plans focus on the skills needed to benefit from the full curriculum. Small group work is well tailored to match their needs within the planned curriculum. Teaching assistants have been trained to meet the individual learning needs of these pupils. Fun activities are held each week in the hall, using large play equipment to help develop the physical skills and co-ordination of those pupils who will benefit. This is also a good opportunity to develop their personal and social skills. The school works closely with outside agencies to meet the needs of pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

Care, Guidance and Support

The school provides well for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils. Its support, advice and guidance to pupils based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development is good. Very good arrangements exist for involving pupils in the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel very well supported and confident, due to the consistent friendship and encouragement shown by the school's dedicated staff.
- Very good induction arrangements throughout the school prepare pupils very effectively for the next stage of their learning.
- Pupils enjoy many opportunities for practical work in helping to improve their school.
- Significant improvements have been made to the school environment since the previous inspection.
- Maintenance arrangements are not as effective as they could be and can impinge on pupils' well-being.

Commentary

24. Led by the headteacher, well supported by his colleagues, the school has an atmosphere of purposeful, happy stimulation, which everyone is encouraged to enjoy. Teachers and support assistants know their pupils very well, treating them as individuals and alert to their needs. Monitoring of achievements and personal development is closely structured and recorded throughout the school. Pupils are very positive about the help they receive in the classroom and parents confirm that their children are given "every encouragement". The arrangements for involving pupils in the school's work is developing very well with a successful school council.
25. Particular care is taken to settle pupils into each stage of the school. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents were extremely positive about the quality of the arrangements made when their child first joined. For example, when children are leaving the nursery, not only are they acclimatised beforehand to their reception class but they also receive a supportive letter, a leaving certificate, and an invitation to a graduation party! The same spirit of friendly encouragement and help is shown in the programmes for moving from the infant to the junior school and for their transition into secondary education.
26. The school deliberately aims to keep its pupils active throughout the school day. This policy is very effective in minimising the opportunities for misbehaviour and maintaining a positive momentum. A breakfast club, run by caretaking and cleaning staff, is very well attended every day and gives a very positive boost to many pupils. Pupils also look forward to taking part in many activities in break times and lunchtimes. These range from informal games, such as mixed football or outdoor chess, to ecology work in litter-picking or tending flowerbeds. Supervision is alert, but allows for initiative. Pupils also support each other. For instance, Year 6 pupils act as prefects for infant classes when playtimes are wet. Pupils who wish to discuss their problems privately can do so by seeing a designated classroom assistant at lunchtimes. This valuable support service is much used.
27. Procedures for the care, welfare and safety of pupils are good overall. Child protection awareness is well established in accordance with local procedures. Pupils receive good personal, social and health education. The school offers a residential camp for leavers, run by community police officers, as a follow-up to a police 'respect programme'. Premises and equipment have been improved in several important ways since the

previous inspection and a thorough programme of risk assessment is in place. Much outside woodwork, including that in the nursery play area, is deteriorating badly.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership with parents is good and has strengthened since the previous inspection. The school has established very good links with the community and other schools that strongly benefit pupils' experiences and achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information provided for parents is very good.
- Very good use is made of resources drawn from the community and other schools, particularly to enrich cultural aspects of the curriculum, and also to provide competition, especially in sport and music.

Commentary

28. Parental satisfaction with the school has increased markedly since the previous inspection. Four times as many parents replied to the inspection questionnaire on this occasion, representing over half the parents, and their responses across all sections are more favourable than before. Parents are almost unanimous that their children are taught well, expected to work hard, and are making good progress. Due to its reputation, the school is nowadays over-subscribed.
29. The headteacher has ensured that the parents receive a very good standard of information. The nursery, for instance, is excellent in this respect, supplying prospective parents with very good written documentation as well as talking things through on home visits. It issues its own newsletters and regularly explains what is to be taught and why. The nursery team seeks parents' views about what could be improved and afterwards writes to say what can, or cannot, be done to meet the suggestions made.
30. The school prospectus is comprehensive and attractive. Parents now regularly receive curricular information in advance and news-snippets, in the 'Greswell Gazette'. The school extends to parents an 'open door' policy. In children's early stages in school, many parents take advantage of mingling with their children and talking with staff during the first 15 minutes of each day. There is a good attendance at the two parents' meetings a year that deal with progress. Annual written reports are substantial and of good quality. While most parents are satisfied, a very small minority would wish for more frequent seeking of parents' opinions. Several suggestions made by parents of nursery children have been applied.
31. The school has ensured a very good quality and range of inputs from local schools and the wider community. In the curriculum, dance, drama and music are very popular, supplied through links with the local arts college, secondary school and a specialist studio. Due to this provision, for instance, the strength and quality of the school's samba band has drawn it into competition in London. Sports coaching from several sources support the school's teams against local competition. Pupils' cultural awareness is much enhanced by visitors, such as those who come in on the multi-cultural day, and by visits to places like the Jewish Museum. The school's purposeful approach has resulted in very good science links with

the local secondary school, where teachers work closely together to improve their understanding and strengthen curricular links. Training is also obtained from the same source for leadership skills involving pupils in Years 5 and 6.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The management and governance of the school are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is fully committed to ensuring the highest possible standards in all aspects of the school's work.
- The governing body are fully involved in shaping the school's priorities and monitor major financial decisions closely.
- Data analysis has been used very effectively to raise standards in literacy, mathematics and science.
- Arrangements for monitoring, supporting and developing teaching are strong and have led to improvements.
- The school's budget is monitored carefully and finances are used efficiently.

