

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BOOTHROYD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dewsbury

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107598

Headteacher: Mr K Ford

Lead inspector: Mr R Gill

Dates of inspection: 22 - 25 March 2004

Inspection number: 255557

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:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	431
School address:	Temple Road Dewsbury West Yorkshire
Postcode:	WF13 3QD
Telephone number:	(01924) 325257
Fax number:	(01924) 325258
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ann Iqbal
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Boothroyd Primary School is situated to the west of Dewsbury and serves an area of high unemployment and marked social disadvantage. Most of the pupils live locally. The school is part of The Excellence in Cities project and received an Achievement Award from the Department for Education and Skills, and also achieved Healthy Schools Status in 2003. A very high proportion of pupils has a minority ethnic heritage and very many are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is above average when compared to all primary schools. A similar number of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need when compared to figures nationally, and a further 114 pupils have a special educational need. The majority of these pupils have learning difficulties, but the school does cater for pupils with behavioural and physical difficulties. The school population is a changeable one. In some year groups the number of pupils entering the school beyond the normal point of entry is high. The children's attainment when they start school is very well below that found in most children of a similar age. The main barrier to learning is the poor attendance by some pupils.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
4074	R Gill	Lead inspector	Science English as an additional language Art and design Physical education Music
8988	J Cross	Lay inspector	
25352	G Taujanskas	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics
23375	J Holt	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs
33209	P Lunn	Team inspector	Religious education History Geography

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services (ISIS)

3 Harrowby Road  
West Park  
Leeds  
LS16 5HN

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>10</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>31</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

**This is a good school** with some strong and outstanding features. Standards are well below the national average by the end of Year 6, but pupils, very many of whom are learning English as an additional language, achieve well from a very low starting point. Their achievement is due to good teaching that has been inspired by leadership that contains a strong vision for success. Pupils and their parents appreciate the school greatly. Pupils know how well they are taught and have the benefit of a curriculum that nourishes their special gifts and talents. The school provides good value for money. Very low attendance and unsatisfactory punctuality by some pupils is a barrier to their progress. This is mainly due to extended holidays abroad during term time.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- strong leadership has created a school that caters successfully for pupils with a wide range of talents and needs
- standards in English, mathematics and science are not yet as high as they could be, but those in information and communication technology (ICT) go beyond what is expected nationally
- the school provides a rich and imaginatively taught curriculum that contains excellent links with other schools
- checking on teaching lacks consistency
- pupils' personal development is very good
- links with parents are very productive in many respects.

Improvement since its last inspection in June 1998 has been good. Teaching has improved a great deal. Pupils now achieve well in English, mathematics and science, but standards could be improved further. Standards in ICT have been raised. The monitoring of teaching and learning has improved, but not uniformly.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E*	D	E	A
Mathematics	E*	E	E	C
Science	E*	E	E	C

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

**Pupils' achievement is good.** This includes pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented, who all benefit from very well orchestrated support. Some able pupils could reach even higher levels in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. A significant minority of pupils who are learning English as an additional language are hampered in their progress by extended periods of absence. The work seen during the inspection demonstrates that:

- children in the reception classes have achieved well from a very low starting point. Their progress is very good in personal, social and emotional development;
- standards in reading, writing and science are well below average by the end of Year 2, but are better, but still below average, in mathematics; and
- standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, but are satisfactory in religious education and good in ICT.

**Pupils' personal qualities are very good** including their very good spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. They enjoy school but attendance is very low and punctuality is unsatisfactory. Attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around school are very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are characterised by lively relationships and imaginative teaching methods. They often include extra sessions of drama and discussion to develop skills in speaking English. Pupils learn quickly and enjoy what they are doing. Those who have special educational needs or are learning English as an additional language are included well in lessons and make good progress. Teachers assess pupils' attainment well, but the information gained is not used well enough to help raise standards. The school has recognised this flaw, particularly for higher attainers, and has already made plans to tackle it.

The school has a very caring ethos and provides a curriculum that is very well enriched by an enormous range of additional activities to promote interest, cater for gifted and talented pupils and broaden pupils' general experience of the English language. Parents are very well informed about children's progress and how they can contribute. Links with other schools locally and further afield are excellent in the way that they develop social and cultural understanding.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The headteacher, senior staff and co-ordinators provide very good leadership in creating the school's very positive climate for learning, inclusion and racial harmony. Attendance is monitored very well and the school does all that it can to tackle the low levels. Monitoring of teaching is undertaken regularly, but lacks a sharp enough focus on raising standards. The governing body works satisfactorily to fulfil its statutory duties and is knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses.

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

**Parents have a very high opinion of the school.** They are particularly pleased with the way in which they are included in school life and their children's education. They are very happy with the timely and well-produced information they receive about children's progress. Pupils are very pleased with the school. They talk proudly of what the school offers them and find it hard to think of ways in which it can be improved. Pupils recognise that the school's most important resource is the staff who work very hard on their behalf.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise standards in English, mathematics and science by setting more ambitious targets for pupils capable of higher attainment;
- improve the consistency of the monitoring of teaching and learning; and
- strive to improve attendance by continuing to advise parents of the educational benefits of full attendance.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science (core subjects) in Year 6 is well below average but their **achievement is good**. Standards and achievement in Year 2 follow a similar pattern. Standards by the end of the reception classes (Foundation Stage) are well below average. Many children are not expected to reach the early learning goals expected for their age except in personal, social and emotional development and physical development, where they are on course to reach the expectations.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well by Year 2 and Year 6 owing to the methods of teaching used.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are not as good as they could be because some pupils do not progress fast enough.
- Children in the reception classes achieve well.
- Standards in ICT go beyond the national expectation in Year 6.

#### Commentary

1. The trend is for pupils to achieve faster than the national rate by the end of Year 2 and in line with it by the end of Year 6. A higher proportion than is found nationally have special educational needs and about one in five pupils join the school part-way through a year, which causes disruption in their learning, particularly between Year 3 and Year 6, where most of the movement takes place. Moreover, some pupils are absent from school for lengthy periods and this leads to loss of progress and important gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Nevertheless, pupils that attend well make good progress, particularly those who begin school in the reception classes. The majority of children join the reception classes knowing very little English and make rapid progress as a result of the good teaching that builds successfully on the flying start they receive in the adjoining playgroup.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.1 (12.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.0 (11.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.1 (13.6)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The good achievement is caused by the way that various groups of pupils are taught. Those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are very well catered for by teachers and their assistants. The school has identified gifted and talented pupils who succeed in activities that, among other things, boost their self-esteem and deepen their knowledge of English. The school caters for different minority ethnic groups. The British Asian pupils that take extended leave abroad tend to do less well because they lose the thread of their learning while away from school.
3. Pupils quickly learn basic English vocabulary and begin to read and write well between the reception classes and Year 2. Their ability to speak about ideas in more than just single words, phrases and short sentences is the key to future success in reading and writing. Some pupils



find it hard but, overall, most make good progress. The reason why results in English are well below average at the end of Year 6 is because the majority of pupils find it difficult to write as well as typical eleven-year-olds. However, they are gaining ground fast. In 2003, in English, Year 6 pupils performed well above pupils in similar schools despite the challenges that many of them have faced in learning English. The Year 6 results in mathematics in 2003 were caused, in part, by the pupils' inability to solve, at speed, the wordy problems, which were introduced into the tests that year. They were not fast enough in reading the problem and then in choosing the best method of calculation to use. The school is working hard to remedy this problem. For example, the need to be swifter and more flexible in thinking things through is being introduced formally into many lessons, not just in mathematics.

