

# INSPECTION REPORT

## HEATHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105172

Headteacher: Mrs Catherine Fenton

Lead inspector: Mrs J Ann Sharpe

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October 2004

Inspection number: 266983

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:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	206
School address:	Henniker Road Bolton
Postcode:	BL3 3TP
Telephone number:	01204 333595
Fax number:	01204 333594
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stuart Patterson

Date of previous inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> April 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This average sized school is situated on the outskirts of Bolton, and most pupils live in the surrounding locality. With 206 pupils on roll (95 girls and 111 boys), the school is full. There are significant imbalances in the number of girls and boys in Years 2 and 6. When children start in the reception class, their attainment, although variable, is typical for children of their age. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Most pupils are white British, although 15 per cent are from a variety of other ethnic backgrounds, mainly Indian. The proportion of pupils whose first language is believed not to be English is high, and a few pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs including statements is average, and the number of pupils on the special needs register is falling. The school has not identified any pupils who are gifted and talented. Most pupils start and finish their primary education at this school. The school received a national award for pupils' performance in tests in 2003. There are no significant external aids or barriers to raising achievement, but an unsettled staffing situation in the last year or so has had a detrimental effect on the quality of education for pupils in Years 1 to 2. The headteacher was at the school at the time of the previous inspection.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18101	J Ann Sharpe	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage English Art and design Design and technology Music English as an additional language
13448	Dawn Lloyd	Lay inspector	
19120	Derek Pattinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education Religious education
32180	David Sleightholme	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This good school gives its pupils a good quality of education and provides good value for money.** Good leadership and management ensure that the school is a friendly, welcoming and happy place, where pupils are looked after well, and where they love to come. Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve good standards by the time they reach Year 6.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Most pupils achieve well because so much of the teaching is good or better.
- Good leadership and management have resulted in much improvement since the previous inspection, as well as very strong parental satisfaction with the school.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons, attend regularly and are keen to learn.
- There is not enough checking of ongoing progress and success with new initiatives or with priorities for improvement in the school development plan.
- Teachers do not make fullest use of assessment information in order to help pupils to do better.
- The curriculum provides the interest and enjoyment that pupils need in order to learn effectively.

Since April 1999, there has been good improvement, despite an unsettled staffing situation. Teaching and standards have improved a lot, as a result of the determined leadership and management of the headteacher. The school has kept up well with the pace of national change, particularly by improving teaching in English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and provision for children in the reception class. The school has responded well to national guidance about broadening the curriculum, although the changes made already have not been planned and checked in enough detail. Pupils' work has improved in most subjects, and performance in national tests has improved at a better rate than the national trend. Governors and staff have addressed the key issues from the previous inspection well. Despite good effort, the lack of use of assessment information to plan pupils' future work remains a relatively weaker aspect of teaching.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E\* - in the lowest 5 per cent nationally.*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**The achievement of girls and boys is good.** This includes the progress of pupils speaking English as an additional language. Children's capability when they start school is typical for

their age. They achieve very well in the reception class, and most children reach at least the goals expected for children by the end of the reception year, with about a third reaching the level expected for pupils in Year 1. Pupils' progress slows down in Years 1 to 2, as a result of an unsettled staffing situation that the headteacher and governors are determined to resolve in the very near future. Pupils' work by Year 2, however, is above average, overall. Pupils' good achievement in Years 3 to 6 is reflected in the school's good performance in the 2004 Year 6 national tests in English, mathematics and science. The pupils tested had made good progress since they were tested in Year 2. The 2004 results were a significant improvement on 2003, and the challenging targets set for 2005 suggest a continued improving trend. Pupils' work by Year 6 is above average in English, mathematics and science. Although work is average in ICT and religious education, this represents an improvement since the previous inspection. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The new co-ordinator has identified what needs to be done in order to quicken their progress. The more capable pupils could sometimes do even better if teachers took more account of what they can already do. Pupils do better in reading than they do in writing, and plans to correct this weakness are not clear enough.

**Pupils' personal development is good because of the good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Good relationships help pupils to have good attitudes to school. Pupils' behaviour is mainly good in lessons, although they are too noisy in the dining hall. Attendance and punctuality are good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good.** While **good teaching and learning** enable most pupils to achieve well, provision in Years 1 to 2 does not meet the consistently good or very good standard of teaching and achievement of other classes. Teachers use several good procedures for assessing their pupils' progress, but they do not take full account of what pupils can already do when they plan future work. The learning targets recently given to pupils to aim for over time do not guide lesson planning and teaching, and pupils are insufficiently involved themselves. The curriculum is enriched well by good links between subjects and by good opportunities for learning from first hand experiences, including play. Pupils receive good support from adults. Good links with parents have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The school does not yet seek the views of pupils formally.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The headteacher has gained the confidence of staff, governors, parents and the local education authority, as a result of a determined and successful effort to improve the school. Everyone shares her vision for broadening the curriculum, and work is already having a good effect on teaching and learning. Relationships are good and the school runs smoothly. Teachers support the headteacher well, by carrying out their delegated duties with enthusiasm. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are capable and keen to help. They are more closely involved in the work of the school than previously, and meet their responsibilities satisfactorily. The revised style of school development planning does not help staff or governors much, because it is not a clear enough plan of action for improvement. There is little formal checking of how well the school is doing with improving provision and raising pupils' achievement.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parental satisfaction with all aspects of their children's education is very good, and pupils think highly of their school. Parents particularly like the happy atmosphere and the approachability of the headteacher and staff. Inspectors agree that parents need more information about their children's targets for future learning. Pupils say that they are getting a good education.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve school development planning to give a stronger focus to raising achievement, including checking ongoing progress and finding out how well the school is doing.
- Make better use of assessment information to match pupils' work closely to their capabilities.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

*Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and capability into account.*

Whilst the achievement of girls and boys is **good** overall, it is **very good** in the reception class, **satisfactory** in Years 1 to 2 and **good** in Years 3 to 6. The standard of pupils' work and national test results are both improving over time, owing to good teaching and good leadership.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standard of pupils' work and their progress has improved a lot since the previous inspection.
- The 2004 national test results in Year 6 are a significant improvement on the previous year.
- The very good achievement of children in the reception class gives them a successful start to their education.
- Standards in writing, including handwriting and presentation, lag behind standards in reading.
- The more capable pupils and pupils with special educational needs could sometimes achieve even more than they do.

#### Commentary

1. Very good teaching, learning and assessment in the reception class ensure that girls and boys get off to a flying start with their learning and prepare them very well for their work in Year 1. Children's very good achievement in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development helps them to succeed in all other areas of their work. Most children are on track to at least reach the goals set nationally for children at the end of the reception year. This is much better than the attainment of children in schools in similar circumstances.

#### Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.4 (16.5)	16.0 (15.9)
Writing	15.4 (15.6)	14.8 (14.8)
Mathematics	16.4 (18.1)	16.4 (16.4)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

#### Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
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English	27.7 (24.9)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.7 (26.2)	27.2(27.0)
Science	29.0 (25.8)	28.9 (28.8)

*There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Pupils' achievement is good overall. Owing to improved leadership and teaching, the standard of pupils' work is considerably better than it was at the time of the previous inspection, including in religious education and ICT, where standards were not high enough. Pupils' work in these subjects now represents at least satisfactory achievement, and there are examples of good and very good achievement in ICT. Pupils' work is above average in English and science by Years 2 and 6. In mathematics it is average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6.
3. Following an expected dip in pupils' performance in the 2003 Year 6 national tests, the 2004 results are much better. The school has set challenging targets for the 2005 English and mathematics tests which, if met, will continue the improving trend. There is an improving trend in Year 2 national test results in reading, writing and mathematics, but governors have not set any targets to overcome the relatively weaker aspects of pupils' performance. Nevertheless, pupils' performance in national tests generally is better than that of pupils in schools in similar circumstances, and the good progress they make between Years 2 and 6 is reflected in the national performance tables.
4. Pupils in Years 1 to 2 do not currently achieve as much as pupils in Years 3 to 6 do, especially in mathematics. The very good achievement in the reception class is not always built upon fully, owing to an unsettled staffing situation. Pupils in the current Year 2 had a very disrupted year last year. A new additional teacher often gives extra help, but it is too early to see the impact of this management decision on pupils' achievement.
5. Pupils speaking English as an additional language achieve well overall. Although most already speak fluent English, teachers enlist the help of a specialist teacher when they see that pupils need more help to understand their work. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Teachers' skills in writing individual education plans are developing, and targets do not yet always focus on the most appropriate activities for them. This partly reflects the school's main priority for improvement – improving arrangements for using assessment information to inform planning, so that lessons always raise the achievement for all pupils. The school has not yet identified any gifted and talented pupils, but some more capable pupils could do even better in all subjects if teachers gave them greater challenges than the other pupils.
6. The standard of pupils' writing by Years 2 and 6, especially handwriting and presentation, is not as good as the standard of their reading. The school is aware of this, and teachers have started to tackle the problem by providing more opportunities in all subjects for pupils to practise writing in a wider range of styles. There is an intention to motivate boys to have better attitudes to writing because of their poorer performance in national tests. Most pupils, both boys and girls, respond well to the new approach, but they do not improve their handwriting and presentation quickly enough because teachers' expectations are sometimes too low.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes to learning, behaviour, attendance and punctuality are all **good**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and most behave well in lessons, although behaviour is not as good at lunchtimes.
- The school works hard to ensure that there is no bullying, racism or other forms of harassment.
- Pupils value the reward systems, which celebrate their good efforts, work and behaviour.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The school works hard to encourage good attendance and punctuality.

### **Commentary**

7. Pupils get along well together in lessons and are willing to share ideas and equipment. In a good Year 6 science lesson, for example, the high degree of co-operation of pupils helped them to achieve well in their investigative work. Pupils are usually polite to one another and to adults, but there are a few occasions at lunchtimes, especially in the dining hall, when pupils are too noisy and some do not show due respect for lunchtime supervisors. A school development priority is to achieve a calmer lunchtime. So far, however, there is no evidence of progress, and lunchtime supervisors have not received the training that has been identified as necessary.
8. Older pupils have a keen sense of responsibility for younger ones, particularly the prefects, who try to include all pupils in playground activities. Year 6 boys know how to read with pupils in Years 3 and 4 because of the training they have had, and this has boosted reading test scores. The school values pupils' achievements, and pupils are especially pleased to have their names entered into the 'Golden Book' following nominations by adults. Year 6 pupils agree that awarding team points and certificates for achievement in classrooms motivates them to work and try harder.
9. Pupils' views of the school are good. A discussion with pupils indicates that pupils of all ages enjoy school, are friendly towards other pupils and usually behave well. Pupils say that on the rare occasions when bullying occurs, it is quickly dealt with by staff, and that it is often followed up as part of an assembly theme or a personal and social education lesson. Parents who attended the inspection meeting confirmed this.
10. Pupils work and learn in a calm and purposeful learning environment, where the school provides good support for their personal development. Provision for pupils' spiritual development remains satisfactory. Although there are some good opportunities in lessons for pupils to think deeply about a good range of issues affecting their lives, the programme of work is not planned formally, and there are missed opportunities in some assemblies. An action plan for religious education indicates that the school intends to address this matter very soon. Pupils' good moral and social development is the result of opportunities to work in pairs or small groups, good role models provided by adults, emphasis on sensible rules and mainly high expectations of behaviour. Pupils' cultural development is well promoted by the school, especially through work in subjects, such as art and design, history and religious education.

11. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to school. They have good relationships with teachers and the classroom assistants who work with them. The progress of a few pupils who have behavioural difficulties is restricted because there are no clear programmes in place to help them to improve. As a result, the learning of other pupils is sometimes hindered.

**Attendance**

12. The school has worked hard to improve attendance figures since the previous inspection, and attendance and punctuality are now good (above the national average). There is very little unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive at school on time and lessons get underway punctually. This ensures that learning time is not wasted.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence	
School data	4.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

**Exclusions**

There have been no exclusions in the last school year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Although teaching and learning ensure good achievement overall, assessment remains a relatively weaker aspect. Teachers are now ready to make better use of the very good information they have about what pupils can already do.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning, although **good** overall, are **very good** in the reception class, **satisfactory** in Years 1 to 2 and **good** in Years 3 to 6. Assessment is **satisfactory**, and improving.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- The unsettled staffing situation for pupils in Years 1 to 2 has hindered their progress.
- Despite some good improvements, assessment remains the relatively weaker area of teaching and learning.
- Teachers' positive and enthusiastic approach encourages pupils to want to learn.
- Very good teaching and learning in the reception class give children a successful start to their education.
- Lessons have clear purposes that pupils understand.
- Teachers are increasingly widening their range of teaching styles and methods to aid pupils' learning.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	5	18	5	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

13. At the time of the previous inspection, almost one in ten lessons were unsatisfactory or poor, there were hardly any very good or better lessons, and there had been too little improvement in teaching since the 1995 inspection. The above sample of lessons indicates that there has been a lot of improvement. The headteacher has been determined to improve teaching, and there are now few signs of lack of expectation, poor lesson planning and the over-reliance on using unchallenging worksheets. The school has maintained the pattern of good or very good teaching for children in the reception class, despite a change of teacher. The success of the teaching for the youngest children in the school lies in the way that staff plan lessons to take account of the national guidance in all areas of learning, and in the very good systems they have for assessing children's progress. As a result, children achieve very well and make a very good start to their education.
14. All teachers are consistently positive and enthusiastic in lessons. They have good relationships with their pupils and mainly have high expectations of their behaviour. Teaching for pupils in Years 1 to 2 is not currently quite as good as elsewhere in the

school because of the unsettled staffing situation that has hindered improvement over the last year or so. It has also unsettled pupils, and a few show behavioural difficulties that have not been resolved fully by teachers. Two of the three teachers, however, are either new to the school or temporary appointments. Nevertheless, teaching in the school is good overall in English, mathematics, science and ICT. It is satisfactory in religious education.

