

INSPECTION REPORT

CORRIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Denton, Manchester

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106214

Headteacher: Mrs S Marland

Lead inspector: Mr T Richardson

Dates of inspection: 6 – 9 December 2004

Inspection number: 266669

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3–11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	392
School address:	Cemetery Road Denton Manchester
Postcode:	M34 6FG
Telephone number:	0161 3364265
Fax number:	0161 3378568
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Smith
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Corrie Primary is a community primary school for boys and girls aged three to 11 years. It is much bigger than most primary schools with 392 pupils on roll. There are even numbers of boys and girls and, although the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average, the socio-economic background of the pupils is below average. Children's attainments on entry to the nursery are well below average, especially in their communication, language and literacy skills. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average, and four pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. These are largely for moderate learning difficulties, dyslexia and social and emotional behavioural difficulties. The majority of pupils are of white British origins and there are no pupils with English as an additional language. Children enter the nursery when they are three and they all transfer to the reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. The population of the school is stable, with only 12 pupils entering and 19 pupils leaving the school last year, other than at the usual times of admission. The headteacher was appointed in 2002, a new deputy headteacher will begin in January 2005, and the school is undergoing a process of rapid change. The school is very active in its links with the community and other schools and colleges. It is part of the 'children's fund initiative', the 'school sports co-ordinator scheme' and is working towards being a 'healthy school'. In addition, the school was awarded the Sports Active Mark and

an Achievement Award in 2003, gained Investors in People and the 'Eco Bronze Award' in 2004 and has an achievement award for the best website.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16500	Mr T Richardson	Lead inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology (ICT); art and design; music
31718	Mrs D Shields	Lay inspector	
16886	Mr R Moseley	Team inspector	English; geography; history; religious education
16038	Mrs J Bavin	Team inspector	Children in the Foundation Stage; special educational needs; science; design and technology; physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the school is **good**. Very good leadership from the headteacher and governors is raising standards, and the previous underachievement in English and mathematics has been halted. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The school has a very good capacity to continue to improve and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher has an excellent vision for how the school should improve and is implementing a period of rapid change very well.
- Standards in English and mathematics have risen and good achievement is taking place in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 6.
- There are very good relationships. The links with parents are very good and pupils are valued and cared for very well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is continuing to improve, but there are still some inconsistencies between teachers in their use of marking and assessment.
- Standards in science have yet to rise to match the improvements in English, mathematics and ICT.
- The curriculum is innovative with very good enrichment, sports and clubs.
- Pupils develop good racial and cultural tolerance, but could understand more about the different cultures in our society.

Good improvement has taken place since the last inspection in November 1998. However, there was unsatisfactory improvement until 2002, and standards declined. This situation was inherited by the headteacher, who immediately took decisive action. Since then, the school has been subject to a number of significant changes and rapid improvements in the quality of provision. This has been managed very well and the resultant improvement is very good. The key issues have all been successfully addressed, pupils are no longer underachieving, the quality of education has improved and the school is now in a position to sustain improvement into the future.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	D	E	E
Science	C	E	E	E

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

Recent improvements in achievement and standards have yet to show in the Year 6 test results. Pupils in all year groups, and of all abilities, show **good achievement**. Children enter the nursery with standards well below average, especially in their communication skills. By the end of reception, most children show good achievement and meet (but do not exceed) the goals expected for them. They enter Year 1 with standards that are, overall, just below average. By the end of Year 2, most pupils' standards of reading, mathematics and science match the national average, with their writing skills just below this. Standards are rising in Years 3 to 6 and pupils in Years 3 to 5 are achieving well with a significant proportion of pupils now demonstrating above average standards in English and mathematics. The pupils in Year 6 are doing better than they were and are working hard to catch up and fill the gaps in their knowledge. Their attainment in English and mathematics is below average, and in science is well below average. Standards in ICT for Year 6 are above average as a result of recent improvements in provision and the quality of teaching. The school has rightly focused on raising standards in English and mathematics, but has yet to give the same attention to science and other subjects.

Pupils develop good personal qualities and benefit from the very good relationships in school. Their attitudes, behaviour and punctuality are good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop racial tolerance well, but should know more about the different cultures in our society.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In the last two years, some teachers have changed the year groups they teach, the role of teaching assistants has been strengthened and there is more teamwork between staff. The enrichment of the curriculum is successfully motivating teachers as well as pupils to work with increased creativity. As a result of these changes, pupils find their lessons interesting and are inspired to work hard. They know their targets and this helps them to understand what to do to improve their learning. Literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school and pupils respond to the rigour, pace and challenge of these lessons by giving effort and concentration in class. There is good use of teaching partners in some classes so that pupils benefit from extra attention from their teacher. However, there are still some differences between teachers, particularly in their use of marking and assessment.

The curriculum is enriched with creative days for every class each week, as well as very good opportunities for participation in sports and for pupils to attend a wide variety of clubs. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. The care, welfare and safety provided for pupils are very good and there are very good links with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has an outstanding vision for what needs to be done and is successfully sharing this with governors, staff, pupils and parents. All statutory requirements are met. The governors provide very good governance and support for school improvement and the headteacher's drive for the transformation of the school is aided by the good leadership of senior staff and subject leaders. The rapid change is being managed very well and improvements are now evident in many areas of the school's work. As a result, there is a strong sense of common purpose

and there is a very good capacity to continue to improve. The school transformation plan is being implemented very well and the school's finances are used very well to achieve its priorities.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. They state that teaching is good, the school is well led and managed, and a good and interesting range of activities is provided for their children. Pupils say they enjoy school, feel safe and are confident to talk to adults if they have concerns. Pupils also know they can make suggestions and that their views are valued.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to share best practice so that there is greater consistency in the quality of teaching between classes, especially in the use of marking and assessment.
- Ensure improvements in the standards and provision in science to match those in English, mathematics and ICT.
- Ensure that pupils are sufficiently knowledgeable about the different cultures in our society.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects.

Standards are below average, but are now rising. Achievement is good for the majority of the pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Previous underachievement has been stopped.
- Standards are rising in English, mathematics and ICT.
- Pupils show good achievement throughout the school.
- Targets are realistic and set with accuracy.