Commentary

32. The headteacher is a very good leader. His vision, dedication and commitment to the whole school community are immediately obvious to visitors. He has been extremely effective in developing a strong sense of teamwork within the school to attain high standards and in creating a culture of striving for constant improvement. The school is very effective in promoting educational and social inclusion.
33. The governance of the school is very good. The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils its roles very well. The governing body has been very involved and effective in addressing the key issues identified in the previous report. There is now a well-established, systematic and thorough approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of education. This includes taking account of data that shows how well the pupils are achieving and the cost effectiveness of financial decisions. Regular visits to the school to look at the work of teachers and subject co-ordinators also help governors to get a good feel for what is happening in school. They play a full part in finalising the school improvement plan. Governors hold the senior management fully to account for spending decisions, through monitoring of the budget and joint discussion and decisions about spending priorities. The governance of the school has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
34. The headteacher has created an environment in which all sections of the school community share a common sense of purpose. Other key staff make a very good contribution to a caring learning environment. The school's aims of maintaining high academic standards and developing pupils' personal qualities through partnership with parents, families and the community, underpins all its endeavours. The headteacher delegates responsibilities well, particularly to other senior staff. He strongly promotes teachers' professional development, both through the performance management framework and through training linked to the priorities of the school improvement plan.

The latter is exemplified by the school currently funding the initial teacher training of one of its nursery nurses.

35. The school improvement plan is well structured and focused on relevant priorities aimed at developing the school further. The headteacher frequently monitors the quality of teaching and learning. He knows what is going on in the school and takes the views of all concerned into account, including the pupils. Senior staff analyse planning and look carefully at the results of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning, by checking pupils' work. This information is used to produce a detailed annual action plan, which successfully directs their work and leads to constant improvement in standards of provision and pupils' achievement.
36. Senior staff and subject co-ordinators show a high level of commitment. They work as united and successful teams. Effective leadership ensures that the standards achieved compare well with similar schools and the achievement of the higher attaining pupils is very good. Although most effort has been put into raising standards in English, mathematics and science, standards are also rising in ICT. Of particular note is the very good leadership in the Foundation Stage, where effective teamwork is resulting in very good early years practice. Subject co-ordinators fulfil their duties very well. The school is very effective in developing the use of teaching assistants to support all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The knowledgeable co-ordinator for special educational needs leads and manages that provision well.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	939,311	Balance from previous year	31,095
Total expenditure	952,406	Balance carried forward to the next	18,000
Expenditure per pupil	2,317		

37. Governors work hard to ensure they get the best value from their spending. They have a good understanding of the principles of best value and, in addition, use the business expertise of their members to obtain the best services. The school administrative officer makes a very valuable contribution to the management of finances, supported by the chair of finance. Prudent use of funding has enabled good levels of staffing, good resources and money reserved for major repair contingencies. The chair of governors has a clear view of what the school should do in the future and has a very clear long-term view. She recognises the many strengths of the school, as well as areas in need of continual development, fulfilling the role of 'critical friend' well.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

38. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. The attainment of children on entering the nursery is well below average. By the time they enter the reception classes this has improved, but is still below average. Most children are likely to reach the goals expected at the end of the reception year. The majority of children who attend the nursery join the school in one of the two reception classes.
39. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. There is a clear view of what the Foundation Stage should be, with strong support and outstanding teamwork by an experienced, knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff. These practitioners are very able in implementing the Foundation Stage curriculum. Teaching and learning are very good overall. Consequently, children in both the nursery and reception classes make very good progress and achieve very well. Teaching is focused strongly on the development of personal and social skills, enabling children to make very good progress by the end of their reception year. Most reach the expected goals for children at this age and a few exceed them. Learning is an enjoyable, challenging experience. The staff use a range of teaching strategies, which encourages children to be independent and confident learners. The staff know their children very well. Their formal and informal assessments are of a high quality, resulting in planning strongly focused on the requirements and abilities of individual children, including those with special educational needs. The school has successfully shaped its own 'early years' curriculum, a good improvement since the previous inspection. In both nursery and reception classes there is a carefully structured programme, in which children are engaged in activities planned by adults and those they plan themselves. Daily planning sessions allow more time when children decide for themselves which activities they wish to participate in. This approach results in enthusiastic, motivated learners. There are developing opportunities for teaching and learning, outside as well as inside. The purpose-built outdoor area promotes learning in physical development and social skills effectively. Planning and provision for developing the children's wider learning experiences are not as strong as in other areas. The school is aware of this and plans are in place to improve provision in this area of the curriculum.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Rich, varied opportunities for children to work together in well-planned activities increase their independence and social skills.
- Children have sustained concentration, which helps their progress a great deal.
- Teaching assistants support and encourage children well, so they gain confidence and develop a sense of independence.

