

INSPECTION REPORT

COBDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Loughborough

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120097

Headteacher: Mr M Stevens

Lead inspector: Mrs G Beasley

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th June 2004

Inspection number: 255844

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 -11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 298 |
| School address: | Hume Street Loughborough Leicestershire |
| Postcode: | LE11 1AF |
| Telephone number: | 01509 263485 |
| Fax number: | 01509 238964 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr Bob Bailey |

Date of previous inspection: 15th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Cobden Primary School is situated in the centre of Loughborough. It is bigger than other primary schools with 298 boys and girls on roll including 54 children in the reception class who all attend full time. There are more boys than girls. A larger number of pupils than average join the school at times other than in the reception class. Pupils come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Almost half are of Bangladeshi heritage and almost half of white UK heritage. A smaller number are of other ethnic backgrounds including Chinese, other Asian and mixed heritage. Forty-two pupils are at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language. This is very high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. Seven pupils have a statement of their need and this is average. Overall attainment on entry to the school is below average. There is a well above average number of pupils who have free school meals. Most pupils come from social backgrounds that are generally less favourable than usual. The school has a community room attached in recognition of the social diversity of the local area. The school is part of the local Sure Start initiative to provide additional education for children under five, and is part of the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools, which focuses on helping schools to raise pupils' achievement. After a period of uncertainty, in which the school had four headteachers in one year, the current permanent head took up post just over a year ago.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 27899 | Mrs G Beasley | Lead inspector | Mathematics, science, design and technology, music, physical education, special educational needs |
| 19693 | Mrs S Hall | Lay inspector | |
| 22896 | Mrs K McGuiness | Team inspector | Religious education, geography, history, provision for children in the Foundation Stage |
| 32367 | Mrs J Pike | Team inspector | English, art and design, information and communication technology |
| 32483 | Mrs K Chandler | Team inspector | English as an additional language |

The inspection contractor was:

e-Qualitas Limited

Langshaw
Pastens Road
Limpsfield Chart
Oxted
Surrey
RH8 0RE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Cobden Primary School is a community of very rich and diverse cultures, where pupils get on together in harmony because of the very good relationships with each other and with adults. Provision for personal development is good. Achievement is satisfactory overall due to satisfactory teaching and learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school gives **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Attendance is poor and many pupils do not get to school on time
- Pupils in some classes are not given enough opportunities to develop their own ideas and investigate independently
- Learning is good in the reception classes and all children achieve well
- The school provides good opportunities for personal development so pupils have good attitudes and behaviour
- Standards and achievement in ICT are unsatisfactory because resources are unreliable, but good in speaking and listening, art and design and in religious education (RE)
- Some teachers do not always use assessment information to consistently plan work that challenges all pupils, especially in Years 1 to 4, and use targets so pupils know how to improve their work
- Provision for special educational needs is very good and these pupils achieve well
- The school's plan for improvement does not look forward far enough and is not focused precisely enough on how it intends to improve pupils' achievement
- The head and deputy provide caring leadership and have established an ethos where everyone works together for the benefit of pupils

Improvement since the previous inspection in June 1998 is satisfactory. Weaknesses remain in ICT provision because resources are unreliable. Provision for children in the reception classes, and in art and design and RE, has improved. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given good support so standards and achievement in speaking and listening are good. The quality of teaching and learning is still inconsistent in some classes, although it is more consistent in mathematics. Governors ensure all statutory requirements are met.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Children start school with skills that are lower than those found nationally. They achieve well to attain the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year in all areas of learning except their literacy skills. This improvement is now being reflected in higher standards at the end of Year 2.

Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Standards seen during the inspection are average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are below average in science because not enough pupils get to the higher than average levels of which they are capable. This is because planned activities rarely take enough account of what pupils already know.

Year 6 results

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| English | D | E | E* | E* |
| mathematics | E | E | E | E |

| | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|
| Science | D | E | D | D |
|---------|---|---|---|---|

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.

Results in 2003 national tests were very low in English which put the school in the bottom five percent of schools nationally. They were well below average in mathematics and below average in science. Although achievement looks poor since Year 2, many of these pupils joined the school in Years 4 and 5, a significant number had special educational needs and several displayed disruptive behaviour. In addition, the poor attendance of a significant number of pupils affects the school's results. Pupils' achievement seen during the inspection in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Standards have improved although they are still below average at the end of Year 6. Higher attaining pupils are not always given the challenging work they need in English and science in Years 1 to 4 to reach the higher than average standards of which many are capable. It is better in most classes in Years 5 and 6 because teachers use a wider range of learning and teaching techniques which give pupils more responsibility for their own learning.

Good focus is given to developing speaking and listening skills so all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language achieve well in this aspect. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support in lessons so they achieve well. Achievement is good in art and design and religious education and standards are above average at the end of Year 6. Standards in history, geography and physical education meet expected levels and achievement is satisfactory.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils listen well in lessons and behave well in and around the school. Too many parents fail to send their children to school regularly so attendance is poor. Too many pupils are late every day, which is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Both are good in the reception classes, and in most classes in Years 5 and 6. There is a positive atmosphere in all classes throughout the school and pupils enjoy learning. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, although the information is not always used effectively to plan work which builds on pupils' previous learning. In some classes pupils are not given enough responsibility to plan their own learning. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in lessons.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is enriched effectively through visits and visitors and a good range of extra curricular activities. The school's systems for making sure pupils are cared for and kept safe are very good. Support and guidance is good. Links with parents are satisfactory. They are good with the local community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory. He has focused on developing a strong ethos during his first year in post. He has established very good relationships and is now poised to focus on improving pupils' achievement. Overall, key staff carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily. There are strengths in the leadership and management of the reception year, special educational needs and English as an additional language. Plans for the school's development contain a number of weaknesses including too little emphasis on how to raise pupils' achievement, do not show clearly how to measure success and do not cover a long enough length of time. Induction and staff training are good. The governing body give satisfactory support and challenge to the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold positive views of the school. Pupils like the school and those who attend regularly look forward to lessons and other activities. Practical subjects like art and design, physical education and

design and technology are particular favourites. All pupils feel safe and say that any small problems that do occur are nipped in the bud very quickly by all staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Establish more effective systems for improving attendance and punctuality
- Identify on lesson plans precisely what and how pupils will learn. Widen the range of learning styles and develop more opportunities for pupils to investigate and try out their own ideas
- Raise standards and achievement in ICT
- Establish and implement an effective plan that outlines in detail how the school intends to improve pupils' achievement and how it will measure its success
- Use assessment information consistently to plan work at the right level for all pupils and use targets more effectively so pupils know how to improve their own work

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the reception year is good and standards are average by the time children start in Year 1. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Standards are below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception classes achieve well
- Poor attendance by a small number of pupils affects the school's results significantly
- Achievement in art and design, religious education and speaking and listening is good
- Standards and achievement in information and communication technology (ICT)) are not high enough
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well
- Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough in science in some classes in Years 1 to 4

Commentary

Foundation stage

1. Children start school with skills that are below average overall. A significant number have language skills and personal development which are well below average. They all achieve well, and most children reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year in nearly all areas of learning. A small number of children do better than this. Many children still do not reach the goals in their speaking skills because their starting point is so low. The improvement in provision is resulting in higher standards at the end of Year 2 because the children start Year 1 ready to learn.