15. Teachers support the headteacher's vision for an increasingly enjoyable, interesting and stimulating curriculum that retains provision for high standards in literacy and numeracy. As a result, they are increasingly widening the range of teaching styles and methods they use, for example by planning more educational visits, visitors, practical activities, opportunities to learn by playing and different ways of approaching curriculum planning, such as linking subjects together. Teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons has not suffered, and teachers have a good degree of subject expertise, which they use to plan interesting lessons that motivate pupils to learn.
16. The headteacher has, rightly, identified assessment as the main priority for raising achievement. There have been some good developments in the past; for example, teachers have responded well in English to the new marking policy, and they use questioning well to find out what their pupils have learned. Teachers work hard to carry out and record a lot of assessments of the attainment of individual pupils, and they have now set easy to understand and appropriate targets for pupils' further learning. They make sure that pupils understand what they are going to be learning in each lesson and, in the very best lessons, discuss progress at the end of lessons. There are inconsistencies between classes, however, and pupils very rarely know much about their longer-term targets for learning. There is little sign that teachers take full account of them when marking work and planning lessons. As a result, there remain occasions when the more capable pupils could achieve even more than they do. Similarly, the satisfactory teaching for pupils with special educational needs does not always take full account of their individual learning needs. Teaching and learning for pupils speaking English as an additional language are good, especially when they work with a specialist visiting teacher, who enables pupils to play a full part in normal classroom lessons.

## **The curriculum**

The **good** quality curriculum provides **good** opportunities for enrichment and a **satisfactory** range of extra-curricular activities. The accommodation and resources have a **good** impact on pupils' achievement.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- English, mathematics and science have a high profile in the school's curriculum, enabling most pupils to achieve well.
- The curriculum has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- The curriculum for children in the reception class helps them to make a flying start with their education.
- The school has made a good start with implementing the national Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy – but methods for checking its progress and evaluating its success are not yet established.
- The improved accommodation and good resources are helping to drive up standards.

## Commentary

17. All subjects required by the National Curriculum are represented, with English, mathematics and science given good emphasis. Teachers take successful account of the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and, as a result, most pupils achieve well over time. There is a clear framework for developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, although there is still scope for improving the match of work to pupils' capabilities in some subjects. Developing links between subjects, such as links between work in ICT and work in religious education, help to make learning more relevant for the pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to improve their English skills through work in other subjects, such as in history lessons when pupils write in a wide range of styles.
18. The Year 5 religious education day held during the inspection was a good example of the school's intention to broaden the curriculum. Teachers have made a good start with implementing the guidance contained within the national Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy, which emphasises the importance of an innovative approach to the curriculum in order to excite and challenge pupils. Year 5 pupils achieved very well because of the carefully planned, well-led and high quality activities they engaged in. They made significant strides in their learning about Hinduism, owing to first hand experiences, such as using resources to further their understanding. A good range of visits and visitors adds to the breadth and interest of the curriculum. Visits, such as to Grizedale Forest, Bolton Museum and Noor-UI-Islam Mosque, and visitors, such as artists and musicians, also enrich pupils' experiences. While governors and staff are very keen to press forward with implementing the Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy, they have no clear written plan to guide them or to enable them to find out how well they are doing and how well pupils are responding over time.
19. The curriculum for children in the reception class helps them to make a successful start to their education and to achieve very well over time. Teachers' planning takes very good account of national guidance by providing many opportunities for children to learn by talking and playing. The school development priority to continue to improve the outdoor curriculum is the right way forward. Teachers in Years 1 to 2 add a sense of continuity to the curriculum by planning for pupils to continue to learn by talking and playing when they transfer from the reception class. Teachers do not yet have, however, a clear overall plan to ensure that play in all three classes builds on what pupils already know, understand and can do.
20. The accommodation has improved notably since the previous inspection, and it is used increasingly to drive up standards. The ICT suite, for example, has improved pupils' attitudes and achievement in several subjects, and adjustments to the internal structure have improved pupils' concentration. The development of the school grounds has provided opportunities for pupils to study wild life, undertake practical work in geography and improve their games skills. Colourful and attractive displays and a good range of resources for learning help to motivate pupils and make a positive contribution to their learning across the curriculum.
21. Teachers largely ensure that pupils have equal access to the full National Curriculum. Although a few pupils who speak English as an additional language missed their art and design lesson when a support teacher visited, they made good progress with extending their understanding of English vocabulary. Children in the reception class achieved very well when the same support teacher helped them to take a full part in their exciting class

lesson. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Classroom assistants are positive, hardworking and keen for the pupils to do well. Teachers work hard to help the pupils to take a fuller part in class lessons than previously. Following a change of approach, the new co-ordinator is keen to introduce closer checking of pupils' progress with their individual education plans.

22. There has been a good amount of improvement since the previous inspection. In 1999, equality of opportunity and the balance of time for subjects were unsatisfactory, and lesson planning was unclear. This is no longer the case. Work is usually now more interesting, stimulating and challenging for the pupils, and their learning is enriched well by it.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are **good** overall. Pupils receive **good** support and guidance, based on effective monitoring of their academic and personal development. Pupils' views are sought **satisfactorily**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are effective systems to help pupils to settle into each stage of their education.
- Good relationships and a caring environment give pupils confidence and help them to learn.
- Good support and guidance are helping pupils to achieve well.
- There is no formal system for taking pupils' views into account and involving them in the school's development.

### **Commentary**

23. When children start in the reception class, they have already met staff and visited the school, so that their new environment holds no fears. Staff introduce children gradually to school, and they soon settle into comfortable routines, while useful leaflets for parents explain how they can help to support their child's learning. Opportunities to take part in carefully planned play makes children's learning enjoyable, and reflects the school's intention to work towards implementing the national Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy. Similar opportunities for learning through play continue in Years 1 and 2, so that pupils can adjust easily to their work in main school. Pupils in Year 6 undertake a planned programme of visits to secondary schools. They start bridging courses of work in English, mathematics and science that are completed at their secondary schools when they start in Year 7. This helps to ensure continuity of learning from the primary to the secondary phase of education.
24. Relationships between pupils, their teachers and other staff are an important factor in creating a caring environment where pupils feel at home. They enjoy the friendly, relaxed atmosphere in which learning is often fun. All staff know pupils well, so that any personal problems can be identified and resolved quickly. Circle times (lessons when all the class sit in a circle with their teacher and talk about any issues that are causing problems) help pupils to play their part in making the school a pleasant place to be. Through carefully guided discussions, pupils learn to show consideration and respect for others. Pupils get on well with staff, and they are not afraid to ask questions, to volunteer answers or to try out new experiences. As a result, they achieve well.

25. Staff routinely monitor pupils' personal development in order to provide individual support and guidance when it is needed. In the reception class, children's personal, social and emotional development is recorded formally, and the information is used well in planning and teaching. Across the school, help is sometimes sought from external agencies; for example, a specialist outreach worker spends time helping a pupil with particular needs to settle into school. Similarly, a specialist teacher visits weekly to give extra help to pupils who speak English as an additional language. This enables them to understand their schoolwork more fully. Trained volunteers provide additional opportunities for pupils, who find learning difficult, to read with adults.
26. Although staff talk regularly to pupils about their likes and dislikes, there are no formal systems for seeking their views and giving them an opportunity to play a full part in the work and development of their school. This has been recognised, and there are plans to formalise the school council, so that pupils can see that their opinions and suggestions are valued.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

Links with parents are **good** and support pupils' learning. Links with the community and with other schools are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a wide range of good quality information for parents about the school and about pupils' progress.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and involve themselves well in pupils' learning.
- Links with the local community are not yet fully developed.