Commentary

40. The very good provision and teaching for this area of learning mean that children in both the nursery and reception classes settle extremely well into routines, making very good progress and achieving very well in developing personal, social and emotional skills. The calm, welcoming atmosphere presents children with a wide range of interesting, purposeful experiences. The very good interaction between staff and children positively affects the attitudes to learning that they develop. The school's philosophy of encouraging children to be independent, active learners drives the teaching and learning strategies. The result is that all children are developing confidence and independence in taking responsibility for their own actions. They get out their own equipment and quickly become absorbed in tasks for extended periods.
41. Teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants have developed a close, effective partnership. They play a significant part in guiding learning and supporting children. Children playing in the 'tent shop' demonstrated their developing skills in relationships when acting out their roles as campers preparing their breakfast. The majority of children will reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year and a few will exceed them. There is very good support for children with special educational needs. As a result, children develop confidence and work happily with others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginative planning and preparation for children in both nursery and reception classes ensure that they build on their skills well.
- Activities provided are highly relevant in developing children's communication skills and enjoyment of language.

Commentary

42. Most children are likely to reach the goals expected at the end of the reception year and a few will exceed them. The very good provision and teaching in this area of learning ensure that children are developing a very wide range of communication, language and literacy skills from the time they enter the nursery. All staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of young children. Very good opportunities and rich experiences are provided for children to develop speaking and listening skills. For instance, a child in the nursery examining the collection of caterpillars excitedly pointed out that some caterpillars were making a cocoon. Children are encouraged to extend their use of language. Role-play is used extensively and successfully in developing the children's linguistic skills. Teachers arrange for children to develop an awareness of phonics in interesting and enjoyable ways. Following such an activity, several children heard and said the initial letter sounds in words. Staff share stories and picture books with children on a regular basis. Parents are also involved in developing children's reading skills through the well-organised home-school reading partnership. This results in most children's reading skills being developed well. A few children are able to read simple sentences and talk about the characters in their stories.
43. In both nursery and reception classes there are many opportunities to write. In the reception classes, higher attaining children write their own sentences independently,

using plausibly spelt words. A few children use full stops and capital letters in their writing. For example, some children produced a well-sequenced account of the story of 'The Three Pigs'. Early reading and writing skills develop well, because of the very good and imaginative teaching.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching helps children to develop their skills step by step.
- Well-organised practical activities allow children to learn and practise mathematical skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers have high expectations and set challenging tasks.

Commentary

44. Due to very good teaching, by the time children reach the end of the reception year, most are likely to reach the goals expected and a small number will exceed them. Activities in both nursery and reception classes are well planned to help children build up their skills step by step, resulting in very good progress and achievement.
45. The very good provision, which incorporates a wide range of mathematical experiences, enables children to develop their skills very well. Most children use number names and make correspondingly accurate taps on the table top as they count up to 20. In both the nursery and reception classes, teachers used a range of stimulating activities very effectively to develop children's understanding of number. Children sing and act out counting songs. Throughout, close attention is given to mathematical vocabulary. The staff's high expectations and suitable challenges ensure that children achieve very well in work well matched to their abilities. Learning is enriched by mathematical skills being developed across the curriculum, for example, counting how many children are present in the classes each morning and afternoon. Children learn about different shapes and investigate their properties, activities reinforced in their creative work when they cut and stick shapes onto card. ICT is used effectively to extend mathematical knowledge. Children confidently used a program to develop their understanding of patterns. Teachers seek frequent opportunities to build mathematical language into everyday activities, to support children's learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities.
- The investigation of objects and materials is very well developed.

Commentary

46. The teaching and provision in this area of learning are very good across a wide range of purposeful, interesting and well-planned activities. Children achieve average standards from a low starting point and achieve very well. In the nursery, the current topic: 'The Lifecycle of the Butterfly' is providing a rich and varied curriculum. They look at their caterpillars and are very interested and aware of this mini-beast's life cycle through close observations, role-play, singing songs about them and sharing stories like 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar.' One child talked excitedly about plans to make a butterfly garden to attract and keep their butterflies. Children have regular access to the computers and are beginning to learn to click, drag and print out their designs. In reception classes, children continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. For instance, the children demonstrated good achievement in bread making, an activity linked to their topic on 'picnics'. They not only increased their knowledge of the baking process and making sandwiches, but also consolidated their social skills by working co-operatively. This enjoyable session ended with a picnic in the school grounds. The experience developed the children's knowledge of appropriate behaviour when eating outside, the need for protection from the sun and the issue of litter. These are well-organised, stimulating activities, where the children are active and effective learners.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good use of a range of materials and activities for children to explore.

Commentary

47. As a result of very good planning, organisation and teaching, children develop their creative skills very well. Children express their feelings through a range of activities, materials, music and imaginative play. Most attain the expected goals in this area of learning. They produce attractive paintings, drawings and collage pictures, which decorate the classroom and celebrate their achievements. Using a range of papers and paints they produce high quality collages. They acquire different sets of skills and knowledge, as they use ICT to create their own pictures. Children learn to tap out rhythms, using percussion instruments to accompany rhymes and songs. A well-organised session resulted in the children in the nursery singing and accompanying on percussion instruments 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' song. These children are provided with a rich variety of opportunities, which they enjoy and respond to in many ways.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning outside is good for children in the nursery.
- Access to outdoor play space for reception children is limited, with fewer opportunities for child-initiated activities.