Key stage 1

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading | 14.6 (15.0) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| Writing | 14.6 (13.2) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| Mathematics | 15.2 (15.6) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Standards have been falling for a few years in reading and mathematics although in the 2003 national tests, they were higher than at the time of the last inspection. Standards seen during the inspection are average in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because most pupils reach average levels. A good number of pupils almost, but not quite, reached the above average levels this year and this resulted in the higher standards and achievement. Standards in speaking and listening remain below average because many pupils still do not have the vocabulary they need to explain their thinking without considerable support. Teachers assessed a very high number of pupils gaining the average level 2 in science last year but very few pupils were assessed higher than this. Although an appropriate number of pupils were assessed at the higher levels this year, work in books and the lessons seen during the inspection indicate that pupils do not achieve this level in their investigation skills. Lessons focus too much on the content to be remembered rather than the skills to be developed, and work is not always challenging enough for higher attaining pupils. Standards in religious education meet expected levels and achievement is satisfactory.

Key stage 2

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 22.6 (23.8) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| Mathematics | 24.7 (25.5) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| Science | 28.2 (27.2) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory despite the poor attendance by a significant number of pupils. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 have risen since the last inspection. However, when compared to schools nationally and with similar schools, standards were very low in English, and put the school in the bottom five percent of schools nationally last year. They were well below average in mathematics and below average in science. Nearly half of this year group joined the school since Year 2, and many had special educational needs especially associated with their behaviour. Despite this, those who attended regularly achieved satisfactorily.
4. This year's results are looking much better and are a significant improvement on last year. Standards seen in Year 6 during the inspection support this improvement. Despite many pupils joining the school since Year 2, this year group have fewer pupils with special educational needs and their attendance has been slightly better so many have benefited from the good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Standards remain below average in English, mathematics and science. A satisfactory number reach the average levels, but fewer pupils do better than this. However, again, when looking at results, a significant number miss this higher level by a whisker. This reflects satisfactory achievement overall since these pupils started school, and there are signs that things are improving.
5. Good focus is given to developing pupils speaking and listening skills, so achievement in this aspect is good by the end of Year 6 and standards meet expected levels. This is particularly beneficial to those pupils who speak English as an additional language and, consequently, there is no difference in achievement between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils achieve well in religious education and at the end of Year 6, standards are above those expected.
6. Standards are above average in art and design at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is good. Standards in history are average at the end of Year 6. They are average in physical education and geography at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 reflecting satisfactory achievement in these subjects. Standards are below average in ICT and achievement is unsatisfactory. No judgement was made about standards and achievement in music and design and technology at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and history at the end of Year 2 because they were not inspected.
7. Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve well in the reception classes. Achievement is satisfactory overall in the rest of the school. Good support as soon as pupils join the school ensures that they catch up quickly and soon learn as well as others in lessons. The needs of the younger pupils at the early stages of learning English are well met through the support of specialist bilingual staff who encourage them constantly, individually and in small groups, to develop their listening and speaking skills. This is particularly important when the children first start school as the use of a familiar language helps them settle in and understand what is going on more quickly. This support continues as pupils move through the school so by the time they get to the end of Year 6 most are attaining average levels in this aspect of English.
8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Adults working with them know their targets in their individual education plans so they get the focused support they need in lessons to succeed.

Most pupils who attend school regularly reach average levels in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is poor and punctuality is unsatisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance levels are far too low
- Relationships are very good and there is a high level of racial harmony
- Pupils are interested in their work
- Pupils respond well to the school's strong moral code and behave well
- A significant minority of parents are not bringing their children to school on time
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to discover things for themselves and try out new ideas

Commentary

9. The provision for pupils' personal development has improved since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. Pupils have maintained their good attitudes and behaviour. Attendance has seriously declined since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. Punctuality remains unsatisfactory.
10. The attendance rates for the year 2002/03 are very low when compared to other primary schools and the rates of unauthorised absences are much higher than the national average. The figures for the current year show very little improvement. These long term and sporadic absences are having a negative impact on the school's results and these pupils' achievement is poor. About half the absences are due to parents keeping children off school when they are not ill, for example for family holidays. Attendance is marked correctly in the registers, but there are inconsistencies in the way in which teachers are marking absences, particularly when they are not due to illness. Although the school works hard at tackling very poor attendance, it has paid little attention to monitoring attendance which is beginning to decline and where immediate action may nip the problem in the bud.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data: | 8.2 | School data: | 0.7 |
| 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.

11. Although the school regularly reminds parents about the importance of pupils arriving promptly at school, there are still too many families who drift into school after the start of the day and pupils are missing important elements of their learning.
12. Pupils enjoy coming to school and want to do well. In lessons most pupils are enthusiastic learners and enjoy challenging tasks. They listen carefully to their teachers and are keen to answer questions. Pupils particularly enjoy practical lessons, such as art and design, physical education and design and technology. Pupils enjoy participating in the enrichment activities such as science club and school visits, which develop their social and personal skills well.
13. Staff have consistent and high expectations of behaviour and are good role models. Nearly all pupils respond well to the system of rewards and understand the consequences of their actions if they misbehave. A significant minority of parents who returned the questionnaire had concerns about bullying, but discussions with parents, pupils and staff found that rare incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly. Pupils learn the importance of reporting any anti-social behaviour to their teachers through assemblies and class discussions. As a result, anti-social behaviour is rare.
14. There were five exclusions last year, one of these was permanent. They were all in Year 6 and due to incidents of violent and disruptive behaviour.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | <i>Exclusions in the last school year</i> | |
|---|----------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| | | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
| White – British | 106 | 2 | 1 |
| White – any other White background | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 9 | 1 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Pakistani | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 88 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| No ethnic group recorded | 2 | 0 | 0 |

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

15. The school is successful in supporting and respecting all its members, so relationships are very good and a strength of the school. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds work and play together amicably, whilst respecting each other's cultures and beliefs. Racial abuse of any kind is very rare because of the harmonious atmosphere which exists.
16. Some teachers are skilled at developing pupils' self esteem and create an atmosphere where pupils are willing to contribute their ideas without fear of failure. However, too often, teachers give pupils too much support and information and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to discover things for themselves or try out their ideas. Assemblies and the end of the day are used well to celebrate success and pupils are given very good opportunities in religious education lessons to reflect on their own and others' beliefs. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to reflect on their work in other subjects.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory. It is enriched well by a wide range of visits, visitors and clubs, and good links with the local community. Links with parents are satisfactory overall, although relationships are very good. The school provides very good care for its pupils.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good in the reception classes and in some classes in Years 5 and 6, and for pupils with special educational needs. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in the reception classes and in some classes in Years 5 and 6 are good
- Some teachers do not use assessment information effectively in a few subjects to plan work to challenge higher attaining pupils
- Some lessons do not give pupils wide enough scope to learn in a variety of ways, to investigate things for themselves and try out ideas
- Relationships are very good so the learning ethos in all classes is very positive
- Pupils with special educational needs get good support in lessons and their needs are met well
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well in lessons
- Pupils do not have enough idea about how to improve their own work