### **Commentary**

27. A good range of written information keeps parents up to date with the work of the school and encourages them to become involved. The school brochure, which is nicely illustrated with pupils' drawings, and the monthly newsletters are written in a friendly, welcoming style that is easy to understand. All communications emphasise that the school values the part that parents play in their children's education. Some particularly helpful leaflets are prepared for parents of children starting in the reception class, giving clear, practical guidance on what to do and what to expect as they help their children to get the full benefit from the school. A termly curriculum plan enables parents to see what is being taught across the school, so that they can, if they wish, tailor home activities and outings to support their children's topics of study. School reports give parents a good picture of their child's strengths and areas for improvement in the future. Formal parents' evenings are supplemented by opportunities every day to speak informally to teachers about any queries or concerns they may have.
28. Parents are very happy with the education the school offers their children. Responses to the inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly supportive, and most of the parents who attended the meeting expressed their satisfaction with most aspects of the school. Parents show genuine interest in pupils' learning by their good attendance at consultation meetings and willingness to become involved in school life. A number of parents and grandparents give valuable practical help in classrooms or on educational visits. Others

help by reading with their children at home, helping their children to research projects or by providing artefacts or expertise to enrich pupils' classroom experiences. A small, but very active, Parents' Association organises social and fund-raising event activities for both pupils and parents. Events are supported well by other parents and succeed in raising substantial sums of money to provide additional resources for the school. Parents were instrumental in setting up the 'before and after school club' and continue to run it most effectively. The clubs and activities they offer are greatly appreciated by both pupils and their parents.

29. Although the school makes considerable use of the locality as a resource to support pupils' learning through visits to places of interest, it does not seek a high profile within the local community. There are good links with the local church and developing links with other primary and secondary schools, with occasional visitors from organisations such as the National Children's Homes. Pupils make little contribution to the life of the community, and this is acknowledged as an area for improvement.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The school has improved a lot since the previous inspection, owing to the **good** leadership and management of the headteacher, with the **good** support of the senior management team and other teachers. Governance is **satisfactory** and improving.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has ensured that standards and provision have improved a lot since the previous inspection.
- The revised format for the school development plan does not give staff and governors a clear picture of the part they need to play in raising achievement.
- Co-ordinators for key areas of the work of the school support other teachers well.
- There is a strong sense of teamwork amongst staff, and relationships at all levels are good.

### **Commentary**

30. Parents, governors, staff and the local education authority have confidence in the headteacher to lead and manage the school successfully. This is because they have seen for themselves how much the school has improved since the previous inspection, when management, efficiency and the climate for learning were not good enough. Owing to the headteacher's determination to improve teaching in the school, national test results have improved at a higher rate than the national trend, and the school is now performing better than schools in similar circumstances. The standard of pupils' work is better than previously, and most aspects of the work of the school have improved notably. There is now a positive climate for learning for all groups of pupils represented in the school. The headteacher ensures that the school runs smoothly and is popular in the locality, and that relationships at all levels are good. She has recently shared her vision for the curriculum of the future with staff and governors, to the extent that the school has made a good start with implementing the national Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy.
31. The headteacher has modified her style of leadership in recent years to reflect the fact that the school's most significant weaknesses have largely been tackled successfully. She now concentrates on delegating responsibilities to other teachers, and giving them a

sense of 'shared ownership' of the school development plan. Whilst this has had the desired effect, in terms of involving teachers and valuing their ideas, it also means that the revised format for the written plan does not provide a clear enough programme for raising achievement. Although the headteacher knows what the school's most important weaknesses are, these weaknesses are not always part of the plan for improvement. Pupils' writing, for example, is a weaker area of achievement, but there is no written plan to show how governors and staff will use resources, check ongoing progress and evaluate how successful they have been in raising achievement. This weakness in school development planning impacts on other areas too, including a lack of close monitoring of the progress and effectiveness of the initiative to implement the Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy. The plan does include, however, an intention to increase the confidence of subject co-ordinators to observe lessons in other classes and to give constructive feedback.

32. Arrangements for managing the performance of staff are well established. Teachers with responsibility for leading and managing provision in subjects or important areas of school life support the headteacher well and do a good job. The strong sense of teamwork is seen, for example, in the way in which teachers in the reception class, Years 1 and 2 work closely with nursery nurses and classroom assistants. Together, they rise to the headteacher's expectations for pupils to learn by taking part in practical activities and well-planned play. The mathematics co-ordinator, who is also the assessment co-ordinator, has devised an excellent computer program, tailored to the needs of the school, to help all teachers to record pupils' achievements and to track their progress over time in the future. This recently completed initiative has the potential to continue to raise achievement across all subjects because of the many ways in which test and teacher assessment data can now be analysed and presented. Provision has improved in several subjects, especially ICT, owing to the positive input of subject co-ordinators. Provision for English and for special education needs is satisfactorily led and managed by a new co-ordinator, who has just started to consider the school's strengths and weaknesses. The deputy headteacher provides a good role model of teaching and is helping the school to work towards gaining the national Quality Mark Award.
33. Supportive governors have increased their involvement in the school since the previous inspection. They ensure a good quality of education, share the headteacher's vision for the curriculum of the future and are not afraid to hold the school to account when necessary. Governors meet their responsibilities to a satisfactory extent. They do not yet have much direct involvement in formulating the school development plan and judging the value for money of their spending. The school has a very small carry forward budget, but forward financial planning shows that any potential deficit will be reversed by 2006. The cost of educating each pupil is below the national average, and the school provides good value for money.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	585,911	Balance from previous year	12,638
Total expenditure	595,618	Balance carried forward to the next	2,931
Expenditure per pupil	2,757		



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

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

34. Children begin full-time education at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. They have previously attended a variety of pre-school provision. When they start school, their attainment, although variable, is typical for their age. At the time of the inspection, children had only been attending school for a few weeks. Owing to very good teaching and learning in all of the areas reported fully below, children's achievement is very good. Children with special educational needs and children who are learning to speak English are already making very good progress. As a result, in these areas of learning, most children are on track to meet the national targets and at least a third are on track to attain aspects of the National Curriculum intended for children in Year 1. Improvement since the previous inspection is good overall, although provision for the outdoor curriculum remains the main area for improvement, and this is recognised by the school.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children settle very quickly into the routines and expectations of school life.
- Children's very good progress helps them to do well in other areas of their work.
- Provision for helping children with particular personal and social needs is very good.
- Children do not have sufficiently regular opportunities to choose to learn from working outdoors.

