

INSPECTION REPORT

EDWARD WORLLEDGE COMMUNITY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Great Yarmouth

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120997

Headteacher: Mrs Dawn Kightley

Lead inspector: Dr Alan Jarvis

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th October 2003

Inspection number: 256039

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Middle deemed Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 8 – 12 Years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll; | 279 |
| School address: | Suffolk Road Great Yarmouth Norfolk |
| Postcode: | NR31 0ER |
| Telephone number: | 01493 603462 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs K Thrower |
| Date of previous inspection: | 8 th October 2001 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Edward Worlledge Community Middle School is smaller than most other middle schools. At the time of the inspection there were 279 boys and girls on roll between the ages of eight and 12 years. Nearly all pupils live in the local area, which is one of the most socially and economically deprived in England. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well above average. One hundred and nineteen pupils (around two in five) are identified as having special educational needs (SEN), which is also well above average. The range of needs includes moderate or severe learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and communication needs. Thirteen pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is well above average. Some of the special educational needs are very severe. Nearly all pupils are of white ethnic origin, although there are a small number of Asian pupils. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils who join or leave the school in any one year is a little above average and this can have an adverse impact on standards, as some pupils have changed schools many times. The school is part of the Great Yarmouth Education Action Zone, which is aiming to improve standards, attendance and the aspirations of pupils in the area. In addition the school is part of the Full Service School project that supports pupils and their families by bringing together a variety of local support agencies such as health and social services. Attainment on entry is well below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---|
| 2711 | Dr Alan Jarvis | Lead inspector | Science Information and communication technology |
| 9986 | Bill Twiss | Lay inspector | |
| 10144 | Mary Marriot | Team inspector | English Art and design Design and technology Geography Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language |
| 17932 | John Bald | Team inspector | English History French Music Religious education |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Edward Worlledge Community Middle is a **fairly effective** and improving school. It is an oasis of calm and opportunity within the local community. It no longer has serious weaknesses and provides satisfactory value for money. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving quickly. Standards at the end of Years 6 and 7 are below the national average. Many pupils do well because of much good teaching, but there is a complex pattern with some pupils who underachieve. Pupils mature well and many are keen to be included in all the school offers. Effective leadership and management are ensuring that standards are being driven up.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- A strong sense of teamwork is leading to rising standards.
- The headteacher provides very effective leadership and management. Many other staff are effective in their work, but the work of some subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
- Standards are rising in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education because of improved provision, but those in other subjects are static or falling.
- There are very strong links for extending learning opportunities with the local community.
- Strong systems of support and guidance are brought into play to support pupils and families with complex social problems, but pupil attendance remains unsatisfactory.
- Many pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make sound or better progress, but those with pronounced difficulties do not.

Substantial improvement has been made in a short time. Standards, achievement, attendance and pupils' attitudes to school are all improving and firm upward trends are starting to be established. Most weaknesses have been effectively attended to, but some subject co-ordinators still need more time during the course of the year to properly manage their subjects. Past weaknesses in SEN assessment have now been converted into a key strength.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Achievement is **satisfactory** and improving. An increasing number of pupils are now achieving well, but good achievement does not yet extend to the great majority of pupils in all subjects and in all years. Pupils with the most pronounced special educational needs show most underachievement. Achievement is also lowered by the poor attendance of some pupils. Achievement is stronger in Years 4 to 6 where it is often good. Achievement in Year 7 is generally satisfactory. Performance in the National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6, compared with similar schools, is improving. These results do not tell the full picture as achievement in Year 7 is not as good as by the end of Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education. In most other subjects standards are also below average, but they are average in history and physical education. By the end of Year 7, standards are below average in nearly all subjects, but are average

in religious education and physical education. Standards in French are well below average and achievement is unsatisfactory in Year 7.

Attendance and punctuality are **unsatisfactory**, but improving. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work. Exclusions are declining and are now at a very low level. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.**

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** and there are good features. Teachers aim to make work interesting and challenging and it is sometimes imaginative. Key skills are taught securely. Classes are well ordered, pupils understand what they have to do and work co-operatively in many classes. Teaching and learning are best in Year 6 and there is also much good teaching in Years 4 and 5. Teaching in Year 7 is generally satisfactory. Teaching assistants play an effective role in behaviour management and in keeping pupils with special educational needs well on task. Realistic levels of challenge are evident in most classes. Whilst some marking is detailed and helpful much does too little to guide pupils in their work. Teachers know how well their pupils are doing and use this information in planning work for them.

The curriculum is satisfactory, fully inclusive and improving. Statutory requirements are met. The organisation of art and design, design and technology, history, geography and music is sound but unimaginative, and is not yet leading to good achievement. Interesting and relevant extra-curricular activities are on offer including the arts and sports. Accommodation has improved, but specialist facilities for science and design and technology are poor. Pupils are well cared for. Close links with other professional support agencies enable pupils' diverse needs to be met.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. Governance is good.

The headteacher has been very effective in turning the school around and creating a positive climate for learning, inclusive education and committed teamwork. The school has rightly focused attention on improving teaching, the curriculum and standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. This has meant that less attention has been given to raising achievement in other subjects. Senior managers and those for English, mathematics, science and ICT lead and manage their areas well. In most other subjects, more time is needed to monitor teaching and standards. The active governing body know the school well and effectively support staff.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents: The school has the full confidence of its parents and the community it serves.

Pupils: Pupils are proud of their school and work hard to support and develop its positive ethos.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the achievement for pupils with the most complex social and learning difficulties by matching work more closely to their learning needs.
- Ensure that a more effective curriculum is provided for design and technology, history, geography, art and design, music and French.
- Continue to work with parents and other agencies to improve attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is satisfactory overall and improving. By the end of Years 6 and 7 standards are below average in most subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are improving because of better teaching and management.
- Standards in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 show good improvement.
- Achievement is stronger in Years 4 to 6 than in Year 7.
- Standards in French are not high enough.
- Achievement is not yet good for the vast majority of pupils.

Commentary

1. This is a much more complex school than many others. The very high proportion of pupils with a wide range of special educational needs, the acknowledged low aspirations of some pupils, the economic and social pressures on some families and the high numbers of pupils who join or leave the school in some years all have a bearing on standards and the progress made by pupils. Overall, attainment on entry is well below average and is very low indeed for some pupils.
2. Standards at the end of Year 6 in the National Curriculum tests have consistently been well below average in recent years. Standards have been adversely affected by past problems with the school's leadership and management and by difficulties in recruiting suitably qualified teaching staff. However, these major problems have been resolved. The very good leadership of the headteacher, the determined steps she has taken to improve teaching and other aspects of provision, and bring into operation as many supportive developments as are practicable have turned the school around. As a result, standards are now moving upwards.
3. Standards in the 2003 National Curriculum tests were below average in English, mathematics and science (see table). However, these show a marked improvement on the previous year, and the previous inspection. As in previous years, there was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in the tests.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 25.9 (23.9) | 27.0 (27.0) |
| Mathematics | 25.6 (24.2) | 27.0 (27.6) |
| Science | 27.5 (26.6) | 28.8 (28.3) |

There were 68 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Standards seen in lessons and in looking at pupils' work at the end of Year 6 are below average in all subjects except for history and music where they are average. These standards prevail through to the end of Year 7 except in religious education, where they are average, and history where they fall to a below average level. Standards in French, started by pupils in Year 7, are

well below average and should be higher. This is because not enough time is given to the subject and some teaching contains errors.