Commentary

17. Teaching and learning have improved satisfactorily since the previous inspection. Considerably less unsatisfactory teaching was seen this time and the proportion of lessons judged to be good or better was higher. The quality of teaching and learning is good in both reception classes and in some classes in Years 5 and 6 because teachers use assessment information well to build on what pupils already know and can do. Lessons use a range of different ways for pupils to learn so they are all motivated to investigate and solve problems, and find things out for themselves.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 0 (0%) | 6 (16%) | 14 (37%) | 15 (39%) | 3 (8%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |

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

18. Learning in some classes throughout the school is exciting and varied. This is consistently so in both reception classes and in some classes in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are expected to develop independence and to take the responsibility for planning and organising the way in which they will complete an activity. Pupils often work together in groups to solve problems and this develops their ability to work collaboratively well. The very good number of teaching assistants ensures that those pupils who need it are supported well when they work on their group tasks. This ensures pupils with special educational needs in particular learn and achieve well.
19. Teachers work incredibly hard to make lessons interesting. They do this by using a range of resources to capture the pupils' attention and make sure that they are interested enough to listen. When practical activities are used, these are successful because pupils are involved throughout lessons. The very good relationships ensure a very positive learning climate so all pupils are keen to learn. They concentrate and listen well as a result. Constant interaction between teachers and pupils through questions and discussions, gives ample opportunity to assess whether pupils know what is expected of them and how well they understand what are sometimes challenging ideas. Pupils are given good opportunities to explain their ideas and what they are thinking so achievement is good in speaking and listening skills. This was particularly successful in mathematics lessons seen throughout the school and in history in Years 5 and 6. When information from assessments is used to make sure that pupils do different work based on previous learning, good and at times very good achievement results.
20. On the other hand, in some classes and some subjects lessons focus too much on pupils learning facts. The way pupils are expected to learn is based too narrowly on pupils listening and the completion of worksheets. These are at different levels in mathematics so learning is

satisfactory. However, in some subjects and classes, including PE and science, pupils do the same thing regardless of previous knowledge and understanding. This means higher attaining pupils in particular waste time doing work they can already do. Work in books does reflect some opportunities for pupils to develop subject specific skills, but in some classes and subjects these are not identified clearly enough on planning. As a result, pupils are often regurgitating facts and do not have enough opportunity to practise skills. There are often good opportunities to review how well pupils have done at the ends of lessons, and to check whether they have learned what they should. However, except for writing and for pupils with special educational needs, there are no targets for improvement and so pupils are not always clear about what they should do to improve their work.

21. Specialist staff provide good teaching for pupils with English as an additional language. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when teaching and learning for pupils who speak English as an additional language was criticised. They plan with class teachers to provide work which focuses on pupils' needs and work alongside teachers in the classroom to promote the use of effective resources and strategies. Teaching and learning are less effective when opportunities for the development of pupils' English language skills in other subjects is not identified on teachers' planning.

The curriculum

The range and quality of the curriculum are satisfactory. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The enrichment of the curriculum is good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links are made between different subjects to make learning meaningful
- Visits, visitors and clubs enrich the curriculum well
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well across the curriculum
- The curriculum for children in the reception classes provides a good start for pupils
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good
- The quality of the ICT resources is unsatisfactory

Commentary

22. There has been satisfactory improvement in the quality of the curriculum since the last inspection. The two-year plan ensures that pupils cover what they should in nearly all subjects. This is more difficult in ICT because the lack of reliable computers and other equipment leads to pupils not covering the planned curriculum as often as they should.
23. Links with other subjects makes the curriculum interesting and relevant. The wealth of the pupils' cultural and religious heritages is used very effectively to make learning meaningful for all pupils. For instance, in the work undertaken on Bangladesh, pupils covered work in religious education, art and geography to learn about features of Islam and compare different homes and ways of life. Good use is made of the local environment, particularly to support learning in local history and geography.
24. Visits to the local church, the mosque and the temple enhance achievement in religious education and pupils' understanding of their own and others' beliefs and faiths. Pupils enjoy learning about the work of various people in the community, including fire fighters and the school nurse. The curriculum provides satisfactory opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills are good. The school does what it can to develop pupils' ICT skills in a range of subjects with the limiting resources it has.

25. There is a good range of extra curricular clubs which enhance pupils' learning well. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in a number of sporting events and this makes a significant contribution to their skills of co-operation and working as a team. Homework club is well supported to extend pupils' learning and a range of activities, such as science and art clubs, are well attended. All these opportunities make a good contribution to pupils' social development.
26. Pupils with special educational needs are given a very good range of curriculum opportunities to reach the targets outlined in their individual education plans. A very good number of learning assistants are always at hand in lessons to support those pupils who need it. Adults know the curriculum well so are able to give the support pupils need to achieve well. A focus on developing speaking ensures that pupils new to English soon learn to talk about their personal experiences and benefit from the planned curriculum. This ensures that they soon catch up with others in the class.

27. The curriculum for children in the reception classes is well planned and focuses on relevant structured play-based activities. It emphasises the development of skills and encourages independence so the children gain a lot from the rich range of experiences. Visitors enhance the curriculum well. For example, a visit from the new site manager to talk about his job enthused the children to write about what he does in school. The outdoor area is still being developed so is not used as often as it could be to support learning in all areas of learning.
28. Personal, social and health education and citizenship is included regularly on the timetable. This ensures pupils learn about themselves and develop a good awareness of drugs misuse and how to lead a healthy life. Pupils get good opportunity to talk about those things that directly affect them and consider how their actions affect others.
29. Accommodation is satisfactory and well maintained. Staff work hard to create an environment which is vibrant. Displays of pupils' work celebrate their achievements and secure high levels of self-esteem. The library has recently been established and is beginning to be used by pupils and adults. Its position by the pupils' entrance makes sure everyone is aware of its existence. Pupils get regular opportunity to borrow books but as yet are not using the facility as often as they could. Resources for ICT are unsatisfactory. Computers regularly break down because batteries are unreliable. It takes time to set up the laptops and this adds additional workload onto teachers' preparation time. Resources in other subjects are sufficient to teach the planned curriculum. They are good in the Foundation Stage, religious education and music. This signifies good improvement in music when the range of musical instruments was identified as too narrow at the previous inspection.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for health, safety, care and welfare is very good. Provision for support, advice and guidance is good. Involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school pays very good attention to health and safety
- Pastoral care is at the heart of the school
- Support and guidance for pupils with English as an additional language are good. They are very good for those with special educational needs
- The arrangements for the induction of children into the reception classes are good
- Pupils do not always have enough guidance on how to improve their work