4. The school is not complacent about its low standards. It knows that pupils could always do better. For example, it is not good enough in some science lessons that pupils are not always required to speak in full, extended, sentences or to write detailed enough accounts. Pupils achieve well generally, but standards could be higher if more pupils acquired the ability to evaluate their findings and ask their own questions about them.
5. Pupils' achievement is good in other subjects because teachers have specialist interests or methods of learning are dynamic. This is the case in ICT, in which, by Year 6, pupils go beyond the level expected nationally for children of this age because specialist skills in teaching are used so well. In religious education, standards are similar to those found in other schools owing to the beneficial effects of exciting opportunities for drama and lively discussion in lessons.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.9 (25.9)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	23.8 (24.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	25.5 (26.5)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 71 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Pupils have **very good** attitudes towards their learning and they behave very well in lessons and around the school. There were no exclusions in the past year. Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. Many families make visits to their heritage countries that extend well into term time and because of this, overall attendance is very poor. Some pupils are often late.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy school because staff make learning very interesting for them.
- Behaviour is very good because staff unwaveringly have very high expectations of pupils' conduct.
- Pupils of all ages, abilities and ethnic backgrounds get on well together.
- Long-term absence creates a significant barrier to learning.

### **Commentary**

6. Almost all aspects of pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities have improved since the last inspection owing to the school's strengthened provision for promoting their personal development. The staff have created a very positive climate for learning within which pupils

achieve well and become very sociable, well-adjusted young people. The impetus starts in the reception classes in which children make very good progress in personal development. The trusting relationships that are generated by adults ensure that children grow rapidly in confidence. The very good attitudes shown by these young children are successfully and seamlessly maintained and developed throughout the school.

7. The pupils are justifiably very proud of their school. They like their teachers and support staff and appreciate that they give up their spare time to run many enjoyable extra-curricular clubs for them.
8. Staff help pupils to feel good about themselves which puts them in the right frame of mind for learning. Pupils work hard and are very keen to please the staff because of the positive relationships that are established. They are actively taught to respect others by valuing their opinions and cultures, however different from their own. The mutual respect created gives pupils confidence to contribute to discussions that help them learn and develop insight.
9. The pupils are delightfully friendly, thoughtful and they form strong relationships that span cultures and abilities. They have great awareness of the needs and sensitivities of others because staff encourage them very successfully to work and play together amicably and to be helpful to one another. The way that older pupils relate to younger ones is superb, helped by initiatives such as reading buddies, playground buddies, friendship clubs and monitor duties. They are very adept, for example, at spotting pupils who need befriending in the playground and brightening up their leisure time. Exciting outdoor equipment that challenges pupils and promotes co-operative play significantly helps them to be very well behaved. Bullying and racism are rare, and incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively by the staff.
10. Staff trust pupils to exercise responsibility and to help the smooth running of the school. Pupils respond very willingly. They represent their classmates through the school council, organise stalls at the school gala, and undertake jobs such as tidying up and switching off lights to conserve energy.

## Attendance

11. Attendance is very low compared to the national average. Staff continue to do all they can to improve it and are having some success. Unauthorised absence has fallen dramatically since the last inspection and the level of attendance has risen slightly. Fewer pupils now arrive late. During the past two terms, however, roughly one-tenth of pupils of statutory school age were absent because their family holidays extended by at least a month into term time. The school's records show that attendance of pupils of Asian heritage is significantly lower than that of white British pupils for this reason. Whilst appreciating that visits to heritage countries are extremely important to the families, the school tries to impress upon parents that children's learning has to build step by step if they are to achieve as well as they can.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	9.2	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

## Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the reporting period.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education that includes good teaching and learning. The assessment of pupils' learning is sound overall. There is a very good curriculum, which is enhanced very well by activities beyond the classroom. Pupils greatly appreciate the way that the school values their opinions and acts on their ideas for improvement.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** throughout the school, but some lessons are very good and occasionally excellent. Some good methods of assessment assist the majority of pupils in achieving well. However, higher attaining pupils could make swifter progress if teaching made better use of the information about their learning.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Innovative teaching leads to high levels of involvement by pupils.
- Specialist and targeted teaching lead to higher standards and very good achievement.
- Pupils with specific needs learn well.
- The teaching and learning of pupils capable of higher attainment could be better.
- The use of information about learning is sometimes not used effectively enough.

### Commentary

12. Many lessons are characterised by careful and imaginative planning for maximum involvement and enjoyment of pupils. Difficult ideas are often presented in the form of drama to make sure that pupils, particularly those learning English as an additional language, can comprehend them. In one excellent history lesson in Year 2, for example, pupils' eyes were transfixed when their teacher demonstrated a washing machine from a hundred years ago. Acting in character in this way, had an immediate effect on pupils' learning. Similarly, in a Year 5 geography lesson, pupils' learning about the effect of change in a real-life Derbyshire village, came alive when they were asked to think deeply about what would be the consequences of building a car factory close by. Pupils' thinking was greatly enlivened by the use of a special programme designed to develop this skill.
13. Purposeful teaching has realigned the way some aspects of the curriculum are taught to provide a closer attention to pupils' needs. Greater time in lessons is devoted to discussion so that pupils can verbalise ideas before they write about them. Reading, spelling and the development of handwriting are taught well by using an approach in which pupils have specialised help on their own or in small groups. These well thought out methods help pupils to achieve well, in particular, pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. These pupils receive good teaching, both in class and in withdrawal groups. The good teaching in the Foundation Stage allows ample time for talking about activities and well planned opportunities for play that make sure that children use the language they have acquired. Good teaching provides an exciting curriculum that is well assessed. Purposeful use is made of any records about children's learning that are made to ensure that good progress is maintained. This is definitely the case in children's development in the use of English and their understanding of counting and simple arithmetic.
14. The use of teachers' specialist skills is most productive and pupils achieve very well in these circumstances. Sometimes this takes the form of teaching pupils in mathematics, for example, in groups based on their attainment. The most significant impact results from the teaching of ICT in Year 6. All three classes are taught by the same member of staff. Expert teaching transmits high expectations to every pupil. The response from pupils is outstanding and, as a result, they work extremely well on computers. For example, a distinctive feature of one lesson for Year 6 pupils was the way in which gifted pupils were given an additional

challenge, when designing animated books for pupils in Year 1, on the computer, to make sure that they fulfilled their potential.