5. Pupils are not yet reaching average standards because their:
 - literacy and numeracy skills are too low when they enter the school and much time has to be spent on addressing these;
 - writing is not as strong as their reading or speaking and listening;
 - investigations in mathematics contain too little challenge;
 - scientific enquiry skills, knowledge and understanding of forces and electricity and analysis of data are weaker than other areas of work in science;
 - use of sensors and equipment in ICT to monitor and control events is too limited;
 - work in history and geography contains too much copying.
6. The results in the National Curriculum tests do not tell the full story about the complex pattern of standards and achievement. Some committed pupils across the ability range do very well and take full advantage of the opportunities presented to them. For example, a small number of the very lowest attainers on entry to the school improve their standards by three, rather than the two levels expected. In Years 4 to 6, with the exception of geography and music, good teaching and learning are enabling many pupils to achieve well. Some higher attaining pupils do particularly well in the tests and in lessons. Some pupils mature very well and, although they may not always shine in the tests, nevertheless, show achievement in other ways such as developing their sporting prowess or care for others. However, there are a number of factors which, overall, lower achievement. Poor or fragmented attendance of some pupils adversely affects their achievement. Some pupils change school frequently and find it hard to catch up on past underachievement. In each segment of the ability range some pupils underachieve. Several pupils have been identified with the potential to do well or very well, but their actual performance has proved to be below that expected. The achievement of the small number of gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory and not yet good because their work is not challenging enough. Achievement in Year 7 is mostly satisfactory, good only in religious education and physical education and unsatisfactory in history and French. The use of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum has a satisfactory rather than good impact on achievement. The achievement of a small, but significant, proportion of pupils with the most pronounced learning difficulties is poor because they are not given work precisely matched to their needs. Overall, therefore, achievement is satisfactory, but it is improving.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is unsatisfactory. Most pupils have good attitudes to school and have a strong desire to do their best. Behaviour and relationships are good overall and pupils are keen to take responsibilities offered to them. The support given to pupils with behavioural difficulties helps them to be included in all activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although it is improving, attendance is below the national average.
- The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and are rigorously applied.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. They work well together and enjoy their lessons.
- Behaviour and relationships are good.
- Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- A minority of Year 7 pupils deviate from the high standards of behaviour expected by the school.

Commentary

7. Attendance is below the national average for a school of this type. Although the current statistics confirm that it is improving, it remains below the national picture. Most parents support the school and do their best to make sure that their children come to school regularly

and on time. However, there are a few families, often in difficult home circumstances, who do not support the school in promoting regular attendance. The school has robust and rigorously applied procedures for promoting good attendance and is working closely with external agencies to address this. It routinely follows up all absences and tries hard to discourage parents from taking holidays during term time. Unauthorised absence is higher than it ought to be. A number of the parents do not readily respond to these extensive efforts. Poor attendance is adversely affecting the achievement of some pupils.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 7.0 | School data | 1.1 |
| National data | 5.4 | National data | 0.5 |

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

8. The pupils like their school. They take a keen interest in their work and enjoy going to the many clubs that the school provides for them. They have a healthy sense of enquiry and show courtesy and respect to each other, staff and visitors. They want to please their teachers and are keen to help the school succeed. They respond well to interesting lessons and will often offer their own views and ideas, for example, by suggesting ways in which existing high standards of conduct could be improved further. Pupils of all ages enjoy being trusted with responsibilities. They assiduously carry out their duties as monitors and will frequently ask if they can do more for the school.

9. The standards of behaviour and quality of relationships are good. The vast majority of the pupils mature well and develop good social skills. Pupils build trust with adults in the school. One pupil summed this up by commenting that, "we work as a family in this school now". Whilst pupils and parents still express a few concerns about negative behaviour, the inspection evidence did not support this and it confirmed the improvements that the school has made since the previous inspection. The school works hard to raise the self-esteem and confidence of all the pupils and effectively tackles occasional instances of bullying. It succeeds in fostering a 'can do' culture and already pupils are making comments like, "I want a good job so I know I have to do well here". The positive relationships and good behaviour are helping many pupils to improve and achieve their best.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| White – British | 271 | 0 |
| White – any other White background | 3 | 1 |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian | 2 | 0 |

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

10. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This has improved since the previous inspection. Assemblies are focused on developing a good range of social skills and appreciating that there are diverse and sometimes conflicting views in society. Pupils know that when they give respect they receive it back. Through a planned programme of personal, health and social education, the pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. Visitors reinforce these messages and recently, a holocaust survivor has helped the pupils to come to terms with the evils of this event in human history. The pupils often lead fund-raising events for charities and appreciate that there are those in the wider world who need their

help. They have, for example, shown a sense of pride in sponsoring a child in a remote Indian village. Appropriate use is made of lessons to help the pupils to develop an understanding of other cultures. The Year 7 pupils, for example, were eager to explore the customs of Judaism in their religious education lesson. The good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a powerful contribution to developing the pupils into mature and caring individuals.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory and improving quality of education. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. The curriculum is inclusive, well resourced and supports the needs of most pupils in the school. Pupils are well cared for and supported. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory, but that with other schools and the community is good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Overall, satisfactory steps are taken to assess standards and progress although they are good in English and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a higher proportion of good or better teaching than at the last inspection.
- Teaching in Year 7, although mostly satisfactory, is not as brisk or as challenging as in other years and so pupils do not achieve as well as in other years.
- A very strong team of teaching assistants ensure that many pupils with special educational needs achieve well in class.
- The pitch and difficulty of work in withdrawal groups, which includes those pupils with the most acute needs, is far higher than it should be.
- The quality of marking has improved, but still needs to be a focus for improvement by some teachers.
- Not enough time is given to the teaching of French in Year 7 and so pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Commentary

11. The quality of teaching and learning remains only satisfactory overall because there is still some unsatisfactory teaching. However, the proportion of good or better teaching has increased from around one in three lessons to three in five since the last inspection. Teaching in Years 4 and 5 is mostly good with satisfactory teaching seen in English, geography and music. The strongest teaching can be seen in Year 6 where it is never less than good and some is outstanding. The overall impact has been improving standards and achievement, especially by the end of Year 6, better support and learning for SEN pupils and more interesting and varied lessons.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1 (3%) | 8 (21%) | 16 (41%) | 11 (28%) | 3 (7%) | 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.

12. A very able and very well trained team of teaching assistants is the key reason why many pupils with special educational needs do well in lessons taught by their class teachers. Consistency of the quality of their support has been assured. They are very well trained and very knowledgeable about how to help pupils to learn. They work very closely with all teachers to

help plan lessons and bring their close knowledge of individual pupils to bear on the support they give. Many classes have a number of pupils who might potentially disrupt lessons, and other pupils with other severe learning needs, but disruption is sensitively nipped in the bud. The swift action that was taken enabled the rest of the class to work without mishap and the pupil involved to be brought quickly back into learning.