Commentary

1. Since the previous inspection, the school has not kept pace with the rising standards in the rest of the nation, and test results have declined. The 2004 test results for Year 6 show considerable underachievement for the pupils in English, mathematics and science. The added value data for the school also puts its performance into the bottom 40 per cent of schools in the nation. However, this data does not show the full picture of what is happening in the school. Since 2002, and following the appointment of the headteacher, the school has focused on raising standards, with an emphasis on English and mathematics. Some results of this work are already beginning to show in test data, especially for the younger pupils.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
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reading	15.5 (15.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.3 (14.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.0 (16.5)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- The 2004 test results for pupils in Year 2 are just below the national average for reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. When these results are compared with similar schools, Corrie's Year 2 pupils have above average reading skills, average writing skills and mathematical scores that are well above average.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.0 (24.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	24.5 (25.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.6 (26.6)	28.6 (28.6)

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

- The 2004 test results for pupils in Year 6 show that their overall scores were reduced by the large proportion of pupils who attained Level 3 instead of the expected Level 4 for English and mathematics. In addition, these scores were reduced by the school having a lower proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science than in other schools in the country. Test results also show that girls do better than boys in all year groups.
- The underachievement of the pupils was recognised by the headteacher on her appointment in 2002. Immediate action was taken and the outcomes for the pupils show that the school is doing the right thing to raise standards. Inspection shows that standards are rising, underachievement has now stopped and there is likely to be an improvement in Year 6 test results in 2005, which will be sustained in future years. Children enter the nursery with standards that are well below average, particularly in their communication, language and literacy skills. Good achievement takes place throughout the Foundation Stage so that, by the end of the reception year, most children are meeting most of the expectations for their age in all the areas of learning. However, no children are exceeding these Early Learning Goals so the overall profile of their attainment on entry to Year 1 is below average. Good achievement continues in Years 1 and 2 and the standards seen in lessons and pupils' work indicate that the current Year 2 are likely to attain average test and assessment results in reading, mathematics and science in 2005. Their writing skills are likely to remain just below average.
- Good achievement is now evident throughout Years 3 to 6. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 are continuing to build well upon their previous Year 2 test results, and a significant proportion of them are reaching above average standards. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 have gaps in their knowledge and understanding, but are now achieving well as they work hard to catch up with what they have missed in previous years. As a result, standards in Year 5 are rising and the work seen in English and mathematics in Year 6 has improved and is now at a below average standard. Standards in science in Year 6 are still well below average as this subject has not yet had the same amount of emphasis for improvement as English and mathematics. Throughout the school, measures are in place to try to boost the standards for boys to match those of the girls. Lessons are presented with a variety of activities and methods that motivate both genders, and boys and girls now usually sit and work co-operatively together. As a result, there is now very little difference between the attainment of boys and girls in class, although this has yet to show a difference in test results. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics in response to the specialised help they receive as individuals or in small groups.

6. Another improvement in school is that the assessment information for pupils is now collated centrally so that the progress made by each individual can be tracked. This data is analysed well and the pupils who have the potential for higher attainment are accurately identified, as well as those who need extra help. The information is also used well to set targets for the pupils in literacy and numeracy that are realistic and achievable. As a result, the current whole-school performance targets are suitably challenging and are firmly based on what the pupils can be realistically expected to achieve.

7. Standards in English are improving as a result of the good leadership for the subject that has helped teachers to increase their knowledge and understanding of the subject and how pupils learn. In addition, a greater emphasis is now given to helping pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills so that their vocabulary and sentence structure is improving. This, in turn, is leading the pupils to have a greater understanding of their reading and to be able to improve the quality of their writing. In mathematics, pupils are responding to the similar emphasis given to improving the subject as in English. The emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills is also beginning to show improvements in mathematics as pupils are increasingly more able to discuss their reasons and explain the relationships between numbers. Standards in ICT are much improved and the Year 6 computer skills are now above average. This is because the school has invested in providing sufficient computers so that pupils can practise their skills, and also in helping teachers to improve their own skills so that they act as good role models for the pupils. Improvements are taking place in science, but they are at a slower rate than in other subjects. However, this is already identified and planned as the next priority for school improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school are good. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and steadily improving.
- Pupils could know more about the other cultures in our multi-ethnic society.
- Pupils' relationships with others are very good.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem grow as they move through the school.

Commentary

8. Pupils get on very well with their classmates and have secure relationships with the teachers and other adults who work with them. Pupils say they like and enjoy school. Pupils with special educational needs and those who sometimes experience difficulty controlling their behaviour equally enjoy, and are involved in, all aspects of school life.
9. In discussions, pupils expressed the view that bullying does not happen very often. If it does happen they tell an adult whom they confirm will help them. The results of the pupils' questionnaires indicate that pupils feel the school treats them fairly. Discussions with pupils indicate that they have a good understanding of both racism and sexism. The school is good at promoting and developing pupils' attitudes towards racial tolerance. However, this is at the expense of developing a more detailed knowledge of the diversity of other cultures. In discussions, pupils demonstrate they have a limited understanding about everyday life in our multicultural world.
10. Pupils are encouraged to respond to and value the views of others. An example of this is the many opportunities that are provided to celebrate pupils' achievement both inside and outside school life. Assemblies have a good social and moral content, and on some occasions there are good opportunities for pupils to reflect on how these themes might apply to their own lives, but this is not always the case. Overall, the development of pupils' spiritual awareness is satisfactory, but teachers' plans do not sufficiently include where aspects of spirituality could be developed in lessons and subjects other than religious education. Very good emphasis is placed on nurturing pupils' confidence and social development. There are many opportunities that contribute to this, for instance, pupils' personal study projects and presentations. Children in the Foundation Stage are showing good achievement in their personal development and are likely to meet the goals expected for them by the end of reception. As they move through the school, pupils become increasingly more confident about themselves and life outside the school.
11. Lessons and other school activities are busy and productive. This is because almost all pupils enjoy the experience of learning, and this is especially so amongst the younger pupils. Most pupils try hard and are attentive and this has a positive impact on how well they achieve in lessons. Generally, they co-operate with each other and work well in small groups and pairs; this is particularly noticeable during ICT lessons when pupils share computers. Sometimes the older pupils show less motivation and willingness to apply themselves to tasks. However, on occasions, this can be directly linked to teaching and activities that do not fully engage them. Pupils confirm, in their questionnaire responses and in discussions, that lessons are usually interesting and fun and that they like most of their teachers who will help them if they get stuck with their work.
12. Overall, pupils are able to get on with their work because they behave well. One reason for this is that nearly all adults have a consistent approach to behaviour management. The other is the priority that the school gives to pupils' social and moral development. There are clear, but fair, rules that pupils say they understand, but there are inconsistencies between teachers in how

they use 'Golden Time'. Incidents of misbehaviour are usually dealt with discreetly and this ensures that lessons are not interrupted. Pupils who sometimes have great difficulty controlling their behaviour are managed well. They receive good support from other adults who work in the school and from external support agencies and, as a result, they are able to continue with their lessons. The pupils' questionnaires showed that there were some concerns over the behaviour and friendliness of pupils. Overall, the inspection findings do not support this view. Only occasionally do older pupils show a reluctance to conform to the school's behaviour expectations. In lessons, mild inappropriate behaviour and restlessness of older pupils sometimes slows the pace of learning. Again this can be attributed to activities that are not sufficiently matched or challenging to the pupils' abilities.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	380	15	1
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	4	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0

