

INSPECTION REPORT

CHURWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leeds

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 107820

Headteacher: Mrs Mel Curtis

Lead inspector: Mrs Penny Parrish

Dates of inspection: 1 – 4 December 2003

Inspection number: 255820

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

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*Inspectors judge the **standards** reached by pupils by comparing their attainments with national test and examination results, or by the levels of performance expected for pupils of the same age nationally. The pupils' **achievements** reflect whether they are doing well enough. These judgements take account of the educational **value added** over time. In this report, **similar schools** are defined as those having similar standards at the start of each stage of learning.*

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	556
School address:	Westwoodside Churwell Morley Leeds
Postcode:	LS27 9HR
Telephone number:	0113 252 7437
Fax number:	0113 214 5408
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alan Birkinshaw
Date of previous inspection:	15 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Churwell is a much larger than average sized primary school, situated in the south-west suburbs of Leeds. The 556 pupils, boys and girls, on roll are between the ages of three and 11. Due to the staged opening of a new local school, the school is transferring from a long tradition of three classes per year group to two classes. At present, there are two classes in reception and Year 1, and three for all other year groups. A result is that the profile of the intake is changing proportionately and the levels of attainment of children starting school in the nursery are different. For the pupils in Year 2 onwards, attainment on entry to the school has been above average for most year groups. For the nursery, reception classes and Year 1, attainment on entry is broadly average. Fewer pupils than average, six per cent, are eligible for free school meals. A well below average number of pupils has special educational needs (seven per cent); a range of difficulties are represented including speech or communication difficulties, visual or hearing impairment, and social, emotional or behavioural problems. Four pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Most pupils (90 per cent) are of white British ethnic background, with a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds in addition, mostly of Asian origin. About three per cent of pupils do not have English as their mother tongue, but none is in the early stages of learning the language.

The school has experienced staffing difficulties over the past year. A new headteacher replaced an acting-headteacher in January 2003 and, over the past two years, eleven teachers have left the school and been replaced. The school is popular within the locality and places are generally oversubscribed. The school is involved in the Excellence in Cities national initiative, and in 2001 was awarded the Activemark, and the Investors in People and Investors in Pupils awards.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22380	Mrs Penny Parrish	Lead inspector	English, art and design; special educational needs; English as an additional language
13786	Mrs Susan Walsh	Lay inspector	
18344	Mr David Earley	Team inspector	Mathematics; music; physical education
8070	Mr Joe Haves	Team inspector	Science, geography, history, religious education
23081	Mrs Carol Waine	Team inspector	Information and communication technology; design and technology; the Foundation Stage

The inspection contractor was:

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	18
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	21
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	40

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Churwell is a **good and improving** school, where successful learning is highly valued. The quality of teaching is good, often better, and standards are above average overall. The new headteacher motivates and inspires staff, pupils and governors exceptionally well and significant improvements in the quality of provision mean that standards are rising. All pupils achieve well and are keen to learn. Costs are lower than average and the school provides **good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Excellent and inspirational leadership by the new headteacher makes sure that staff, pupils and governors do their best.
- The governing body is very effective and acts decisively to fulfil its duties and to achieve its vision for the school.
- The school shows an innovative approach to establishing a relaxed but productive ethos for learning. Provision for the pupils' personal development is very good; pupils are confident and mature.
- The quality of teaching and learning is seldom less than good, and is consistently very good for pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- By Year 2, standards are well above average in mathematics and in writing. High standards in mathematics are maintained through to Year 6. Although standards are average in writing by Year 6, they should be higher because pupils' start school with better than average attainment.
- Standards in reading, science, history, religious education and in singing are above average.
- In art and design and in design and technology, attainment is below average by Year 6.
- Subject managers are mostly new to their roles and need further training to establish their full effectiveness.

Improvements since the last inspection in June 1998 are **good**, with much achieved in recent months. Leadership is now of a higher order and management systems are much improved. Standards in mathematics are considerably higher and in information and communication technology (ICT), there has been good improvement. Although shortcomings are still evident, writing shows good improvement overall. For pupils with special educational needs, provision is now good. Issues still outstanding from the last inspection include training for subject managers and standards by Year 6 in design and technology.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Test results in recent years in **Year 6** show a gradual downward trend, though the results remain well above the national average in mathematics and in science, and average for similar schools. Shortcomings in English are largely the result of weaknesses in provision for writing in previous years. It is clear that the school has accurately identified these weaknesses and has put into place effective strategies to bring about improvement. Overall, therefore, achievement is good. In work seen, standards in mathematics are well above average. In science, standards are above average,

overall, with pupils' knowledge and understanding higher than their investigational skills. In English, where there is still some underachievement, particularly for boys, standards are average. Standards in religious education, history and singing are above average, but in art and design and design and technology, standards are not high enough. In Year 2, standards are well above average in mathematics and above average in reading and science. In writing, standards are well above average, showing good improvement from recent test results. In the Foundation Stage, children get off to a good start and exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in all areas of learning. The school is skilled at providing for pupils' personal development and their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good**. They show very good attitudes to their work; behaviour and relationships are very good. Attendance is above average and pupils arrive punctually.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching is good, overall, often very good and sometimes excellent. For pupils in Years 1 and 2, teaching is consistently very good, leading to very good learning, particularly in mathematics, writing, music and dance. In mathematics, teaching is very good throughout the school, leading to high standards. Weaknesses in the teaching of writing have been addressed and, consequently, standards are rising rapidly.

A good curriculum is enriched well through interesting activities and a very good range of activities available outside lessons. The ethos of the school puts pupils first and standards of care and guidance on a day-to-day basis are very high. Relationships with parents and the local community have improved substantially and are now good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The school is led by a dedicated team with a very strong commitment to providing very well for its pupils. Excellent leadership by the new headteacher means that the school's provision is improving rapidly. Her open, honest and informative management style has enabled the governing body to do an excellent job over the past year. Plans are in place to provide further training for subject managers, to enable them to arrange systems for tracking standards and the quality of provision in their subjects.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents are **highly satisfied** with the school's provision. A small number find the more innovative regime difficult to cope with but inspection evidence indicates that changes are improving pupils' achievement significantly. Pupils have a very high regard for the school and have no significant concerns. They like the way the teachers listen to their ideas and help them to understand how they learn.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- To raise standards in writing so that they are at least as high as those in similar schools by the end of Year 6.
- To raise standards and achievement in art and design and design and technology by Year 6.
- Continue to develop the role of subject managers to enable them to devise successful management systems in their subjects, to carry out their responsibilities for raising standards.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils **achieve well**, overall, in their time at the school. It became clear during the inspection that standards are rising, with particular improvements evident in writing and ICT. Mathematics is consistently strong and standards are well above average in both Year 2 and Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs.
- Standards are consistently very high in mathematics.
- In writing, standards vary through the school but are rising. Standards are now well above average in Year 2. There is still some underachievement in writing by Year 6, where standards are average.
- In art and design and in design and technology, not enough is expected of the older pupils and standards are below expectations in Year 6.
- A recent review of teaching and learning and of the role of subject managers is moving standards forward in all subjects.

Commentary

1. For the pupils in Years 2 to 6, their attainments were generally above average as they started school in the nursery, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The school's catchment zone is changing, however, due to the opening of a new school locally and for the children currently in the nursery, the reception classes and Year 1, school data and inspection evidence shows that attainment was average, overall, as they started school. Good teaching means that most children are likely still to exceed the early learning goals in all areas at the end of the reception year, as at the time of the last inspection.
2. At the end of Year 2, results in reading, writing and mathematics have been maintained at well above average over the past four years, indicating good achievement from an above average starting point, and good improvement since the last inspection. A significant fall back in reading and writing in 2003 took results to above average but achievement remained at least satisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (17.6)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	15.6 (16.2)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	17.7 (17.8)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 82 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. At the end of Year 6, over the past four years, results have been consistently well above average in the national tests in English, mathematics and science, but nevertheless results have been gradually falling. In the tests in 2003, there was a further significant fall back in English, a continuation of the gradually declining trend in science but a significant upturn in mathematics. Compared to schools where attainment was similar for these pupils at the end of Year 2, results in 2003 are average in mathematics and science but well below average in English. In English, significantly fewer pupils gained a higher level, showing unsatisfactory

achievement overall. Targets set for 2003 in both English and mathematics were not fully achieved.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (28.5)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	28.6 (27.6)	27.0 (26.7)
science	30.2 (30.5)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 74 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Inspection findings indicate that standards are high in mathematics throughout the school and in writing in Years 1 and 2, where they are well above average. Standards are above average in reading throughout the school, and in writing in Years 3 to 6, standards are average.
5. In mathematics, very good teaching means that pupils achieve very well consistently through the school. Challenging work is matched very well to pupils' needs, supported by the very good level of subject knowledge of teachers, one of whom is recognised as a leading mathematics teacher.
6. Since the last inspection, although standards in English have been well above average in most years, compared to all schools nationally, they have been declining gradually. Compared to similar schools, results in 2003 were average in writing but below average in reading in Year 2, and below average in English overall in Year 6. Comparing the standards in Year 6 with those of schools with similar results for the same pupils in Year 2, results were well below average, indicating unsatisfactory achievement. Quite rightly, the new headteacher has set tackling the pupils' underachievement in literacy skills, and writing in particular, as a priority for improvement. Good basic skills in reading, spelling and punctuation are well established but the analysis of literature and the content and composition of writing are weaker areas. There is clear evidence that the right action has been taken. The pupils' good language skills serve them well and standards are rising rapidly. More time will be needed, however, for improvements in the quality of teaching and the curriculum to impact, year-on-year, on standards in Year 6. As a result of a renewed focus on marking pupils' work effectively, teachers are matching their plans to the varying learning needs of pupils increasingly successfully. The good information given to pupils means they are much better placed to improve their own progress. The school's focus on making learning more interesting and engaging for all pupils is making inroads, particularly into the underachievement of boys in English - a problem recognised nationally.
7. In science, good achievement is based upon a strong commitment to investigative work in all year groups and the above average standards are secure. In ICT, standards are average but improving well since staff training arrangements were put into place by the new headteacher. In other subjects, standards are above average in history due to good variety of teaching methods and a strength in looking at evidence from different viewpoints to discover motives for action. A good understanding of the feelings and motives of others is also evident in religious education, where standards are above average because pupils have learned a lot from the teaching of different faiths and the effect of religion on people's thoughts and lives. In singing by Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is above average, as it is for music overall in Year 2, showing good improvement from the last inspection and reflecting the skills of the teacher on the staff with advanced skills in music. Due to timetabling arrangements, insufficient evidence was available to make a clear judgement on overall standards in music by Year 6, or in physical education throughout the school. Standards in geography are average and, as in history, pupils' knowledge and understanding are enriched well through visits to interesting locations in the local area. In art and design and in design and technology, examples of past work indicate that standards are average by the end of Year 2, but are not high enough by Year 6 because

the curriculum has been under-developed in the past and high expectations for the older pupils are not clearly established.