13. The mainly good teaching in Years 4 to 6 enables many pupils to achieve well, including those with SEN, as well as average and higher attaining pupils. Much of this teaching is good because teaching methods are imaginative and lead to a high level of pupil interest. Staff generally understand what steps pupils need to take in their learning and ensure that work is well pitched to their individual needs. Some very strong teaching in Year 6 adds extra challenge and impetus and is not only preparing pupils well for the National Curriculum tests, but also develops their self-confidence, independence and group work. Examples of very good teaching were seen in mathematics and physical education. These lessons inspired all groups of pupils to learn and achieve as much as they were capable. A telling example of the very best teaching was seen in history.

Example of outstanding practice

Excellent teaching of writing in a Year 6 history class made an outstanding contribution to literacy as well as history.

A visit to a museum of Victorian life was used to develop skills in writing non-fiction, using the 'recount' format in the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils discussed the purpose of the visit in advance, and the teacher explained key features of this difficult type of writing. They took notes during their visit, and worked these up into 'spidergrams' in their drafting books. In the lesson seen, pupils had a brief, but extremely clear, recap from the teacher on features of the 'recount'. This enthused the pupils. They were engrossed in their writing for 45 minutes and independently worked with intense concentration. The teacher, and teaching assistant, had pinpointed pupils whose concentration was likely to flag, and provided them with extremely discreet and timely encouragement and support. By the end of the lesson pupils had produced well organised writing, with well structured paragraphs giving a clear account of their visit and the significance of what they had seen.

14. Teaching in Year 7 is also mostly satisfactory, although there is some good and very good teaching. Teachers aim to make the work interesting, there are good relationships in the classes, pupils understand what to do and the tasks have sufficient challenge to keep them working by themselves or in groups. However, some uncertainty in the teachers' subject knowledge, for example, in science and French, lessens the pace of learning. Insufficient challenge for some of the higher attaining pupils and those with most acute special educational need is leading to sound, rather than good, achievement.
15. The pupils with the severest learning needs are withdrawn into a smaller group several times a week where literacy and numeracy skills are taught. Teaching here was unsatisfactory because the work they were given, which was within the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies guidance, was pitched at far too high a level. It was way beyond their capabilities. The teacher had much more success when she reassessed her planning and, instead gave them tasks based upon the accurate assessments she had made of their true standards.
16. The quality of marking shows improvement since the last inspection. This is helping pupils to better understand how to improve. For example, in Year 5 one pupil had written about the world of 'Winnie the Pooh'. The teacher had marked the work and written, 'You have used three paragraphs accurately to write your book review. This is top Level 3. To make it Level 4, you need to make sure capital letters and apostrophes are used correctly, where I have marked them wrong'. Other good examples are evident in science, pupils' spelling logs and mathematics. In contrast some examples were seen where spelling mistakes were not corrected and guidance on improvement was lacking. Overall, there is less inconsistency than the last inspection, but there is a need to continue to focus on this aspect of marking.

17. In English, mathematics and science targets are set for classes, groups and individuals and are reviewed regularly. The Year 3 optional tests are undertaken at the start of Year 4. This helps teachers to gain a better understanding of what pupils can and cannot do when they start at this school. The records allow teachers to track the progress of pupils well in these subjects and pupils are given targets for the optional tests in Years 4 and 5 and the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6. In other subjects targets are less detailed, focusing rather on broad outcomes to provide useful information for both teachers and pupils. The school is gradually putting together a portfolio of moderated work to make sure that all teachers interpret the National Curriculum Levels in a consistent way.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, fully inclusive and has some good features. There are good opportunities for enrichment. Satisfactory accommodation and levels of resources meet the needs of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well organised in English, mathematics, science and ICT in Years 4 to 6.
- The organisation of the other subjects does not exploit their full potential.
- A wide variety of curriculum challenges have been introduced across subjects, which are helping to raise standards and improve pupils' learning skills.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities is helping pupils to widen their skills and aspirations.
- The food technology/science room is of poor quality and does not support high standards.

Commentary

18. The curriculum enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily. It provides well for a fair proportion of pupils with special educational needs, but those with the most acute learning, behaviour and attendance difficulties are not as well provided for. The curriculum provides for all the subjects of the National Curriculum including French in Year 7, a daily act of collective worship, an improved programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and a good range of extra-curricular activities. Statutory requirements are met.
19. The strength of the curriculum lies in the way in which English, mathematics, science, ICT, religious education and physical education are provided for. Provision for dedicated ICT lessons has improved, but the use of ICT in classrooms could be improved. Teachers have worked hard to develop these areas through better planning and including work that is often imaginative and challenging for a wide range of pupils. The strong and well balanced curriculum in all years in these subjects is a key factor in helping to improve standards.
20. The other subjects of the curriculum are adequately catered for and soundly balanced with the exception of history, where provision is unsatisfactory, and French where it is poor. The time for these subjects is squeezed out by the emphasis given on the core subjects. Achievement is limited because they are always taught in 45-minute or one hourly sessions each week, limiting opportunities for pupils to work more intensively for longer periods of time. Therefore, there is scope for the school to review how these subjects are organised and delivered in a more imaginative and effective way and raise their profile.
21. A further strength of the curriculum is developing a range of learning challenges that aim to promote group work, independence and initiative. This is called the 'Challenging Education', programme. For example, in Year 6 pupils are currently working in science on developing a poster on harmful microbes, in literacy on providing information about Great Yarmouth to tourists, and a design and make challenge in design and technology. Other, good quality challenges are being provided in other years. The good training and improved curriculum that is resulting is having a noticeable impact on the way pupils learn and their achievement.

22. A good range of extra-curricular activities for all pupils in all years supports and extends a number of different subjects. This is a further improvement since the last inspection. These include sports, art, ICT and a newspaper club where pupils regularly produce the school newspaper. Active participation in the arts and sports are promoted, often through strong and effective links with local organisations and community groups. These have led, for example, to wide participation in girls' football league, netball, football and basketball and a chance to broaden aspirations by participating in national tournaments. Beneficial development of social skills, self-esteem and self-awareness are developed through these and good links with the nearby youth club and community centre. Good links with the secondary school permits access to more advanced facilities.
23. There is a full complement of suitably qualified staff. They are well deployed to make best use of their skills, talents and experience. Teachers plan carefully and review their plans in the light of pupils' learning to make sure that work is suitably demanding. More teaching assistants are now employed, particularly benefiting pupils with special educational needs. There is an improved library, but it still contains too few books to support independent study. The jointly designated food technology/science room is of poor quality and underused. This shortcoming has persisted since the last inspection. Consequently, pupils have more limited opportunities to learn within this form of specialist provision than they might in a secondary school. Mathematics, ICT, religious education, geography and physical education are all well resourced to help deliver the curriculum. Resources in other subjects are satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

This is a caring school. The school offers all its pupils and their families good support and guidance, which enables them to play a full and active part in its daily life.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has good procedures that protect children and ensure their health and safety.
- The school works well in partnership with the professional support agencies and uses its status as a fully serviced school to help pupils and their families to overcome complex problems.
- Staff know and guide the pupils particularly well.
- Pupils are encouraged to become fully involved in the life of the school.
- Induction arrangements are good and the parents like them.