Commentary

48. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the time they leave the reception classes, since they achieve well. Physical development is fostered well in organised physical education lessons, thereby increasing children's skills in control and co-ordination. Most children are developing a sense of space and an awareness of how to share the hall floor area sensibly and safely with other children in the class. The very good teaching is clearly focused on developing not only physical skills but also sensitising the children to the importance of movement as a means of keeping healthy.
49. Children are adept in manipulating different tools and equipment safely and with increasing control. The outside area is used more as an external classroom by the nursery class, with good quality provision meeting children's needs in most areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. As a result, children develop enthusiasm and enjoyment, as well as achieving highly, as they experience a variety of learning opportunities in these areas. The co-ordinator has an action plan to extend the use of the outdoor play space by children in the reception classes, as a vehicle for developing their skills across all areas of learning. However, the current lack of planned opportunities for reception children to be involved in a varied range of outdoor activities limits their progress in independent learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good and this helps pupils achieve very well.
- Teachers are expert in using literacy strategies, so pupils read very well by Year 6.
- Pupils' work is very well marked, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and targets help them know how they can improve.
- Pupils make rapid progress in developing their writing skills in Year 3.
- Not enough use is made of performance data to bring about further improvement.

Commentary

50. The 2003 test results for pupils in Year 6 were in line with the national average. The Year 2 national tests indicated that the proportion of pupils reaching the standard expected for pupils of this age was well above the national average, both in reading and writing. During the inspection, standards seen were above average in Years 2 and 6, with reading being a particular strength. This is an improvement on the standards during the last inspection. There was no significant difference between girls and boys. The strong foundations laid in Years 1 and 2 enable pupils to make very good progress in developing their literacy skills. Very good teaching ensures that pupils continue to build very well on their achievement up to Year 6.
51. Pupils are very well behaved and show interest in their lessons. Consequently, their listening skills are very good and speaking skills good, by the time they reach Year 6. They answer questions clearly and are able to join in and enjoy debate.
52. The majority of teaching is very good and this helps all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to learn very effectively. Teachers are expert at teaching literacy and have high expectations of pupils. They are very well prepared and know their pupils' individual learning needs very well, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Teaching assistants, nursery nurses and volunteers also support the pupils effectively. Intensive work with small groups is often dynamic and boosts pupils' skills and confidence. All teachers use shared reading sessions very effectively, encouraging pupils to enjoy the text and participate. Questioning is used to probe understanding and involve pupils, who are then motivated to produce their own writing.
53. Year 2 pupils read clearly, mostly with expression and attention to punctuation. They understand very well what they have read and can answer questions very fully. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils enjoy a wide range of books, which they are able to discuss and evaluate. Higher attaining pupils fluently read quite challenging texts such as 'Northern Lights'. Lower attaining pupils enjoy reading library books and a range of other texts at a satisfactory standard.
54. The marking of pupils' written work, particularly in Years 1 and 2, is very constructive, helping them to see how they can improve by setting them clear, achievable targets.

Whilst marking is very helpful in Years 4 to 6, it is not always as rigorous as in Years 1 to 3. Pupils are given a very good range of writing experiences that help them develop their literacy skills. They often use dictionaries and practise spelling, grammar and comprehension. This underpins their good independent writing, sometimes based on their own research, for instance about hedgehogs. Pupils sometimes use word processing to produce their writing, or sets of instructions when writing a poem.

55. Pupils have developed their writing skills very well by Year 6 and almost all pupils have a clear, consistent writing style. Pupils' writing is interesting and well structured. Higher attaining pupils use language extremely well to produce very interesting writing. For instance, one pupil wrote: "Just you wait", he replied, grinning mysteriously! Average pupils are able to write lively stories and descriptions. Lower attainers take pride in their writing, which although simpler, is well structured and purposeful. Individual education plans help pupils with special educational needs to focus on improving their literacy skills, enabling them to make good progress.
56. The subject is well co-ordinated, which has led to much good practice being embedded across the school. The whole school is committed to improving pupils' literacy skills through the quality of teaching and by creating a wide, varied range of opportunities for reading, writing and discussion. The annual book week, visits from poets and storytellers and the input from a drama specialist from a linked secondary school, as well as the after-school drama club, have all contributed to enriching the very good curriculum. Performance data is used to focus additional support, but the school has recognised that the results of this analysis should be strengthened, to plan work for individual pupils even more effectively than at present.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. The school is committed to developing language and literacy throughout the curriculum. Literacy opportunities have been built into the whole curriculum. For instance in history, pupils have written about the Crimean war, using word processing to produce vivid descriptions of a soldier's journey. They have also produced letters to their families, imagining they are evacuees in World War 2. Personal, social and health education is also used effectively as a vehicle to encourage speaking and literacy skills. In religious education, pupils have produced beautifully written and illustrated examples of the different aspects of Islam, which help their cultural and spiritual awareness. ICT is often used to draft and edit work, to produce writing of a very good standard and improve its presentation.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved well since the last inspection and are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils learn and achieve very well, because of well-planned lessons and very effective teaching.
- Target setting procedures are particularly effective and enable pupils to know what they have learnt and what they need to do next.