#### **Commentary**

35. Staff work very well together as a team, ensuring that children make a happy and successful start to their education. They understand how young children learn best, and work very hard to make the right provision by watching over children's progress carefully. Staff are very good role models for the children, and they constantly remind and encourage children to be polite, friendly and caring towards others. When children need specialist help, for example, to enable them to settle at school, staff organise sensitive and caring support. After only a few weeks, most children are very well settled, secure in their surroundings, and already learning quickly from taking part in a wide range of activities and across all areas of their work. They know and follow daily routines, for example taking part in registration, going to the hall for assembly and moving from activity to activity. Children are confident to work with different adults and other children. Their behaviour is mainly very good, although a few children still occasionally find it difficult to share toys amicably. Children can work equally well by themselves, in small groups or as a whole class. They sit still and listen well for long periods of time. They can work as directed by an adult or choose their own activities at times. A recent school development priority is to improve children's outdoor play experiences. The experiences they have already are often good, for example when the whole class work outdoors together with a good range of equipment and resources. Opportunities on a regular daily basis for

children to choose to work outdoors are restricted, however, and when they do so, involvement by adults in their chosen play activities is limited. Nevertheless, the otherwise very good provision for personal, social and emotional development gives children a flying start with their work in all other areas of learning.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff give a lot of attention to improving children's ability to listen and to talk in a wide variety of situations.
- Children get off to a good start with learning about the sounds represented by letters in words in reading and writing (phonics).
- Children who are still learning to speak English have good quality specialist help.
- Staff do not always take fullest advantage of some opportunities to extend children's talking skills.

### Commentary

36. Staff provide an environment that is rich in opportunities for children to learn that print has meaning and to practise their listening and talking skills. They focus teaching strongly on providing an enjoyable and stimulating place for children to learn, with a good balance between formal lessons and opportunities for playing. Listening and talking are central to all activities, and staff introduce children to new vocabulary all the time. When considering the rhyme 'Old Mother Hubbard', for example, the teacher explained interesting words, such as 'empty', 'bare' and 'disappointing'. Staff often question children carefully in order to introduce new words and to encourage children to use them. Children who are still learning to speak English benefit from good quality specialist help to extend their vocabulary and to help them to take a full part in lessons. During the inspection, the degree and depth of questioning of groups of children varied, however, and at times it did not challenge children to try to explain their own ideas well enough. When children chose to act out stories in the pretend house or market stall, they were confident to talk to other children. They were confident to talk to staff too, but there were some fairly lengthy periods with no adult intervention in their play to encourage a higher level of talking. When these matters were discussed with staff, they were very quick to respond by asking children considerably more challenging questions and by finding a few more opportunities to interact with children during role-play. Staff introduce children to learning to read and write sensitively, including working closely with parents to help children to get off to a happy start. They modify the national teaching programme to take account of children's needs. As a result, most children listen well, recognise at least a few letters and the sounds they make, turn pages of books correctly, write some of the letters in their names properly and talk about their activities using the new words they have learned.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well with learning to count and to recognise numbers.
- Staff are very good at planning activities that help children to understand mathematics in real life situations.
- Staff do not always make the most of opportunities for children to learn about mathematics outdoors and during their role-play.

## **Commentary**

37. Staff give a lot of time and attention to helping children to learn to count, and to recognise numbers and write them. The teacher modifies the national programme for teaching and learning in numeracy to take account of children's needs, so that very good formal teaching sessions are relaxed and enjoyable. As a result, most children can already join in with reciting counting rhymes, using their fingers to help them to match the correct number of objects to each number. Most children can count to 10 and a few recognise larger numbers. Children's learning takes place in a wide variety of situations. When they work with creative materials, for example, staff emphasise the idea of covering Old Mother Hubbard's skirt with patterns of fabrics and materials. Each activity offers opportunities for children to further their mathematical understanding. Staff have high expectations that children will respond to their questioning and suggestions, such as when recording the number of fruits in their baskets in a formal way. When the whole class work together outside, staff capitalise well on opportunities to extend children's mathematical vocabulary in real play situations. On the occasions when a few children play outdoors, and when children play in the pretend house, however, the lack of close interaction with adults sometimes limits children's achievement. The quality of children's play, in terms of learning about mathematics, at such times deteriorates.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

38. Teacher's planning indicates that throughout the reception year, children have many very good opportunities to at least attain the national goals. Children go to the ICT suite eagerly and happily and are confident to use technological equipment, such as the listening centre. They do not often turn to computers as part of their day-to-day play, however, because the physical organisation of the classroom sometimes prevents them from doing so. The teacher says that this is an intentional initiative, designed to encourage some children to try out other activities. A school development priority is to incorporate computers into opportunities for role-play, but current practice prevents this. During the inspection, the strong focus on encouraging children to observe fruits and vegetables closely and to talk about them using new vocabulary had a very good effect on their achievement. The questioning of children by staff improved considerably as the inspection progressed. This resulted in excellent learning by children when they discussed exotic fruits and vegetables. The very good use of resources gave children an opportunity to extend their understanding of cultural similarities and differences.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

39. Children have a lot of very good opportunities to learn to use tools and equipment correctly. With careful supervision, for example, they practised using knives to cut fruit. They learn to use scissors, brushes, construction kits and equipment for working with sand and water. Children move around the classroom safely and with awareness of others, and go to other parts of the school confidently with adults. When they play outside, children run, jump, climb and move on equipment with increasing agility. Children take part in formal physical education lessons in the school hall, but it was not possible to see a lesson.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

40. Children have many opportunities to express their ideas creatively, such as drawing, painting, making models and making up stories in the pretend house and market stall. Activities, such as responding to the taste, feel, smell and look of unusual fruits and vegetables, help them to make meaningful connections between all the areas of their learning. Although the day-to-day physical environment is not very rich in resources that reflect people and events from other cultures, staff made very good use of the fruits and vegetables from other countries to raise achievement during the inspection. Planning suggests that further good opportunities to extend children's religious and cultural beliefs will be provided throughout the year.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement, including their performance in national tests, is good overall.
- The National Literacy Strategy is firmly embedded into teaching and learning.
- Teachers do not always make full use of assessment information to plan lessons.
- Pupils could do better in writing, especially handwriting and presentation.
- Most pupils are good listeners and confident speakers.
- Links with other subjects give pupils a wide variety of good learning experiences.

#### **Commentary**

41. The standard of pupils' work is above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. National test results in reading and writing for pupils in Year 2 have been consistently high over the last few years, and standards are rising at a better rate than the national trend. Although there was an anticipated dip in the performance of Year 6 pupils in 2003, the 2004 results are much better, and standards are now rising better than the national trend. Additionally, pupils' progress since they were tested in Year 2 is better than that of pupils attending schools in similar circumstances. The school has set challenging targets for the 2005 Year 6 tests, and indications are that there is a good chance of meeting them. Pupils' good overall achievement was confirmed during the inspection. Achievement in Years 1 to 2 is currently satisfactory, however, owing to the unsettled staffing situation in the last year or so that has disrupted pupils' education. While teaching and learning in the school are good overall, they are currently satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 2, where two out of the three teachers are temporary or very new to the school. The poor behaviour of a few pupils has not yet been tackled successfully, and this restricts the learning of other pupils at times.
42. All teachers use the National Literacy Strategy successfully as a basis for planning their English lessons. They know it well and are skilled at translating the suggested programmes into enjoyable and interesting work for their pupils. This work often extends into work in other subjects, so that pupils learn to apply their skills in meaningful ways. As a result, most pupils are good listeners who can express their ideas confidently using technical vocabulary correctly across all subjects. They write in a wide variety of subjects, styles and situations, as seen in Year 5 when pupils wrote thoughtfully and sensitively

about life in Victorian times. Such links with other subjects, including the good quality play activities for pupils in Years 1 and 2, are helping to raise pupils' achievement over time.