Commentary

24. Strongly established procedures covering child protection and health and safety ensure that the pupils enjoy coming to a safe and caring school. All staff understand the procedures and are vigilant in reporting any concerns that they may have. The headteacher and staff throughout the school know the pupils very well. Consequently, they can see when pupils need help and provide sensitive support for their personal and academic needs.
25. Pupils enjoy being involved in the life of the school. The school council meets regularly and gives pupils of all ages the opportunity to make sensible suggestions and to represent the views of their peers. Councillors see it as an honour and responsibility to be elected. Pupils are encouraged to approach staff and to make direct representations to the headteacher with their views and ideas on how the school can continue to develop.
26. Trust between the pupils and all adults in the school is securely established. Pupils say that this is one of the main reasons why they enjoy coming to school. The valuable trusting relationships that the pupils have extend beyond the school's staff, and pupils understand that they can go to visitors such as the school nurse and the learning mentor for confidential and individual help.

27. The school sees the value of working in partnership with the professional support agencies. It successfully harnesses the resources of the local Education Action Zone (EAZ) to fully service the diverse and often complex needs of the pupils and families it serves. The partnership closely involves social services, for example, who help the school to find the most appropriate support needed to help the pupils to make the most of their schooling.
28. Induction to the school is valued by the parents and close working relationships with the first school help to make the pupils' transition to the next stage of their education a smooth one. The pupils settle well into their routines and quickly get down to work. The school recognises that pupils join at times other than the start of the school year and it gives personal attention to those who do so to make sure that they too settle quickly. The high standards of care, support and guidance given to the pupils have improved since the previous inspection. They create a safe and happy school in which the pupils are increasingly becoming confident achievers.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school enjoys good relationships with the parents. It has good partnerships with the community and has effective links with neighbouring schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has good relationships with the parents who are satisfied with all that it does and who strive to support their children's learning.
- Effective partnerships with the community work well to enrich the pupils' learning.
- Good use is made of the support provided by the EAZ.
- A few parents feel that the school does not consult them enough.
- Arrangements for transfer to the high school are good.

Commentary

29. Nearly all the parents express positive views about the work of the school and are happy with the education that it provides. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The quality of communication between school and home is high. Useful and easily understood information lets the parents and carers know what is being taught, how their children are doing at school and how they can do even better. The school knows that some families face complex difficulties and it works hard to support them. It demonstrates innovative practice by, for example, running family learning sessions. These are effective in helping children and parents learn together. A few parents did not feel that the school consults with them on its plans. There are many opportunities for the school and parents to discuss concerns, but the school recognises the need to develop its formal consultation methods.
30. Parents enjoy coming into the school to see performances and to help the children make the most of their visits to places of interest. A loyal band of volunteers assist the pupils with their reading work and provide extra help for groups of pupils who find learning difficult. Parents work together to organise social and fund-raising events, which are successful in providing extra resources for the school.
31. The school has good links within the EAZ. It works in close partnership with other schools and the Zone's leadership to ensure that what is on offer meets the diverse needs of the pupils. These arrangements are effective in helping the pupils to learn in different and exciting ways. The pupils have, for example, taken to the Challenging Education Programme. As a result, they have been helped to develop confidence in using and applying critical skills such as writing in their learning. The EAZ makes a powerful impact on the support that the school offers. Its resources have, for example, enabled the school to give extra help to the pupils who have learning literacy and numeracy needs.

32. The school and community work in harmony and enjoy good links. These are used well to enrich the experiences of pupils. There is a regular programme of visits to places of interest like museums and the theatre. The pupils enjoy taking part in performances and are pleased when community members support them. The school has built links with a supermarket and the pupils have used these well to help them to explore the benefits and disadvantages of commercial development. Many of the pupils were thrilled when older members of the community who had attended the school when they were young returned to talk about their experiences. The pupils recorded their views in enchanting poems. The local community centre is adorned with the pupils' artwork.
33. Good working relationships with the high school to which most pupils transfer help to make the transition a smooth one. The headteacher of the high school keeps in regular contact with the school and is a member of Edward Worlledge's governing body. As well as a planned induction visit and open evenings, the two schools share a learning mentor and French is taught by a visiting teacher from the high school. These arrangements help pupils to see the 'friendly face' of the high school and their future move of school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The strong measures that have been adopted are starting to bear fruit on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, but their full impact has yet to be realised. Governance is good and improved.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has been very effective in turning the school around and creating a positive climate for learning, inclusive education and close teamwork between all staff.
- A supportive and active governing body know the school well and are particularly active in seeking improvements and supporting staff.
- The management of the curriculum in the non-core subjects has received too little attention.
- Senior managers and those for English, mathematics, science and ICT lead their areas well, but elsewhere, better leadership and management are needed.
- Sources of additional funding are sought out and used well to promote improvement.

Commentary

34. Governors have supported the school well through a difficult time. Their work has improved, has much stronger direction and has a clearer focus, which is now reaping benefits. They support the school in a number of ways. Committees are well organised and function effectively. Governors have been keen to improve their performance. For example, they have audited their work through a 'Health Check'. An action plan for further improvement is in place following this review. They receive up-to-date advice and support and attend regular training sessions. An important strength is that they regularly visit classrooms and talk to subject co-ordinators. This helps them find out and discuss, at first hand, what is going on and how developments are proceeding. Of particular note is the time and care taken by the governor who oversees provision for special educational needs to ensure that pupils' needs are carefully identified and the correct support is given. Through activities such as these, governors have a good grasp of the school's performance and progress. They are fully involved in producing the school development plan, which this year, was produced off site when all staff and governors discussed strengths and weaknesses and the way forward. This has helped them to direct resources to the right areas in order to support the drive for improved standards. They have actively monitored the school's race equality policy.
35. The headteacher has been pivotal in creating a positive climate for raising standards, motivating staff and gaining the full confidence of parents. As one parent commented at the pre-inspection meeting, "Parents have noticed a considerable change in the last two years especially in the way in which more opportunities are being provided for our children!". Another

said, "Almost immediately she took over there was a marked change for the better!". Staff work closely together; all now know the part they are playing. Morale is higher. Responsibility for developments is becoming better embedded at all levels. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has strengthened the work of the senior management team and is bringing some welcome new ways of thinking. Heads of year successfully lead their teams and effectively manage the care and support for pupils for whom they are responsible.