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

13. In the year prior to the inspection there were 15 fixed term exclusions and one permanent exclusion. This was because the headteacher was determined to set clear expectations about the required standard of pupils' behaviour. She has been successful in this and there have been no exclusions since February this year. There are good systems in place to support individuals at risk of or on return from this sanction.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	0.3
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

14. Having declined over a two-year period, attendance has now recovered so that rates are now broadly the same as other schools. This recovery is due to the very good systems and procedures that the school has introduced to both monitor and promote regular attendance. Most pupils arrive at school on time. The school is very aware of those pupils who do not attend regularly and takes prompt action to encourage them to do so.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with satisfactory assessment. There is a good curriculum, with very good opportunities for enrichment. The school's care, welfare, health and safety for the pupils are very good,

pupils receive good support and guidance and there are very good links with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good and is supported by satisfactory assessment procedures.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils find their lessons interesting and are motivated to work hard.
- Literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school.
- There are some inconsistencies between teachers in their use of marking and assessment.
- There are examples of good practice in the deployment of 'teaching partners'.

Commentary

15. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well because of the good quality input they receive from the staff. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught well and are learning well in their lessons. Significant changes have taken place over the last two years. There have been some staff changes and a number of teachers have moved to work with different year groups. The role of teaching assistants has been strengthened so that they function as 'teaching partners' in class. There is an increase in teamwork and teachers plan together, as well as sharing the responsibility for teaching the literacy and numeracy 'sets' each morning. All staff are benefiting from the well-constructed opportunities for professional development that are in place, and the work to enrich the curriculum is motivating teachers as well as pupils to work with increased creativity. The result of these measures is that pupils are learning well and achieving well, although the impact of this has yet to show in the Year 6 test results.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7 (16%)	21 (49%)	14 (33%)	1 (2%)	0	0

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

16. A key feature in many of the lessons observed was that pupils were interested in what they were learning and were keen to find out more. This is a result of the school's recent focus on pupils' learning needs and an emphasis on using different methods in lessons to motivate the pupils. For example, in a lesson for Year 2 pupils, the teacher received a pretend telephone call and hinted to the class that 'aliens' may have been sighted in school. As a result, the pupils were very keen to follow this idea and, on learning that the stranded 'alien craft' relied on number sequences to fuel its engine, they doubled their efforts to analyse and sort numbers by a wide range of different characteristics.
17. Every class has one day per week that is set aside as a 'creative day'. This is successful and motivates the pupils well. For example, in a lesson in Year 4, the class were working on a dramatisation of a Roman defeat. The teacher's own dramatisation inspired the pupils to generate ideas, with every pupil contributing to the full. As a result, the pupils learnt to consider historical events in the context of their impact upon the people, whilst also extending their thinking, speaking and expressive skills. Teachers use questions well and often target them so that higher attaining pupils have harder questions than the lower attaining ones. This generally works well, and keeps all the class, including the pupils with special educational needs, involved and giving effort to their learning. Teachers also use demonstrations well and

these are usually presented with clarity and logic so that pupils move forward in their understanding in small steps. This is a feature of teaching in ICT lessons where the clarity of demonstration enables the pupils to quickly try out new applications and increase their level of computer skills. Pupils are further motivated by carrying out personal projects. They do most of the research for this at home and present their findings to the rest of the class. This allows pupils to follow their interests to a depth that matches their learning needs and also motivates others in the class to try harder with their own work.

18. Since 2002, the school's priority has been to raise standards in English and mathematics. As a result of this emphasis, literacy and numeracy are taught well in all classes. Pupils are grouped into 'sets' by ability for these lessons and can be taught by different teachers for each subject. As a result, teachers aim the content of the lessons to more closely match the ability and needs of each group. These lessons have clear introductions, activities and final summaries. This leads to the pupils knowing what they are learning, keeping to time schedules and reflecting at the end of the lesson on what they have achieved. Teachers have high expectations for what pupils should achieve in these sessions and provide challenging tasks that help the pupils to sharpen their skills. For example, in a numeracy lesson for Year 6, the teacher informed the class they were going to learn how to measure accurately and briskly led the pupils to use their rulers with precision so that, by the end of the lesson, most pupils were confident they could now measure accurately to the nearest millimetre.
19. Analysis of pupils' work shows that there are some inconsistencies between classes. For example, some books are marked well with constructive comments that show the pupil what needs to be done for their work to improve. In other classes, books are marked with ticks or additional comments that focus on what is missing, for example, 'use a ruler!'. Assessment procedures are now in place that enable teachers to keep track of how well pupils are doing over time and to spot who needs extra help, or who could be doing more. These are also being used well in some classes to plan what pupils should learn next. However, this practice is inconsistent and in some classes while pupils have been identified as having the potential for higher attainment, they are not always being provided with different work from the rest of the group.
20. 'Teaching partners' are deployed well in some classes. For example, in some classes, the assistant takes the register, dinner numbers and discusses what pupils have done at home while the teacher gives extra help to some pupils, for example, with reading. In other lessons, the 'teaching partner' takes a small group of pupils with special educational needs and this encourages a good rate of progress. This kind of deployment is of benefit to the pupils as it gives those who need it the opportunity for increased individual attention. However, this good practice has yet to be shared throughout the school and established in every class.

The curriculum

The breadth and balance of the school's curriculum is good, and satisfactory for the Foundation Stage. There are very good opportunities for curriculum enrichment. The accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is innovative, has very good provision for sports and successfully motivates the pupils.
- Creativity days and other opportunities for enrichment enhance pupils' learning very effectively.

- Personal, social and health education is not consistently planned to ensure pupils' development.
- Strengths in curriculum enrichment through sport have been successfully maintained.