Commentary

30. Arrangements for the care of pupils have improved since the last inspection when the overall judgement was that it was satisfactory.
31. Staff and governors endeavour to provide a healthy and safe environment for the pupils. Risk assessments are undertaken for visits and for the premises. The head teacher and deputy have had relevant training in child protection and carry out their duties effectively. Staff are aware of the school's child protection policy and know to report any concerns to the designated officer. Arrangements for first aid are very good and parents are kept informed when their children are injured.
32. This is a school which welcomes everyone so members of the school community show high levels of care and concern for each other. The results of the pupil questionnaires and discussions with pupils indicate that nearly all pupils feel they can talk to a member of staff if they need help. The head teacher is very supportive of families where pupils have particular difficulties. Teachers and support staff know and support the pupils well. They track the progress of the pupils' personal development, celebrate their achievements and make

valuable comments in the pupils' annual reports. Teachers talk to pupils regularly about what they have done in lessons and this helps pupils understand how well they have done. However, many do not generally give pupils enough advice and opportunities to think about what they need to do to improve their work. Targets are identified in writing and written in a way that enables pupils to remember them easily. They give clear guidance to pupils about how they can improve. These are not yet in place for other subjects.

33. Staff regularly carry out careful assessments of how well pupils with special educational needs are doing and the information is used effectively to identify relevant targets in their individual education plans. These targets are shared with pupils and parents so that they have a good understanding of how well they are doing and know what they need to do to improve. Pupils who speak English as an additional language have their needs regularly assessed to make sure they are making the progress they should and that the support they are given is relevant to their particular needs.
34. Parents value the induction arrangements for children into the reception classes and feel that their children settle into school quickly as a result. Through visits to the school, meetings and information, new pupils and their families are welcomed into school. Staff make home visits when necessary where individual concerns can be discussed. Parents find these beneficial because they help them to get to know the school and its work better. Links with the local playgroups are good.
35. Teachers listen to pupils and value their comments in lessons. Some members of the school council are keen to bring about improvements in school life and their opinions are acted upon. For example, pupils discussed their concerns about school meals with the catering manager and changes were made in the light of the schools' commitment to the Healthy Schools initiative.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are satisfactory overall, and relationships are very good. Links with the community and other schools are good. The school has improved its links with the community which were satisfactory at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works hard to welcome parents into school
- The school has not been successful in ensuring that all parents value the importance of their children attending school
- The school has developed beneficial links with local employers
- Pupils' transfer to secondary school is well managed

Commentary

36. The school is committed to making parents feel welcome in school and staff are very approachable. Both before and after school, parents and carers are invited into the classroom and there are good opportunities to discuss any minor concerns with teachers. The head teacher is regularly in the playground at the start and end of the day and this gives parents good opportunities to talk informally with him, as well as making formal appointments if they wish. Parents are very keen to attend meetings to find out how well their children are doing, but attendance at meetings that provide information about how subjects are taught is poor. A minority of parents come into school to read with their children and to attend SWAP (school welcomes all parents) and both these activities help them to become more involved in their children's learning. The school provides parents with satisfactory information about the school and how their children are getting on.
37. The home-school liaison officer offers an effective link between home and school. She works closely with families, particularly those whose mother tongue is not English. She makes beneficial home visits, provides a useful translation service and organises valuable courses such as those that

develop personal literacy skills and subsequent guidance on how to support their children at home. She promptly follows up absence, encouraging parents to understand the importance of regular attendance, and makes home visits to offer help and guidance to families who find it difficult to get their children to school.

38. Despite the school's success in developing very good relationships with parents, a significant minority of parents do not value the importance of their children attending school. Parents are keeping their children off school for reasons other than illness and these high rates of absence are having a detrimental effect on these pupils' achievement and the school's results.
39. The school's good links with the community enrich the curriculum well. The school embraces the rich diversity of cultures found in the local community for example through its Carnival and celebration of world faith festivals. Pupils gain valuable insights into the world of work. As part of their learning, children in the reception classes talked with members of local services to find out about their jobs and older pupils worked alongside local scientists at science club and during science week. Local employees also volunteer to provide valuable support in hearing pupils read. Local heritage is celebrated by visits to places of worship and studies of historical buildings.
40. Through suitable partnerships with local schools, the school works closely with other professionals to discuss the curriculum and make sure that the receiving schools have all the information they need to build on pupils' learning. Staff benefit from joint training opportunities. Transfer arrangements are good and prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. The development of a neighbourhood nursery in the school's grounds is planned to strengthen the already effective provision for pupils under five and those who speak English as an additional language.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. The leadership of other key staff and overall management of the school are satisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher and the staff team, has successfully created a caring ethos in the school which welcomes and includes everyone
- Governors ensure that the school meets all the statutory requirements
- All staff benefit from good professional development and the induction of new staff is effective
- Strategic planning requires improvement because it does not identify how the school intends to improve pupils' achievement over time
- The school does not evaluate how well it does rigorously enough
- Leadership and management of special educational needs and English as an additional language are very good

Commentary

41. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory. Following a period of uncertainty when the school had four headteachers in one year, the current permanent headteacher began to consolidate the school's positive ethos. He has quickly gained the support of staff, governors and parents through his open and welcoming approach. As a result, standards of care are very good, and parents feel welcome in the school. Relationships are very harmonious because the different cultures reflected in the local community are valued and celebrated throughout the school. The school is now poised to build on this and identify how it intends to improve pupils' achievement.

42. Governors know the school and community well. They support the school's caring ethos, and its desire to work closely with the community, well. They know the school's current priorities because they contribute to the draft improvement plan. However, they are not fully aware of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning and have not had enough opportunities to become involved in shaping the future direction of the school until recently. The governing body is diligent in ensuring that statutory requirements are met, including the information to parents in the prospectus and annual report to parents. Everyday financial management is good. However, strategic financial planning is weak, because the school improvement plan does not identify clearly enough how much improvements will cost over time. The school makes sure that when spending money they make careful comparisons to get the best value they can from funds. However, the development plan does not identify in enough detail how the school will measure its successes, so secure comparisons of how well funds have been spent are difficult to make.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Total income | 824,418 | Balance from previous year | 61205 |
| Total expenditure | 869,992 | Balance carried forward to the next | 15631 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2919 | | |