36. Some focus has been given to reviewing and developing the curriculum in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education. Good management and development of these subjects has led to improved standards. However, insufficient attention has been given to the management and development of other subjects. Consequently, standards and achievement are much more variable in them.
37. Leadership and management are effective in English, mathematics, science, and ICT. This is because the staff have a clear vision of where their subjects are going, monitor teaching and standards well and track the progress of pupils. There are some good features in some other subjects, such as improved planning of the curriculum in history, physical education and religious education. Staff training has also been well managed with a generous allocation of resources to allow staff to update their skills. However, in the non-core subjects, co-ordinators do not have enough time to monitor teaching and standards.
38. The performance of the school is effectively monitored and evaluated. This is a key reason why better provision is leading to higher standards. Effective whole-school systems are in place to monitor the teaching of each member of staff, providing support so that they can improve their performance. Teaching assistants are also included in this process. Standards reached in the National Curriculum tests are scrupulously analysed and compared with national benchmarks. Consequently, effective action can be taken to target individual pupils or groups of pupils and raise their standards, especially in literacy and numeracy. Arrangements for teachers' performance management are linked closely to pupil performance, personal development and subject leadership. Progress towards any targets is carefully monitored. Systems for tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics are good, help guide teachers' planning and are used to provide suitable targets for each pupil in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6. Careful records are kept so that both the progress and attendance of all pupils can be followed and the right action taken at the right time, including outside agencies if required. The school's commitment to and impact on inclusion and equal opportunities is good and reflected in the school's work, for example, in working with a range of families whose home circumstances are difficult.
39. The budget is carefully managed. The surplus carried forward from last year was in excess of five per cent and included some costs of building improvements. Unforeseen staffing costs this year have also meant that the governors have had to draw on reserves and temporarily reduce staff training. However, through good planning, a balanced budget has been set. The school provides satisfactory value for money because it achieves its success with average basic costs and good use of the extra grants it receives.
40. Significant additional funds provided through the EAZ and other sources are spent on alleviating some external barriers to achievement, such as the unsatisfactory attendance and the low aspirations that abound in the area. By involving parents more in the life of the school and offering them training, the school has achieved some success in improving support for their children's education, and attendance has started to improve. Spending on SEN pupils is fully accounted for and used well, supplemented by additional internal funds.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 718,812 | Balance from previous year | 50,503 |
| Total expenditure | 718,812 | Balance carried forward to the next | 52,111 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,754 | | |

SEN ASSESSMENT

Provision for SEN assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective systems for assessing and meeting pupils' needs are now in place.
- Assessment needs fine tuning to pinpoint the needs of the pupils with the most severe need so that their work is matched to what they are capable of learning.
- This aspect of work has improved considerably and is now well led and managed.

Commentary

41. Effective systems for assessing pupils' special educational needs are now in place. These now have a positive effect upon pupils' achievement. This is now satisfactory and improving. For example, all pupils have accurate individual education plans, which are used by all teachers and teaching assistants to help them to plan suitable work. The school assiduously pursues provision for those pupils who require a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This is a key improvement. As a result, their needs are fully funded and met. Parents are regularly involved in reviewing progress and are kept fully informed of pupils' progress.
42. Pupils' needs are identified as soon as they enter the school. However, this takes some time and for some pupils this slows down the rate of their achievement in Year 4. Teachers analyse the results of these assessments and mostly use them well to plan for the learning needs of their pupils. The quality of the partnership and dialogue between teachers and teaching assistants is good. Teaching assistants know their pupils well. This enables them to offer sensitive support, promote independent learning and minimise their dependence on adults. However, assessment for some pupils with more complex learning and social needs, is insufficiently fine tuned and the work they are given is sometimes unsuitable.
43. The management of special educational needs in the school is good. Time for the co-ordinator to fulfil the role has been improved and this is used well. There is a clear commitment for improvement. Resources are good. The special educational needs governor is very supportive and ensures that systems, procedures and monitoring are set up and running in this area. She ensures that the full governing body are kept well informed of how the pupils with special educational needs are achieving and that appropriate resources are allocated. Overall, very good improvement has been made since the last inspection.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 2 and 3

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well organised teaching enables most pupils to make good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 6.
 - Pupils have good attitudes to their work, co-operate well and try hard.
 - Provision does not meet the needs of pupils with the most serious learning difficulties.
 - Good leadership and management have created a climate of continuous improvement.
 - There is good teamwork, and new teachers are well supported.
 - The best work in other subjects makes an important contribution to literacy.
 - Some work is not matched closely enough to pupils' learning needs, and some writing is rushed.
 - Teaching assistants are well informed and effective in promoting learning.
44. At the time of the last inspection, there were significant weaknesses in the teaching of English to all groups of pupils across the school, and the school had only just begun to address its weaknesses in teaching writing, speaking and listening. The school has made good overall improvements from this position, particularly in these areas of weakness, and this has led to a strong pattern of improvement in national test results over the past two years.
45. Pupils join the school with standards that are well below average for their age, and some are in the very early stages of learning to read and write. By Year 6, standards are below average overall, and have shown considerable improvement in the last two years. One fifth of pupils reached a higher standard than expected for their age in the 2003 national tests. The overall standard of work during the inspection was below average in Year 6, but showed good indications of further improvement, particularly in pupils' extended writing. Standards in Year 7 are below average; they represent satisfactory progress from the standards reached in Year 6, though much work seen during the inspection involved consolidation of existing skills. A small number of pupils throughout the school are still in the very early stages of learning to read and write. Whilst additional support and teaching is provided for these pupils, it does not use the national guidance to track back to the point at which they can learn effectively. As a result, they are making little or no progress in the aspects of English on which they most need to work.
46. These standards represent good achievement for many pupils, and particularly among those of average attainment, but not yet for the great majority. Pupils also achieve well in speaking and listening, building confidence both in discussion and in speaking to larger groups. However, the achievement of the small, but significant, number of pupils with the most pronounced learning difficulties is poor, and some higher attaining pupils could achieve more if they were fully challenged in all lessons and were more consistently guided to reading more difficult books. Overall, achievement in English is, therefore, satisfactory.
47. Teaching and learning are good in Years 4 to 6, and satisfactory in Year 7. There is some unsatisfactory teaching of pupils with the most complex learning difficulties related to literacy. Overall, the quality of teaching is good by the end of Year 6, satisfactory by the end of Year 7 and satisfactory overall. Teachers know the subject well, and create a purposeful and co-operative atmosphere in lessons, explaining complex issues clearly and sharing responsibility for learning effectively with their pupils. Pupils enjoy the work, concentrate well and take pride in

their progress; learning is helped by the use of response or study partners who review each other's work and suggest improvements; this is particularly well organised in Year 6 classes. There are clear goals for each lesson, but teachers often stick too closely to the basic pattern of using time set out in the National Literacy Strategy. This sometimes causes work that is going well to be interrupted and resumed the next day, and often leaves pupils with too little time to complete their writing. Teachers use long-term assessment well to measure progress, and the best marking promotes attention to detail as well as to the overall quality of work, with good use of targets. Information from assessment is not, however, used consistently enough to match work to individual needs. This sometimes limits the benefits to pupils of strengths in teaching, and leads to some unsatisfactory teaching of pupils with the most learning difficulties.

48. Leadership and management are good. Teachers work closely as a team, sharing ideas and analysing the effectiveness of each aspect of their work, with good guidance and leadership from the co-ordinator, headteacher and deputy headteacher. This reflects the school's high priority for English since the last inspection, and is a key factor in the improved results in national tests. Good management includes effective monitoring of teaching and learning, and close analysis of results. There are good opportunities for pupils to explore their feelings and to reflect on world issues, for example, when writing poetry. However, the upgraded library still has too few books, both for pupils who find reading difficult and for higher attaining pupils who are ready to read demanding fiction.