8. The use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills is satisfactory across other subjects. The staff recognise that the need to do more to ensure the improved writing standards evident in English lessons are practised at the same level in other subjects. Similarly, there is more to be done to include mathematics and data analysis more frequently in subjects such as science and design and technology. The computers in the ICT suite are put to good use but this is not extended fully to lessons in other subjects.
9. The school tracks the achievement of different groups of pupils well and responds promptly, since the arrival of the new headteacher, to differences noted. Changes to the curriculum and the awareness of teachers are helping the school to combat the lower attainment of boys in English and of girls in mathematics by Year 6. The school is focused on improving the match of teaching plans to pupils' learning needs, which benefits higher and lower attaining pupils. Those with special educational needs get the help they need to enable them to make good progress and to achieve well. None of the pupils with English as an additional language is in the early stages of learning the language, and these pupils achieve as well as their peers. Gifted and talented pupils are identified within each subject and suitable provision is made through the school's usual careful approach to matching teaching to learning needs. For those with musical gifts or talents, pupils and their families are put in touch with local musical groups where their skills can be extended beyond the many opportunities available in school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good** because the school gives very high priority to the pupils' personal development and their readiness for learning. Their spiritual, moral, and social development are **very good** and their cultural development is **good**. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good; pupils want to come to school, are confident and eager to learn.
- The school has high expectations for good behaviour and sets clear guidelines. Consequently, pupils behave very well and have a very good understanding of what is right and wrong.
- Pupils learn to reflect well on attitudes and behaviour and they understand how to live together in a harmonious community.
- Pupils are helped to understand the importance of values and beliefs; they respect their own cultural traditions and those of others well.
- Attendance is good and pupils come to school punctually.

Commentary

10. Pupils are eager to come to school because the school is an interesting and stimulating place in which to learn. Relationships are very good; pupils feel welcome and valued. Their efforts are celebrated and respected and, from the nursery onwards, pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem. School is a very special place for most pupils. Classrooms and corridors are very attractively coloured and displayed with pupils' work and inspirational posters and pictures. The school makes good use of recorded music to enhance pupils' attitudes to their work and their readiness to learn. Depending on the activity, music is used as a calming influence or to stimulate their enthusiasm. The school ensures that in every classroom, pupils and adults have access to the sight and sound of cascading water. This environment makes pupils feel special, enhances their spiritual development and forms an important part of the school's very open and very positive ethos.
11. The school sets high expectations for both staff and pupils; all are expected to give of their best in all aspects of their life in school. This aspiration is consistently and sensitively applied so

that, for example, efforts to help others are celebrated as well as success in academic work. Pupils feel very secure, well supported by teachers, teaching assistants and other staff. The school has a very clear policy for the prevention of bullying and harassment and, should any incidents occur, they are dealt with promptly. A working party led by governors is helping to organise events that raise pupils' awareness of the importance of race equality. There has been no necessity for the exclusion of any pupil.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	435	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	13	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	7	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	11	0	0

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

12. Staff provide very good role models for kindness and consideration. As occasional issues arise during the day, staff consistently take time to talk and listen, raising matters of importance to all when the whole class meet together, or in school assemblies. Pupils help with the day-to-day routines of running of the school and show responsibility and initiative when they perform tasks such as answering the office telephone at lunch-time, helping to look after younger pupils, or preparing drinking water for each class at the beginning of the day. They are polite and courteous and, unbidden by adults, are very helpful to visitors.
13. Pupils become increasingly independent in their learning because teachers encourage them to find out for themselves. As part of the Investors in Pupils scheme, they set and monitor their own personal and work related targets. The School Council provides opportunities for pupils to be involved in decision making through a democratic process. The provision of playground furniture and equipment was discussed, for example, then provided from the School Council's own budget. Pupils help to support a range of charities over the year.
14. Very good improvement has been made to the school's provision for pupils' spiritual development since the last inspection. Assemblies now include a strong focal point for reflection and worship, and pupils are no longer withdrawn at this time for extra music tuition. In assemblies, and at many other times during the school day, pupils have opportunities for reflection and for exploring feelings and values. Subjects such as English, music, religious education and physical education are well used by the school to extend pupils' spiritual development.

15. Pupils have a good understanding of the traditions and practices of their own culture and of the wider multicultural community. As part of their work in literacy, history, geography, music and religious education, pupils have many opportunities to explore and celebrate their own and other cultures. Pupils appreciate the celebration of festivals, such as the Chinese New Year, and learn from visitors about the food and costumes of other cultures and to play, for example, Caribbean music. They take part in local music festivals, join the Mayor's parade and, in school, recognise and reflect on Remembrance Day. Pupils had the opportunity to extend their understanding of the diversity of cultural traditions during a race equality week organised in school. The school is putting its race equality policy into practice through its work towards qualifying for the Steven Lawrence Award.
16. Attendance is good because the school has clearly stated requirements in this area and staff, particularly learning mentors, work well with parents in order to implement them. Most pupils arrive in school punctually and lessons begin on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2002-2003

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.6	School data	0.0
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education for its pupils, and much is very good. Pupils achieve well because teaching is now good, and it is often very good or better. The school's close attention to what helps pupils to learn best leads to innovative planning and routines in lessons that are well-known to pupils. The curriculum is well constructed and interesting. Provision for mathematics, history and music throughout the school and writing in Years 1 and 2 is very good. Weaker subjects are art and design and design and technology - where, although provision is satisfactory for most pupils, it is unsatisfactory for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school provides very well for the care, health and welfare of all pupils and parents think highly of the school.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **good**, overall, often very good and sometimes excellent. The school's close interest in how pupils learn leads to innovative practice and a very good climate for learning in most lessons. Teachers put a lot of thought into planning lessons and have a good understanding of the pupils' needs. Assessment systems are satisfactory but inconsistent between different subjects and teachers.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good overall, often very good and sometimes excellent. Teaching is consistently very good for pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils enjoy learning because relationships are very good and teachers use a good variety of methods and enrichment activities.
- The school has a strong interest in finding out more about the way we learn. This leads to innovative teaching styles that promote reflective learning and very good pupil management.
- Well thought out sequences of lessons ensures that pupils build well on what has gone before.
- The teachers' subject knowledge and expectations for what the pupils can achieve are good, overall, and sometimes very good. However, in art and design and in design and technology,

teachers are not sure of the level of work to be expected of the older pupils. This leads to attainment that is below average in both subjects for pupils in Years 5 and 6.

Commentary

17. The good quality of teaching has a strong impact on pupils' achievement and explains the higher than average standards in most subjects. There are significantly more lessons of high quality than at the time of the last inspection, showing good improvement.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 58 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (9%)	17 (29%)	29 (50%)	6 (10%)	1(2%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages.

18. Since an audit by the new headteacher identified problems with under-achievement in some parts of the school, staff training has been focused quite rightly on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Through broadening the staff's awareness of how pupils learn best, teaching plans now include a greater variety of teaching methods, including investigational tasks, role-play and performances for parents, interesting resources and visits from subject specialists. The outcomes of training have united the staff in agreement that innovative approaches to teaching that take account of pupils' needs for differing learning styles present the best way forward. Because teachers are strongly motivated to improve, they review their work routinely and the quality of teaching and learning is rising. Pupils are quite certain that learning is now more interesting and challenging and are developing a more clear understanding of what they need to do to learn successfully. They know, for example, that it is important to review existing knowledge at the start of each lesson so that they are well disposed to further learning. Other methods, such as branch-type plans, known to pupils as 'mind maps', are compiled of various topic areas, which successfully help pupils to visualise what they know and what they need to learn.
19. The techniques used by teachers to focus pupils' concentration enable an efficient use of time and preserve a constructive and positive learning atmosphere. Routines, such as placing fingertips on foreheads and music used to signal change of activity, are well established and, consequently, pupils are focused quickly on to their work. Background music is a feature of the school's environment; it is enjoyed by pupils and staff and sets an equable atmosphere for productive learning. While most of these methods are familiar within successful teaching in many schools, the dedication and universal commitment is very strong in this school and helping to raise standards through consistent application across all subjects.
20. A review of the quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes (known in the school as Foundation 1 and Foundation 2) has led to an increased focus on providing opportunities for the children to learn through well-planned play activities. Children make a good start to literacy and numeracy and develop a strong interest in finding out and talking about the world around them because the opportunities for learning are made interesting and relevant. For personal, social and emotional development, the quality of teaching is particularly effective. The children are led very deftly towards developing self-assurance, confidence and independence. The good teaching means that the children's skills in all areas of learning develop to above average, despite changes to the school's intake that mean that attainment has reduced to average on entry to school.
21. In mathematics throughout the school, the quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have a very good understanding of what needs to be taught when and are adept at matching tasks to pupils' needs. Challenging questions demonstrate the teachers' very good subject knowledge and channel pupils' thinking to higher levels very successfully. The arrangement of pupils, for

mathematics lessons in Years 3 to 6, into classes according to their previous attainment enables this process. The school has a teacher recognised as a leading mathematics teacher on the staff and this is an asset to monitoring and reviewing the school's provision.