15. Assessment of pupils' standards and progress is satisfactory overall. The school uses a good range of tests and other methods, to assess pupils' levels of attainment. Teachers have a generally good knowledge of what pupils have achieved and can plan lessons to make sure that good progress is made. However, sometimes the use made of teachers' assessments is not rigorous enough and, for example, not enough is expected of pupils who are capable of reaching higher standards. This results in some lessons having good expectations for pupils with special educational needs and average attainers, but undervaluing what others can achieve. In science, for example, those capable of higher attainment are not always expected to think more deeply about their findings. In some mathematics lessons, extension tasks are planned for higher attainers but they are not undertaken owing to a lack of time.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	9 (19%)	24 (51%)	13 (28%)	0	0	0

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

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **very good**. It promotes good achievement in pupils' academic development and very good achievement in their personal development; this is an improvement on the last inspection. The curriculum is enriched because expertise from within and outside the school is used in a very productive way. There is a wide variety of extra-curricular activities that are well supported by the pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- An innovative curriculum that is underpinned by very effective planning.
- Very good use is made of visits and visitors to provide a challenging and inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of the majority of pupils.
- The accommodation and resources are generally good, but the school gym is a poor facility.
- Activities for higher attaining pupils are sometimes not planned well enough.

### **Commentary**

16. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including provision for religious education and collective worship. Very good planning ensures that the curriculum is balanced throughout the school. Teachers have very clear guidelines and plans to ensure that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are developed in a very effective manner. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are used well to produce good achievement. The staff have usefully modified the recommended approaches to suit their pupils' needs. For example, there is extra tuition in reading, spelling and writing, beyond the general literacy lessons, which is responsible for improving achievement. Moreover, planning for personal development is very effective.
17. The activities provided for children in the Foundation Stage are very well conceived. They are ideally suited to the needs of the many children who are learning English as an additional language and who need high quality educational play with an accent on conversation and vocabulary enrichment.

18. The school provides a rich and varied programme of experiences for all pupils. The school gives all pupils the opportunity to take part in a good range of visits that enrich the curriculum. For instance, pupils have visited Cliff House Field Studies Centre in Year 3 and Kettlewell Field Studies Centre in Year 6. A wide variety of visitors also add an extra dimension. These include theatre groups, dancers, physical education coaches and musicians. There are many additional activities including the breakfast club, 'friendship' club, knitting, art and a variety of sports' clubs. The school has also been awarded the Healthy School Award, Activemark and Football Charter Status, demonstrating that the curriculum promotes health and physical activities to a high standard. Pupils learn a lot from countryside stays and from working with the development officer at a local park on environmental issues. A visit to the Crucible Theatre has significantly enhanced Year 6 pupils' own production and performance of 'The Firework-Maker's Daughter'.
19. Special features of the curriculum are the many innovative elements, for example, the teaching of thinking skills and philosophy and, in Year 6, occasional projects that incorporate many subjects in the field of the creative arts. Teachers use real objects in their lessons, to good effect, to provide a focus for discussion. For example, in an excellent history lesson in Year 2, pupils acquired an excellent understanding of Victorian history because wash tubs and dollies were used so well to introduce pupils to the period. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language receive very well targeted support. The school identifies pupils who are gifted and talented and makes very good provision, including the teaching of German and French. The pride with which Year 5 pupils spoke German when playing a mathematical card game, for example, demonstrated the value of such teaching on their academic and personal development. By contrast, planning for higher attaining pupils sometimes misses opportunities to extend their learning as well as possible.
20. The accommodation is good, although two classes are disadvantaged by being located in portable classrooms. The outdoor environment offers designated areas for sports, including a caged multi-court area and playgrounds painted for creative play. These recent additions to the playground have had a very positive effect on pupils' achievements in physical education and have gone a long way in making up for the over-large school gym with poor acoustics. Resources are generally good and managed well. The staff are very well qualified and experienced and this has a positive influence on the progress made by pupils.

## Care, guidance and support

Staff take **very good care** of the pupils and support and guide them very effectively. They very successfully seek pupils' views about the work and development of the school and act upon them accordingly.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong role played by bilingual support staff, learning mentors and classroom assistants in helping pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils can concentrate on their learning because they are very well looked after and feel happy, safe and secure.
- Pupils' trusting relationships with the staff enable them to discuss their concerns.
- Pupils of all ages are encouraged to come up with ideas for school improvements, which helps them to feel valued

## Commentary

21. All aspects have strengthened since the last inspection and the reported key weakness relating to the recording of safety risks has been tackled successfully. Pupils' welfare, health and safety are paramount to the staff who do all they can to minimise risks, both on the premises and on off-site visits. The school has recently achieved national recognition for its active promotion of healthy lifestyles. Care is extended outside school hours through a breakfast club and after-school club. Matters relating to child protection are taken very seriously by the staff who liaise well with outside agencies when there are concerns.
22. Racial harmony in school is good. There is a clear policy and it followed well. Progress in this aspect is helped by weekly lessons in personal, social, health and citizenship education that encourage pupils to talk openly about their feelings and anxieties. Parents are very pleased with the way that the school deals with bullying or harassment.
23. Staff keep a very close check on pupils' academic and personal progress and provide suitable help for those who need it. This process begins even before the children start school through strong links with the on-site playgroup that was set up by the school as part of an initiative to raise standards in literacy and numeracy. Reception class staff visit the families at home to establish relationships, assess needs and sensitivities, and enable the school to provide the best possible start for the pupils. Good arrangements are made upon induction to help the children ease into routines and expectations through, for example, initial part-time attendance for some.
24. The skills of bilingual support workers are now used very effectively. They assess pupils with very little English in their home languages so that teachers can identify if other types of support are also needed. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those who are particularly gifted or talented, is very good and enables all to achieve well. This, where appropriate, involves specially devised programmes that help pupils catch up. The progress of pupils capable of higher attainment in English, mathematics and science is sometimes not so vigorously monitored, but the school is aware of this and has plans to remedy this flaw in an otherwise positive picture of support.
25. Learning mentors, introduced since the last inspection, provide very good support for carefully selected pupils who would most benefit from their particular skills in raising self-esteem. They successfully encourage pupils to focus upon things they are good at and openly discuss their feelings and concerns. Sometimes attendance or punctuality is a factor preventing these pupils from achieving as well as they can. The mentors set realistic goals for improvement. Pupils' attendance is checked daily and parents contacted straight away if their child is absent without explanation. This has helped to reduce the school's once high level of unauthorised absence.
26. The learning mentors run very popular all-age lunchtime friendship clubs, a beneficial homework club and an enjoyable summer school that helps to keep the children active and stimulated over the long break.
27. Pupils are proud of their achievements through the school council in improving the toilet areas and are gathering ideas for setting up a healthy tuck shop.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents and the community has further strengthened since the last inspection and is now **very good**. Its links with other schools and colleges are excellent.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have established very good relationships with parents and the wider community which reap dividends for the pupils.
- Parents are actively encouraged to see their children at work and to become involved in their learning.
- Visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning and personal development very effectively.
- Mutually beneficial links are established with other schools and colleges.