Literacy across the curriculum

49. Provision is satisfactory. There are some outstanding features, notably in the best history teaching, where provision for literacy is planned closely to contribute to achievement in both history and English. Some history writing, however, involves too much copying, some writing is inaccurate and lower attaining pupils are sometimes allowed to leave work unfinished. Work in science and religious education provides consistent opportunities for writing, with good features where pupils write from direct observation or personal experience. Singing in music lessons makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' understanding of the power of words and the importance of pronouncing them clearly.

French

Provision for French is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is not taught for long enough in the week.
 - Teaching has good features, but some teachers do not have a good enough command of French.
 - The range of learning is restricted, and pupils have too few opportunities to speak French.
 - There is a limited, working relationship with a local secondary school.
 - There is too little use of ICT in learning, and too few resources in the library.
 - Pupils enjoy French and want to learn; all pupils have an opportunity to visit France.
50. French is taught in Year 7. Standards were broadly average at the time of the last inspection. They are now well below average. Improvement is unsatisfactory. Each class has only one lesson per week, giving them under half of the nationally recommended time for the subject. As a result, even though the inspection took place early in the school year, pupils had already learned much less than they should, and standards are well below average. The range of simple phrases and words pupils had learned was very limited in both classes, and the full week between lessons led lower attaining pupils in particular to forget much material between lessons. There was some variation in standards between the two classes, and pupils taught by a specialist teacher from the local secondary school had better listening skills, were more

accurate in their intonation, and knew more of the alphabet in French. These pupils had also benefited from an introduction to French in the previous year.

51. This very limited knowledge and understanding of the language represents unsatisfactory achievement for all groups of pupils. In one class, however, pupils with special educational needs found the use of French songs interesting, and the teaching assistant's records showed that they engaged more with learning in this subject than in some others.
52. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. In the best teaching seen, the teacher had planned activities that developed a basic range of skills effectively within the constraints of time. As a result, pupils understood the material they had covered, and could pick out numbers in a listening test. However, where teaching was unsatisfactory, very good skills in class management were outweighed by many basic errors when presenting work to the pupils and by limited knowledge and understanding of the language that prevented the teacher from explaining issues clearly. Good use of songs in this class, however, contributed to pupils' understanding of rhythms and intonation in French, and they made better progress in this part of the lesson. There is some use of homework, but it is limited in scope, and offers too little challenge to higher attaining pupils in both classes. There is very little use of ICT, and the subject does not contribute to literacy or numeracy skills. Despite this, pupils in both classes showed strong interest in French, behaved well and wanted to learn. Effective learning and behavioural support from teaching assistants sustained pupils' interest and helped them to concentrate.
53. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The inadequate allocation of time is made worse by timetabling that concentrates it in a single weekly lesson, which is also the last lesson in the afternoon for one class. The school is building a relationship with its local secondary school, and co-ordinates its work with other local middle schools. This is, however, not yet having a significant impact on the basic level of provision. An annual residential trip to France for pupils in Years 6 and 7 provides a valuable experience to widen their understanding of French culture and language.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables most pupils to make good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils work hard and enjoy their lessons.
- Teachers plan their lessons well.
- Teaching assistants are very well used and effectively support learning.
- Good leadership and management of the subject ensure good teamwork.
- Some work is not matched closely enough to pupils' learning needs.
- ICT is insufficiently used in lessons.

Commentary

54. At the time of the last inspection, standards in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were well below average. There has been good improvement since then and standards continue on an upward trend because of improvements in teaching.
55. Pupils enter the school with standards that are well below average for their age. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average overall. This shows considerable improvement in the last two years. Standards are higher when pupils do calculations, either mentally or orally. Weaker standards are seen in their mathematical investigations because these contain too little

challenge. The standards in Year 7 were below average, and represent satisfactory progress from the end of Year 6.

56. These standards represent good achievement for many pupils, particularly for those of average attainment, but not yet for the great majority. Pupils achieve well in their number work and are making good gains in investigating and problem solving. However, the achievement of a small number of pupils who have the most complex needs is unsatisfactory. This is because the work they are given is too difficult and so they flounder. Some higher attaining pupils could achieve more if the work they were given to do was more challenging. Overall achievement in mathematics is satisfactory.
57. Teaching and learning are good in Years 4 to 6, and satisfactory in Year 7. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers know their subject well. They use skilful questioning in particular to adapt the National Numeracy Strategy to the learning needs of their pupils. However, in a small number of lessons teachers did not match the tasks as closely as they could have done to the needs of a few pupils with more complex needs. Teachers help their pupils to understand their learning as they talk to them about the work they are doing. This helps pupils to know what they need to do next to help them to improve their work. Pupils enjoy their tasks and work hard. Learning is enhanced by the use of response partners. This develops pupils' thinking and speaking and listening skills well and helps them to understand their learning. Classroom assistants assess how well their pupils have done and this is discussed with the class teacher after the lesson. Teachers use this information to help them in their planning. However, information from assessment is not used consistently enough to plan for all groups of pupils. Consequently, some pupils with more complex needs do not always learn as well as they should.
58. Because of the good leadership and management of the subject, teachers and teaching assistants have received good training in how to teach mathematics. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to ensure that the National Numeracy Strategy is embedded. Other teachers are seen teaching and pupils' work and test results are carefully scrutinised. As a result of these initiatives there is a clear drive to improve the subject further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. In most subjects a satisfactory focus is given to relevant mathematical techniques and calculations. For example, calculations are used in art and design and science. In contrast, opportunities to use mathematics are missed in the learning in history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Much teaching is good in Years 4 to 6.
- Insufficient attention is given to teaching more precise investigative skills.
- Pupils' scientific literacy and numeracy skills are underdeveloped.
- Analysis and interpretation of experimental data is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

60. At the time of the last inspection standards in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were well below average. There has been good Improvement since then and standards continue their upward trend. This is because the subject has a good profile, scientific enquiry is emphasised and areas of weakness are continually targeted.