22. In English, the quality of teaching is good, overall, and very good for the teaching of writing in Years 1 and 2. The staff have well established skills in teaching the basics of the subject, such as letter sounds and blends, spelling, punctuation and reading. Quite rightly, the areas for development are identified as the enrichment of reading and writing, and the attainment of boys. The school has set improved teaching strategies in place that are moving standards forward rapidly. For example, the books available are wider in range of interest to pupils and include more examples of children's literature of high quality, both for whole class and individual use. Teaching in reading does not at present take full advantage of the strategies offered by the national literacy strategy and this is being gradually addressed to improve pupils' opportunities for learning. In the teaching of writing, teachers are successful in devising reasons for writing, such as a play to be performed in Year 6, and instruction books in Year 4. This adds significantly to the pupils' sense of purpose and means that their application to their work is good. Another strength is the valuable work evident throughout the school on extending the richness of the pupils' vocabulary, through a clear focus on the importance of the choice of words. Good preparations are made before written work begins and lots of opportunities to redraft in detail or rewrite bite-sized chunks of pupils' writing ensure that standards move forward effectively. Very good teaching is evident in a number of classes through the school but teaching is of consistently very good quality in Years 1 and 2, where standards are rising much more rapidly than in most schools.
23. Across other subjects, teaching skills are generally good, leading to good achievement. Standards are rising in most subjects because of the school's increased efficiency in meeting pupils' learning needs. In subjects, such as science and history, where the school has had a tradition of a good curriculum and good teaching, standards are maintained well at an above average level. In subjects, such as ICT and geography, where the quality of teaching has recently improved, pupils' attainment has yet to demonstrate full evidence of these improvements. In art and design and in design and technology, improvements to the curriculum have been significant but there is more to be done to help the older pupils to reach high enough standards. Teachers' understanding of the sequential development of skills is good in all other subjects, but in these subjects, their knowledge is insecure and not enough is expected of pupils in Years 5 and 6. In music, where a teacher with advanced skills has been appointed since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning has improved markedly. Her good leadership, along with the specific talents of some other teachers on the staff, has improved the knowledge available to the school and the teachers' ability to analyse and improve the pupils' performance.
24. Staff show a very strong commitment to helping every pupil achieve as much as they are able. The same high expectations apply to all pupils and learning opportunities are made equally good. This approach in itself encourages all pupils to do their best and it is of particular benefit to those who find learning more difficult. Pupils appear never to give up trying and this is because staff are so positive in their approach to teaching. The support staff have a significant impact on the learning of pupils with special educational needs but also for other pupils, helping teachers to concentrate on teaching where it is needed most. Homework provides sound support for work in class throughout the school.
25. Assessment systems are satisfactory, overall, and improving. A significant feature of recent months has been the improvement in the marking of pupils' work, although this varies between classes. At its best, it summarises the pupils' main achievements in relation to the objectives of the lesson and gives helpful reminders for future learning. In English, this leads to the setting of specific targets that are proving to be a strong influence on raising standards in writing, particularly in Years 2 and 6. Marking is not proving productive when it is over positive and fails to note significant weaknesses or where it is general and over-simplified to comments such as 'good try'. The monitoring of marking by the senior management team is improving practice

rapidly and, for the teaching of writing in particular, is having a strong impact on raising standards. Day-to-day assessments in the Foundation Stage are thorough so that staff are well informed on the children's learning needs.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good**, rich and varied curriculum that meets statutory requirements and the needs of pupils at all stages in the school well. A very good range of interesting extra-curricular clubs and activities, and a good number of visits and visitors to the school, enhance pupils' learning well. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum engages the interest of pupils through a lively and practical approach to learning.
- Equality of access and opportunity for all groups of pupils is very good. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Provision planned for the pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good.
- Accommodation and resources for the children in the Foundation Stage are good and support their learning well.
- There is little systematic planning to develop writing or ICT skills across all subjects.
- The way that time is allocated to design and technology and to art and design does not support the progressive development of skills for the older pupils.

Commentary

26. Curriculum planning is good and has improved well since the last inspection; all subjects are now supported by clear schemes of work. Lessons are lively and engage pupils' interest well, providing many opportunities for independent learning and research. A wide range of trips and visits supports learning; for example, a vicar and a rabbi have visited lessons in religious education, and a Tudor dance group worked with pupils in Year 4 to produce a dance performance linked to work in history. However, clear schemes of work, which take account of national guidance, are recent additions to some subjects and have yet to make a full impact on pupils' achievement. This is particularly so in art and design and in design and technology, where the systematic development of skills is not fully established through the school. In addition, a flexible approach to allocating time to these subjects means that there is sometimes a considerable period of time between lessons, which limits the transfer of skills.
27. Significant improvements in the curriculum for writing are proving successful in raising standards within lessons in English but the school is not planning systematically enough for the development of pupils' writing skills across the whole curriculum. Although subjects, such as history and design and technology, are linked well to work in English lessons, written work within lessons in history, geography and religious education is not developed as well as it should be. Similarly for ICT, where skills are developed well within the computer suite but computers in classrooms are not used sufficiently to record results, analyse data or to present written work in other subjects and pupils are not sufficiently aware of their usefulness in this process.
28. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is very good. It is a highly valued aspect of the curriculum and taught both through specific lessons and successful integration into other subjects, such as history and religious education. The school is firmly committed to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to all aspects of its provision. Work is generally well planned to suit individual pupil's needs. The arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are good, improving from the satisfactory provision of the last inspection. Pupils benefit from the extra help and guidance they receive in lessons from the teacher and support assistants to enable them to take a full part in all activities. Individual

education plans are relevant to pupils' needs, with manageable targets that are reviewed regularly. In a small number of cases, however, the targets are not sufficiently specific to provide a clear steer to teaching plans. Targets are shared with families routinely so that parents are well aware of their children's needs and progress.

29. A very wide range of instrumental tuition and musical and sporting clubs, such as orchestra, golf and athletics supports those with particular interests and talents. The inspection supports parents' positive views about the very good range of interesting activities provided, which include after-school study clubs on several evenings each week.
30. Accommodation is good for the children in the Foundation Stage and includes two outdoor areas that contribute well to the children's development. Whilst the school makes the most of its accommodation and a very high standard of displays in most areas rewards and stimulates pupils' learning, some classrooms are small and make it difficult for staff and pupils to circulate during lessons. Any difficulties are likely to be resolved, however, as the number of pupils reduces year on year due to the recent reduction in the admissions number. A good range of good quality and attractive resources is used well to support teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. Resources in Years 1 to 6 are satisfactory, overall.

Care, guidance and support

The ethos of the school has changed substantially since the last inspection. Pupils are now at the forefront of the school's work and their views and needs are carefully taken into account, resulting in **very high** standards of care and guidance.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Substantial improvements have been made to procedures to ensure pupils' care and access to support and guidance since the previous inspection.
- The school provides a very vibrant learning environment where pupils feel very well cared for and safe.
- Pupils have access to very good quality support and guidance.
- Induction procedures have improved and are now good.
- Processes for involving pupils in the work of the school are highly effective.

Commentary

31. The school consistently provides an environment, which is safe and supportive. Arrangements for child protection have improved since the previous inspection. All staff are now made aware of child protection issues and staff are careful to identify and support vulnerable children. Daily routines are well planned and pupils are carefully supervised when at work or at play. Action is taken to minimise hazards and thorough maintenance programmes ensure that buildings and equipment are safe. Pupils appreciate very much the recent improvements to internal decoration and the school now provides a very vibrant learning environment where children are carefully nurtured.
32. Parents appreciate the improvements that have been made to induction procedures in the reception and nursery classes. Home visits by nursery staff have been very useful and have allowed staff and parents to discuss child-based issues in an informal setting. A more gradual introduction to full time education in the reception class has allowed young children to settle into school routines with the minimum of distress.
33. Staff have very good relationships with pupils and a thorough understanding of pupils' achievements is developing. Careful monitoring of pupils' progress in English and mathematics by the head teacher, together with good monitoring by individual teachers, results in underachievement being quickly recognised. There are very good systems of support. The

learning mentors are available to provide help for vulnerable pupils and play an important role in monitoring attendance, promoting good behaviour and supporting achievement across the curriculum. Pupils are very well motivated by systems such as Golden Time that reward hard work and good behaviour in class. They also respond well to the system where they are awarded a number for good deeds and this results in entry into a weekly raffle. Pupils continue to strive for house points. Good systems of support help to support very good personal development and good academic achievement.

34. Procedures for seeking pupils' views have been developed very well and practice is now excellent. Pupils express their views thoughtfully through personal and social education lessons, the school council and in general discussion. Pupils are expected to use their own initiative when expressing their views. Their self-confidence has blossomed, as they know their views will be taken seriously. The pupils influence all aspects of school life that affect them directly. For example, pupils are involved in the racial equality working party along with governors and staff; they are able to discuss developments seriously and their views are taken into account. The school monitors many areas of its work carefully and pupils are fully involved in these processes. Pupils are also involved in setting their own targets and monitoring their progress towards them.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Relationships with parents and the local community have improved substantially and are now **good**. These good quality links help support good academic achievement and very good personal development. The school has satisfactory links with other schools and colleges but there is room for further improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents appreciate the more open atmosphere in the school.
- Parents receive good quality information about the work of the school and their children's progress.
- The make up of the governing body reflects the local community and this helps its role as a critical friend.
- The school makes good use of the local community as an educational resource.