Commentary

21. The school has embraced the idea of developing the curriculum and enhancing opportunities for creative learning very enthusiastically. The school recognises the enormous power of the curriculum as a source of pupils' motivation. Staff go the 'extra mile' in planning a programme of 'trips out' and 'visitors in' that enhance topics, especially in the humanities, very effectively. Consequently, the very wide variety of enriching activities successfully enthuse pupils of all ages and please parents. One of the deputy headteachers has led recent initiatives with a strong and clear commitment to teaching all subjects creatively rather than just focusing on the traditional subjects on the new 'creativity days'. Although the school is still grappling with the challenge of how to evaluate the effect of these days, staff and pupils recognise that the more open-ended tasks contribute well to meeting the wide and varying needs of different pupils.
22. Previous strengths in the number and variety of clubs have been maintained. The school is continuing to provide very good opportunities for girls and boys of all abilities to develop through sports activities, including competitive events. Similarly, the strengths in provision for pupils with special educational needs identified during the previous inspection have been sustained. Good provision is made for these pupils. The school has a good variety of specialised literacy resources available to meet special educational needs. This means they are in a good position to select resources to suit individual pupils and pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
23. The school recognises that while personal, social and health education is at the heart of its curriculum and teaching, provision is not formally planned and monitored. While pupils clearly develop well socially through activities such as the 'school council' and the 'eco-project', there is no system for ensuring that pupils' progress is fully recognised and extended.
24. Accommodation is steadily being refurbished and recent investment in two new information and communication technology suites has already had a positive impact upon pupils' standards in the subject. Sufficient resources for learning are in place and the school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified staff. Overall, the school is providing a good curriculum that is continuing to improve.

Care, guidance and support

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Boys and girls of all ages and backgrounds are very well cared for.
- Academic guidance helps pupils understand what they need to do to improve their learning.
- Pupils have a very good and trusting relationship with at least one adult.

- Pupils' opinions are regularly sought and their views are valued.

Commentary

25. The school's provision for care, welfare, guidance and support has improved significantly since the previous inspection. All adults now work very well together to provide very good care for the pupils.
26. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe there. All adults know the pupils very well and regularly share information about them with each other. As a result, individuals and their families are very well known. The school regularly uses the expertise of a wide range of external agencies to support and guide pupils, and often their families as well. This provision reflects the very caring ethos of the school. In discussions, pupils state that there is an adult they are confident to talk to if they are worried or unhappy, and this view is supported by the questionnaire results. Older pupils clearly feel that because the learning mentor has recently left the school this has currently left a gap in this aspect of the school's support network. They unanimously say they miss the 'bubble box' where any concerns could be placed.
27. Pupils indicate both in discussion and through the questionnaire results that they can ask their teachers for help during lessons. During the inspection good examples of one-to-one support were seen. Although recent, the school's monitoring and tracking system is good and enables teachers to identify when pupils are having difficulties. This means that they can take swift action to help put matters right, for instance, through the identification and then support for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils know what their targets are in both literacy and numeracy and confirm that these help them understand how they need to improve their work.
28. Systems to ensure pupils' care and welfare permeate all aspects of school life. They are very clearly understood and implemented by all concerned who work or help in school. There are well-planned arrangements for supporting children who join the school part-way through the school year. Arrangements to help the youngest children who are starting formal education for the first time are satisfactory. Health and safety throughout the school are very good. The governing body ensures that the vast majority of arrangements are constantly reviewed in order to improve or refine policy and practice. However, what prevents this aspect from being excellent is because at break and lunch-time pupils are not always in full view of the adults on duty. These findings confirm the concerns expressed by some parents.
29. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the recently established school council. They know how they can make suggestions and feel their views are listened to. The school now regularly seeks pupils views by other means, for instance, sometimes through circle time or the recently established eco-council. There are now many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility and contribute to the smooth running and decision making process of the school; this makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The relationships with parents are very good.
- The community is very well used to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' personal development.
- The school uses its links with other schools and colleges to very good effect.
- Pupils' end of year reports could be improved.

Commentary

30. In the past two years there has been a significant improvement in the school's relationships with parents, and this is still growing. The school puts a great deal of effort into encouraging parents to become involved in school life and their children's education. A significant majority of parents respond positively to this and support the school in many ways, such as by hearing pupils read at home, especially the younger ones; this has a positive impact on their standards and achievement. Parents also show support by raising large sums of money that enable the school to buy additional resources, and by giving their support to the opportunities to see their children take part in school productions, concerts and assemblies. Despite the school's very best efforts, a small minority show apathy and do not support the school's work. Parent's views are regularly sought and the school takes these into account when setting priorities for future development. Parent's views about almost all aspects of the school's work are very positive. They think that teaching is good, the school is well led and managed, and a good and interesting range of activities are provided for their children. The inspection findings fully endorse these views.
31. Day-to-day information for parents, both written and verbal, is very good. It is useful, practical and accessible. The school's web site is particularly well structured with many useful links, but end of year reports about pupils' progress are too wordy and do not always clearly enough indicate pupils' strengths and areas for development. These findings endorse the concerns expressed by some parents.
32. Both the local and wider communities provide a rich source for school visits. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about these visits, for instance, to the Manchester Museum. They also regularly take part in local events, for example, the Denton Carnival, and also help to improve the local environment through their work with the Eco club. These opportunities make a particularly good contribution to pupils' social development. Very close working relationships have been established with local schools. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting events with local primary schools. Staff meet regularly with the local cluster of schools and this has resulted in good initiatives to develop the curriculum, for instance, ICT and also for staff development. Joint working parties are frequently set up to look at how best to tackle national initiatives. The very good liaison with local secondary schools ensures that pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. These links also provide opportunities to broaden pupils' curriculum experiences through the joint projects that take place.
33. The school regularly accepts students from further education colleges and also trainee teachers, and this 'extra pair of hands' is used to good effect within classrooms. Links with the local colleges have also benefited parents and the community through the introduction of adult education and parenting skills courses. In addition, a range of community groups regularly use the school facilities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership. The school is managed very well and the governance of the school is very good. The leadership of other key staff is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has an excellent vision for how to improve the school.
- The process of change is being managed very well.
- There is a strong sense of common purpose. Other staff are leading developments well and there is a very good capacity to continue to improve.
- The school transformation plan is very clear and is being implemented very well.

- School evaluation systems are not yet focused sufficiently on judging the impact of developments on pupils' achievements.
- The school is very well governed and governors are fully involved in all aspects of the school's life.
- Finances are controlled and used very well to achieve educational priorities.