43. The school is aware that the standard of pupils' writing, including handwriting and presentation, is not as high as the standard of their listening, speaking and reading. Extending the range of reasons for writing has been very helpful, but plans for making certain that teachers' efforts are fully effective are insufficiently clear. Teachers do not always expect enough of all their pupils; for example, they allow careless presentation and do not insist on forming and joining individual letters correctly, even when pupils are very capable of doing so. Not all teachers set good examples of handwriting themselves. Part of the problem arises because teachers do not make fullest use of the good assessment information that they collect about individual pupils. Teachers have set National Curriculum targets for all their pupils, but pupils are not often aware of what they are, and teachers do not automatically refer to them in their planning, marking and day-to-day teaching. The main outcome of this weakness is that the more capable pupils are sometimes insufficiently challenged to do better. Marking has improved a lot recently as a result of agreeing a new policy however, and pupils are beginning to understand a little more about how they need to improve their work.
  
44. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Leadership and management of provision are currently satisfactory because the school has very recently appointed a new co-ordinator, who has only just started to think about how provision can improve further. Arrangements for checking pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, and for finding out how consistent and effective new initiatives are proving to be are not having much influence on standards in the school. The assessment co-ordinator's work to improve teachers' knowledge of their pupils' progress over time, however, has very good potential to improve provision in the near future and to put right most of the existing weaker areas of teaching.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

45. Provision is good. Pupils have good opportunities to learn to listen carefully and to express their ideas by speaking to different audiences. Teachers are good at promoting the vocabulary associated with all the subjects, and well-planned opportunities to write across the curriculum, including using ICT, are helping to raise achievement in writing.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve good standards during Years 3 to 6 owing to good teaching and learning.
- The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, who is skilled at using information collected about the standard of pupils' work in order to improve provision.
- Teachers' good quality assessment information is not yet used fully in order to raise pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' numeracy skills are not developed fully through work in other subjects.

### Commentary

46. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 to 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. This difference arises because pupils in Years 1 to 2 have had a disrupted education over the last year or so, owing to an unavoidable unsettled staffing situation. As a result, a few pupils have behavioural difficulties that are not always managed successfully. This has slowed pupils' progress over time, as has a lack of close match of work to pupils' individual needs. The standard of work by the end of Year 2 is average. Most pupils achieve good standards in Years 3 to 6, however, because consistently good teaching and the good attitudes of pupils help them to learn at a good pace in their numeracy lessons. The performance of pupils in Year 6 tests in 2004 was good, when considering the progress they had made since they were tested in Year 2. Improvement since the previous inspection is good overall.
47. While teaching and learning are satisfactory over Years 1 to 2, they are good in Years 3 to 6, with very good teaching in Year 5. The good teaching in Years 3 to 6 is characterised by work that is pitched at appropriately challenging levels and by the high expectations of teachers that pupils can complete it. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and their purposeful questioning develops pupils' good understanding of new mathematical ideas. High levels of enthusiasm and good relationships keep pupils motivated and involved in their lessons, so that they put more effort into getting their work right. In most lessons, pupils with special educational needs are well supported to enable them to make at least satisfactory progress. Teachers give increasing emphasis to developing pupils' thinking skills through mathematical investigations as a means of furthering understanding. They place good emphasis through displays and questioning on developing pupils' mathematical vocabulary. These positive features of teaching explain pupils' good attitudes to learning, their mainly good behaviour and the good standard of work in Years 3 to 6.
48. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, and there are written whole-school plans for continued development. Some stated priorities lack clarity, however, which makes it hard

to see whether the changes have had the desired effect in raising achievement. Nevertheless, the co-ordinator rigorously analyses the school's performance in national tests in order to identify and overcome weaknesses, and the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils is tracked increasingly carefully. Although the co-ordinator has not had opportunities to find out directly how effective teaching and learning are in other classes, the school development plan indicates that staff will be trained to do this later this year.

49. Teachers now set their pupils clear targets to aim for over time in order to help them to make the best possible progress. The pupils do not yet know much about their new targets, however, and the recent policy for marking their work has yet to have full effect in helping them to know how they need to improve. There are still some occasions when the more capable pupils are given number work that they already understand, rather than responding to challenging targets set for them. Pupils' understanding of 'real life' mathematics remains a relatively weaker area of their achievement, because they have few opportunities to learn to appreciate the importance of numbers in our daily lives. Some younger pupils still spend time working on activities, such as colouring in, which do not extend their understanding.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

50. The planning undertaken for pupils to learn to apply mathematical skills during work in other subjects is coincidental, rather than systematic. This means that teachers do not work to a clear programme that ensures that pupils always have plenty of opportunities. Some good planned links for older pupils, such as learning about historical time lines and using laptop computers to sequence numbers in Year 3, make learning more meaningful for the pupils. The subject co-ordinator recognises the scope for further improvement.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well owing to good teaching and learning.
- Good leadership and management of provision have resulted in good improvement since the previous inspection.
- Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to learn by investigating.
- Good developments in assessing pupils' work are beginning to raise their achievement, although further work is necessary.

### **Commentary**

51. The standard of pupils' work is above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Following an expected dip in performance in Year 6 national tests in 2003, the 2004 results were much better because a lot more pupils attained a level higher than expected for their age. The school anticipates that this year's results will continue the improving trend, although governors have not set any targets.
52. The good achievement overall of girls and boys from all ethnic backgrounds is the result of good teaching and learning across the school. Teachers emphasise the investigating

aspects of the curriculum, and give pupils frequent opportunities to practise their developing skills. In a good Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils considered the factors involved in planning a fair test when using paper spinners. They tested the effectiveness of spinners by timing how long each one took to reach the ground. The teacher led a good discussion beforehand about the thickness of the paper used, the design of the spinners and the height they would be dropped from. Pupils contributed well and demonstrated a good understanding of the conditions needed for a fair test, especially the importance of changing only one variable at a time. When investigations got underway, pupils worked enthusiastically, and with a good degree of co-operation with others. They drew upon their mathematics skills well when they totalled the time taken for spinners to fall and worked out the average time. They applied English skills well when they took part in the discussion and completed a written record of the investigation, including formulating hypotheses about what had happened. Previous work in pupils' books indicates that this investigative work enables pupils to achieve well in all classes.

53. The school has improved arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment since the previous inspection, and there are some good features in current systems. Planned improvements include tracking pupils' progress over time more closely, in order to spot any pupils who are falling behind or any who could benefit from greater challenges. Teachers are building up a portfolio of assessed work in order to help them to feel more confident when they award National Curriculum levels to pupils' work. A lack of confidence resulted in a significant under-assessment of pupils' work by the teacher, when compared with the test results for the same Year 6 pupils in 2004, especially for the more capable pupils. It also explains why pupils with special educational needs make no better than satisfactory progress. Their individual education plans do not include small and clear steps that they need to make in science work in order to achieve as well as other pupils in their classes.
54. The good leadership and management of the co-ordinator, who provides a good role model for other teachers to follow, help to improve teaching and raise achievement. Other teachers receive feedback about their planning as a result of the co-ordinator's monitoring of it. He knows what the strengths and weaknesses in provision are, including the need to analysis pupils' performance in national tests and teacher assessments in more detail in order to find out how planning needs to change. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, when the more capable pupils were rarely challenged to reach their potential, work was often based on completing poorly designed worksheets and there was little writing by pupils in science. A school development priority is to extend pupils' use of ICT in science, particularly as an integral part of their investigative work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Improvement since the previous inspection is very good, notably in the accommodation and resources.
- Good teaching and learning enable pupils of all ages to achieve well.
- Leadership and management by the subject co-ordinator are good.