## **Commentary**

28. The school is very popular and oversubscribed because parents, justifiably, hold it in very high regard. Trusting relationships established within the whole school community are at the heart of its success and bear testimony to the vision and aspirations of the headteacher, senior staff and governors. The very good links with parents begin in the Foundation Stage and are based on productive home visits.
29. Many very successful initiatives are underway that are winning the support of parents and helping them to understand what and how their children are taught in school. These initiatives are changing parents' perceptions of school for the better and give them confidence to get involved in their children's learning at home and at school.
30. Particularly noteworthy has been the hugely successful 'Bring your Parents to School' week that attracted them in large numbers into classrooms during school time. Parents really valued the opportunity to see what goes on in school, many of them apprehensive beforehand but delighted that they had made the effort. Many found that school is very different to what they imagined. They were very impressed with the way that teachers make learning fun, explain things so well to the pupils, respect them and take such good care of them.
31. The school taps very effectively into national and local authority schemes to raise standards in literacy and numeracy in disadvantaged districts. These projects are stimulating a zeal for family learning through, for example, encouraging parents to share books and play games with their children. The literacy development worker for one of these projects has a high profile in school. She is successfully encouraging parents to cross the threshold into school to use the toy library, become 'play pals' and 'reading friends'. Others attend on-site adult education courses such as English for speakers of other languages, arts and crafts, and basic computer skills.
32. The learning mentors keep in regular touch with parents and suggest ways that they might help at home to develop their child's motivation. Drop-in facilities enable parents to discuss any concerns. Well attended consultation evenings, along with reasonably detailed annual written reports and simple, but effective, mid-year mini-reports very successfully keep parents informed about their children's progress.
33. The school uses its very strong links with the community to help pupils learn through wide-ranging, first-hand experiences that are interesting and fun. Pupils' motivation is boosted, for example, through their literacy and numeracy work at Batley Bulldogs Rugby League study club.

## Example of outstanding practice

### First-rate links with other schools and colleges are mutually beneficial

The school is exceptionally good at building productive links with other educational establishments that enrich pupils' learning and personal development. Almost too numerous to mention they include multicultural links with primary schools in two other authorities whose pupils are virtually all white British. Staff very successfully use these links to enrich pupils' lives and for their own professional development. Years 5 and 6 school councillors, for example, have taken Tex and Pearl, the school's mascot teddy bears, to one of these schools. This experience provided wonderful opportunities to promote speaking and listening skills and to write about their visit in the school's newspaper.

Pupils hugely benefit from top-notch mathematical and technological challenges posed by specialist teachers from local secondary schools. Year 6 pupils, for example, were fascinated when stimulated to control the sequence of mock 'traffic lights' using specialist equipment. Excellent links with the main high school to which pupils transfer ensure that they are very well prepared for transition. Work experience pupils, student teachers and those on care courses are found placements that help staff keep in touch with latest educational thinking.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff and governors have been very successful at creating a strong climate for learning. Management is good, but the school acknowledges correctly that some aspects require attention if standards are to rise faster.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership has tackled many potential barriers to learning to create a very positive climate for achievement.
- The monitoring of teaching and pupils' learning lacks consistency.
- An imaginative curriculum is well managed by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators.
- Progress made by many groups of pupils is very well managed, except for some higher attainers, which could be improved.

### Commentary

34. In 1998 pupils achieved satisfactorily as a result of sound teaching. The school was described as a significantly improving school. Six years later, those improvements have taken effect alongside all the other innovations that have been introduced. Pupils achieve well now as a result of the consistently good, and sometimes very good, leadership and management shown by the headteacher and staff.
35. The main thrust of the school's development has been to try to overcome the factors that prevent pupils from making better progress, such as the very limited knowledge of English that many children have when they start school. The quality of teaching is better and children get a good start in the reception classes because learning is managed very well in the way that it builds on experiences acquired in the new on-site playgroup. The curriculum throughout the school is enriched to include many activities that satisfy the needs of pupils, but in particular those with special gifts or talents. Parents say, correctly, that they far more involved in their children's education and have very good opportunities to improve their own knowledge in the various classes that the school provides. Pupils speak glowingly about the improvements. Their pride, for example, in showing their superb paintings on silk or in talking about the lessons designed to develop skills in thinking, bears testament to the way that learning has developed since 1998. The school's development plan has been carefully constructed to achieve this climate for learning and governors are knowledgeable about what has happened and its value for pupils' education. The governors fulfil their statutory duties in all respects, including



ensuring that the policy for racial equality is in place and being effective. A core group of the governing body has a long-term knowledge of the school while others are relatively new, but keen to learn about their duties as quickly as possible. Nevertheless, the work of the governors is satisfactory overall.

36. There is an adequate system for checking the quality of teaching and learning, but there is variation in the quality of this work; sometimes there is good insight, while on other occasions the findings lack precision and are not always helpful in improving practice. The main drawback is that monitoring is not always linked closely enough to raising standards or evaluating the benefit of recent innovations within the school.
37. Pupils make the justified claim that lessons are most enjoyable. Their enjoyment results in very positive attitudes and behaviour in class. This enjoyment is also planned for carefully. The management of the curriculum stems from a strong belief held by the headteacher and all staff that the school should make full use of the various national strategies available, but tailor them wisely to suit the pupils' needs.
38. The school has well qualified and energetic teams of staff who provide for pupils with special educational needs and for those learning English as an additional language. These teams are well led and managed by co-ordinators who have a clear understanding of the issues that matter for pupils' progress. These leaders keep a detailed check on progress made by pupils, liaise very well and work in strong partnership with all colleagues throughout the school. The success of this provision ensures that pupils are included very well in all lessons. The relative weakness in providing for some pupils capable of higher attainment prevents the quality of inclusion from being first-rate overall.
39. The school uses its finances productively to make sure that pupils achieve well. Expenditure is carefully monitored and well linked to the priorities in the school's development plan such as providing for gifted and talented pupils. The good value for money provided by the school is closely linked to the quality of education and the very good curriculum available.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,258,021
Total expenditure	1,232,688
Expenditure per pupil	2,808

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	47,980
Balance carried forward to the next	73,313

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** and has improved since the previous inspection.

Children start school with very poor levels of attainment. They have very little knowledge of English and lack social skills. The very good support of bilingual assistants significantly enhances their experiences and helps them to settle quickly and join in all activities.

The open-plan rooms for the two reception classes are organised well to provide good opportunities for learning. There is an outdoor area, which has recently been refurbished and is used regularly to provide good quality play activities for all children.