61. Standards seen are now below average at the end of Year 6 and in Year 7. This is mainly because of the proportion of pupils who find it difficult to recall key facts, understand ideas or make sense of their investigations. Pupils have a stronger knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things than other areas, but a weaker understanding of the difficult ideas about forces and electricity. Standards of scientific enquiry are below average. This is because too few pupils are fully confident in planning, carrying out and making sense of their own investigations, although this is improving. A particular weakness in later years, especially with the higher attaining pupils, is the difficulty that many have in interpreting graphs and tables. Consequently, they find it hard to think about what patterns are evident, whether there is enough data or if there are errors in how the data is gathered.
62. Achievement is good by the end of Year 6 and satisfactory in Year 7. The pattern of achievement is, however, complex. Pupils join with standards that are well below average and often impaired by their very low levels literacy skills and degree of special educational need. The majority of the average attaining pupils do well up to Year 6, but progress in Year 7 is not as strong. Some pupils with special educational needs also do well because of the good support they receive in class. Pupils with pronounced learning difficulties, or attendance problems, often underachieve. Some higher attaining pupils and those working towards the higher levels might achieve more if they were given more challenging work. Therefore, overall achievement is satisfactory rather than good because the great majority of pupils do not yet do well in all years and across all facets of the subject.
63. Teaching is good in Years 4 to 6. The purpose of each lesson is shared and made crystal clear from the outset. A 'hands on' and 'try it out and find out' approach is fostered, which encourages enthusiasm and helps pupils understand that scientific ideas are based on first-hand evidence. Pupils are encouraged to always seek out the answer to "why?" something happens in a scientific way. The strongest teaching and learning is in Year 6. In a good lesson seen, the teacher had the confidence to present a challenge to the pupils to produce an exciting poster for a doctor's surgery to explain to patients the harmful effects of microbes. As a result, pupils worked independently in groups with relish and produced a range of good quality posters that advanced their skills and understanding. In Year 7, the pace of learning is slower because teachers' knowledge of the subject is sometimes unsure and the range and challenge of activities selected is too narrow. Teaching is, however, satisfactory with good attention paid to behaviour management, working closely with the teaching assistants and giving pupils a clear purpose to their learning. A general weakness in teaching is that planning does not yet target with precision the next level of development for individual pupils, although it is well pitched to the general level of development.
64. Increasing opportunities are taken to develop pupils' scientific literacy. However, pupils need to be clearer about how they write descriptions, explanations and predictions. Some examples of graphical work and simple calculations are evident. There is scope for this area of work to have more prominence. The use of ICT, which was unsatisfactory at the last inspection, is improving. Sound use is now made of the Internet for research, an interactive microscope in their biological work and sensors are occasionally used to gather data in investigations.
65. Leadership and management are good. As a result, the curriculum, teaching and achievement are improving. Teachers are seen teaching and the results of the National Curriculum tests are analysed in detail. Consequently, teachers are supported effectively and given pertinent advice on what they do well and what they need to improve. There are productive links with governors. A sound and developing system of assessment is enabling pupils' progress to be better tracked. Pupils benefit greatly from a wide range of science visits, fieldwork and visitors all of which enhance the curriculum. There are insufficient books in the library and some of the texts used in class do not promote a spirit of enquiry.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are confident in teaching the subject.
- Each class has time each week in the ICT suite, which helps develop their skills.
- A useful system of assessment is helping set realistic learning targets for each pupil.
- Better use is made of sensors to gather data and computers to control events.
- Pupils are less confident in the use of computers to solve problems and to send e-mails.

Commentary

66. At the last inspection standards were below average, but were weak in the strands of data handling, modelling and control technology. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and these aspects have received good attention. Standards remain below average by the end of Years 6 and 7, but are improving. Achievement is good by the end of Years 6 and 7 from their well below average standards at the start of Year 4. All groups of pupils undertake tasks that cover all strands of the curriculum. In addition, ICT is used to provide good support for lower attaining pupils, including the many with special educational needs.
67. Pupils' confidence and ICT skills progress well because they are taught well and enjoy using computers. Some also have computers at home, are avid users and are very knowledgeable. The use of ICT is having an increasing impact on the standards of the SEN and higher attaining pupils. Software such as 'Success Maker' and 'Goal', help test pupils' development in literacy and numeracy and promote independence.
68. Teaching of ICT as a discrete subject is good by the end of Years 6 and 7. The confidence of teachers and teaching assistants in using computers has improved through good quality training and support. Teaching was consistently good in the lessons observed in the ICT suite. Effective use was made of available resources, including a large display screen that was used to demonstrate the tasks and skills needed to each class. Pupils show great interest in the subject. Their enthusiasm is an important factor why good learning takes place. For example, Year 4 pupils showed developing confidence in using a word processor to select fonts and change their appearance on the screen as a pre-cursor to designing a poster to encourage parents to be more involved in their learning. Year 7 pupils worked briskly and confidently in putting together well organised 'PowerPoint' presentations of information about volcanoes. Pupils now have the opportunity to use and control and change the direction of a floor 'roamer' and extend this concept to a virtual 'roamer' on a computer screen. Pupils are less confident about using computers to send and retrieve e-mails, using computers to solve problems, using databases and using spreadsheets, for example, to construct a financial budget. Continuity in learning is sometimes affected by maintenance and virus problems.
69. Subject leadership and management are good. Good attention is given to observing and supporting other teachers and carefully tracking pupils' progress. Resources have significantly improved with the help of the EAZ. Well attended lunchtime and after school clubs help many pupils to develop their skills and interests. An improved system of assessment has been introduced in which the information that is gathered is discussed with pupils to help set realistic targets for learning. Good governor links do much to move the subject forward.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. Pupils' use of ICT across the curriculum was unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Satisfactory use is now made in most classrooms and subjects. Years 4 pupils used ICT to help improve their writing and learn their tables in mathematics. In Year 5 pupils used a variety of computer software programs to produce pictures, for research and to develop their mathematical skills. In Year 6 the Internet was used well to research 'germs and microbes' and in Year 7 pupils used ICT to produce newspaper articles and write poetry. Occasionally, digital cameras and sensing

equipment in science are used to develop other aspects of the subject and raise standards. However, it is insufficiently used to strengthen the mathematics and history curriculum.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision for geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils work hard and enjoy their lessons.
- Teaching assistants are well used and support learning well.
- Some work is not matched closely enough to pupils' individual needs.

Commentary

71. Evidence from lessons seen, discussion with the co-ordinator and looking at pupils' work shows that standards are below average overall by the end of Years 6 and 7. This is mainly due to the proportion of pupils who find it hard to recall facts and understand ideas and the lack of planning to suit individual needs. This is similar to the position reported in the last inspection.
72. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve appropriately in the development of their skills and knowledge as they move through the school. Higher attaining pupils are not given sufficiently challenging work. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the high quality of support they receive.
73. Teaching is satisfactory by the end of Years 6 and 7. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and create a purposeful learning environment. Pupils enjoy the work that they are asked to do. Learning is helped by response partners who help each other to complete tasks. A general weakness in teaching is that planning does not yet target with precision the next level of development for individual pupils, although it is pitched to the general level of development. This results in some pupils underachieving. For example, pupils are often asked to copy write the same piece of text. This does not challenge the higher attaining pupils and does not support pupils who have special educational needs in their learning. The use of information and communication technology is insufficiently used to help pupils to investigate their geographical topics.
74. Leadership is satisfactory. Management is unsatisfactory because no time is allocated to observe other teachers teach and so guide their improvement. However, there are some good features. The relatively new co-ordinator has reviewed the curriculum provision. Consequently, areas for development have been identified and include enhancing practical fieldwork, of which there is very little at the present time, and more visiting speakers.

History

Provision for History is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent teaching in Year 6 develops historical skills and literacy together.
- Pupils have had a recent and inspirational visit from a survivor of the Holocaust.
- Too much written work outside Year 6 is copied, sometimes inaccurately.
- There is some unsatisfactory teaching and behaviour in Year 7.
- Some marking is unsatisfactory, with incomplete work and clear errors ticked.