Commentary

35. The school has sought parents' views and acted on their concerns. Communication with parents has substantially improved since the previous inspection and is now good. The prospectus now meets statutory requirements and the governors' report is of a very high quality, being interesting and easy to read, and it now also contains all the information required by law. Regular newsletters are produced which inform parents about the work of the school. Parents of children in the nursery also receive high quality information. They have easy access to their children's files, which contain a delightful record of their children's progress. Parents appreciate the improvements and report that it is much easier to contact the school to discuss problems. The number of complaints from parents has diminished and the whole atmosphere is more approachable and friendly. Annual reports about pupils' progress are of good quality and now contain useful targets and strategies to help parents assist their children.
36. The majority of parents are very supportive of their children's education and want their children to do well. A parents and carers group has been established and a cheerful parents room has been developed. Parents are invited into school more regularly and many parents enjoyed the pupils' presentations about Tudor and Egyptian history during the inspection. A small number of parents find the more innovative regime difficult to cope with and would like a more traditional approach to homework. However, the provision of homework was found to be satisfactory. The provision of study support groups after school helps older pupils extend their

research techniques and gives them a good opportunity to use computers to complete their homework.

37. The school has changed its approach and is now outward looking. The governing body has been developed and now contains a broad range of individuals who are representative of the local community. As a result of the dynamic governing body and the excellent leadership of the headteacher, partnerships with the local community are now developing well. The school uses local resources and facilities well to extend pupils' educational opportunities. The racial equality week was a wonderful opportunity for pupils to meet a great range of talented people from the local community who reflected many ethnic backgrounds, and a live broadcast from the school was the cream on the cake. Although local groups do use the schools facilities, there is an understanding amongst governors and senior managers that this is an area where the school can develop, including providing more learning sessions for parents
38. Links with other schools and colleges have been at low ebb and have now improved to satisfactory. The headteacher and her staff realise how important it is to communicate with other schools and share good practice; useful visits and contact with other local primary schools are now occurring. Local groups for governors and learning mentors are also helping to build upon good practice. Links with the local pre-school group, Chirpy Chicks, are well established. Pupils go to several local high schools and the exchange of information is satisfactory but curriculum links are not well developed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The headteacher's excellent leadership is focused firmly on raising standards and inspires governors, staff and pupils to give of their best. The governance of the school is excellent and keeps a firm and astute eye on the best way forward for the school. Subject managers are now given more time and encouragement to carry out their responsibilities but are not always sure of how to track standards in their subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent leadership and educational vision of the new headteacher.
- The governing body does an excellent job, overall, enabled by the open and honest communication of the headteacher.
- The new senior management team is vibrant, enthusiastic and keen to improve provision.
- Subject managers are largely inexperienced and just getting to grips with managing their responsibilities efficiently.

Commentary

39. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. She has successfully built a strong staff team in the wake of significant staffing difficulties encountered on her appointment. Her audit of the school's effectiveness has brought about the right changes, with the staff trained properly to put them into place. She has established very much improved lines of management through improving the efficiency of subject managers, establishing key stage leaders and the delegation of appropriate responsibilities to the special educational needs co-ordinator. Her very clear and dynamic focus on the learning outcomes for pupils ensures that the school is strongly focused on improvement.
40. The governing body is skilled, knowledgeable and conscientious, and safeguards the school's provision for its pupils very well. Governors show a very good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and show a strong determination to move the school forward. The chair of governors is adept at obtaining useful advice and information from national and local specialist sources to inform governors' discussions and judgements. Governors made

excellent endeavours to identify the needs of the school before appointing a new headteacher and were determined to secure the right person for the task in hand. Their work is enabled extremely well by very good and productive communications with the new headteacher and they say this is the key to their success. The perceptive, efficient and dedicated chair of governors spearheads the governance of the school in the best interests of pupils. Communication is highly valued and a weekly newsletter keeps the whole governing body informed of developments and points that will need future investigation or discussion. Information from the headteacher together with comparative information on the performance of the school, their own experience through visits and links with subject managers and their contact as parents of the school, give the governing body a clear route to evaluation. Governors' very effective management systems ensure that the best value for pupils is achieved.

41. The school's improvement plan is a very clear document that ensures that staff and governors are agreed on the way forward. The budget is allocated carefully to provide the best opportunities for pupils although the governors' formal monitoring of spending outcomes is in the early stages. Performance management targets set for all staff, including the headteacher, are ambitious and closely linked to the school's plan. Committees discuss pertinent matters and governors' views have a strong impact on the school's action. An example of their influence is the work being done to promote racial equality. The school's awareness of its need to examine more closely its provision for racial equality led to the establishment of an action committee that includes governors, staff, parents and pupils. Chaired by a governor, the committee is working to improve the provision in the school to a level where it will qualify for the Stephen Lawrence award. Governors are well aware of the importance of their role and 'understudies' are trained through shadowing key positions such as the chair of governors or the chair of curriculum or finance committees. The governing body is very ambitious for the school and sees its future as a centre of excellence for primary education.
42. The new senior management team shows exceptional enthusiasm, energy and commitment to reviewing practice and taking action to improve provision. Supplementing the headteacher's excellent skills, it provides a formidable force in moving the school forward. All provide very good role models for colleagues in improving provision within their own classes, year groups and subjects. Meetings are appropriately focused on moving the school forward and successes are a great source of further inspiration. Weaker areas noted generate innovation and further enthusiasm. The very good relationships evident in the school ensure that management systems work well without any compromise on the quality of provision.
43. Most subject managers are recently appointed and keen to see their subjects improve. Training is planned to supplement their skills, particularly with regard to the monitoring and evaluation of standards, and there is further work to be done in helping them to fulfil their responsibilities. Outside specialists are involved suitably to provide guidance, for example, in literacy and for the Foundation Stage. Those with responsibilities for year groups form cohesive and productive teams that share expertise to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils. Planning and evaluations of lessons are very carefully thought through to provide the best possible learning opportunities for pupils.
44. The co-ordinator of the school's good provision for pupils with special educational needs has been given enough time and authority to work on improving the school's arrangements further. She now takes responsibility for co-ordinating and monitoring the work of teaching assistants, for example, and has arranged for useful training courses at local colleges and in national strategies to help them to carry out their work more successfully.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,048,913	Balance from previous year	69,490

Total expenditure	1,083,333
Expenditure per pupil	1,619

Balance carried forward to the next	35,070
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PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **good**, as it was at the time of the last inspection, and is improving further as recent initiatives begin to take effect.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. Provision in creative development was only sampled and hence no overall judgements can be made. Standards are likely to be above average by the end of the reception year and children achieve well. The children are prepared well for their work in the National Curriculum. The children with special educational needs make good progress because they are supported well by staff on work that is planned for them. Staff in the reception year work together well in sharing an extensive indoor area and a good new secure outdoor area. Nursery children also use part of the shared area, which helps them become familiar with the organisation and staff in the reception class. Indoor and outdoor accommodation is generous but, occasionally, in whole class sessions in the reception classes, space is not used as well as it might be, with large groups occupying a small area. On other occasions, a direct teaching activity is not positioned appropriately in a quiet area of the room. This makes it more difficult for children to retain concentration, particularly when they are all taking a turn in the activity or need to listen carefully. The school is aware of this and is reviewing the new organisation constantly.

Leadership is good and has provided a strong team of staff, who work well together to plan a wide range of activities to build well upon children's knowledge and skills in all areas of learning. There has recently been considerable good improvement in the organisation of the Foundation Stage unit and the provision of resources. The curriculum is planned well to the national guidance and improved links between the nursery, the reception classes and Year 1 ease the children's transition between the classes. There is a good balance of direct teaching and independent choice of activities and a good range of attractive resources motivate children to learn. There are good assessment procedures that help staff check how well children are progressing; individual profiles containing staff assessments and samples of children's work build up a comprehensive picture of the good progress that children make. These are available for parents to see at all times and keep them well informed of their children's progress. Parents are very supportive; several help in school, with others assisting occasionally on visits out of school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**. By the end of the reception year, standards are likely to be above average, with many children exceeding the levels expected for their age.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good induction procedures help children to settle into school quickly.
- A positive and supportive atmosphere helps children to feel secure and confident.
- Children form good relationships with staff and each other.
- Children quickly become independent in looking after their personal needs.

Commentary

45. Teaching is good, sometimes very good, and constructive relationships are established with children and their families. Children settle quickly into classroom routines; a warm and caring ethos supports them well and promotes confidence and self-esteem. This is enhanced by the many attractive displays of photographs and children's work that celebrate their efforts and successes. Staff provide very good role models of relationships and adopt a positive approach to managing children's behaviour. Children quickly learn what is and what is not acceptable

and form friendly relationships with each other, learning to share and take turns. They are independent in looking after their personal needs, such as dressing and undressing themselves for outdoor play. From their early days in the nursery, children are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves, such as by registering themselves on arrival by transferring their name cards from their coat hook to their milk carton.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Basic letter-sound and literacy skills are taught well.
- Children make good progress in learning their letter sounds and common words.
- Children learn to write independently.

Commentary

46. Most children achieve well and are likely to exceed the learning goals set for the end of the reception class because there is a good emphasis on teaching literacy skills to provide children with the basic skills for reading and writing. There is an active approach to teaching letters and their sounds and many opportunities for children to apply these in writing, both in direct teaching sessions and in activities of the children's own choice. For example, children in the nursery write about their washing in Mrs Lather's Laundry. In the reception classes, mechanics complete a work specification sheet when playing in Chirpy's garage, such as when one child wrote "I fixt the blts" (bolts). Teachers pronounce words carefully as children learn to write and encourage children to listen for the sounds they know. This helps them to make good attempts at new and difficult words. For example, in the topic on people in uniforms, one child wrote "fbls w shs" (footballers wear shorts). Speaking and listening skills are currently average and staff provide good opportunities in whole-class sessions and group activities to widen their vocabulary further. Children enjoy listening to stories, and handle and care for books well. They make a good start on early reading and parents support this aspect of learning well at home.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Numeracy skills are taught effectively and children achieve well.
- Most children count to 10 and back confidently.
- There are good opportunities for children to apply their skills in independent activities.