Teaching builds successfully on the good work accomplished by the new playgroup that is based in school. By the time children arrive in the reception class some basic vocabulary has been mastered and social routines have been established. The partnership between the playgroup and the reception classes has proved to be an extremely valuable improvement since the last inspection.

The curriculum is well-organised to ensure that children experience a broad range of activities. Lessons are carefully planned. Useful systems of recording and checking children's progress are in place, including photographs, samples of work and notes of observations in all areas of learning. This means that teachers are in a position to use the data to evaluate whether children are making sufficient progress.

Leadership and management are very good. The range of activities which is undertaken both prior to and during reception, is excellent. For example, a 'take home' bag gives parents some of the resources their child will find in school, such as crayons and scissors to use at home with their child. Detailed records of children's learning, particularly in mathematical and language activities, give very good information to teachers to enable planning for new lessons. Co-operative activities with other year groups help children to learn well. For example, Year 2 children play with reception children regularly each week which helps all children to practise their speaking and listening skills in a fun way.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good and helps children make very quick progress.
- Very good role models from staff help children to understand what is required of them.
- Effective bilingual support helps children to feel happy and comfortable, while ensuring that they are actively involved in all activities.

### **Commentary**

40. The very good teaching ensures that children make swift progress and achieve very well. They are on course to reach the expected standard by the time they are ready to go into Year 1. Staff work well together, ensuring very good role models for the children to follow. They manage children well and relationships are very good. A positive environment is created and children feel valued. Support staff ensure that children make strong progress, particularly those for whom English is an additional language.

41. Teaching provides interesting activities that help children to concentrate well. Behaviour is very good and well-established routines ensure that children understand what is expected of them. For example, a bell signals the end of a session and children know tidying up is required, and willingly undertake this. Children quickly become independent and choose from a wide range of activities. A good range of planned activities links the school with the community and gives children a chance to meet other people. These include visits to a local community centre where children play simple games and chat to the members. The parent groups work very successfully with children to teach them games and activities linked with basic skills, and this gives children chances to take turns, learn rules and practise their language and number skills in a very small, focused group. Various celebrations are planned such as Diwali, Pancake Tuesday, Chinese New Year and Eid, which help children to appreciate their own cultures and those of others around them. Staff promote independent personal skills well, and most children manage dressing and fastening shoes themselves.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Speaking and listening skills are poor but are given high priority in all activities.
- The reception unit provides a very good quality environment with lots of print and labels for children to recognise, reinforcing their learning.
- Good opportunities to develop the skills associated with writing are provided.
- Very good use is made of story time to use both English and children's home language.
- There are few chances for higher attainers to write independently.

### **Commentary**

42. Teaching is good. Children are likely to be well below the expected standard by the end of the year, but they are achieving well. Staff work well together as a team to improve children's poor language skills. The development of speaking and listening skills is a feature of almost all planned activities. Skilled bilingual staff ensure that all children are involved, and questioning is used extensively to involve children in the stories they hear. Staff encourage children to participate in speaking in groups, and give plenty of time and encouragement to do this. A good range of activities is planned which children choose during the day. Lots of opportunities are provided for children to hear a range of stories, some in their home language and some in dual languages. These are very effective sessions. Songs and rhymes are used well to practise language skills, for example a song which names parts of the room.
43. Varied opportunities for role-play help children to practise their speaking and listening skills regularly. There is an estate agent, a baby clinic and a shoe shop, as well as planned activities outdoors. Adult support in these activities helps children to practise and improve vocabulary. Puppets and dressing up outfits are used effectively to give children chances to act out and retell traditional stories such as Red Riding Hood. This helps them to practise emerging language skills.
44. Children enjoy practising writing their names, and proudly demonstrate to visitors that they can do this independently. They practise early writing skills, copy-writing their ideas from sentences written by staff, but there are few planned chances for more able children to write independently.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planned activities provide many interesting opportunities to practise mathematical skills.
- Children enjoy working with numbers.
- Sometimes tasks are too difficult.

### **Commentary**

45. Teaching is good. Children achieve well despite being likely to be well below the expected level by the end of reception. Staff are well organised and activities are well prepared. Bold displays, such as birthday charts for four and five year-olds, help the children to recognise numbers, and to sort and measure. Staff support children well and find ways to introduce number into many activities. Occasionally, activities are not well matched to children's capabilities and results in tasks that are too difficult.
46. Lively introductory activities help children enjoy number work. For example, in one lesson children loved the mathematical games that were being played. Anticipation was so carefully managed that a few children immediately recognised numbers above ten and some of them knew '33' when the teacher held it up. Practical activities are planned to help children begin to make sense of money but few of them recognise coins, and cannot find different coins to make a small amount, unless in pence. Numbers are all around the class and this encourages children to identify them, reinforcing learning. Topics are thoughtfully resourced, for example, the 'pairs' topic with a shoe shop selling pairs of shoes and the Noah's Ark with animals going in two by two. Exploratory play with sand and water helps children to learn successfully about capacity and measuring in a practical and enjoyable way as they fill and empty containers.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of the local area to help children understand the real world around them.
- Children learn through using ICT, in well-planned activities with good resources.
- Well-planned topics help children to learn about things in the past.

### **Commentary**

47. Teaching is good. Children are unlikely to reach expected levels by the end of reception, but are achieving well. Planned activities are thoughtfully resourced to attract children to experience them. Bilingual assistants are very supportive of children at the early stages of learning English and help them to be fully involved.
48. Children work at the computer confidently, using the mouse for control in the games they play. All children have used a drawing program, and drawn their faces in various colours. Some have drawn well-produced snowmen. Children learn about the past through identifying 'yesterday', and through topics that help them to learn more about familiar things long ago. For example, they learn about themselves and how they have changed from babies to young people. A big photograph display of the class and some of the staff when they were babies generates lots of interest for both parents and children, encouraging discussion about how they have changed.

49. Planned activities throughout the year help children to learn more about the area in which they live. A range of role-play activities enables children to think about the shops and facilities nearby and act out how they use them, particularly in the well-planned outdoor play. Visits to the local area and good use of photographs help children to understand about houses and buildings around them.
50. In early science activities, children think about their five senses and try tasting various foods. They eagerly await their turn and enjoy trying to guess the food and describe it. Other groups, when making pizza, learn that heating or cooking things changes them.
51. Children have good chances to build with a range of construction resources, both traditional large wooden pieces and small plastic shapes. They concentrate for a considerable time, working out which pieces they need, but because their language is weak, most children describe what they are doing in single words rather than extended sentences. It is this lack of fluency in the use of English that will prevent most children from reaching the expected level by the end of reception.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have daily opportunities to engage in physical play.
- The outdoor area provides good chances for imaginative play.
- Good opportunities are provided for children to use small and large toys and equipment.