Commentary

34. The headteacher was appointed in 2002, and inherited a school that had slipped into decline since the previous inspection. Standards were falling, the key issues from the previous inspection had not been addressed and there was an immediate need to halt this decline and bring about significant improvements. She quickly established what needed to be done and shared this excellent vision with staff, governors and the school community. Decisive action has been taken, and the school is now in a position of strength and continuing to improve. Her calm, thoughtful and co-operative approach to moving the school forward has kept staff and governors 'on board'. The last two years have been a difficult period in the school's life, but changes have been managed very well and the benefits for the pupils are now beginning to show. Consequently, this is a rapidly improving school, standards in English and mathematics are rising and pupils are achieving well. All the key issues identified in the last inspection have been successfully addressed within the last two years and are all securely in place.
35. The headteacher motivates staff very well through her observations of lessons and her sharing of the development of the school curriculum. The headteacher is very well supported by the leadership team, which includes two acting deputy headteachers. Both command respect and loyalty from colleagues, pupils and parents. All staff are encouraged to lead developments, especially in the teaching of literacy, numeracy and the development of the 'creative day'. She values the contributions that teachers make and the skills they bring to the school. These are fostered well. A strength is the way the headteacher has encouraged all adults in the school, secretarial and caretaking staff, classroom assistants, playground supervisors, dinner staff, as well as teachers and governors, to develop their roles with relevant training. As a result, there is a strong sense of common purpose where everyone is 'pulling together' and equally valued. This is likely to continue to support further improvements.
36. The school transformation plan is a very good document. This name was given because the headteacher stated, "the school needed to be transformed rather than just improved". It covers a period of three years and is reviewed frequently so that improvements can be flexible and tailored more closely to the changing needs of the school. It is effective because the priorities are the right ones to transform the school in what has been a very short period of time. One weakness in the plan is that it measures success by the provision being in place rather than evaluating the benefits for the pupils. The headteacher and governors are now beginning to evaluate these outcomes, but they are not yet collated in such a way that they clearly demonstrate to others the success of the school.
37. The governance of the school is very good. Governors are committed to the school and carry out their statutory duties very well so that all statutory requirements are met. They are committed to the school's principles of inclusion, raising achievement

and developing the curriculum in a more exciting and lively way, all of which are key elements of the headteacher's vision. The governors are keen to extend and improve their performance further. Governors visit the school regularly. Each governor is linked to a class and meets with subject leaders on a regular basis. This involvement helps them to be very well informed about what is happening in the school and to be able to clearly identify strengths and weaknesses.

38. The leadership of the subject leaders is good overall. All produce a detailed development plan for their subject, which is linked to the overall school transformation plan, and shared with the governors. The school's plans show that the observation of lessons by the subject leaders is to start shortly. All subject leaders also analyse pupils' work and teachers' plans in their subject. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is led well and the children benefit from the coherent teamwork of the staff. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision well, successfully ensuring that pupils receive the specific help they need and, consequently, make good progress.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,071,542	Balance from previous year	4,175
Total expenditure	1,019,439	Balance carried forward to the next	56,278
Expenditure per pupil	2,365		

39. The finances available to the school are used very well. All educational developments are carefully costed and linked closely to the items identified on the school transformation plan. Financial arrangements in the school are very clear and are kept in very good order by the school administrator, headteacher and governors. All purchases go through a rigorous procedure, which ensures that the school gets best value. There is currently a small surplus, which is clearly identified for spending on building improvements and the cost of temporary supply teachers. Money is spent wisely and carefully; staff are deployed appropriately and supported well. This ensures that the school is managed very well and run efficiently.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. Most children join the nursery class with standards that are well below average. They have poorly developed communication skills and a lack of curiosity that has a detrimental effect on most areas of their learning. For more than half of the children, the nursery is their first experience of being outside their home and apart from their families.
41. Children achieve well throughout the nursery and reception classes because teaching is good and they enjoy a suitable variety of activities both in classrooms and outside. By the end of the reception year, the vast majority of children are achieving most of the Early Learning Goals, in all areas of learning, but none are exceeding them. This lack of children reaching higher standards means that the attainment of children on entry to Year 1 is just below average overall.
42. Since the previous inspection, good improvement has taken place. During this time, the extent of children's language and communication needs has increased. Also, the national requirements for the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage have been implemented. However, much of the development has taken place since 2002. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has led and managed her team through a period of significant change very rapidly and effectively. The result is a good level of consistency among staff and a shared commitment to children learning through play and extending their imaginations. Children enjoy a suitable variety of activities and the early years' team is rightly aware of the need for further curriculum development, for example, in the amount of learning taking place outside.
43. The provision in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development is reported on in detail below. The other areas of learning were sampled. In **knowledge and understanding of the world**, evidence from children's work indicates that teaching and learning are good and the provision for this area of learning is planned for well. In an ICT lesson for reception children, they used a computer program appropriately to design repeating patterns for Christmas wrapping paper. This also contributed well to their mathematical development. In **creative development**, a strength is the use of children's imaginations to enhance learning, and children have regular access to imaginative play. In **physical development**, a part of one lesson developing large movement and physical skills in the hall was seen during the inspection. In the short session seen, the vast majority of children moved with the level of skill and co-ordination expected for their age. In other lessons, children manipulated small pieces of equipment and used pencils and spatulas with the level of control expected for their age.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children grow very well in confidence because they are listened to carefully and adults have consistent expectations of them.
- Children learn to behave well.
- Opportunities for children to make their own choices are sometimes missed.

Commentary

44. Children achieve well because of the good teaching they receive. All staff share a good understanding of the importance of this area of learning, and in the nursery and both reception classes, adults set a very good example for children to follow. They are consistently firm, but warm and encouraging in their relationships with the children. Consequently, girls and boys, including those with special educational needs, settle quickly. They soon learn that what they say and do will be valued and so rapidly increase in self-confidence. Because expectations are consistent, they quickly learn to share and work alongside others, successfully developing their readiness to learn.
45. During the inspection, in a very good lesson introducing a new reading book to the children, every opportunity was taken to reinforce messages about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. As a result of 'dramatic outrage' from the teacher, children were immersed in the story and appalled that two of the characters fought over play equipment. This lesson made a very good contribution to children's moral and social development. However, there are occasions throughout the day when adults provide children with too much help and so limit their choices and independence unnecessarily. Nevertheless, by the end of the reception year, most children meet the expected levels of personal and social skills. They share equipment and attention harmoniously and are beginning to negotiate with one another in spite of their continuing relative weaknesses in communication.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in developing their speaking, reading and writing skills.
- Adults value children's writing and listen closely when they voice their ideas.
- Still more can be done to stimulate children's individual speaking skills.

Commentary

46. The quality of teaching and learning is good. A significant strength of provision in the nursery and reception classes is the extent to which all adults value children's marks on paper as they begin to try to write. There are countless opportunities throughout the day for children to 'play write' and whenever they do, they receive sensitive encouragement. As a direct result of this, children are very willing to express themselves on paper and incorporate their increasing ability to link sounds and letters. This interest in letters and sounds also helps children to gain confidence in reading.

Children's interest in books and willingness to read is also attributable to adults successfully selecting books to share as a class that stimulate and hold children's interest well.