- The subject is well monitored and pupil performance data analysed to determine areas for further improvement.
- Not enough use is made of computers to aid learning.

Commentary

58. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. The school has continued to develop the subject and standards, which were above average then, are now well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils start school with below average mathematical understanding. They make very good progress, so that by Year 2, standards are above average and about a third of pupils reach the higher levels. When the school was last inspected, only a minority of lessons were very good. Teaching that is very good or better is now a significant feature of provision in mathematics. This improvement results from the greater attention being given to the subject, the faster pace of lessons and teaching which challenges all abilities. A significant proportion of pupils are reaching the higher levels by Year 6.
59. Standards are high, because teachers have a strong command of their subjects, place an emphasis on developing pupils' mental calculation skills and enable them to apply these skills regularly through investigative work. Teachers give effective demonstrations, use targeted questions for individuals and have high expectations of what pupils will achieve. Lessons are well structured and pupils gain very good opportunities to develop their understanding of number facts and calculation strategies through playing games, tackling word problems with partners and small group investigations. This enquiry-based work includes extension material for the higher attaining and talented pupils, and adult support, modified tasks and extra resources for the lower attaining pupils. Teaching is especially strong in Years 5 and 6, where the pupils show particular competence in applying mathematics across almost all aspects of the subject. For instance, pupils are able to identify where shapes will be after a translation, order decimals and numbers beyond 1000 and calculate both fractions and percentages of quantities with confidence. Pupils across the school show very good attitudes to learning in class.
60. Teachers in all year groups discuss and agree with pupils individual learning targets that help them recognise achievements to date and know what they must focus on in their future work. This helps to establish and secure high expectations. In class, ongoing assessments of pupils' learning are made regularly. Teachers plan well together and make very good use of the National Numeracy Strategy planning guidance. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution. They give specific support to less able pupils and those with special educational needs and communicate well with teachers about assessment findings. Teachers' marking of work is followed up with precise advice on how to improve learning in future.
61. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator. Analysis of pupils' performance and tracking their progress are allowing the school to focus on areas of weakness and target pupils in need of further support in reaching the next level of attainment. External and in-house training for staff has been used very effectively over time, to help increase teachers' subject knowledge.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is good. Mathematical skills are used in science to measure and present data in the form of bar charts and graphs. Computers are used occasionally but the use of ICT to support learning is still underdeveloped. Measurements of area are made of three-dimensional shapes when pupils engage in design and technology activities, such as creating their own toys. Six-figure grid references are examined during map work studies in geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well by the end of Year 2 and exceptionally well by the end of Year 6.
- Stimulating teaching challenges pupils in most classes.
- There is a strong emphasis on experimental science.
- Opportunities for pupils to use computers to assist their learning are too limited.
- Assessment procedures are good but fairly new, so the information gained is not yet fully used.

Commentary

63. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. This is a very good improvement on the standards identified at the time of the last inspection and similar to the 2003 test results. The standards at the end of Year 2 were similar at the time of the last inspection and are above average.
64. Many lessons focus on an investigative, experimental approach, which gives pupils a very practical feeling for the subject. For example, pupils in Year 6 were given a mixture of sand, gravel and salt and after a little guidance had to devise their own way of separating these three substances. Many pupils separated the gravel using sieves. They then mixed the rest of the mixture with water and filtered out the sand, allowing the liquid to evaporate, leaving the salt. Work in the pupils' books showed that they described clearly what they were doing and carefully recorded their results. This lesson consolidated the pupils' knowledge of materials in a very practical, enjoyable way.
65. The quality of teaching is good and often very good. Teachers introduce lessons well and always share the main objectives with the pupils, so that they are fully aware of what they are to learn. Teachers' planning usually contains many stimulating and motivating ideas. Teachers ensure that pupils have fulfilled all the objectives well, by building a strong conclusion into the lesson that tests their understanding. This was seen to good effect in a Year 3 lesson, where pupils were investigating how shadows are formed. They rightly predicted that a shadow was caused by the absence of light. They proceeded to demonstrate this by placing a solid object, like a large comb, between the light from a torch and a large sheet of white paper. In their conclusions, they were able to explain that the teeth of the comb blocked the rays of light from reaching the paper. The teacher stimulated discussion in a good question and answer session. It was obvious that pupils are very familiar with this kind of approach, centred on good discussion and effective thinking. Work seen in their books also confirms this approach. Pupils are also encouraged to develop their knowledge and understanding of science by independent research in books and occasionally on the Internet. For example, pupils in Year 2 were seen using the Internet to extend their understanding of the habitats of different animals

and mini-beasts. They recorded the information obtained from their research very well. However, the use of CD-ROMs, the Internet and computers to enhance learning in science is at present underdeveloped.

66. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator monitors the teachers' planning and pupils' work on a regular basis and gives advice and support to other teachers. There is a good scheme of work and the coverage of all areas is done very well. Most areas are covered by the end of Year 5, enabling Year 6 work to be used for consolidation and extension work. This is one reason for the well above average standards attained. Assessment information, obtained through fairly new assessment arrangements, is not yet fully integrated into teachers' lesson planning. Teachers are aware of the different abilities in each class and mainly set work which challenges all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make progress. The subject co-ordinator is also very aware of recent developments in science education and has very close links with all the science teachers in local secondary and primary schools. These links are very valuable. As well as ensuring that secondary teachers build well on the work done in primary schools, the links also develop confidence and scientific understanding in all teachers. The science curriculum is enhanced by visits out of school, to places such as the Science Eureka Museum in Halifax, farm visits and contrasting environments like the Hyde Mill Ponds and the Derbyshire Peak District, during a residential visit.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is well led and managed and consequently standards are rising.
- The teaching of ICT skills is effective and ensures that all pupils achieve well.
- New assessment procedures need to be refined, to enable more targeted pupil support in the ICT suite.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT in all subjects of the National Curriculum.

Commentary

67. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Standards were then adversely affected, because some teachers had insufficient subject knowledge and there was little direct ICT skills teaching. Pupils are now reaching average standards in all aspects of the curriculum. The subject has made good strides, particularly in the last two years. There has been a considerable investment in ICT, which has resulted in a very good ICT suite, as well as five interactive whiteboards for whole-class teaching and networked computers in classrooms. Achievement is now good, because the subject is better co-ordinated and comprehensive training has ensured that teachers have the confidence to teach the subject. The co-ordinator has also devised a very effective scheme of work, which clarifies key learning objectives and expectations for all abilities. Pupils have some time each week to visit the suite and learn ICT skills. Standards are rising very quickly. However, they are not yet above average, because most pupils have not had the full benefit of better teaching and improved facilities during their time in school.

68. The wider curriculum is being taught, so by Year 2, pupils have had experience of using control technology to program a series of movements for floor turtles (robots), navigate web sites to find information and to word process their own written ideas. By Year 6, pupils are using ICT to monitor changes in light, temperature and sound using a simulation program. They can also use databases and spreadsheet programs to gather, retrieve and analyse data. They exchange information, using the Internet and e-mail, with confidence. However, pupils have less experience of desktop publishing and graphics software and insufficient use is made of sensors to monitor the physical environment.
69. Teaching and learning in the ICT suite are good overall by the end of Years 2 and 6, because pupils now get weekly skills inputs and teachers make good use of the planning advice now available to them. Teachers prepare well for lessons and use the interactive whiteboards well to take pupils through the steps necessary to access and explore a program. Pupils are enthused about the subject and work co-operatively together, sharing computers in pairs and remaining fully engaged when their partner is operating the mouse.
70. Assessment procedures need to be refined to enable more targeted pupil support in the ICT suite. Where teaching is most effective, the expectations of pupils of different abilities outlined in the subject scheme of work are translated into ICT tasks in the suite that match pupils' needs. Where teaching is less effective, all pupils explore the software in the same way. The staff and subject co-ordinator have recognised this weakness. They intend to continue developing the use of the Tameside Computer Passport system, which promotes pupil self-assessment and makes the teacher's expectations of each learner clear. Teachers do not consistently use close assessments of each pupil's level of ICT competence with each type of software to inform lesson planning, group organisation and the match of tasks to pupils' ability.
71. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is highly skilled and very supportive of colleagues. He offers much informal advice that enables them to identify teaching and learning approaches and the appropriate software to deliver planned lessons. He has led staff very well in devising a good policy for the subject. A great deal has been done and achieved in a short time. There is, additionally, an equally clear plan for the future.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. Word-processing features in pupils' extended writing. Internet research is used well to help pupils in all year groups extend their research skills and knowledge and understanding in other subjects such as science. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, navigate well-selected web sites with confidence, extending their awareness of the habitats, diet and appearance of a range of mini-beasts. However, more use could be made of ICT to enhance both teaching and learning across the curriculum. The whiteboards, which are new are used well, but are not yet a feature of teaching across the curriculum. Even less use is made of peripheral computer equipment such as laptop computers, video or tape recorders and digital cameras, as learning aids for pupils in class. Opportunities for the use of ICT in science, music, physical education, art and history have not yet been systematically mapped into subject schemes of work. The ICT suite has not yet been formally timetabled to ensure that all classes have a balance of sessions using ICT to extend their learning in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported in detail below. History and geography were sampled.

73. The curriculum in **history** grows from younger pupils getting their first understanding of the passage of time to looking at the famous historical events like the Great Fire of London and famous people like Florence Nightingale. Older pupils in Years 3 to 6 carry out an in-depth study of specific periods of time, such as Ancient Egypt and the Tudor period. A particularly good study of Tudor and Victorian times is carried out, where pupils research the contrasting lives of rich and poor. Pupils in Year 6 have a good grasp of historical characters from the Tudor period such as Henry VIII and his wives, as well as explorers like Sir Francis Drake. The subject is well linked to other subjects. For example, while doing the Tudor topic, pupils design and make models of Tudor houses in their design and technology lessons. History is brought up-to-date for pupils in Year 6, where they carry out a study, not only of World War 2 but also of more recent history related to the 50s and 60s. Teachers' planning indicates that the full history curriculum is covered well from Years 1 to 6.
74. The curriculum in **geography** grows from a study of the local environment and moves on to the wider world. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand simple maps, both of the British Isles and of the whole world. Pupils' geography books and the many displays around the school indicate that, in Year 1 and 2, pupils expand their knowledge well, not only in relation to places but also about how people in other countries live. For example, pupils in Year 2 study China and the display showed a good collection of Chinese food utensils, a map of China and a poster of Chinese mathematical sums. Geography is closely linked, where appropriate, to other subjects like history, so that a study of Florence Nightingale, for example, works in well with some good maps of the Crimea. Pupils in Year 6 visit the Lake District and the Peak District on residential visits, where they study an environment contrasting with their own. Year 6 pupils have developed geographical skills well and use an appropriate vocabulary. This was seen to good effect in work associated with mountains and rivers, where pupils understood words like erosion, river basin, source and reservoir. This led to good work on how settlements arise and how people live in mountain areas like the Pyrenees. Teachers' planning shows how the full geography curriculum is covered well, from Year 1 to Year 6.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and reach high standards, because of the good teaching they receive.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to make comparisons between religions.
- Audio-visual learning experiences enable pupils to think deeply about the significance of faith stories and worship.
- Good leadership and management ensure that the subject enjoys a high profile.