43. New staff quickly feel part of the team, because of the effective procedures for induction. These ensure that all staff know the way the school works and their role in it. Staff training is considered very important so teachers and teaching assistants attend many relevant courses which support the schools and their own development well. The staff work effectively as a team and support each other well.
44. The school improvement plan is not based on a rigorous analysis of pupil performance so does not identify all the key priorities for improvement. It does not look forward far enough so does not outline precisely what the school wants to achieve. The current priorities do not focus enough on how to raise standards and improve pupils' achievement. The new assessment system is beginning to provide a useful way of tracking pupils' progress and provide information on strengths and weaknesses in English and mathematics. The effectiveness can be seen in rising standards of speaking and listening, writing and mathematics. The information is not yet linked sufficiently well to improving achievement in other subjects.
45. Leadership of other key staff is satisfactory. The role of subject leaders has recently been developed, but this is new so their effectiveness is not yet resulting in higher standards in some subjects. Checks are made to ensure that relevant resources are available to support teaching and the curriculum is organised to ensure pupils cover what they should. Learning in lessons, and teachers' planning and marking are checked regularly but this is not yet rigorous enough, so inconsistencies remain. Subject improvement plans cover one year only and focus on the development of teaching rather than learning. They do not identify clearly enough how improvements will be measured because specific outcomes are not detailed enough.
46. The management of provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. Priorities for improvement are included in the school development plan and consequently support is deployed effectively across the school. Resources and staff training have been particularly well managed to the benefit of pupils' learning. Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and teaching assistants play an equal role in this and ensure that pupils get the support they need in lessons. Paperwork is up to date and relevant. Very good links with

outside experts ensure that pupils get regular up to date provision for their needs and that they achieve well.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the foundation stage is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Systems for welcoming children into school are good
- Teaching and learning are good and all children achieve well
- The outdoor area is not used often enough to support activities in all areas of learning
- Assessments procedures are good and the information is used to plan activities matched well to the children's needs

Commentary

47. Most children come into school with skills below those expected for their age. A significant number arrive at school with standards well below average, particularly in language and personal development. The carefully planned programme to welcome the children into school ensures they settle in quickly and happily. Visits to children's homes and the playgroups build good liaison with home and playgroups and help the children feel secure and look forward to coming to school. Parents are encouraged to participate in their children's learning. Many come into school with their children every morning and attend a more formal weekly session which helps them find out more about the things their children do and how they learn. Children and parents are clear about the routines and what is expected of them. Consequently, the beginning of each day starts with the children being fully involved in a range of learning activities. As a result, they quickly start to achieve well and by the end of the year most children reach the expected learning goals in nearly all areas of learning. The improvement in provision since the previous inspection is contributing to the higher standards at the end of Year 2 because children start Year 1 ready to learn.
48. Adults who work in the reception classes work together well as a team. The regular weekly meetings ensure that adults share information and planning, and activities match the children's individual needs well. Children with special educational needs are given the support they need to develop important skills, and those who speak English as an additional language quickly learn to hold conversations with others. Adults use praise effectively to encourage children to organise themselves and be responsible for their choice of activity. This gives them a good start to becoming independent learners. Adults ask questions which help children to think for themselves and this is helping them to develop a good understanding of how well they are doing. Opportunities for them to identify the next steps in their learning are not a regular feature although children are often invited at the end of sessions to review what they have done.
49. The curriculum is well planned and there are good links made between the areas of learning. This ensures that learning means something to the children. The learning environment is stimulating, bright and well organised so that children can get the things they need for their learning. Although the outdoor area is used well at playtimes and lunchtimes to develop the children's physical and social skills, it is not used sufficiently well at other times to support learning in a wide enough range of activities. Leadership and management are good. The two-year development plan identifies relevant priorities and is focused on raising achievement. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths

- The quality of relationships is very good
- Children gain a great deal of confidence and motivation
- There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to gain independence
- Children learn to work well together and to co-operate with others

Commentary

50. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good. Many children start school with below average skills. A significant number have skills lower than this. All children achieve very well and by the end of the reception year, nearly all reach the expected goals in this area of learning. Within the caring ethos most are encouraged to learn to express their feelings and to value their own and others' efforts. As a result, children become confident to try out new things and ask for help when it is needed. All children choose activities confidently and talk readily to adults about their tasks and what they are doing. They are clear about what is expected of them and learn to take turns and look after resources such as books, games and toys very well, returning them to their place afterwards when asked. During registration and at circle times, because of gentle encouragement, all but the most reluctant children contribute in discussions. After activities, children are given regular opportunities to discuss what and how well they have done, and this is helping them gain some insight into their own learning.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is good.

Main strengths

- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed well
- Children learning to speak English as an additional language get very good support
- Activities to promote reading and writing skills are well matched to the children's interests and abilities

Commentary

51. Many children arrive at school lacking the language skills expected for their age. Achievement is good although by the end of the year only about half of the children reach the expected goals in this area of learning. A few children do better than this. Adults assess what the children can do carefully and use the information to plan suitable activities. Consequently, learning is always relevant and matched well to individual needs. The significant proportion of children who start school with very little knowledge of English get very good support from teachers and teaching assistants and are soon able to hold conversations and know what is expected. Adults encourage good speaking and listening skills and children use new vocabulary and express ideas with enthusiasm. They talk to children on a regular basis about their work and play, questioning closely to develop the words the children need to talk about what they are doing. However, many are still not able to explain what they have done without a considerable amount of support. Early reading and writing skills are developed through a good range of relevant play and more formal activities. All children enjoy the wide range of stories, rhymes and books and the practical games and activities which help them to learn and practise their letter sounds. Adults encourage and challenge them with good questioning and sensitive intervention so they are confident in using letter sounds to work out new words by the time they start Year 1. Children write their names under their photographs every morning and through this simple activity, they soon recognise their own name and form the letters in these correctly. More able children have begun to write clear sentences and use a range of skills to try new spellings with confidence.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is good.

Main strengths

- Adults use a wide range of practical and structured opportunities to extend learning
- Children have great interest in using mathematical language

Commentary

52. Children enjoy mathematical experiences within a rich and interesting environment. The good teaching ensures that children have many opportunities to develop mathematical ideas about shape, size and capacity as well as number. They recognise and name the shapes that they use when constructing models and apply their knowledge well. For example, in a dance lesson a child commented that the circle the class had been asked to form looked more like an oval. A range of resources and materials are used effectively to teach children how to compare weights. So at the end of a session using play dough in different quantities they were able to accurately say which were the heavier and lighter. They practise their number skills during story sessions, when the register is being taken and throughout the day. Consequently they make good progress in developing counting skills. They read and write numbers to ten and find the programs they need on the computer to investigate number bonds. All children achieve well and by the end of the year most reach the expected goals in this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children benefit from a wide range of well-planned experiences in and out of school
- Teachers make effective links to other areas of the curriculum and this has a positive impact on children's language and mathematical development

Commentary

53. During their year in the reception classes, children find out about how various living things grow through a range of practical activities, including growing plants and investigating small creatures that live immediately outside the classrooms and going on well-planned visits. They recall well the life cycle of frogs and the visit to the farm, carefully timed to coincide with the hatching of chicks, so this remains a vivid memory. Teaching is good, so children achieve well. Adults value children's current interests and personal experiences and take these into account when planning activities. As a result, learning about growth becomes very meaningful. For example, because one of the children had lots of news and information about a baby brother that was due, the role-play area became a pre-natal clinic. A visit from the premises officer sparked off an interest about a range of tools and how these are used. Consequently, children acted out the role, selecting the tools they need to assemble models of buildings and vehicles. Computers are always readily available for the children to use and they find what they need independently from the small range of programs offered. Teachers use walks in the locality to look at old and new buildings and children consequently talk about and compare these with confidence. Children are gaining a good knowledge of other cultures and faiths through visits to the mosque, the church and the temple.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are good and provide good opportunities for children to explore and create

- The outdoor provision is not used effectively to support the children's creative development

Commentary

54. The experiences that many of the children enjoy in playgroups are further extended and built on when they are in the reception classes. Children are suitably supported and encouraged to respond to what they hear, see, touch and feel in a variety of ways. They choose confidently from a range of materials to make pictures of various water scenes and the colours and textures in their finished collages accurately depict seaside views. Good use is made of stories and visual aids to stimulate children's imaginations. They think hard about what it could be like underwater and explore these ideas well in paintings. A visit from a guide dog with its blind companion was followed up well by teachers, encouraging children to close their eyes and listen and describe a variety of changing sounds. Through a range of musical activities, children recognise repeated sound patterns and enjoy making a musical pattern on a xylophone to match their names. They sing a good range of familiar songs confidently and enjoy participating in musical and role-play activities. Their achievement is satisfactory and most attain the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is satisfactory.