### **Commentary**

52. Good teaching ensures that children engage in physical play in the classroom, outdoors and in the school hall. They achieve well and are on course to reach the expected standard by the end of the reception year. Well-planned activities encourage children to handle and experiment with a range of materials. Support staff work very effectively with children in the outdoor play area. Activities, such as riding bikes, help them develop physically and socially.
53. The outdoor play area is imaginatively developed. There is a hard-play area on which children can ride large toys and develop their sense of balance and control. There is seating for chatting or resting, and areas for imaginative play where children can invent games for themselves and their friends. Large, fixed equipment gives children chances to move over, under and around in different ways.
54. Every day, children have many opportunities to practise the use of tools and equipment and improve their manipulative skills. They have, for example, many opportunities to fill and empty containers from the water tray and to learn mathematical knowledge of capacity as well as skills of physical co-ordination. Similarly, sand is used to fill and empty containers and to make shapes. Hammers and tacks are used with small shapes to arrange figures and patterns on boards and children find this activity very satisfying. A range of equipment offers chances to build structures and fasten things together. Children enjoy clicking shapes together and concentrate for some time in construction activities. Soft dough encourages children to experiment in making different shapes.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good opportunities are provided to experience a broad range of materials.
- Children express themselves well in dance sessions.
- Practical sessions with musical instruments are not always organised effectively.

## **Commentary**

55. Teaching is good and children achieve well overall. They are not on course to reach the expected standard by the end of the year, partly because some aspects of music are not developed well enough. Staff plan interesting activities using a broad range of materials, offering children good experiences. For example, teachers are particularly good at choosing recorded music for children to dance to and this has a positive affect on their performance. Children are taught to handle equipment and to use appropriate tools safely and this helps them to produce work of high quality on occasions.
56. Provision for practical art activities is good. Children paint and draw regularly. A good range of other activities is planned, such as painting fantastic creatures in bold colours, and building three-dimensional houses from boxes and card. Occasionally, chances are missed to help children reflect on their work and improve it, such as in painting.
57. Music is an important part of each week. Informal singing at the end of sessions is complemented by weekly singing practice with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Children make good progress in these sessions, particularly when working alongside older pupils who act as good role models. Occasionally, instrumental sessions are sometimes ineffective in developing a sense of rhythm in children because teaching lacks the expertise and confidence to get a whole group of children to use the instruments together. Standards of dance are good. Children enjoy the work, for example, when they are asked to pretend to be caterpillars and turn into butterflies. The expressive movements required represent a good challenge for the class and they rise to it well.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very low by the time pupils leave Year 6 although pupils achieve well
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, but sometimes higher attainers do not make fast enough progress.
- Classroom assistants contribute very well to the good teaching standards, especially with pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for learning, based on very good relationships with their teachers, is a strong factor in most lessons.
- The English curriculum is broad, balanced and innovative.
- The subject is generally well led and managed.

#### Commentary

58. Standards of speaking and listening are well below national averages in Years 2 and 6 because, for many pupils, English is their second language. The school works hard to improve pupils' oral skills and to raise their overall standards in English. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening are identified and included in lesson plans. Pupils are encouraged to listen carefully and to speak with confidence and in different contexts. Listening skills are improved best in lessons that do not require pupils to listen passively for long periods. A particularly strong feature of effective lessons is the very good teamwork shown by teachers and classroom assistants. One of the primary benefits for pupils is the very good adult-to-pupil ratio. This greatly increases the opportunities for pupils to speak and listen in a style close to normal conversation. Sensitive questioning by staff encourages pupils to rephrase and refine their initial sentences to conform more closely to the rules of English. Teachers and classroom assistants help to raise standards because they act as good role models when speaking clearly to pupils. As a result of this good provision, pupils' achievement in Year 2 and Year 6 is good.
59. Pupils are taught reading skills systematically throughout the school but most pupils do not reach the levels expected by Years 2 and 6. This is very much related to pupils' poor speaking and listening skills. For example, pupils do not develop a wide enough vocabulary in conversation and so find it extremely difficult to understand poetry or technical language. Pupils enjoy reading and show good application and perseverance. They use their knowledge of letter sounds and word structure to build up unknown words. However, pupils often lack the vocabulary to recognise the correct word when they have built it up. Teachers work well with parents to increase the range and quality of pupils' reading. The library is underused because it is waiting to be transformed as part of the new building project. Consequently, pupils do not have good library skills, but do they use the Internet for research purposes.
60. The English subject co-ordinators and other key members of staff use several procedures to identify those areas of the curriculum that pupils find most difficult. They use this information to teach pupils the reading and writing skills needed to achieve higher standards in national tests. However, pupils find it extremely difficult to comprehend some texts, such as poetry, well enough to reach these higher standards. Pupils have writing targets in their exercise books but they are sometimes not specific enough to meet their learning needs. This affects the progress made by higher attaining pupils, in particular. Standards in writing are well below the levels expected and this reflects the poor oral skills possessed by most pupils.

61. Leadership and management of the subject are good and there have been a number of good improvements to the curriculum and organisation for English since the last inspection. The monitoring of teaching and achievement is generally effective and weaknesses are identified, but sometimes advice is not closely enough linked to ways of raising standards. The teaching of spelling and reading comprehension in Years 5 and 6 is very well managed in the way that it concentrates on what individual pupils need to do to improve their proficiency. Older pupils write stories for younger pupils and regularly read with them and both groups benefit from the social interchange.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

62. Pupils generally practise skills learnt in English in other areas of the curriculum. For example, they write clear instructions and evaluations in their design and technology lessons. In Year 6, there are informative factual accounts, for example, about spiders, based on written information. Pupils in Year 5 learn well about myths and legends, such as the Chinese “The Willow Pattern Story” and from other countries, and often answer in character when being asked questions about the story by the rest of the class.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Energetic introductions to lessons and well-chosen practical activities help pupils to learn and achieve well
- Regular reinforcement of mathematical vocabulary gives pupils the tools they need to improve
- Lessons do not always provide enough challenge for higher attaining pupils.

### **Commentary**

63. Standards in mathematics are well below what is expected nationally by Year 6. Pupils achieve well throughout the school owing to a range of improvements and innovations that have been introduced since the last inspection. The new methods capitalise on the elements of the National Numeracy Strategy that have the most relevance for pupils who are learning English as an additional language such as those that rely on oral work. These are beginning to have a positive influence on standard achieved in Year 2. For example, in 2003 standards are below average for their age, but were a improvement on the year before and much better than standards found at the time of the last inspection.
64. Good arrangements for teaching pupils in groups according to attainment, combined with good staffing levels, means that in some years those pupils with special educational needs can be taught in small groups for mathematics. This has a positive effect on their progress, although the benefits for other pupils are not consistent across all year groups. In some lessons, for example, higher attaining pupils often benefit from the challenging questioning during the mental arithmetic part of the lesson, but are not always given challenging enough tasks in the second half of the lesson. This means they do not always capitalise on their previous learning.
65. Teaching is good overall with some very good features. Well-chosen introductory activities often grab pupils’ attention and engage them in the lessons. Mathematical vocabulary is introduced effectively and reinforced regularly. Resources are used well to maintain interest and assist learning. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher used good quality transparencies on the overhead projector, calculators and challenging worksheets effectively to maintain pupils’ interest throughout the session. High expectations and teachers’ good use of praise help pupils to learn well. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 2, the teacher’s



enthusiasm and well-timed praise generated a very positive attitude from the pupils. Formal assessment is thorough and effective, so teachers are well informed, in general, about how well pupils are progressing each term.