- Increased emphasis on using ICT across the curriculum encourages higher achievement in other subjects.
- The school does not yet have rigorous systems for evaluating the success of initiatives.

## Commentary

55. The standard of pupils' work is in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents good achievement in recent times for all pupils, and good improvement for pupils in Years 3 to 6, where standards were too low at the time of the previous inspection. The school has put a lot of effort into improving provision, and this has quickened pupils' rate of progress as they grow older. Classes are now timetabled to work in a well-equipped computer suite, with an effective link to the Internet. The school has purchased good quality computers and installed software that enables the requirements of the National Curriculum to be met well. Consequently, all classes have enough time and opportunities to learn ICT skills, including those occasions when small groups of pupils have good support from teaching assistants. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 use the smaller suite of computers well.
56. The confidence of staff to use ICT has grown since the previous inspection. This is a result of increased training, the guidance of the subject co-ordinator and the availability of laptop computers to assist with administration tasks. Staff now have a good degree of expertise. Pupils are taught well and have plenty of opportunities to practise and extend their ICT skills through meaningful work. Teachers plan activities carefully, including using support assistance well in order to give help to those pupils who need it. This means that pupils with special educational needs also achieve well.
57. As a result of the good teaching and learning, pupils' confidence to learn and apply ICT skills is growing. In a good Year 4, lesson, for example, pupils achieved well when they searched the Internet confidently for information about skeletons. They quickly found the information because they knew how to narrow down a search, and most succeeded in cutting and pasting what they needed from the Internet for their presentations. This helped them to make meaningful links between work in science and work in ICT, and helped them to understand the uses of ICT in our everyday lives. Likewise, in a good Year 6 lesson, the teacher had high expectations of the pupils to make presentations for younger pupils, by using text, pictures and diagrams based on the mosque. This linked well with current work in religious education. Pupils rose to the challenge and learned to ask specific questions of search engines. Several such links with other subjects help to raise achievement across the curriculum.
58. Leadership and management are good because the co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be done to continue to improve provision, and the school development plan reflects this. The co-ordinator keeps an eye on progress by checking teachers' planning, collecting samples of pupils' work and by working alongside other staff. The recent introduction of an assessment system, which builds up a picture of the strengths and weaknesses in each pupil's skills, enables teachers to plan their next steps for learning. The policy for safe access to the Internet is followed. The amount of improvement since the previous inspection is very good. All the issues have been tackled successfully, standards have improved and the school has kept up with the pace of national advances in technology. Governors and staff do not yet have clear plans in place to find out how effective planned initiatives and spending have been in terms of providing value for money.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. Provision is good. Teachers are keen to exploit the use of ICT in other subjects, and some good examples were seen during the inspection. The school's enthusiastic response to the national Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy has led to increased innovation in the way that the subject is taught. The effects of this are seen in pupils' confidence and enjoyment when working with computers, and in their improved achievement. The school does not yet have any systems in place for finding out how links with other subjects impact upon their achievement over time.

## HUMANITIES

60. Owing to inspection priorities, too little evidence was collected to make overall judgements in history and geography. No lessons were seen, but teachers' planning and pupils' previous work was looked at, along with a discussion with Year 6 pupils.
61. Although teachers' planning suggests that **geography** is securely represented within the school's curriculum, evidence indicates that it does not currently have the same high profile as history does. There was little work on display, and little pupils' work available. Year 1 pupils recognise and remark upon the features of different places through a photographic record of the travels of Barnaby Bear. Year 5 pupils show a developing understanding of maps when they study and compare copies of old maps as part of their work in history. Year 6 pupils demonstrated weak geographical knowledge and understanding during a discussion with them. The Year 6 pupils who recently left the school covered a satisfactory range of work during Years 5 and 6, including good opportunities for visits into the locality and to places further afield. They applied their mathematics skills when they made graphs and studied grid references. Pupils made meaningful links with other subjects when they studied the history of the River Croal. Some tasks asked too little of them, however, and pupils spent time copying out the same text. A school development priority indicates that teachers intend to maximise the use of the school grounds to develop pupils' map making and orienteering skills.
62. Pupils' previous work in **history** and a discussion with Year 6 pupils suggest that pupils make at least satisfactory progress across the school. This is because the subject is securely represented in teachers' planning and has a high profile in practice. Colourful and attractive displays celebrate pupils' achievements and motivate them to want to learn. Artefacts, such as the Victorian desk and chair in Year 5, and historical sources are used well by teachers to interest and involve pupils. Pupils have opportunities to record their developing knowledge of history in a good range of ways, such as when Year 5 pupils study census returns, copies of old maps and local buildings. Visits are used well too, such as when Year 1 pupils visit Bolton Museum and Year 2 pupils visit Skipton Castle. Opportunities to act out historical events in Years 1 and 2 during well-planned play with an adult encourage pupils to 'take themselves back in time'. Links with other subjects are developing well. In Year 3 English, for example, pupils write instructions for an Anderson shelter as part of a study of the Second World War, while Year 5 pupils use ICT when they compare the occupations of the residents of Rothwell Street in 1841 and 1891. A successful 'Tudor Exploration Day' in Year 6 enabled pupils to learn through practical tasks and first hand experiences, such as making the food eaten in Tudor times. All these good features of teaching bring history alive for the pupils, and make a good contribution to the school's intention to implement the Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy. There are

still occasions in Years 1 and 2, however, when pupils spend time unnecessarily colouring in pictures – a weakness noted at the time of the previous inspection. A school development priority is to improve arrangements for recording pupils' achievements so that teachers and the subject co-ordinator can track their progress over time.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has improved a lot since the previous inspection.
- The subject is well led, and there are clear plans for continued development.
- Visits, visitors and the use of religious artefacts bring the subject to life for the pupils.
- Links with other subjects, such as English and ICT, are developing well.
- Arrangements for checking the progress of curriculum initiatives and for assessing their effectiveness are not yet rigorous enough.
- Pupils could learn more about how religion affects people's daily lives.