Main strengths

- Children have suitable opportunities to cut, paint, draw and write through formal and play activities
- The outdoor area is used well at playtimes and lunchtimes to develop the children's physical skills

Commentary

55. Children hold and use a variety of tools, such as paintbrushes, scissors and construction materials safely and with dexterity. When moving around the classroom and when outside on the playground, they show a suitable awareness of space as they organise their games and form circles and lines. When running and riding trikes outside, they show a good awareness of their own and others' safety, taking care not to bump into each other in the small space available. They explore aspects of healthy foods as they look at different fruits. By the end of the reception year, most reach the goals expected for their age. Achievement is satisfactory.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in their speaking and listening skills
- Reading skills are not always taught systematically, particularly in Years 3 to 6
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well
- Standards in writing are improving
- Poor attendance by a small number of pupils affects the school's results significantly
- Some teachers' planning concentrates too much on what pupils will do rather than what and how they will learn
- Teachers manage behaviour effectively so that classrooms are calm and purposeful
- The planning of future developments is not sharply focused on raising achievement

Commentary

56. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Standards in the national tests for reading in Year 2, have declined over the last three years, and were well below average in 2003. Standards seen during the inspection indicate that standards have risen this year and are average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The average standards in writing are confirmed by those seen during the inspection, although the number of pupils exceeding average levels in writing was lower than expected. Standards in speaking and listening are below average because pupils have not yet learned all the vocabulary they need to explain what they do and how they do it. Achievement is satisfactory for both boys and girls and for pupils from different minority ethnic groups.
57. Standards in the Year 6 national tests have declined over the last three years. They were very low in 2003 and in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. This year group had more pupils with special educational needs, and this, and the poor attendance and behaviour of a significant minority of pupils, affected the school's results significantly. Standards seen during the inspection in reading and writing are higher this year, although they are still below average. Achievement is satisfactory overall for both boys and girls and for pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds.
58. Weaknesses remain in reading because skills are not systematically taught in some classes and the time put aside for this to happen is not always used effectively. As a result, apart from more able readers, pupils do not use advanced skills such as skimming the words ahead and using expression, and less able pupils do not always understand the meaning of what they read. The use of targets in writing is helping pupils gain a better understanding of how well they are doing and the skills they need to develop to improve their work further so standards are higher this year. Standards of speaking and listening are in line with national expectations and pupils achieve well in this aspect. Pupils can explain their ideas clearly and express their opinions. They listen well to others and respond to points made.
59. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported by teaching assistants and teachers who know their needs well. This helps them achieve well. Similarly pupils with English as an additional language benefit from good support in lessons and achieve as well as other pupils.
60. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The school has focused on improving standards in writing, and this is beginning to have an impact, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Pupils cover a very wide range of different sorts of writing, including reports and stories in English and accounts and letters to support learning in other subjects. This results in pupils achieving better

with non-fiction writing. Assessments are carried out regularly and this ensures that pupils' progress is tracked closely. While the information is used well to note how well pupils are doing, the information is not always used effectively to identify precisely what pupils need to learn next. Lesson planning sometimes focuses too much on what pupils will do in lessons, rather than on what pupils will learn so tasks are not always relevant to the learning needs of all individual pupils. When pupils are taught in ability groups the needs of higher attaining pupils are met satisfactorily. However, further refinement of what they can do in lessons is required to raise their achievement more. In many lessons, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to learn independently or to participate actively. This results in pupils not thinking things through for themselves and thus consolidating learning.

61. Teachers create positive classrooms where learning is celebrated, and behaviour is nearly always good. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to talk about their work and questions are asked to make sure they are all clear about what they are expected to do. During Years 1 and 2, pupils read regularly in school with an adult and most pupils read at home. This ensures they achieve satisfactorily. However, the time at the beginning of the day is not always used effectively for teaching groups of pupils' specific reading skills. In Years 3 to 6, pupils do not have enough opportunities to read with an adult. In lessons there are limited opportunities for teaching pupils further reading skills. Other reading time is used unsatisfactorily, and has little impact on pupils' achievement. Teachers make the best use of computers whenever they can for word processing. Pupils look up and find the information they need in books because a good range of books in topic boxes is available in classrooms. However, because the library is new, it is not yet used often enough for independent research. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. Pupils know how to improve their work in those classes where marking is detailed and the targets set are checked closely to see if they have been achieved.
62. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Recent actions taken to raise achievement are having a positive impact. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. However, the development plan does not look forward far enough and does not focus enough on learning. The subject leader does not have a clear idea of what is happening in all classes because procedures for checking achievement are new. However, things are improving and plans are in place for this to happen. Achievement tracking systems are now in place and the information is used satisfactorily by senior managers to check whether pupils are making enough progress. New systems are in place to set targets for improvement to make sure that pupils are achieving as well as they can. The information is not yet used effectively to set priorities for improvement in the subject action plan. The team responsible for provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language plan jointly with each year group's team and this helps pupils with English as an additional language to achieve as well as others. This is good improvement since the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers give pupils lots of opportunities in English and other subjects, to explain ideas, express opinions, and listen and respond to others. Drama and role-play are used well to develop pupils' speaking skill as demonstrated by a particularly effective drama lesson in Year 1 during the inspection. As a result, achievement in speaking and listening is good for all pupils. Writing is used well to record what pupils have found out in a number of subjects, and standards in non-fiction writing are higher as a result.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well
- Higher attaining pupils get the challenges they need in Year 3 to 6 because they work in ability groups and work is matched well to previous learning
- Poor attendance by a small number of pupils affects the school's results significantly
- Assessment information is used effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's performance