Commentary

75. Standards are above average because pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, teachings, practices and lifestyles associated with world faiths. Pupils in Year 2 have studied Christianity and Judaism. They are able to retell stories from the Bible, describe the importance of key sacred texts and the features of places of worship such as the church and the synagogue. Visits to the local church and a Jewish Museum help to bring these studies alive for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils understand the core beliefs underlying religious practices. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are able to write the Ten Commandments in their own words and compose their own 'rules for us all' in detail. By Year 6, pupils use technical terminology to explain how religious beliefs can be expressed in a variety of forms. More able pupils give detailed explanations of key Islamic beliefs, using diagrams and script together, showing an appreciation of how worship is part of everyday life for believers.
76. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they have studied a range of world religions in detail in their own right. However, to raise standards further, teaching needs to address the lack of opportunities for older pupils to compare world faiths and explore how some beliefs and aspects of worship are shared by different religions. The school has started to address this issue. The co-ordinator recently organised and led a 'multicultural week', in which each teacher focused on religious practices across the world. The school's programme of assemblies helps pupils to learn from religion. Pupils regularly reflect upon their awareness of the world and consequently, they are developing an appreciation of their own identity and personal values.
77. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. Sensitive, well thought out learning experiences enable pupils to think deeply about the significance of faith stories and worship. For instance, a visiting lay preacher regularly talks with Year 5 and uses a range of imaginative techniques to help pupils understand and relate to the meanings underlying key stories from the Old Testament. Audio-visual demonstrations were used to give pupils a striking representation of how the Bible is organised. Pupils were asked to offer sound effects to accompany oral retelling of stories and to use mime and actions as symbols summing up the key messages. Where teaching is most effective in class, pupils again enjoy first-hand learning experiences. For example, the teacher used religious artefacts very well to help pupils erect a model of a classroom shrine for Hindu worship and to re-enact key rituals together in order to explore ways of belonging to a faith. Pupils responded by showing particular respect for the customs and detailed understanding of the significance of each action. Where teaching was less effective, questioning was used to check pupils' understanding, but insufficient opportunities were offered to groups of pupils to share their ideas about aspects of Hindu worship with the whole class.
78. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is very well qualified in the subject. Whilst she has only held this responsibility since September, the curriculum map for Years 1 and 2, based on the locally agreed syllabus, has been enhanced. Work in pupils' books has been monitored by the co-ordinator and teachers given helpful feedback and advice. Further training and support is now required to enable teachers to refine their teaching plans and develop efficient systems for assessing pupils' learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology and physical education were inspected in full and are reported in detail below. Art and design and music were sampled.

79. In **art and design**, teachers' planning and visual displays demonstrate the development of pupils' artistic talents and show that the enjoyment of art is a high priority for the school. The focus on studying a wide range of different techniques, including pottery, sculpture and printing, as well as the study of great artists, often in more depth than is usual in primary schools, is leading to standards that are well above average in Year 6 and above average in Year 2. Through the knowledgeable and enthusiastic leadership of the headteacher, ably assisted by a nursery nurse, pupils across the school are developing a real appreciation of art. The outdoor, life-size sculptures created by Year 6 pupils demonstrate the high standard of work. A large number of displays portraying pupils' work were closely analysed, confirming the high standards attained.
80. In **music** pupils benefit from an exciting curriculum. Unfortunately, it was possible to observe only two lessons and so no judgement can be made about its overall provision. During the week of the inspection, listening and performing skills were taught effectively. The pupils listen attentively, learning and recalling sounds well. They combine pitch, dynamics and silence simply and expressively. The enjoyment of music is evident throughout the school. However, pupils struggle to explain their ideas in musical terms. They recognise different styles of music but have a very limited knowledge of famous composers. A significant number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from the chance to learn to play in a samba band. The pupils' performance shows they have secure sense of pulse and rhythm, moving with energy and vitality. They are well disciplined and thoroughly enjoy this music form. The experience is providing these pupils with an opportunity to explore South American music and becoming culturally aware of different music styles. They regularly participate in local festivals and enjoy considerable success. This summer the band is taking part in the National Festival of Music for Youth in London.

Design and Technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils use their good understanding of the design process well to create good constructions.
- Standards are above average throughout the school and pupils achieve very well because of good teaching and very good leadership.
- Good resources are used well to promote pupils' learning.