### Commentary

63. Pupils' satisfactory achievement across the school enables them to reach the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a much better picture than at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were too low because of unsatisfactory teaching, and also because there was not enough lesson time to cover the syllabus fully. The subject is now well represented within the curriculum. Teaching and learning have improved, and are now satisfactory across the school. This is because teachers' knowledge and confidence to teach the subject are greater than previously.
64. A successful religious education day for Year 5 pupils was held during the inspection. A carefully chosen range of activities enabled pupils to learn, sometimes through first hand experiences, about aspects of Hinduism, such as Hindu weddings, mendhi patterns, rights of passage and the Seven Steps. As a result of very good planning and organisation, and owing to the confident, individual initiative on the part of the teacher, all pupils achieved well. They thoroughly enjoyed the day, which also demonstrated a growing commitment to implementing the recent national guidance about the curriculum – the Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy.
65. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, who has plans for further development in the future. The school's procedures for ensuring that agreed priorities are implemented and for finding out how successful they have been are not yet tight enough. The lack of opportunities for the co-ordinator to find out directly about the strengths and weaknesses in standards and teaching across the school has been identified for attention. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are only just starting to be developed, but they are consistent with the approaches used in several other subjects.
66. Educational visits, and visitors to the school, extend and enrich the curriculum well. Year 2 pupils visit St Bede's Church, Year 5 visit the Jewish Museum in Manchester and Year 6 pupils visit Noor-Ul-Islam Mosque. Older pupils learn about the festivals of Succoth and Hanukkah from a Jewish visitor. The local vicar is a regular visitor, who gives pupils an insight into the liturgies and symbols of Christian faiths. Teachers use religious artefacts

well in lessons and in displays in order to extend pupils' learning and to bring the subject to life. Links with work in other subjects also enhance the curriculum. In Year 3, for example, pupils study Judaism and write letters about Shabbat, while Year 6 pupils produce leaflets about Hindu weddings. In a good link with ICT in Year 6, pupils used text, pictures and diagrams about the mosque to put together presentations for pupils in Year 3. Such interesting work explains why pupils showed good attitudes to their lessons, and why the standard of their work has improved.

67. When Year 5 pupils considered how they might feel about getting a job and learning to drive, they applied the knowledge they gained from religious education lessons. Generally, however, teachers pay less attention to helping pupils to learn *from* religion, for example by considering how religious beliefs and faith affect people's daily lives and thoughts. Teachers do not always encourage pupils to appreciate fully that they are part of, and have responsibilities to, different communities. In this way, the school misses some good opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This weakness is acknowledged as an area for improvement in the future.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

68. Owing to inspection priorities, too little evidence was collected to make overall judgements in any of the subjects reported below. Only one lesson was seen in art and design, none in design and technology, none in music and one in physical education. Pupils' previous work was looked at and discussions with Year 6 pupils were held. The limited evidence suggests that the school has maintained the satisfactory provision found at the time of the previous inspection in art and design, design and technology and music.
69. Owing to staffing changes, there is currently no subject co-ordinator for **art and design**, and there are no plans for further developments this year. A priority last year, however, was to increase pupils' range of experiences, culminating in an exhibition of art and design work. As a result of this, teachers are now finding innovative ways to link work in art and design with work in other subjects. There is further work to do, however, in finding out the effect of these changes to the curriculum are having on the standard of pupils' work, and in ensuring the systematic and rigorous teaching of the skills and techniques required by the National Curriculum.
70. Teachers' planning and pupils' previous work indicates that they have opportunities in all year groups to work with a satisfactory range of art and design materials. Year 6 pupils have not studied art and design so far this year, but they talked with great enthusiasm about lessons in Year 5 when they designed and made clay pots. They know that their projects alternate each half term between art and design and design and technology, and that there are links between these two practical subjects. Pupils recalled with enthusiasm when the whole school visited Grizedale Forest, where they looked at sculptures and did their own sculpturing back at school. They enjoyed the school's art week when artists visited the school to work with them making a model of a city landscape. In a good Year 3 lesson, pupils enjoyed experimenting with fabric paints and pens to make designs for T-shirts. They worked sensibly and carefully to apply ideas from class work in mathematics to their topic about textiles. The teacher skilfully planned links with work in ICT too, and pupils achieved a good standard of work. A recent study of Indian art in Year 1 was enhanced considerably by the teacher's good use of artefacts. The work on display is interesting, thoughtful and imaginative, and makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual

and cultural development, as well as to their knowledge of using art materials to represent their own ideas. About 20 pupils attend the art club, where they enjoy interesting activities.

71. The subject co-ordinator's priority for improving provision in **design and technology** this year is to increase teachers' confidence to teach the subject. Teachers' planning and pupils' previous work indicate that pupils have satisfactory opportunities in all year groups to learn to design and make things. Year 2 pupils have designed and made eggcups, shields, snapping crocodiles and models made with construction kits. They have used a satisfactory range of materials and techniques, and often linked their work to work in other subjects. As part of the current history topic on castles, for example, pupils are making models of castles to incorporate drawbridges. Year 6 pupils are currently designing and making shelters. They talk about their work with enthusiasm, using technical vocabulary correctly, such as '*jinx method of fixing*' and '*bracing*'. They know a little about evaluating their finished products, but this aspect of their knowledge and understanding is weaker. Teachers find individual innovative ways to link work in design and technology with work in other subjects. In Year 5, for example, work in literacy, art and design and design and technology are linked in a meaningful and exciting way.
72. In **music** in the recent past, the school has benefited from working with a teacher from the local music service. A visiting specialist previously taught pupils and helped teachers to improve their own confidence to teach music at the same time. Discussions with staff and pupils indicate that this arrangement provided good opportunities to raise pupils' achievement and for teachers to extend their skills. Owing to budgetary constraints this year, however, it is not possible to continue with this arrangement, and a school development priority is to ensure that standards are maintained when teachers work unaided with their own classes. The co-ordinator is currently developing a method of recording pupils' progress and finding ways to ensure that the entire National Curriculum is being taught. Year 6 pupils talk about previous work with enthusiasm. They use technical vocabulary, such as '*pulse*', '*rhythm*' and '*rounds*', correctly. They have listened to recordings of their own musical performances in order to suggest how they could improve. Pupils have worked in groups using percussion instruments to compose their own pieces, and enjoyed listening to the musical performances of visiting instrumental players. Pupils' knowledge of types of music and of composers is not extensive, but they displayed good attitudes towards the musical opportunities on offer. Singing in assemblies is satisfactory, and pupils' enthusiasm sometimes results in shouting and diminished quality. About 20 children attend the extra-curricular music club. They are very enthusiastic and work hard to learn new ways of performing. Although school productions for parents were not seen, staff and pupils talk about the benefits of these to the musical standards achieved. A very small number of pupils learn to play brass instruments.
73. At the time of the previous inspection, standards and teaching in **physical education** were variable across the school because of weaknesses in the curriculum. Teachers' planning indicates that this has been put right, and the subject is now secure within the curriculum; all aspects of physical education are now represented. A discussion with Year 6 pupils suggests that games is a stronger component, with football and netball clubs held regularly to increase pupils' key skills. In a good Year 4 lesson, pupils achieved well. The teacher emphasised ball skills, tactics and rules strongly, showing much enthusiasm and giving pupils a lot of encouragement to improve. Good links with science work on exercise and muscles contributed to pupils' good attitudes and progress. A school development priority is to raise the profile of the subject within the curriculum by extending

the range of pupils' experiences of sport, including working towards gaining a national sporting award – the Active Mark.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

74. Owing to inspection priorities, no overall judgements were made about teaching and learning, although the limited evidence suggests good provision. The school development plan for last year included developing the use of circle times (lessons when the whole class sit in a circle with their teacher and discuss current personal and social issues) as a means of improving relationships and pupils' sense of citizenship. Evidence suggests that this has been a successful initiative. In a good Year 4 personal and social education lesson, pupils achieved well when they discussed classroom behaviour. The teacher's good questioning helped pupils to focus on understanding the principles of respect and consideration for others.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

*Inspection judgement*

*Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	3
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	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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