Commentary

64. Results in national tests in 2003 at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were well below average when compared to all schools nationally and were below average when compared to similar schools. Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are rising and results are likely to be higher this year. The school has put into place provision to raise achievement in mathematics throughout the school with some success. There has been a focus on improving pupils' ability to talk about their work and explain how they reached a particular answer or solved a particular problem. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and achievement is satisfactory. They are below average at the end of Year 6, but this is an improving picture. Many pupils miss the higher level 5 by a whisker and evidence from lessons and pupils' work indicates that while achievement is satisfactory overall, pupils in the current Year 5 are on track to achieve well. Achievement is good in Years 5 and 6, and poor for those pupils who do not attend school regularly.
65. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The support pupils receive in lessons from skilled teaching assistants is well focused on their needs because of clear planning and direction from teachers. As a result, many of those pupils who attend regularly reach average standards. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. They make good progress in learning the vocabulary they need to help them succeed in their number work. Their vocabulary for describing shapes, space and measures is less secure.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 5 and 6. In Years 1 and 2, pupils work at levels which are relevant to their individual learning needs and the school makes sure that good support is available in most lessons to support learning when pupils work in ability groups. Activities are mostly practical so many pupils enjoy learning, settle quickly and work with good levels of concentration. When pupils work in ability groups in Years 3 to 6 learning is often good because pupils are given work which is matched well to their abilities. Further refinement of this within the set is required to improve achievement even more. When pupils work in groups investigating number patterns and relationships, this extends their learning because they are expected to work independently to solve problems themselves, and explain to each other and to adults what they are doing and why. Questions are used effectively by teachers and teaching assistants to challenge what pupils are thinking and this makes them check whether what they think is correct.
67. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Specific action has been taken to raise standards and this is beginning to improve achievement. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Recent analysis of test results in Years 2 to 6 have highlighted the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and these have become relevant priorities for improvement in the subject action plan. This only covers one year and does not yet identify specific ways of evaluating success and clear targets against which improvements can be measured precisely. Achievement tracking procedures are now in place and the information is used satisfactorily by senior managers to check whether pupils are making enough progress. New systems are in place to set targets for improvement to make sure that pupils are achieving as well as they can.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Pupils' use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. In science they measure the plants they have planted, for example the heights of sunflowers and other plants, and record the information on simple tables. Graphs are made of the amount of pull required to move shoes down a slope with different surfaces. Younger pupils are encouraged to calculate numbers in a range of situations, such as noting how many children are away from school that day.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Not enough pupils reach above average levels because higher attaining pupils are not always challenged in Years 1 to 4
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 5 and 6
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well
- Pupils are not given enough guidance so do not know clearly enough what they need to do to improve
- Learning is not varied enough and sometimes relies too much on pupils learning scientific facts rather than developing skills
- The subject is enriched well by visits and visitors

Commentary

69. Standards in science have been steady for the last few years but remain below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is because not enough pupils are reaching beyond average levels. Teacher assessments this year have awarded this higher level to pupils at the end of Year 2 so standards are likely to be higher. However, work in books and standards in the lessons seen do not support these assessments. Several pupils in Year 6 just miss reaching the higher level. However, pupils' achievement is hampered by poor attendance by a significant minority of pupils, and lack of challenge in some aspects of science in Years 1 to 4. Achievement is satisfactory overall.
70. Pupils with special educational needs learn well and many of those who attend regularly reach average levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They receive good support in lessons from teaching assistants who make sure they understand what is expected, and who ask probing questions as pupils work to guide them as they complete the work. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily because they have the vocabulary they need by the end of Year 6 to explain what is happening in their investigations.
71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. It is inconsistent across the school. Work in books indicates that pupils learn well in Years 5 and 6. Planned activities focus much more on pupils being involved in carrying out investigations themselves and developing their scientific skills. Pupils in these year groups talk excitedly about the investigations they have carried out and the photographs to record the work they do show the fascination on their faces when particular things happen that they were not expecting. In other year groups, learning is sometimes too directed and pupils are not given enough responsibility to plan and carry out their own investigations. Lessons are not always practical enough. Planning focuses too much on what pupils will do and the content to be covered rather than the skills they will develop. Therefore, pupils do not always transfer earlier learning to new situations. Recording sheets are sometimes too focused on pupils filling in one-word answers and higher attaining pupils sometimes waste valuable learning time because they already know the answers. While good use is made of tables to record measurement, and graphs are sometimes made of results, pupils rarely evaluate these to draw conclusions about what the information is saying. Learning is better when pupils are involved in practical investigation. Lessons are more varied and pupils are therefore interested in finding out what will happen.
72. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has ensured resources are available for teachers to use when they are needed. Science club makes a good contribution to younger pupils' knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts, and to older pupils'

achievement when people from the same local company support learning during science week. Assessment procedures are now in place and are used effectively to track progress of individual pupils. The information is not used effectively enough to plan work of a challenging nature for higher attaining pupils in some classes. The subject leader has not had opportunity to check the quality of teaching and learning over recent years because the subject has not been a focus for improvement. Despite this, improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory because the weaknesses identified in the previous report have all been dealt with and standards are rising in line with the national trend.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6
- There are not enough resources to support pupils' learning, so achievement is unsatisfactory
- The teaching observed was good, and pupils achieved well in those lessons
- Teachers make the best use of the computers they have, but these are often unreliable
- Improvement planning is unsatisfactory

Commentary

73. Standards are below average because pupils do not have sufficient access to computers. Their keyboard skills are slow. In the lesson observed, about half of pupils had forgotten how to change font styles and sizes because they had not had opportunities between lessons to practise and remember these skills. Teachers make sure learning is relevant by linking ICT to learning in other subjects. For example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils used the Internet for research in geography, and some used email to send in their homework for English.
74. At the time of the last inspection, teachers did not have the skills needed to teach the subject effectively. Since then, training has been completed and teachers have the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to teach the subject well. Therefore the weaknesses identified at the time have been dealt with satisfactorily. New weaknesses now exist because the school does not have sufficient up to date equipment to keep pace with national improvements. While there are now enough computers, many of these are unreliable. The battery life on some of the laptops is too short and this means they often run out at a critical part of the lesson and pupils' work is often lost.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are now satisfactory. Plans are in place to improve resources and to create designated areas where computers are constantly to hand for pupils to use. However, the subject's action plan does not look forward far enough and is not sufficiently focused on identifying ways to raising achievement and measure its success.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. When ICT is taught, it is always relevant to learning in another subject. Therefore learning is always meaningful. However, some aspects are not covered sufficiently well because of unreliable equipment. Consequently, the use of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

HUMANITIES

77. Inspectors talked to pupils and looked at their work in **geography**. No lessons were seen so there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about provision in the subject. The wide range of work undertaken by pupils indicates standards have improved since the previous inspection and now meet expected levels. Leadership and management are satisfactory, although there has been too little opportunity to monitor learning to ensure

consistency. There is a suitable curriculum in place which is enhanced well by relevant use of pupils' personal experiences and visits into the local area. Resources are good.