Commentary

47. Almost all children are on course to reach the learning goals set for this age group and many are likely to exceed them. Achievement is good. Teaching provides for a good range of practical activities that engage children's interest in counting and measuring and develop their understanding well. Most are already confident in counting to ten and higher attainers count to 20. Children join in mental arithmetic sessions at the start of lessons with enthusiasm, such as when adding one more or counting one less on the teacher's 'magic tray' of toys. Careful attention is paid to learning mathematical vocabulary, which promotes children's understanding well. Children learn to compare measurements and use terms such as 'bigger' and 'smaller', for example, when making biscuits. They have good practical experience with a wide range of

resources in independent situations, such as when buying pairs of shoes in the 'shoe shop' and counting the coins that they need to pay.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children experience a wide range of activities that extend their knowledge of their world.
- Good links are made between different subjects.
- Children become confident in the use of computers.

Commentary

48. Children achieve well and make good gains in their understanding of the world. Most children are likely to exceed the goals set nationally for the end of the reception class. In both the nursery and the reception classes, they make good use of computers independently and are confident in their use of the mouse and keyboard. They learn about the way that they change as they grow and about and about the many people who help them at home, at school and in the wider world. Visitors to school, such as the 'lollipop' man and a local police officer, enhance this work. Good links are made between subjects; for example, during the study of people in uniforms, children developed their creative skills by painting pictures of the police officer. They learn about the properties of materials, such as sand and water, and experiment with them freely. Children in the nursery learn about waterproof and absorbent materials whilst studying the book Mrs Lather's Laundry. Those in the reception classes learn how ingredients change during baking. Children in both age groups have many opportunities to take part in a good range of role-play that reinforces their learning about the wider world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to develop control of their bodies, both indoors and out.
- Children develop good control in using tools, such as pencils and scissors.
- Resources are good and are used well to support children's learning.

Commentary

49. Most children are likely to reach the goals set for the end of the reception year and many are likely to exceed them. Children move with confidence and good control and co-ordination. They have a good awareness of space and when moving around do so sensibly. They enjoy their many opportunities for developing skills outdoors, such as when using good quality wheeled toys independently or taking part in lessons to develop their games skills. In the classroom, children have many opportunities to develop finer control, such as in the use of pencils, scissors and brushes but on some occasions a few hold them awkwardly without correction by an adult. This makes it more difficult for them to achieve their desired effect, such as correctly formed letters or numbers.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development was only sampled. However, evidence shows standards to be at least average. The specialist teaching of music to a small group of children was very good. In the lessons, children quickly learned a new winter song, selected suitable instruments to accompany themselves and played them appropriately. Both indoor and outdoor accommodation provides a very good range of imaginary role-play opportunities, such as in the home corner, the shoe shop, the laundry and garages. Resources for role-play are good and provide for a wide range of experiences. Art areas include a good range of resources and children have good opportunities to experiment when drawing and painting their own pictures or using malleable materials, such as dough and clay.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is now **good**. Standards are rising through the school and show good improvement, overall, since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising rapidly in writing, where pupils' attainments are well above average by Year 2, although still average overall by Year 6, where there is underachievement evident.
- For most pupils, speaking and listening skills are above average. This supports their learning well in both reading and writing.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good in Years 1 and 2, and it is now good overall in Years 3 to 6.
- Similar to the national picture for English, boys achieve less well than girls.
- Assessment systems are developing well, but are inconsistently applied through the school.

Commentary

50. Standards are above average, overall, by Year 2 and average, but improving, by Year 6. Attainment is above average in reading and in speaking and listening for pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6, as at the time of the last inspection. Standards are much improved in writing but vary from well above average in Year 2 to average in Year 6. In response to issues raised in the last inspection, spelling, punctuation and handwriting have improved well. Recently implemented changes that have improved the quality of the curriculum, resources and the quality of teaching will need time to impact on standards for the oldest pupils. Nonetheless, pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, enjoy their work, concentrate and are now achieving well. Those with English as an additional language are given extra help where necessary from teaching staff, and achieve as well as other pupils.
51. The pupils' basic reading skills are secure throughout the school and pupils have effective extra practice through reading their books regularly at home. Very thorough teaching of letter sounds, blends, and frequently used words begins from the earliest stages and continues in logical sequence throughout the school. Pupils in their first term in Year 1, for example, confidently add single letters or, for higher attaining pupils, letter strings, to make words that include 'ug', such as 'tug', 'chug' or 'slug'. Relationships are very good; teachers respond very well to pupils' suggestions and this gives pupils the confidence and interest to try out new words.
52. Recent improvements to the quality of resources have raised the pupils' interest further in reading. This is particularly the case for boys who say they prefer the wider selection of books on offer. The better range of books of good quality, together with improvements in teaching to take it into line with the national literacy strategy, has improved pupils' ability to analyse texts. The close study of events and characters in stories also extends pupils' personal development. Pupils in Year 6, for example, learn to empathise with evacuees and their families through the study of a story about set at the time of World War Two, which adds a deeper understanding to their studies in history. These improvements have not yet extended fully to individual reading books, particularly for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Here the range of books used for teaching reading is sometimes too narrow to develop pupils' literacy skills fully. In addition, teachers are reluctant to move from hearing pupils reading individually towards the more time effective strategy, recommended nationally, of practising and improving reading with groups of pupils.
53. Teachers skilfully plan rich learning opportunities that interweave the skills of reading and writing in a way that captivates the pupils' interest and encourages them to produce work of high quality. The teaching of writing is never less than good, with basic skills, such as spelling

and punctuation, taught systematically and well. In Years 1 and 2, and in some classes in Years 3 to 6, teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. Pupils are left in no doubt about the teachers' high expectations and they respond to the challenge by concentrating exceptionally well and trying their very best. Consequently the pupils' achievement is high and progress is very good. In these classes, teachers are adept at focusing pupils' interest on the quality and variety of the vocabulary they use in their writing and there are many examples through the school of writing that has been improved significantly through redrafting.

Example of outstanding practice

In an excellent lesson in Year 2, the teacher linked a focus on the story of the Great Fire in London with discussions, reading, writing and spelling activities.

Background music gave a calm start to the lesson as pupils assembled from previous activities. A very good atmosphere for learning was established from the start, where friendly relationships, well-planned and interesting work, and the teacher's high expectations led pupils to make their best efforts. Spellings learned earlier in the week were practised to the rhythm of 'rap'. A clear checklist for writing helped to guide the development of skills; attention was to be given to interesting words, good sentence beginnings and words that join sentences. Examples of such words were easily available within charts and prompt cards. The teacher worked with the class on two short, simple sentences to incorporate the target skills. Suggestions made by the pupils' were seized enthusiastically and used to enhance the new sentence. Pupils were clearly used to studying their work closely to achieve improvement. When pupils wrote their own sentences, supported by a sequence of pictures portraying the Great Fire, rich sentences of description were produced by most pupils, with many well in advance of the average for their age. One child wrote, 'Bravely the frightened family jumped from roof to roof because the hot fire was spreading fast.'

54. Past underachievement in Years 3 to 6 is being tackled rigorously, with standards rising rapidly through the concerted efforts of each year group. Close monitoring of pupils' achievements is organised through detailed marking in most classes and assessment checks each half-term. Teachers match the work well to pupils' needs, generally, and for those with special educational needs, extra help is arranged to ensure that these pupils achieve well. The school has identified, quite rightly, the need for teaching in English to be continued across the curriculum and has changed from teaching in classes based on previous attainment to keeping all pupils with their own class teacher. This system enables more consistent expectations in literacy across all subjects, tracked more effectively by one teacher. However, there is more work to be done in achieving this aim.
55. In speaking and listening, the attainment of pupils when they enter school is above average overall and these higher than average standards are maintained throughout the school. There is a high proportion of above average, articulate pupils who discuss and analyse texts and their work well. Their good skills in speaking and listening help to accelerate their progress in both reading and writing, as well as other subjects across the curriculum. A close study of stories, poetry and other interesting resources such as persuasive letters are used well by teachers to highlight the impact of chosen words. For example, pupils in Year 6 worked on enriching the quality of imaginary recipes for a good holiday, with suggestions such as, 'large, slightly chilled swimming pools' and 'thousands of miles of freshly picked mountains'. Because the school is targeting the quality of vocabulary and composition in pupils' written work, the pupils' expressive language is improving well. Lessons in drama and in personal and social education help pupils to think about the way things are said. A recording of the performance of Romeo and Juliet by pupils in Year 6 shows very clear and expressive enunciation.
56. The new subject managers have got off to a good start, working in liaison with the headteacher and an outside consultant to audit the school's provision. A well thought out action plan is in place and teachers in each year group work hard to produce well co-ordinated units of lessons. The subject managers monitor these to check on quality and help is given where needed, such as in providing more successfully for the differing needs of pupils. Staff review samples of pupils' writing in order to improve their marking skills and a portfolio of standards expected for each year group is newly established. An analysis of differences between the

results of boys and girls has led to changes in the teaching programme in order to provide a better balance between factual and fictional texts. Resources are satisfactory. Books in use are of good quality but there are some shortages in sets of books needed for reading in groups.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. The development of language and literacy skills across all subjects is satisfactory, overall. Opportunities are wisely taken to link texts for teaching reading to other subjects, such as history, when, for example, teachers in Year 2 base pupils' work in literacy lessons on The Great Fire of London. Good examples were also seen of linking the teaching of writing to design and technology. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote clear instruction books on how to make a winding mechanism, and pupils in Year 4 worked to improve the vocabulary in the recipe and instructions they had used to make chocolate biscuits. Pupils read for research in other subjects such as history and geography. Pupils in Year 6 are using information books, brochures and the Internet, both at home and at school, to complete their independent studies of a chosen country. Opportunities for extending writing within lessons in other subjects, however, are not always used fully and written work is sometimes sketchy in content and style in subjects such as history and geography. Information and communication technology is increasingly being used to extend work in English through word processing programs on computers. The newspaper club is popular and makes a very good contribution to literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are well above average, showing very good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are high.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good and leads to good achievement for pupils.
- Assessment is used well to identify next steps and to help with planning.
- Leadership of the subject is very good.
- The National Numeracy Strategy is used very well to ensure that pupils build securely onto their existing knowledge, understanding and skills.