Commentary

81. Since the last inspection, standards have improved throughout the school. These are now above average and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well. This is, in part, because resources have been improved during this time. Pupils can now be encouraged to make a reasoned choice of materials and tools with which to work. Also, the subject co-ordinator, who is very enthusiastic and talented, has ensured that all aspects of the

subject are covered well and that pupils and teachers have a good understanding of the importance of the design process. Pupils produce very good, clearly annotated design briefs, carefully executed products and honest evaluations, knowing that these will help them to improve their work and enhance their skills.

82. Teaching seen during the inspection was mainly good, as lessons were well planned and provided suitable challenges for pupils. Teachers' questions stimulate rational decisions, as in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were using their taste buds, while blindfolded, to decide which fruit they would build into the design of a fruit salad they were going to construct in a later lesson. They reasoned that if the taste was not to their liking, the overall effect would not be as enjoyable. Many examples of pupils' designs and constructions were on display throughout the school, all reflecting above average standards. They demonstrated that teachers had high expectations of pupils' work and that they were often linked to topics in other subjects. For example, good models of Tudor houses were made during the Tudor history topic and displays and constructions of card and paper were linked to the study of the Great Fire of London.
83. The subject co-ordinator gives good guidance and monitors the subject well. She scrutinises all constructions and takes photographs of pupils' work. She uses these to talk to all teachers, to help raise standards. She regularly introduces new initiatives. Pupils' work in design and technology is celebrated regularly in 'good work assemblies', where pupils are interviewed and questioned by the headteacher. Pupils have to explain what they have made, how they designed their product, how they evaluated it and how they would improve it if there were making it again. This presentation to the whole school, often accompanied by the use of overhead transparencies, develops their confidence and speaking skills very well. Work on display demonstrates that pupils use a wide range of materials such as cloth, wood, card, plastic and air-dried clay, as well as a wide range of tools. Teachers' planning and photographs indicate that pupils make a very wide range of constructions. These include glove puppets and wind-up models for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and moving 'monsters', cardboard boxes, pop-up story books, photograph frames and money containers in Years 3 to 5. In Year 6, pupils design and construct model slippers and quite advanced working models of fairground rides.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils show good achievement.
- Teachers use some good ideas that motivate and challenge pupils to achieve well.
- The quality of subject leadership is good.

Commentary

84. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards or achievement in all aspects of physical education. However, standards in dance and games are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They are also above average in swimming by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement on the standards in these areas at the last inspection. All pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs, in all these areas. For example, in a dance lesson, pupils in Year 1 were able to interpret the music and words of a song with co-ordination

and unison of a higher level than normally expected of this age group. In swimming, all pupils are able to swim at least the nationally expected 25 metres before they leave the school, and most swim much further.

85. The quality of teaching and learning is good. A good strength is the very good relationship that exists between pupil and teacher. This results in pupils making a great deal of effort to demonstrate to their teacher and to each other that they are determined to improve their performance. Teachers give good demonstrations, participate fully in the activity and have high expectations of pupils' effort and behaviour. Lessons are carefully planned so that there is clear progression, as pupils develop increasingly complex skills. For example, in a games lesson, pupils in Year 2 developed and extended their skills of throwing up a bean bag to catch it and travel with it balanced on a racket. This skill was then extended to moving and travelling with a ball on the racket. Pupils found this motivating, so they remained focused and interested to the end of the lesson.
86. Good leadership is provided for the subject. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and dedicated to maintaining and improving standards and supporting his colleagues. He has ensured that resources are good and that adequate training is available. For example, members of staff have had specialist training in the teaching of dance and outdoor and adventurous activities. He has ensured that the physical education curriculum is suitably enhanced and extended. For example, there are after-school clubs and competitions with other schools, in rounders, football, athletics, hockey and volleyball. He has also set up an arrangement for the local education authority to provide specialist coaching in a variety of sports. The school has recently been very successful in a number of competitions. For example, Year 3 won the area rounders competition, the girls' football team came second and the boys' football team usually wins each year. Outdoor and adventurous activities are carried out in a challenging way during the yearly residential visit to a youth hostel in the Derbyshire Peak District.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The development of pupils' personal and social skills and their health education are well planned.
- Circle time is used very effectively to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence and to deal with issues such as feelings.

Commentary

87. Opportunities to develop pupils' personal, social and health education are well planned and integrated into the whole school curriculum to ensure continuity. The curriculum covers a wide range of issues such as families and friendships, rules, personal safety and feelings. Teachers have received good training. Pupils are aware of environmental issues and discuss ways in which they can care for the planet. An 'eco committee' is in place and involves pupils very actively in discussing and dealing with environmental issues. The committee has already made recommendations such as no smoking by parents whilst on the school grounds and on family walks. Circle time was observed a good number of times and it was used effectively to deal with sensitive issues such as other people's feelings, for instance how the new children might feel on their first day at school in

September. The school is working towards achieving the Tameside Healthy Schools Award and is involved in a project to prevent smoking and alcohol abuse. Sex education in Years 4 and 6 is taught by the class teachers. The co-ordinator is relatively new but is bringing about a coherent programme and is committed to further improvement.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
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	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
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	3
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	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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