47. The reception classes participate in the whole-school project to develop children's speaking and listening skills through individual presentations. These are successful in supporting children's self-esteem because each child chooses a subject of interest to them to share with their peers; during the inspection these topics included 'dancing' and 'key-rings'. These presentations provide a good link between home and school because children prepare at home with the help of parents or carers. They also successfully increase children's skills in expressing themselves in a large group. However, when children have chosen an activity themselves, opportunities to extend individual language skills, introduce new vocabulary, and rehearse grammatical structures, are sometimes missed. This is because these opportunities are not always fully recognised and are not always specifically planned for. Nevertheless, the good teaching for this area of learning means that children achieve most of the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, although none exceed them.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in their understanding of numbers and calculations.
- Teachers successfully promote children's interest in numbers.
- Opportunities to extend the children's mathematical vocabulary are sometimes missed.

Commentary

48. Teaching is good in this area of learning. Children show good achievement and are successfully enabled to reach the Early Learning Goals in their understanding of number and calculations by the time they begin Year 1. A key strength is the extent to which teachers engage children's imaginations to help them learn successfully. For example, during the inspection, children in a reception class consolidated their knowledge of number sequences and recognition of numerals by labelling 'postboxes' and helping an imaginary postman to deliver Christmas cards. Adults are skilled at providing children with mathematical language of size and shape in a wide range of activities. However, all adults could do more to adjust their comments and questions to help children to extend their vocabulary so as to be better able to discuss mathematical concepts.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall and because of this, pupils achieve well.
- Standards are improving rapidly because of the good leadership provided.
- Some teachers are more effective than others and in these lessons, pupils make more rapid progress.
- The outcomes of new initiatives are not yet evaluated sufficiently well to measure success.
- Target setting has been successfully introduced. Pupils now have a clear picture of what they have to do to improve.

Commentary

49. The National Literacy Strategy with many new initiatives is well established throughout the school and teaching and learning are effective. As a result, standards are rising rapidly and the previous underachievement of pupils has been arrested. Inspection shows that pupils in Years 1 to 6 are now achieving well. The 2004 test results for pupils in Year 2 were below average in writing and reading. Standards observed during the inspection in reading for this year's pupils in Year 2 have risen and are average. In writing, however, they are still below average. The 2004 test results for pupils in Year 6 were well below average. Inspection shows that standards for pupils in the present Year 6 have risen and are now below average. Since the last inspection, the school went through a period where standards declined, with significant underachievement evident. Raising standards in the subject has been a strong focus since 2002 and the development work carried out so far is proving successful, as standards are now at least average throughout the school up to Year 5. This improved provision, however, has not been in place long enough to lift test results at the end of Year 6.
50. Standards in speaking and listening are now average by the end of Year 2 and, although they are still just below average by the end of Year 6, they are rapidly improving throughout Years 3 to 6 and are now average up to Year 5. Last year's test results show that girls do better than boys. This is still the case. However, this difference is not as significant as it was. Teachers are now successfully targeting the discrepancy with specific initiatives, such as seating boys and girls together in class, and standards for boys are improving rapidly.
51. The quality of teaching is good overall and this improvement is likely to raise standards further over time. Most teachers have good expectations of pupils' work. They have developed some good ideas to motivate pupils and make their lessons very productive and successful. For example, pupils in a Year 4 class wrote and performed a play about the two Roman invasions of England in 54BC and 43BC. This exercise was not only greatly enjoyed by the pupils, but they also improved their skills in writing precise instructions and sentence construction. Their performance gave them excellent opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills, describing events and conveying opinions with clarity and precision. Pupils were totally motivated and concentrated hard to the end of the lesson. This is typical of the motivating ideas brought about by the introduction of 'creative days' in each class.

52. Teachers are enthusiastic about developing imaginative writing for a wide range of different purposes, such as writing stories and poetry, letters, lists, diaries and plays. Some good quality writing was seen, which demonstrated that a small number of pupils have wide vocabulary and choose words with a great deal of imagination and understanding. However, a larger number of pupils have a limited vocabulary, and this restricts their writing skills. Teachers are aware of this and a great deal of effort is being made to improve pupils' vocabulary and especially their understanding of words. For example, wall displays in most rooms are of good quality and they often display words that form the basis of constant discussion. A good display, in a Year 3 class, listed the way writing can be used. Words like, 'persuasion', 'discussion', 'comparisons', 'instructions' and 'explanations' were posted, and pupils were able to explain what they meant. Pupils also have a spelling book, but instead of learning words in isolation, they have at the same time to put the word in a sentence so that its meaning becomes clear. These important initiatives and ideas are only just beginning to take effect, and helping pupils to develop a wide vocabulary and an understanding of words is still a major area for development. Teachers' assessment procedures and planning are of good quality, especially in providing appropriate work for pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs. Literacy is taught separately in upper and lower ability groups and this also usually ensures that pupils get work that matches their ability. However, on a few occasions, in the lower ability groups, the more able children find the work a little too easy and are not challenged as much as they could be; and in the higher ability groups some of the most able pupils do the same work as the others. Group and individual targets have been set for all pupils in Years 1 to 6; these are appropriate, displayed on classroom walls and known and understood by the pupils. This means that most pupils have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve. Classroom assistants are well organised in the teaching of literacy and also know pupils' targets and support their development well.
53. The school has two libraries. The infant library is of good quality and well stocked. The junior library is satisfactory, and there are relevant plans to improve this provision. Both libraries are used well to encourage good, regular reading habits and pupils use books for individual research as well as personal pleasure. Most pupils enjoy reading and are encouraged to take books home regularly. Pupils are provided with many additional opportunities to develop their enthusiasm and fascination with the spoken language, not only in lessons, but also by listening to visiting puppet theatre groups, attending pantomime performances in a local theatre and taking part in drama productions in school. Many pupils take part in at least two school productions each year. Speaking and listening are developed well in the literacy period and during 'creative days' where almost all lessons have a question and answer session, which stimulates constructive debate. In assemblies, pupils regularly make good contributions, which develop their confidence in addressing an audience.
54. Good leadership is provided for the subject and the provision shows good improvement as a result. Teachers' planning and pupils' work is regularly monitored. The leadership has also ensured that all teachers have had specific training provided by the local education authority. Consequently, teachers feel well supported and most demonstrate a good depth of knowledge and understanding of the teaching of literacy. The two subject leaders are aware that, although there is no unsatisfactory teaching of English, there are variations between classes and the quality ranges from very good to satisfactory. The subject leaders have appropriate plans to implement the