78. No overall judgement was made about the quality of provision in **history** as too few lessons were seen. Inspectors talked to pupils, looked at their work, teachers' planning and saw three lessons in Year 5 and 6. No judgement was made about achievement in Years 1 and 2 as too little work was seen. Work in books and talking to pupils indicate that standards at the end of Year 6 have improved since the previous inspection and are now in line with levels expected nationally. Teachers plan to teach all areas of the subject in interesting ways. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy being historians and they achieve well. They talked avidly about their work on Victorians showing a good awareness of the changes that have taken place since then compared with present day life. For example, they know that peoples' lives have been improved because of the work of significant individuals such as Doctor Barnardo. Highly detailed drawings of a Victorian town following on from their research, and discussions, indicate that they are aware of the main characteristics of the period.
79. Teaching and learning in the three lessons seen were good. Teachers have good subject knowledge so the questions they asked were challenging. This enabled pupils to gain a good understanding of the subject they were studying. Through a practical game which really interested them to find out more, pupils gained a greater understanding of the Aztecs as they discovered that slavery, and what this entailed, was the consequence of not paying taxes through tributes. The curriculum is enriched well through a range of visits and this brings learning to life so that pupils remember the history linked to these. For example, role-play enabled pupils in Year 2 to recall how they felt being a Victorian and this enabled them to gain a real understanding of what it was like to be a school child in Victorian times. They see themselves as history detectives when they go on carefully planned visits.
80. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection and now focuses on developing pupils' skills of research and deduction and understanding of history as well as knowledge. Whilst some checking has been undertaken to ensure that teachers plan appropriately there have been no opportunities to ensure consistency in teaching and learning in lessons. The subject action plan is a list of jobs to do rather than focusing on raising standards and improving pupils' achievement.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good understanding and value of their own and others' religions, beliefs and feelings
- The religious education curriculum supports the strong ethos of care in the school
- Visits and the range of good resources enrich learning well
- Links between themes in collective worship and religious education are not always made to support learning
- The subject action plan is too general and does not focus sufficiently well on raising standards and improving pupils' achievement

Commentary

81. Standards at the end of Year 2 meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Year 6 the standards pupils reach are above these. Pupils achieve well. Pupils' spiritual development is strongly supported by the teaching of religious education at the top of the school. It also contributes well to pupils' social, moral and cultural development. Year 2 pupils understand the meaning of religious festivals. They know that people worship in different ways.

In this multi-faith school they learn from each other's religious experiences well. In Year 6 pupils understand the significance of symbols in world religions and explain their meanings. They benefit from exploring their own responses to devotional music from different faiths. They describe what it is like to worship and why people celebrate in different ways. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

82. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils achieve well because most lessons are well structured with very good opportunities for pupils to reflect and discuss issues. Teachers ask questions which challenge pupils and so they are clear about what they will be learning. Very effective teaching provides opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning by asking them to make judgements about the quality and amount of work they have done. A range of relevant resources is used to support learning well. Devotional music and artefacts are used effectively to stimulate pupils and evoke thoughtful responses.
83. All the pupils benefit from a good range of well-planned visits to the local church, the mosque and temple. They recognise the main features of these places of worship and record these in various ways. The curriculum map identifies important religious festivals and these are highlighted throughout the year and are well used to stimulate pupils' interest and learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They are ably supported by visitors from the local community and parents. There is a good range of resources which are well organised. These are used effectively to enrich pupils' experiences and extend their knowledge well.
84. Leadership and management are good. Some monitoring has been undertaken and this has led to improvements in the consistency in teaching and learning. Assemblies are interesting but are not linked closely enough to work in religious education to help consolidate learning. Assessment procedures provide enough information about how much progress pupils make in the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

85. No lessons were observed in art and design, design and technology and only one in music so it is not possible to make judgements about provision in these subjects. Inspectors talked to pupils and staff, and looked at work and displays around the school. All aspects of **design and technology** are taught over the year and pupils get a rich experience. Pupils consider art and design and design and technology among their favourite subjects. The one lesson observed in **music** was lively and engaged pupils well. Pupils get suitable opportunities to perform to different audiences through concerts and shows. This was demonstrated in the production of 'Oliver' when pupils, staff and parents came together to entertain and perform to their audience. The range of resources is now good and enables all pupils to take an active part in performances.
86. Pupils reach above average standards in **art and design**. Year 6 pupils know the proportions of the face, and use this to accurately produce likenesses in their collages, paintings and drawings. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 talk knowledgeably about the work of Monet and have used this artist's ideas to produce their own paintings of flowers. Pupils are given a wide experience of art, including work in two and three dimensions. Art and design contributes well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils learn about the beliefs of other cultures, and how these are expressed through art. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have created pictures inspired by Aboriginal art and pupils in Years 5 and 6 created very attractive Eid designs with felt, sequins and glitter.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most teachers have good subject expertise so skills are taught well
- When pupils work collaboratively learning is good
- A wide range of sports clubs and activities enrich the subject for older pupils
- Teaching is inconsistent across the school because the quality of lesson planning varies

Commentary

87. Achievement is satisfactory overall and standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve well in developing games skills because they take part in a wide range of team games during and after school. These effectively develop pupils' team spirit. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.
88. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. It is obvious from the way pupils talk about physical education activities that they enjoy the subject. Many lessons are exciting and this keeps everyone on task and involved in the activities. This is particular so in games lessons and those in which pupils are encouraged to work as a team to solve problems outdoors. These lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to work together in groups and teams and this makes a good contribution to personal development. Dance lessons do not always take into consideration pupils' previous skills and how pupils will learn. Commercial tapes do not always support the development of specific dance skills and pupils' own ideas sufficiently well. Too much focus is on pupils following instructions rather than learning a range of dance techniques and skills.
89. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject's action plan contains a list of jobs to do rather than focussing on how to raise standards and improve achievement. Careful analysis of pupils' performance, teaching and learning does not guide priorities for improvement in the plan. This is unsatisfactory. Resources are well organised and except for dance, ensure that teaching and learning are supported well. The curriculum is enriched well through extra curricular clubs and specialist coaching in lesson times such as Tag Rugby and athletics.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths

- The school council provides good opportunity for pupils to take responsibility for decisions
- Opportunities are taken in many lessons to develop pupils as responsible citizens.
- Teaching and learning in lessons observed during the inspection were good because they were relevant and had clear learning intentions

Commentary

90. Well-planned and good quality activities take place regularly through school council meetings, timetabled lessons, circle times (when pupils sit together and discuss how they feel about a range of issues which affect them personally), and assemblies. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of how they should behave and are fully aware of the impact of their actions on others. This makes a considerable contribution to the positive ethos in school because pupils take full responsibility for their actions. Consequently, they all behave well towards each other and help create a friendly atmosphere. Citizenship is an important part of the curriculum and links to other subjects well. For instance, in a good lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils were encouraged to express ideas and opinions about the United Nations convention on children's rights. The lesson effectively linked to the children's learning in geography.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 4 |
| How inclusive the school is | 3 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 4 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 4 |
| Overall standards achieved | 4 |
| Pupils' achievement | 4 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 3 |
| Attendance | 6 |
| Attitudes | 3 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 3 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 4 |
| The quality of teaching | 4 |
| How well pupils learn | 4 |
| The quality of assessment | 4 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 4 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 4 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 2 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 4 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 4 |
| The governance of the school | 4 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 4 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 4 |
| The effectiveness of management | 4 |

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