Commentary

58. Standards are high because the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Because teachers have a very good understanding of the subject, they are confident to ask challenging questions that prompt pupils to think hard and deepen their understanding. In Years 3 to 6, the system of organising pupils into classes according to their previous attainment helps teachers to provide pupils with suitable work, to enable effective learning with a good level of challenge. Working in this way helped higher attaining pupils in Year 6 to accurately estimate and measure the volume of a cuboid, and lower attaining pupils to understand how to measure volume and capacity, although their work was less accurate. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work in mixed classes, but their work is similarly challenging because it is planned well to pupils' needs. In Year 2, for example, higher attaining pupils multiplied random numbers accurately and recalled multiplication patterns, while lower attaining pupils were less accurate but, supported by the class teacher and well selected equipment, they made good progress. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Most have clear, manageable targets for improvement within their individual educational plans and this enables them to achieve well.

59. The school makes very good use of the planning guidance available from the National Numeracy Strategy. This helps to give continuity between lessons and to structure lessons so that work is closely linked to what has gone before. The school has improved its use of assessment since the last inspection and uses it well in order to check pupils' progress, identify areas of strength and weakness and to plan work which is suited to pupils' needs. In this way the school focused on pupils' performance in mental calculations and problem solving so that standards were improved. Assessment strategies have also helped the school to recognise the need to ensure that girls progress as well as boys in the classes for older pupils. Teachers mark work carefully and provide comments that are encouraging and help pupils understand what they need to do in order to improve.
60. Pupils work very hard during lessons and sustain their interest well. This is enhanced by the way teachers plan interesting work. In an excellent lesson in Year 1, for example, the teacher used stories, pictures, songs, practical activities and role play to ensure that pupils made very good progress in their understanding of the passage and measurement of time.

Example of outstanding practice

The teaching of the passage and measurement of time in Year 1 was excellent.

Excellent relationships combined with rigorous planning, ensured that pupils were confident, ready to contribute to the lesson and set tasks that were well matched to their learning needs. The teacher used an excellent range of strategies, such as songs, pictures, stories, role-play, timed activities and discussion, in order to reinforce the pupils' understanding of the passage of time and its measurement. The sequence of the days of the week was reinforced with a familiar song. Pupils learned that time never stops and that there is always a yesterday, today and tomorrow. They found out just what could be done in one minute. Each pupil was challenged at their own level of ability and responded very sensibly to the opportunities to work independently. Teaching assistants extended the teaching very well across the variety of activities taking place. The very brisk pace set to learning ensured that all pupils worked hard, made very good progress and achieved very well. Their work was very thoroughly reviewed at the end of the lesson; pupils were asked how well they thought they had done so that learning was clarified and links with future work established. Pupils enjoyed the activities thoroughly.

61. Because relationships are very good, pupils are confident to answer questions and make suggestions. In Year 2, pupils were eager to suggest different strategies for counting because the teacher welcomed and valued their contributions. Expectations are always high and a positive approach to work is established. Pupils work well even when they are not under the immediate supervision of the teacher and co-operate well with each other. Teachers ensure that, at appropriate times, pupils have opportunities to perform the exercises adopted by the school that are designed to re-focus their concentration.
62. The subject is very well led and organised. The manager has a very good knowledge of mathematics and a very clear understanding of what the school needs to do in order to make improvements and raise standards further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Numeracy skills are practised satisfactorily in other subjects of the curriculum. In geography, for example, pupils in Year 6 use six figure co-ordinates in their map work and learn about direction and compass points. In science, pupils measure time and temperature in work on dissolving. In history, they learn to sequence events on a time line. Although there is some mathematical work in ICT, such as the use of graphs and spreadsheets, computers are generally insufficiently used to support work in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**. Standards have improved satisfactorily since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching and learning promote high standards.
- The pupils' very good attitudes towards their learning enable good progress.
- The well-balanced and good quality curriculum has a suitable emphasis on experimental and investigational work.
- Assessment procedures require further development to support target setting and further improvements in standards.

Commentary

64. Standards are above average in both Year 2 and Year 6, and a small number of higher attaining pupils attain standards that are well above average. This maintains the good standards reported in the last inspection and improvement is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school because teaching is consistently good, and sometimes very good. The positive attitudes most pupils display towards their learning are encouraged by the teachers' practical approach to the subject. The emphasis on investigative techniques ensures the pupils' good achievement.
65. By Year 2, pupils conduct simple experiments and record their results accurately. For example, they investigate how butter changes when affected by heat. Higher attaining pupils recognise that this can be reversed; when cooled, it "goes harder." Pupils investigate and carefully record the life cycle of plants and mini-beasts and learn how the environment affects them. They conduct an experiment methodically to test how materials stretch, and they learn through practice how to construct a simple electrical circuit. Their work is carefully recorded, using diagrams and short written explanations. Where teaching is very good, work is carefully organised to match pupils' differing abilities and there is very careful reinforcement of scientific vocabulary.
66. By Year 6, pupils understand the principle of a fair test. They are confident in carrying out experiments and clear about safety issues. Pupils' very good social skills mean that they work effectively in groups. In Year 5, for example, groups worked well to construct electrical circuits of differing complexity, and in Year 6, to investigate gases. Good teaching ensures that pupils are able to make rapid progress in their learning. The teachers' effective questioning leads to thoughtful responses and sometimes research, which helps to reinforce literacy skills as well as scientific understanding. In a lesson to observe how gas inflates a balloon, pupils conducted the experiment competently and expressed amazement at the result. This very good lesson helped pupils to recognise how some changes are irreversible and the teacher's insistence on scientific vocabulary ensured that pupils described the experiment accurately. Opportunities are missed occasionally to pursue pupils' thinking a little further; for example, to investigate why variations sometimes occur in the outcomes of seemingly identical experiments.
67. The subject managers work hard to promote the subject and provide good levels of leadership through the support they give to colleagues. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure an appropriate balance between the different aspects of the subject. Good use is made of resources to underpin practical activity. Literacy and numeracy skills are reinforced effectively, but there is insufficient use of ICT. Assessment and monitoring procedures are not fully established in science, limiting the school's means of checking teaching and learning and setting targets for further improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good** and has improved well since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are now average.
- Planning is now good and promotes the development of pupils' skills progressively.
- Teaching is good and promotes good achievement for pupils, particularly when learning skills in the computer suite.
- Use of ICT to extend learning in other subjects is improving but computers are not fully incorporated into lessons in classrooms.
- There are no assessment systems to help teachers to check pupils' progress.
- Leadership is good and has secured good improvement in provision and standards since the last inspection.

Commentary

68. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and standards are now average at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when progress was unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6 and standards were below average. For a considerable time from the last inspection, standards remained too low. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, pupils' achievement has improved significantly because all the different aspects of the subject are now taught. Good teaching is improving pupils' skills systematically. Pupils in Year 6 have had to catch up quickly but, overall, they have made satisfactory progress over their time in the school. Resources are much improved and those in the computer suite are good.
69. Pupils make good progress in lessons in the computer suite but there are few opportunities taken to extend this work into other lessons within classrooms. Pupils have good skills in using the Internet to download information to support learning, and in word processing to record their work. However, these skills are not planned for systematically in other lessons and some opportunities are missed for pupils, for example, to learn the importance of computers in drafting and redrafting work. Skills in controlling and modelling events through computers are below average by the end of Year 6 because teachers have less expertise in these areas and the resources available for older pupils are outdated. A good action plan for development is in place to resolve these problems.
70. Teaching is good, overall, particularly in the computer suite, where teachers make good use of the data projector to demonstrate what pupils are to learn. Pupils are highly motivated; they watch the demonstrations and then concentrate very well as they learn for themselves, collaborating effectively in pairs. They develop good levels of independence in their work and gain confidence in exploring the possibilities presented by the programs they use. For example, pupils in Year 6, working on a program based on personal, social, health and citizenship education, enjoyed manipulating images to create linked storyboards; they achieved well as they experimented with their effects. All staff have had training that enables them to teach the subject well. Some make good use of computers themselves in preparing and presenting their lessons and this quickly engages pupils' interest. The school has firm plans to purchase more data projectors so that this work can be extended into all classrooms.
71. Leadership is good; good resources and training have been provided to help teachers to improve their skills. The profile of ICT has been raised in the school and across the curriculum. There is a good action plan to improve provision further and to introduce a whole school assessment system. The subject managers have not had sufficient time to check the quality of teaching and learning in lessons but this is a planned development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. ICT contributes satisfactorily to the development of research skills in other subjects, such as geography and history. Pupils are competent in using computers; they access programs and

information confidently and download information and pictures to record their work. They do not have sufficient opportunity in lessons, however, to produce reports on word-processors or to enter their mathematical and scientific data as they work. Digital cameras are used effectively to record work across the curriculum and to celebrate pupils' achievements.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**, showing good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching promotes good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs.
- The curriculum is well organised and of good quality.
- The subject promotes pupils' personal development extremely well.
- Sometimes insufficient attention is given to teaching about religious beliefs.