observation of lessons and the sharing of good practice next year. The main thrust of leadership has been to implement new initiatives over the last two years to raise standards. Now that these have been implemented, subject leaders have recognised that there is a need to evaluate fully and formally how successful these initiatives have been by measuring the outcomes in the achievement and standards of the pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. This is done well. Many examples were seen of literacy being addressed successfully in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 have been studying Ancient Egypt in history. They had to play the part of a journalist writing about the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. 'Tuts Tomb Found. An amazing discovery', wrote one pupil, followed by a description of how it felt. Pupils in Year 4 have written about Queen Boudicca, the leader of the Celts. 'A picture of beauty and grace', wrote one girl, followed by a well-written imaginative story. Many pupils use computers in information and communication technology lessons to word-process their work. A good number of extended pieces of writing, worked on the computer, are displayed on the wall. Pupils in Year 3 have written good descriptions of the visit to the Eureka Science Museum in science. Good writing was evident in the work pupils did in their study of Denton, both past and present. It was particularly effective in describing the comparison between the village of 1905 and the present day town.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because they are taught well.
- The arrangements for monitoring progress and teaching pupils in 'sets' are effective.
- There are inconsistencies between teachers in their use of marking and assessment.
- The subject is led well and shows good improvement since the last inspection.
- New developments to improve pupils' use and application of mathematics are beginning to be effective.

Commentary

56. Since the last inspection standards, as shown in the Year 6 pupils' test results, have gone down. When these results are compared with other schools, the Year 6 pupils have not done as well as the other pupils in the nation who scored the same test results when they were in Year 2. This suggests that a considerable proportion of Year 6 pupils are underachieving each year. The 2004 test results also show that the previous Year 6 could have done better and should have gained higher scores than they did. The school recognised in 2002 that standards were too low, and clear and decisive action was begun to improve the pupils' achievements. These measures are now making a difference. The 2004 test results for pupils in Year 2 are above average, and the school's test data shows that pupils in Years 1 to 4 are doing well. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 show below average standards, but are starting to catch up.

57. The inspection focused on how well the pupils are doing this academic year. Pupils enter Year 1 with mathematical development that is just below the average for their age. They achieve well in Years 1 and 2. As a result, standards in Year 2 are already average. This good achievement continues into Years 3 and 4, so that the standards in Year 4 are just above

average. Pupils' work and lesson observations show that the pupils in Years 5 and 6 are achieving well this year. Standards are below average, but the pupils are now doing their best and working as hard as they can. This 'rising tide' of higher standards is likely to lead to improved test results for Year 6 within the next two years. The good achievement now evident is the result of good teaching. There has been a focus on helping staff to apply the National Numeracy Strategy more effectively, as well as identifying teachers' strengths so that they can work more productively together. In addition, there are now good procedures to monitor how well each pupil is doing and this data is being used well to set realistic targets for pupils to attain.

58. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In all year groups, pupils are taught in two 'sets', for higher and lower attaining pupils. This helps the teachers to plan and deliver their lessons so that they are more closely matched to the needs of the pupils. In both sets, lessons are carried out with high expectations, rigour and a good pace. As a result, pupils are challenged, remain attentive and give effort to their learning. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, the teacher expected the pupils to count in sixes forwards and backwards, at speed, as well as answer questions about the six times table. This kept the pupils 'on their toes' and they all worked hard to give the correct answers. Teachers understand how pupils learn, and present new concepts in a clear and logical way. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 3, the teacher took care to build in logical steps on pupils' knowledge about fractions so that they first identified a quarter of a circle, then realised that this relates to time, and discovered for themselves what this means when people talk about 'quarter past'. In a lesson for Year 6, the teacher carefully demonstrated the use of a ruler, which led the pupils to realise they should begin measurement from zero centimetres, and then led them to be accurate to the nearest millimetre. Teachers also make good use of questions that can have many correct answers to lead pupils to think about number facts for themselves. For example, in a lesson for Year 2, the pupils were asked to sort the numbers they were given. As a result, some pupils separated odd and even numbers while others identified which were more or less than twenty.
59. Pupils' work shows that there are some inconsistencies between teachers in the way they mark. For example, some teachers write helpful comments that praise what pupils have done well, and give clear guidance about how they can improve. In other classes, pupils' work is just ticked. Also, whilst teachers are identifying correctly which pupils have the potential for higher attainment, they are not always giving them work that is sufficiently different from the rest of the group to further extend their achievement. These areas for improvement have already been identified by the subject leaders, and are scheduled for development in the near future.
60. Good leadership is provided, which is showing benefits in the raising of standards and achievement. Improvements in the subject have accelerated since 2002. In addition to improving the quality of teaching and learning, other developments are also beginning to have an impact. For example, work has recently taken place on finding ways to raise the standards of boys, so that they match those of the girls. In most classes, boys and girls now sit together and this is helping the 'work ethic' of the boys to improve. Also, recent initiatives to promote speaking and listening skills, as well as increase the creativity of the curriculum, are beginning to help pupils to learn more about how to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills. These developments are still being implemented and, whilst the outcomes for the pupils are not yet evident, they are likely to be successful in promoting higher standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Good use is made of opportunities in other subjects to strengthen and develop pupils' mathematical skills. The 'creative days' in each class enable pupils to consider well how to apply their knowledge of number facts in a wide range of problem solving tasks. In addition, pupils are able to use computers regularly to practise and extend their mathematical ability.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The previous underachievement of pupils and the unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection have been halted.
- Standards are rising, and improvements are already showing in Years 1 to 5.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2.
- Despite improvements, teachers' expectations could be higher and the quality of marking improved.
- The curriculum has recently improved to include plenty of practical work.

Commentary

62. Standards in Year 6 are well below average. These pupils have underachieved until very recently because of weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum, which have left gaps in their knowledge. For example, they have not had enough opportunities for independent practical work. Consequently, their understanding of how to conduct a fair scientific test is superficial and they are over dependent on adult direction. Since the last inspection, standards declined and test results show that pupils should have been doing better. Recent improvements are effective, but are not yet showing an upturn in the Year 6 test results. However, inspection shows that standards are rising in Years 1 to 5, and pupils in Years 1 and 2 show good achievement, with satisfactory achievement now evident in Years 3 to 6.
63. Last year, there was a good improvement in the Year 2 test results and a dramatic increase in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3. Inspection shows that this improvement is being sustained and similar results are likely in 2005. Throughout the school there are no significant differences in standards in different elements of the subject and the curriculum now includes a good amount of practical investigations and experiments. This is helping pupils with their learning.
64. The quality of teaching is satisfactory because teachers now plan together more closely, sharing ideas and teaching strategies more effectively. Most importantly they are raising their expectations of what pupils can do. However, this is inconsistent and these high expectations are not sufficiently evident in all classes. In addition, the marking of pupils' work does not always help pupils to understand their mistakes and learn how to improve.
65. The school has understandably given more attention to improving standards in English and mathematics. Developments in science are a focus on the school transformation plan for 2005. However, the action taken so far is effective, improvement is now satisfactory and the decline in the subject has been halted. The subject has benefited from new, whole-school initiatives and from the co-ordinator increasing her role and participating in the whole-school expansion of systems to track and record pupils' progress. As a result, there is now a good understanding of the strengths and

weaknesses in the subject and the leadership and management of the subject is now satisfactory overall.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' computer skills in Year 6 are above average.
- Computers are used very well to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
- The school's website is very good and pupils have regular access to very good hardware and software.
- Pupils could use ICT more to organise, improve and present information for specific purposes and audiences.