66. Leadership and management are good. Comprehensive action plans are supported by a well-organised range of documentation and a good understanding by the co-ordinator of how mathematics is taught across the school. A good analysis of tests results has ensured that new lessons are designed to close gaps in pupils' knowledge or tackle weaknesses in their approach to solving problems, for example. The monitoring of teaching and learning has identified what strengths exist, but it sometimes lacks a sharp focus on what more can be done to raise standards such as providing higher aspirations for some pupils capable of higher attainment.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

67. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics across the school in other subjects. Particularly in science, pupils successfully use the skills they have learnt in making charts and graphs.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lively and well-planned teaching results in productive learning that is not always evaluated well enough.
- The well-devised curriculum has a strong emphasis on the development of scientific vocabulary.
- The majority of pupils make good progress.
- Some pupils capable of higher attainment could do better.

### **Commentary**

68. Standards by Year 6 are well below the national average, but pupils achieve well. Pupils' progress accelerates in line with their proficiency in English. Therefore their progress gathers momentum between Year 3 and Year 6. This was shown clearly in the National Curriculum test results of 2003. In 1999, well over half of the pupils concerned achieved well below or very well below what was expected for their age. However, by 2003 the majority had reached the expected level for their age. The fact that very few went beyond it brought down the school's average overall, but the achievement of the Year 6 pupils in 2003 was very good. Similarly, Year 2 pupils achieve well. Standards are well below the national average owing to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the slower pace at which some pupils acquire knowledge of English.
69. Standards would be higher if more pupils attained beyond the expected level for their age. Sometimes extension tasks are planned for pupils capable of higher attainment, but time is too short for them to be tackled. In some lessons, higher attaining pupils are not expected to write more fully about their findings in ways that require them to ask additional questions and evaluate more deeply than other pupils. Despite these shortcomings, the subject is well led and managed and has improved well since the last inspection. The school is aware that standards could be higher and is constantly striving to achieve this, but the evaluation of pupils' learning does not always identify the issue relating to higher attaining pupils.
70. Pupils' good learning stems from thoughtful planning, and good teaching generally, that provides plenty of practical activities to cement the understanding of scientific ideas. In Year 1 and Year 2, science is very usefully linked to other subjects, for example, in geography, to allow

vocabulary to be repeated and reinforced. The provision has been well managed so that the scientific process is practised well in every class. Furthermore, pupils' work is recorded in a common way to give a firm structure for their thinking and writing, including the good use of ICT. Carefully planned lessons emphasise the good use of scientific vocabulary. For example, learning in Year 1, related to the conditions under which ice would melt faster or slower, was based on well developed discussions in which pupils used all the correct terminology. As a result of this constant exposure to scientific words many higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are able to write complete sentences to describe their observations and findings.

71. Good achievement by older pupils is produced by lively and interesting teaching that inspires pupils' very good responses. For example, in Year 5, pupils had planted seeds to determine the best conditions for growth. Energetic teaching managed to keep the discussion alive throughout the lesson in a way that secured understanding. The working partnership between the class teacher and the teacher appointed to support pupils who are learning English as an additional language was most effective in helping pupils to achieve well. The best teaching is based on a clear knowledge of pupils' understanding of the topic before it is begun. For example, in Year 6, pupils made very rapid strides in their learning about electricity because their practical challenges were so well matched to their needs as assessed beforehand. Gifted pupils were given extension work immediately, which boosted their self-esteem and satisfied their intellectual curiosity while pupils with special educational needs were very well taught by the teacher and a very capable teaching assistant.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers with particularly good expertise in the subject, including those from secondary schools, have helped to raise standards.
- ICT is used well to support other subjects.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and develop their computing skills systematically.
- Resources for the subject have been improved and are now good.
- Some pupils do not get enough time to practise and develop their skills.

### **Commentary**

72. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Year 2 pupils reach average standards for their age and standards reached by Year 6 pupils are above average. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and progress continues well to the end of Year 6. There have also been many other improvements. Teaching staff have all received national training and have worked enthusiastically to develop their skills in the subject. The curriculum has been much improved and meets statutory requirements. Particularly strong improvements have been made to incorporating ICT in other subjects. Resources are now good and the new computer suite is having a very positive effect on teaching and learning. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 have recently gained full access to the suite and this is beginning to accelerate their learning. Teachers' expertise is used well in the juniors where one teacher teaches the subject to all Year 6 classes so they make good progress.
73. The teaching and learning of ICT are good. There are weaknesses in a minority of lessons in which teachers do not give pupils enough time to use the computers to develop their skills. Activities that could be done in the classroom are undertaken in the computer suite, so this important facility is not always used effectively. Classroom assistants work very well with teachers to help pupils learn at a better pace and with increasing accuracy and confidence.

Pupils' work is monitored and assessed and careful records are kept of their progress against National Curriculum objectives.

74. Pupils say they love learning about ICT and their enjoyment is evident in all lessons. They listen carefully to instructions and share tasks and equipment carefully and productively. Discussions are invariably about their tasks and this helps to develop their speaking and listening skills in a technical context. Pupils in Year 6 talk with animation and keen interest about a wide range of activities they have enjoyed in school.
75. The subject is well led and managed by two teachers with very good subject knowledge and this is leading to steadily improving standards. Teachers make good use of the comprehensive range of resources including digital cameras and tape recorders. This allows pupils to attach relevant photographs to their work or extend their work in English by listening to taped stories. Pupils regularly update the school website which provides a valuable source of information for parents. All classes have guaranteed time in the new computer suite. However, access for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very recent and is only just beginning to have a positive effect on raising standards.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

76. Teachers take great care to use ICT across the curriculum. They keep accurate records to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to practise their skills. Pupils use interactive DVDs to find information in science and listen to well-read stories using an audio centre. They develop their learning using programs to improve their spelling. Pupils develop their word processing skills by writing poetry, answering worksheet questions and writing about their work in history and geography. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included, for example, pupils in Year 6 improved both their literacy skills and their self-esteem when making a video of Robin Hood. Older pupils use the Internet and their literacy skills effectively to find illustrations for the books they are writing.

## **HUMANITIES**

It is not possible to report fully about the provision in history and geography because only two lessons were observed in geography and one in history. However, pupils' work was examined and discussions were held with teachers and pupils.