Commentary

73. Standards are above average in both Year 2 and Year 6 because good teaching is successful in ensuring that pupils become reflective learners. Pupils express their ideas extremely well in discussion and older pupils make thoughtful comments, demonstrating their understanding of tolerance, honesty and equality. However, their knowledge and understanding of faith stories and chronology are not as strong. This is because there is insufficient attention given in some lessons to consolidating these areas of learning.
74. By Year 2, pupils gain good insights into the ideas that underpin the Jewish and Christian faiths. They recognise the importance of festivals that celebrate belief. They comment on artefacts demonstrating an understanding of their significance. Pupils benefit considerably from opportunities to meet leaders from different faiths. Good preparation helps pupils to ask relevant questions that enable the local priest to explain the range of his responsibilities. This helps pupils understand the diverse nature of a priest's role within church and community.
75. By Year 6, pupils recognise there are important similarities and differences between the Christian, Muslim and Jewish faiths. They know that each of these religions worships one god, that they each have centres of worship and holy books. Pupils are not always sufficiently clear on the detail of specific faith stories. For example, they know about beliefs in the resurrection, but they are less clear on the events that led to the crucifixion. Some pupils have difficulty in determining the order of events; for example, whether Moses belongs to an earlier era than Christ. Occasionally, a teacher's insecure subject knowledge leads to unsatisfactory teaching and learning but, overall, teaching is good. Pupils are very successful in discussing issues of morality and behaviour. This is because teaching is strongly empathetic, drawing successfully on pupils' ability to form opinions and judgements on a range of issues. The school sees this subject as an important vehicle for promoting pupils' personal development as thoughtful and reflective young people. In this respect, it is extremely successful and this is why standards are judged to be good.
76. The curriculum builds effectively upon the locally agreed syllabus, meets its requirements, and enriches it through visits and visiting speakers. Curriculum leadership is good, promoting the subject effectively within school, reviewing current progress and planning carefully to develop the curriculum and resources. This subject has improved well since the last inspection. Standards are higher and teaching is more consistent. The school recognises its value in promoting pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour, ensuring it has a clear position within the curriculum.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**, overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall.
- Standards are average but improving now that sufficient time has been restored to the subject.
- The curriculum is of good quality and enriched by educational visits.
- Assessment procedures require development.

Commentary

77. Standards reached by pupils in Years 2 and 6 are average. Achievement is good, because pupils benefit from good teaching and rapidly acquire an appropriate range of geographical skills. Standards are likely to rise because there is a greater focus on the subject now than in the intervening years since the last inspection.
78. Good teaching and careful planning mean that the basic skills of the subject are taught well. By Year 2, pupils are able to draw accurate maps and include a key. They can use these to plan local routes and record visits to local places of interest. Higher attaining pupils accurately record the environmental features of the park, making good use of the key. Teaching is less successful in helping pupils to learn about measurement and scale.
79. By Year 6, pupils are secure in their use of co-ordinates to six figures. They use an Ordnance Survey map competently to plan a journey by locating specific features on route. They are less secure in understanding the significance of contour lines. Pupils' mapping skills provide good support for a residential visit to Whitby, where pupils apply them in mapping sections of the town to determine land use. As a result, they reach valid conclusions on the local economy.
80. In lively discussion, pupils in Year 6 demonstrate their secure knowledge of the Lake District and the teacher helps them to identify useful links with the literature of the region. Pupils have a secure understanding of river basins and they make accurate comparisons between the climates of contrasting regions. Attainment is average, overall, with strengths in the development of geographic skills. The older pupils' written work, however, is often too brief and their grasp of subject vocabulary is insecure. Pupils in Year 6 make independent studies of chosen countries; their good interest in geography is evident and their files offer opportunities for useful comparative work.
81. The curriculum is effectively enriched by educational visits. The two subject managers provide good leadership in supporting colleagues and developing resources. Management of standards, however, is satisfactory overall. Assessment procedures are under-developed and because of this the tracking of individual achievement lacks precision. The subject supports numeracy development effectively, but could promote pupils' literacy skills more fully. Computers are insufficiently used to extend work in lessons but individual studies offer opportunities for independent research.

History

Provision in history is **very good**. High standards have been maintained well since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of teaching and learning are consistently good, and sometimes very good or excellent.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The curriculum is rich in content and imaginative in practice.
- The range of written work, by older pupils, does not always reflect their full abilities.

Commentary

82. Standards of attainment are above average by both Year 2 and Year 6 because staff show a strong interest in the subject, teaching is of high quality and an enriched curriculum which is taught with imagination. As a result, achievement is good, pupils work hard and rapidly acquire good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills.
83. The very good teaching in Years 1 and 2 ensures that pupils acquire a wide range of skills. They use evidence well to analyse cause and effect, numeracy skills to sequence events and literacy skills to write short summary accounts. An excellent lesson in Year 2, for example, led to rapid gains in the pupils' understanding of the time of the Great Fire of London.

Example of outstanding practice

In an outstanding lesson in Year 2, pupils achieved very good understanding as they were taken back in time to meet 'Samuel Pepys'.

The teacher took on the role of Samuel Pepys convincingly, dressed appropriately in clothes of the time. Pupils were in awe of the character, noting the cut of his outfit and his powdered wig; clearly a gentleman of importance. They listened quietly and asked questions respectfully. In discussion with 'Pepys', they quickly recognised the horror of the fire as London burned: a fire that respected neither master or servant, of no known cause, that was faithfully recorded by the diarist. Having listened to his account and his answers to their questions, the pupils joined him in offering thanks to God, for sparing his own humble dwelling and for sparing the life of the king. The teacher's exceptional skills engaged all pupils in re-living the events of the Great Fire of London and they made rapid gains in their understanding of its impact upon the buildings of the time and all classes of citizens.

84. In Years 3 to 6, good teaching continues to promote the subject well. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and how to teach it well. They draw effectively upon varied resources to engage the interest of pupils. By Year 6, pupils have a good sense of chronology, use evidence effectively and can identify motives for actions in the past. For example, in studying the Tudors, they use famous portraits to identify important events and discuss their significance well. Good use is made of census material to study their locality one hundred years ago. An educational visit to Whitby helps pupils compare the history of the town with their own locality, enabling them to recognise reasons for change over time. In work on Britain in the 20th century, pupils use skills of empathy well to recreate the lives of civilians in wartime and study artefacts to provide supporting evidence. Work in English on a novel set in wartime provides very good enrichment to the pupils' studies.
85. History is a strong subject within the school. A very good curriculum is provided that is considerably enriched by educational visits, speakers and special events within school. Self-assessment is encouraged, which helps pupils identify how to improve their work. Leadership and management are very good. Both subject managers are enthusiastic and possess considerable expertise. They use this to promote the subject very effectively, ensuring that standards are higher than in most schools.
86. The developing use of ICT broadens learning for pupils and provides good opportunities for independent research. However, some written work focuses too much on description without using evidence, and does not fully illustrate pupils' ability in analysis. Pupils do not always have a sufficient grasp of subject vocabulary; for example, not recognising such terms as 'primary' and 'secondary' sources of evidence.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only one lesson was seen in each of **art and design** and **design and technology** and little work was available to supplement this evidence. However, samples of work seen indicate that provision in both subjects is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, where standards are broadly average at the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, standards are much less secure and the few samples of work seen indicate that standards are not high enough in either subject by the end of Year 6.

Since the last inspection, standards have remained below average in design and technology and have fallen in art and design. This is said by the new headteacher, staff and governors to be because the curriculum in the school has given too little time to these subjects in the intervening years. Effective action plans are now in place but need more time to impact on standards, especially for the oldest pupils.

In **music** and **physical education**, insufficient evidence was available to make overall judgements but in the lessons observed, standards were higher than average. With a good range of activities arranged outside lessons, pupils with a specific interest in these subjects are able to advance their skills well.

Art and design

Provision is **satisfactory** for pupils in **Years 1 and 2**. The limited evidence available indicates that provision for pupils in **Years 3 to 6** is **unsatisfactory**, overall. Since the last inspection, standards by Year 2 have been maintained satisfactorily but standards have fallen by Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Samples of work in Year 2 indicate that standards are average.
- It is evident from teachers' planning that cohesive units of work are in place through the school but those for Years 5 and 6 do not tackle the subject in sufficient depth.
- Samples of pupils' work in Years 5 and 6 indicate that expectations for the older pupils are not high enough and, consequently, skills are under-developed.

Commentary

87. The quality of teaching and learning in the lesson observed in Year 2 was satisfactory and other samples of pupils' past work support this judgement. Pupils with special educational needs are given extra help where necessary to enable them to achieve well. A range of sensitively observed drawings in pencil and pastel indicate careful attention to detail and colour. Fruits, for example, are examined whole and in cross-section to produce drawings showing individual interpretations of the colours and shapes visible. Pupils' portraits, drawn of themselves or a friend, are captivating and show a subtle use of pastel colours. Work completed with the help of a computer program is more bold, following the style of Mondrian. In the lesson observed, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed studying examples of the portraits painted by Picasso and trying to make their own original designs representing faces, combining small pieces of their own portrait work with pieces of a digital photograph taken of the same person. Their interpretations were restricted to some extent by the limited information about Picasso's work given to them by the teacher. Nonetheless, pupils applied themselves conscientiously to the task in hand and achieved satisfactorily. Few examples of painting were evident although this is planned as a focus for later in the year. The curriculum is suitable and supports the development of a satisfactory range of skills.
88. For the pupils in Years 3 to 6, no lessons were observed so no overall judgements can be made on the quality of teaching. From samples of past work, it is evident that pupils'

attainment is of suitable quality by Year 4 but by Year 6, standards are below average. In Year 4, for example, pupils produce good examples of paintings of Tudor monarchs, with delicate detail of fabrics included and collage added effectively to highlight trimmings. Sensitive use of paint shades enhances the work and demonstrates good control of the medium. Pupils talk with interest about their work and what attracted them to portraying which monarch. In Year 6, the same quality of drawing and subtle representation of detail is not apparent. Pupils' representation of an autumn scene is simplistic for their age in the main although some pupils have clearly worked hard to compose and construct collage arrangements. Work in sketchbooks is very limited in quantity and does not provide a fund for future work. Pupils in Year 6 recall the names of several famous artists but find it difficult to provide basic details of their style of work. However, they remember with pleasure completing artwork linked to a residential visit and the art week held in school during the summer term to decorate the nursery's outdoor work area.