Commentary

66. Pupils show good achievement throughout the school. Since 2002, very good improvements have taken place in the provision for ICT. Governors have supported significant investment in new hardware and software, staff have received training to develop their own computer skills, networked computer suites have been established for the both the infant and junior buildings, computer clubs have been established and the school's website is fully operational. As a result, pupils have much increased access to computers and every class uses the computer suite for at least one lesson per week with the focus on improving pupils' computer skills, as well as an additional lesson where computers are used to support learning in other subjects. These improvements have been very well led by the headteacher and the subject leader. Pupils in Year 6 now sit the Tameside Computer 'Driving Licence' every year. The pass mark for this is equivalent to Level 4 of the National Curriculum and 85 per cent of the Year 6 pupils attain this standard each year. These results are above average and inspection shows that the current Year 6 are likely to do at least as well as pupils in previous years.
67. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were observed editing computer presentations to include the animation of text and graphics with accompanying sound effects. They confidently used the Internet to find relevant illustrations and imported them efficiently into their work. Discussion with these pupils shows they are familiar with spreadsheets and word-processing applications and that they routinely log on to the school's website when at home for information, searches and to help with homework. Too few lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 to judge standards overall, but in the Year 1 lesson observed, pupils could log on effectively, start new files as appropriate and use the mouse at the level expected for their age.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have sufficient skills of their own and set a good example for the pupils through using, for example, interactive boards and computers for their own planning. Lessons usually contain good and clear demonstrations and this leads the pupils to quickly learn what they should do to improve their skills. Pupils usually share a computer and generally take turns fairly. They also co-operate in designing their presentations and learn from each other how to do increasingly complex operations. Lessons are also helped by the part-time ICT technician employed by the school. This ensures that the network, hardware and software all operate as planned and that pupils have as full an access to the equipment as they can. However, much of the teaching and learning is about the skills for operating computers, and the pupils have yet to extend their knowledge and develop higher level skills to organise, improve and present their work for specific purposes and audiences.

69. The subject leader has good plans to continue to develop the subject and to further raise standards. In addition, he has developed the website very well, to the point where it, quite rightly, receives awards for its quality and is visited in excess of 28,000 times each month.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. This is done very well. Pupils use the Internet well to research topics they study in other subjects and use computers to enhance their learning in subjects such as art and design, and music. In addition, teachers plan lessons in the ICT suite so that pupils can practise, for example, their literacy and numeracy skills. The computer clubs work very well and also help the pupils to use computers to support their learning in all subjects.

HUMANITIES

The inspection coincided with rehearsals and performances of Christmas productions. As a result, inspectors were unable to observe sufficient lessons in religious education to judge the quality of provision. History and geography were sampled.

71. In **religious education**, pupils' work shows an appropriate curriculum is followed and the pupils' depth of study increases effectively as they move through the school. The locally agreed syllabus is used as a basis for the curriculum and the subject is woven well into topics often linked with history of geography. For example, during a study of local geography, pupils visited a local church and looked at the different religions in the area. In the lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher used the current story of the birth of Jesus in a novel way. She read and talked about the feelings of different people involved in the story, such as one of the three wise men or a young shepherd boy. This motivated pupils' interest well. The lesson demonstrated that pupils in Year 3 had a good grasp of the Christmas story and understood the meanings of words such as 'Advent'. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, resources have been much improved and the curriculum is enriched by visits, for example, to a Hindu temple, Jewish museum and a mosque. Local Christian churches are visited and the Methodist and Church of England ministers come into school to talk about relevant aspects of Christianity.
72. In **history**, pupils' work shows the curriculum is secure and they carry out in-depth studies of specific periods such as Ancient Egypt and Tudor times. In the one lesson observed, the teacher used a good range of pictures and posters to develop pupils' knowledge of Victorian buildings. By the end of the lesson, the Year 5 pupils used their understanding of the features of old buildings to judge if they were late or early Victorian by the area of glass in the windows. The curriculum is greatly enhanced and enriched by a good number of visits to places of historical interest, and makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills through writing at length and in depth about historical events.
73. In **geography** the work in pupils' books and displayed on the walls of classrooms indicates that many interesting aspects are studied. For example, pupils in Year 6 carry out a good investigation into the impact of Manchester Airport on the local environment. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, and provision includes a number of well-organised visits to, for example, St Annes, Blackpool and Southport. The pupils also have the opportunity to attend two residential visits in Years 5 and 6.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The provision for art and design, music, design and technology and physical education was sampled.

74. In **art and design**, the curriculum is securely in place and the subject is well led, with good plans for improvement based on a clear audit of current strengths and weaknesses. In **music**, standards in singing are in line with expectations throughout the school. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn musical instruments and to take part in performances within the community. The subject is well led and there are good plans for further improvement. The **design and technology** curriculum is in place and pupils are accustomed to planning and reviewing their work. There are some interesting topics, such as designing a small housing estate, and the subject is enriched well with activities such as the 'Tetrahedron Challenge', designed to develop pupils' awareness and understanding of the construction industry. The subject is clearly led with enthusiasm, and developments such as monitoring teaching are planned for and about to take place. In the lesson seen in **physical education**, the Year 3 pupils were achieving well in response to the challenge provided by the teacher. They watched demonstrations by other pupils carefully and worked hard to improve their own dance movements. The subject has enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership and previous strengths in the contribution of sports activities to the curriculum have been sustained and developed. There is a very good range of sports and physical education activities available to boys and girls both within and extending beyond the school day.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

75. This area of the curriculum was sampled. Aspects such as sex education and substance misuse are taught together with other areas of personal and social education. This arrangement is effective, with clear outcomes in the confidence and sociability of the pupils. However, the programme for personal, social and health education is informal and insufficiently defined, so that there is no guarantee that pupils will build on their previous knowledge as they move through the school. The school is aware of this and has appropriate plans to review and refine the provision.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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