### **Geography**

77. In geography, pupils appear to attain average standards in relation to national expectations for their age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They learn well because teachers plan effectively for a rich curriculum that includes visits and visitors to the school. For example, pupils in Year 5 had a very good opportunity to use compasses in an orienteering exercise at a local woodland course. Pupils' work usefully includes studies of the local environment, places around Europe and the world. In addition they make good progress when learning about environmental issues such as coastal landscapes and erosion.

### **History**

78. Attainment in history appears to be average in relation to nationally expected standards in both Years 2 and 6. In a Year 2 class, excellent teaching was seen that was inspiring and highly

effective because its originality of approach resulted in pupils' achievement being very high. The key strength of Year 3 and 4 work examined was the pupils' extended writing.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a have a good knowledge of Christianity, Islam and Judaism.
- Teaching is good as a result of effective planning and good subject leadership.
- Provision for higher attainers is not consistent across the school.

### Commentary

79. Standards broadly meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because teaching successfully promotes valuable discussion that develops pupils understanding about religious education and their general powers of expression. In a Year 1 class, for example, the teacher linked the celebration of Easter to the Resurrection by eliciting from the pupils that Easter is the celebration of Jesus Christ's new life and linking this to the giving of Easter eggs, a topic that pupils were only too happy to discuss. In a Year 5 class, the story of Jesus' arrest was read from the Bible. This reading was followed by the choosing of some pupils to play the characters from the story. Other pupils were given question cards that the pupils in role had to answer as their characters would have done. This was a good lesson because, as a result of re-enacting the story, the pupils acquired a good understanding of the Bible story they had just heard read by the teacher. It is a strength of the provision that pupils are not only given time to answer questions from their class teacher, but that they are also encouraged to ask questions of their peers. This leads to informed discussion between pupils and as a result they make swift progress.
80. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, which gives them the confidence to use a variety of approaches, such as drama, to develop pupils' achievement and learning. As a result, the teaching and learning are good throughout the school and have improved well since 1998. Subject leadership is good and plays a significant role in monitoring lesson planning to ensure that learning is developed well. Pupils capable of higher attainment are sometimes not given enough to challenge them. This relative weakness in an otherwise good standard of planning is acknowledged by the co-ordinator, but methods to tackle it are not yet in place.
81. An overarching strength of the provision is the way that the many faiths are studied by all pupils, in a stimulating way. Visits to places of worship are central to pupils' learning and contribute to the good achievement along with the number and variety of visitors from various religious faiths within the local community.

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

Not enough lessons were seen in these subjects to form overall judgements about the provision in them. Two lessons were observed in each of design and technology, art and design and physical education and one in music. Pupils' work was examined and discussions with staff and pupils took place.

### **Art and design**

82. Standards in art and design appear to be typical of what is expected for pupils' age at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is due to the satisfactory curriculum that forms the basis of regular lessons throughout the school. Pupils become proficient at the basic skills of painting, drawing and modelling but these aspects are not enhanced by a well-developed use of sketchbooks in Year 3 to Year 6. Consequently, pupils do not try out ideas often enough and make decisions for themselves in regular lessons.
83. Interest in the subject is set alight regularly by artists working with pupils in school and the use of school competitions to add zest to the curriculum. Some very striking work visually has been produced with the help of professional artists, for example the mosaic at the school's entrance. Moreover, some of the drawings of landscapes submitted for the most recent school competition contain a mature sense of perspective and a subtle use of colour. The provision for talented pupils after school helps them to produce some superb work such as the silk paintings.

### **Design and technology**

84. Standards in design and technology appear average in Year 2 and Year 6. Teachers in Year 1 and Year 2 successfully link the subject with English and ICT to develop pupils' learning on a broad front. In spite of pupils' weak literacy skills, teachers successfully concentrate on developing their specific skills in design and technology. Teachers of pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 use an innovative system of dividing pupils into small groups with and knowledgeable adult to give them good experiences in a wide range of activities such as designing, making and evaluating puppets, clay badges and slippers. Links with other schools are particularly good in control technology. A teacher from the local grammar school uses expensive technology resources and his specialist skills to teach pupils in Year 6. As a result, they make very rapid progress in devising, for example programs on the computer to control a clown model so that lights flash and bow ties spin. Management of the subject is good resulting in a curriculum that is relevant and carefully structured.

### **Music**

85. Standards appear to be above average in Year 2 and Year 6 for pupils' age in music because singing is taught well, often by a staff that possesses confidence and skill. Pupils achieve reasonably well in lessons in their compositions depending on the musical knowledge held by individual teachers. Many pupils achieve very well in the school's extended programme of enrichment. For example, a choir meets regularly and sings to a high standard of performance. Talented pupils and those that show an interest have the opportunity to play an exciting array of musical instruments such as African drums. Moreover, the school has a strong reputation for musical productions that involve as many pupils as possible. The most recent production of *The Firemaker's Daughter* demonstrated the strong role that music plays in pupils' cultural development and how well they can express themselves through music and drama.

### **Physical education**

86. Standards in physical education are generally above average in relation to those expected for pupils' age by Year 6 because the provision for games and dance is so well established. However, achievements in gymnastics are no more than satisfactory owing to the unsatisfactory accommodation afforded by the gymnasium that is far too large and acoustically poor. Progress in dance and games is good because the school's own schemes of work are translated well into lessons that demand energetic involvement from pupils. For example, in a Year 6 dance lesson, pupils made rapid progress in using their bodies to depict various three dimensional shapes in a successful and lively dance that successfully linked mathematics to physical education.
87. The development of skills has been greatly enhanced by the establishment of additional facilities outside. The enclosed area for ball games has meant that pupils get more frequent opportunities to practise. Success in games has been heightened by the school's very productive use of specialist coaches, for example from a local club for rugby league. Talented pupils receive many chances to excel owing to the school's increasing reputation for fielding teams in local competitions, for example, in rugby and netball.

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

Only three lessons were observed in personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) so an overall judgement about provision is not possible. Discussions with pupils and staff indicate that it is likely to be at least as strong as at the time of the last inspection when it was judged to be good.

88. PSHCE underpins all that happens in the school to create trusting relationships and pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour. Weekly PSHCE lessons throughout the school are used effectively to raise pupils' self-esteem, enable pupils to discuss their feelings, issues and concerns, and help them to stay safe and well. For example, a Year 3 lesson about bullying was taught very well. The very apt use of a hand puppet eliminated pupils' inhibitions and, as a result, they spoke freely and thoughtfully about their emotions and feelings.
89. Since the last inspection the school has gained 'healthy schools' status and has introduced a school council so that pupils' views can be taken on board. School councillors of all ages showed very good awareness of health promoting foods and drinks when discussing their latest proposals for a tuck shop. The councillors are democratically elected giving pupils a real taste of democracy. Citizenship is further promoted through active encouragement to think about the needs of others. Pupils distribute harvest produce within the local community, for example, and are collecting pennies for an international charity that provides clean water to developing countries.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
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</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	7
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<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	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1
<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).*