89. The new subject managers are aware of what action is needed to raise standards and have a suitable plan mapped out. Their enthusiasm and energy for tackling the work is infectious and staff are inspired to follow their lead. Useful units of study are in place although those for the older pupils lack sufficient challenge. A portfolio of past work has been introduced and is already providing a source of discussion on standards as an aim for the future. The subject managers have suitable training courses in hand and, wisely, are visiting local schools where practice is good to help establish suitable expectations throughout the school.

Design and technology

Provision is **unsatisfactory** overall, for pupils in Years 3 to 6. No overall judgement on provision can be made for pupils in Years 1 and 2 because no teaching was observed, but samples of work indicate that standards are average by the end of Year 2. Discussions with pupils in Year 6, together with a very limited range of evidence, show that their skills in the design and evaluation of products are below average, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. Improvement has been unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Samples of work in Year 2 indicate that standards are average.
- Discussions with pupils, staff and the limited amount of past work available indicate that standards are too low by Year 6 and pupils are not achieving enough.
- Some topics provided are mainly based on art and design rather than focusing on design and technology.
- A new curriculum has been introduced recently to support teachers in planning for the progressive development of skills and knowledge.

Commentary

90. No lessons could be observed in Years 1 and 2 so no overall judgements can be made on provision. Examples of pupils' work showed standards in Year 2 to be average. Due attention is paid to designing products in advance of making them. For example, pupils made labelled diagrams of a spider and a drainpipe with a winding mechanism before construction began. Products are constructed carefully and finished to a sound standard.
91. Very little work was available in Years 3 to 6 but discussions with pupils in Year 6, and with subject leaders, confirm that pupils make insufficient progress in developing their skills and that standards are below average, particularly in the design and evaluation of products. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection and there has been unsatisfactory improvement since that time. No pupils' designs, products or evaluations were available for Years 6 as evidence of current standards. Some teachers are confusing the skills of art and design with

those of design and technology, for example, in plans for the construction of an autumn collage in Year 6. Work made available from the previous Year 6 group was insufficient in quantity and quality of designs and evaluations. Discussions with pupils showed that they enjoy the subject and have used a sound range of materials and tools in making products during Years 3 to 5. However, they seem uncertain as to the difference between designs done as art and design or the designs for the more functional products that need to be completed for design and technology. Work seen in Year 5 on designing and making puppets, was average in terms of making skills but designs were too simplistic for this age group. Pupils report that they do not use computers in their design or evaluation work.

92. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching and learning in the one lesson observed, in Year 4, was very good. The teacher showed a clear understanding of the subject and built well on pupils' previous learning about mechanisms. Pupils showed that in this class they were able to select a mechanism and apply their skills to making a moving Christmas card. Pupils reflected on their work quietly, whilst Christmas music was played to support them in visualising their end products. The teacher reminded them of the need to consider the response of recipients to their Christmas messages and to be exact in their designs. Pupils were confident in attempting their initial designs and in questioning the teacher to clarify their ideas; they made very good progress in applying what they had previously learned to a real product.
93. A new curriculum is in place, which provides satisfactorily for the progressive development of skills. The new allocation of time is effective in that it allows pupils to complete the whole process of designing and making a product over a short period. This maintains the pupils' interest and motivation and provides a sense of personal achievement. However, it is often a considerable time, sometimes two terms, before the subject is taught again. This means that pupils do not build efficiently on their skills in designing, making or evaluating. The new subject managers have produced a satisfactory action plan for improvement. Training for their role in developing the subject is planned for next term and good use is being made of the recommendations of an external adviser.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**, showing very good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes good use of the advanced skills of staff.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good in Years 1 and 2 and in singing in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is excellent in Year 4, in the class of the teacher with an advanced skills qualification.
- There is very good provision for pupils to learn to play musical instruments and to take part in activities outside lessons.
- Music is used well to stimulate learning and personal development throughout the school.
- Leadership and management in the subject are very good.

Commentary

94. Because teaching is of a high standard, standards by the end of Year 2 are above average and most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. It was not possible to see all aspects of work by the end of Year 6 but it is evident that singing is above average and pupils achieve well. The pupils who are able to take advantage of the wide range of musical instrument tuition available achieve very well.
95. The school has worked very hard to raise the profile of music and to raise standards since the last inspection. Important factors in this success have been the work of the subject managers and the staff with expertise in music, including the significant impact of the teacher credited with advanced skills. The subject is led with inspiration and a high level of skill. Managers provide valuable support for class teachers and have a clear understanding of how the subject is to improve in order to raise standards further.
96. Music is a central feature of the life of the school. Recorded music is used consistently in all classes to focus learning in lessons and, at the appropriate time, to help to relax or stimulate pupils. This also helps pupils to appreciate a wide range of musical traditions. The school has well planned opportunities to link music with other subjects. Pupils in Year 4, for example, listened to visitors playing Tudor instruments and learned from them how to express themselves in Tudor dance, which they performed for parents. In a similar way, pupils in Year 3 combined ancient Egyptian music and customs in presenting their work to parents. Pupils in Year 6 combined literature with music for their performance of 'Romeo and Juliet'.
97. For the pupils who choose to take part, musical experience is further widened by a good range of after school clubs, such as the choir, orchestra and recorder players. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to play a wide range of musical instruments and many of these pupils reach high standards. Opportunities for pupils to play in the school orchestra help their skills in ensemble playing and raise standards further. Some pupils are recognised as gifted and the school introduces such pupils to additional practice groups outside school. All pupils have good opportunities to listen to and play alongside visiting musicians. Caribbean and Asian musicians, for example, have visited school and worked alongside classes. Pupils perform at local festivals and have opportunities throughout the year to perform in school assemblies and, at certain times, to perform for parents.
98. The teachers' very good subject knowledge means that they know how to challenge pupils well and work to extend their skills. In Year 2, for example, pupils used graphic symbols to represent sounds and composed music to accompany pictures. The teacher organised collaboration in groups in order to evaluate their work and to suggest improvements. In this way, pupils improved their composing and appraisal skills well, and increased their understanding of the musical elements. Teachers' high expectations and good management skills enabled pupils in Years 5 and 6 to improve their singing in three parts and to develop their

awareness of phrasing and musical expression to a higher than average level. Relationships are very good and this means that pupils are ready to have a go. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, pupils sang very confidently and with lively rhythm because the teacher welcomed their efforts and praised the specific features of their performance. The confidence generated by the teacher's very good expertise enabled pupils to use percussion and tuned orchestral instruments very well to follow notation.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent music lesson in Year 4

The teacher, recognised as having advanced skills in music, used her considerable subject knowledge and experience to challenge pupils in Year 4 to extend their understanding of rhythmic patterns and their use of notation. The lesson was very skilfully layered so that pupils built onto accretions of knowledge and skill to produce small group performances of steadily pulsed rhythmic patterns to a high standard. The teacher's very high expectations and outstanding organisation skills ensured an excellent pace to the lesson so that pupils worked very hard and enjoyed their high achievement. A significant feature of the lesson was that the skills of pupils of all abilities, including those proficient in string, brass and woodwind instruments, were combined with peers playing percussion instruments to produce imaginative and pleasing ensemble performances.

Physical Education

It is not possible to give an overall judgement on provision or on standards in physical education because only dance was observed and no lessons were observed in Year 6. In lessons observed in Years 1, 2 and 4, the quality of teaching and learning was very good, and sometimes excellent. Pupils' attainment in dance by Year 2 is above average and they achieve well. In a lesson observed in Year 4, similarly high standards were maintained. Teachers show very good subject knowledge and observe pupils closely so that they can advise them how to improve. Pupils in Year 2 show good control in their movements and perform sensitively in response to music. Teachers manage pupils very well so that they behave very well and work hard. This enabled pupils in Year 4 to execute a complicated Tudor dance with poise and good co-ordination. In Year 1, the teacher used pupils' demonstrations very effectively and encouraged pupils to evaluate their work. Consequently, they achieved very highly in responding to music on the theme of fireworks.

Example of outstanding practice

Excellent teaching was observed in a lesson in dance in Year 1.

Pupils worked very hard at their warm up exercises because they enjoyed the lively accompanying music. Pupils were inspired by the teacher's high expectations and, enlivened by appropriate music, were able to develop impressive sequences while imitating the movements of fireworks. The teacher recognised and praised pupils' strengths, adding to their confidence and their awareness of their own successes. They went on to make mature and sensitive evaluations of their work. Pupils are developing a very good spiritual awareness of the value of their own feelings and emotions expressed through dance. Excellent teaching led to excellent learning and achievement and prompted above average standards of attainment.

The school provides a very wide range of opportunities for pupils throughout the school to take part in extra curricular sporting activities. These include football, rugby, golf, skipping, netball, athletics, and karate skills. The school teams are very successful in competitive sport. Pupils in Year 4 take part in swimming lessons at a local pool. Most pupils learn to swim and many go on to reach high standards. The subject managers have good subject knowledge. They work hard to organise the subject and to support staff. They have a good understanding of the way ahead in order to raise standards. A review of teachers' planning indicates that all required aspects of the subject are taught.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The school is strongly committed to providing very well for the pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) and, through specific lessons and work across the whole curriculum, provision is **very good**. Through discussions in lessons in PSHCE and in subjects such as history and religious education, pupils learn to examine their own values, empathise with the feelings and viewpoints of others, and to balance factors which may impinge on the actions and choices of individuals. The school's very good ethos and the staff's success in supporting individuals provides a very effective model for a successful community. The very good opportunities pupils are given to express their own views, through class councils and the School Council, for example, develop their understanding of democratic decision-making.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	1
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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