Commentary

75. At the time of the last inspection, provision for history was just satisfactory, but standards were falling. There has been too little improvement on this position across the school, but the quality of work in Year 6 shows that the school is now well placed to address the weakness.
76. Work seen during the inspection was consistent with average standards in Year 6 where pupils were writing on Victorian daily life. Standards were, however, well below average in earlier year groups and in the lesson observed in Year 7. Some younger pupils make very basic errors in work that is subsequently ticked, and pupils in Year 7 had no clear idea of what might make an item of historical evidence important or not. The standard currently reached in Year 6 represents good achievement. However, it is the result of outstanding work in that year, and achievement in Year 7 is unsatisfactory. Pupils are not yet adequately prepared effectively for further secondary education in the subject.
77. Excellent teaching in Year 6 is based on clear understanding of history and of the role of reading and writing in learning history. An example is described in detail in paragraph thirteen. Teaching seen in Year 7 was unsatisfactory, because work was too difficult for pupils to understand clearly, and they were not given clear enough guidance on what was and was not significant in the extracts from the 'Doomsday Book' they were studying. The work was particularly poorly matched to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. Learning in this lesson suffered further when pupils began to misbehave when they did not understand what they were supposed to do. Analysis of pupils' written work showed that much was copied, and that some marking was confined to providing encouragement, even when pupils' writing was incomplete, or contained very basic errors of fact. There is no systematic assessment of history in most classes, and teachers, therefore, do not have reliable information to use when trying to pitch work at the right level for all pupils. Despite the outstanding quality of the best work, history does not make an adequate contribution to literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the school.
78. Both leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is some monitoring of planning, but not of pupils' work across the school or teaching. As a result, the co-ordinator does not have a clear enough picture of progression in the subject. There are some suitable books in the library, but not enough to promote independent learning. Visits to local sites are used well in the best teaching, and all pupils benefited from a moving and inspirational visit from a survivor of the Holocaust in the term before the inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching gives pupils a sense of the importance of the subject.
- There are good opportunities for reflection, and for consideration of the values of world faiths.
- There is a good collection of resources for learning, which pupils treat with respect.
- Leadership and management are good, and provision is very well organised.

Commentary

79. When the school was last inspected, there were significant weaknesses in provision for religious education. Since then, all aspects of the work have been reviewed, and it has been given greater priority in the allocation of the school's most experienced teachers. This has led to good improvements in teaching, learning, standards, management and the subject's contribution to pupils' personal development.

80. There was too little evidence on which to base a judgement on standards in Year 6. Standards in Year 7 are broadly average, and above average in areas that have been studied closely, including aspects of Judaism. Analysis of pupils' work across the school, however, showed sound understanding of the principles of Christianity. Current standards show good overall achievement by Year 7, and the subject's opportunities for reflection make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
81. Insufficient evidence was available to judge teaching in Years 4 to 6. Teaching and learning are good in Year 7. Teachers make good use of the scheme of work to plan individual lessons that are interesting, creating an atmosphere of calm reflection that enables all pupils to consider the significance of religious belief, whether or not they share it themselves. Teachers make good use of discussion to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, and writing tasks are carefully thought out, with extracts often brought together and illustrated to make interesting books for pupils to read. Since the last inspection, the school has brought together a good range of resources, which teachers use for practical demonstrations of religious practices such as the treatment of 'holy' books. Pupils take lessons seriously, and develop a genuine interest in the thinking and beliefs of people from other cultures.
82. Leadership and management are good. Effective support from the deputy headteacher is also helping to move the subject forward. This creates a strong sense of teamwork, and consistency of learning in all classes. Careful structuring of the scheme of work, and good, accessible resources make an important contribution to learning. There are some suitable books in the library, but more are needed, particularly to challenge higher attaining pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was insufficient evidence to report fully on provision in art and design and design and technology. In these subjects inspectors discussed provision with the subject co-ordinators, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their work. One lesson was seen in each subject. Music and physical education are reported on in full.

83. In **art and design** pupils in Year 5 were engaged in making a clay pot. Most were enthusiastic as they began to learn the technique and skills of handling clay. The pupils worked hard and enjoyed the experience. Teaching made the work interesting and involved all pupils productively. Pupils understood what they had to do and worked well together. The lesson extended and developed a study on Ancient Greece that the pupils were learning about in history. Another lesson was seen for a limited amount of time. Pupils in Year 6 were learning the skills and techniques of observational drawing. The inspirational and imaginative teaching led to a high level of interest from the pupils. Skills were developed well. The high expectations of the teacher and the good relationships ensured that pupils' skills were enhanced. This made a good contribution to pupils' artistic development.
84. In a **design and technology** lesson, pupils were using their investigational skills well as they discovered how much weight a paper carrier bag would hold. Pupils worked hard and used their discussion skills well to help them to come to a conclusion. Teaching in this one lesson was sound and this was because of the secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. The teacher's enthusiasm encouraged pupils to work hard and enjoy the lesson.

MUSIC

Provision for music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visiting teachers have high levels of musical knowledge and teach very well.
- Pupils have the opportunity to learn recorder free, and the violin at very low cost.

- Some pupils do not concentrate and work as they should in afternoon lessons.
- Teaching assistants are particularly effective when pupils work in groups.
- The lack of specialist accommodation makes some aspects of teaching very difficult.
- Teachers make good taped records of pupils' work and progress.

Commentary

85. Provision at the time of the last inspection was barely satisfactory. There were weaknesses in teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject. The school has addressed this issue well by recruiting skilled professional musicians through the New Opportunities Fund. However, pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding remain below average, and reflect earlier gaps in teaching. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
86. Standards in Year 7 are below average. They range from broadly average in pupils' best singing to well below average in composing music. This is partly due to inconsistencies in teaching in earlier years, some of which were noted in the last inspection report. When pupils put their best effort into their work, at the mid point of the singing lesson seen in Year 7, their singing was well up to the standard expected for their age, with good phrasing, intonation and rhythm. At other points in the lesson, weaknesses in concentration and behaviour prevented them from achieving as much as they should. There was too little evidence during the inspection to assess standards in Year 6. Pupils receiving peripatetic violin lessons reach broadly average standards in playing and reading music. Standards among pupils joining the school are well below average for their age. Current standards represent satisfactory overall achievement. There is scope to improve this by encouraging more pupils to take full advantage of the high quality of teaching provided by the visiting specialists.
87. Teaching is good overall, and very good in lessons taught by visiting specialists. All teachers work to plans carefully drawn up to meet National Curriculum requirements, explain issues effectively to pupils and ensure learning that is satisfactory or better in all lessons. Where the teaching is very good, teachers have high levels of professional skill, and make full use of their experience of performance and musical direction to support pupils, particularly those who are less confident. Lessons, however, take place in normal classrooms, which are sometimes cramped even for less practical subjects. This makes it difficult for teachers to direct sessions where pupils compose using percussion instruments. There was a tendency for pupils to lose concentration for the same reason, and there is some poor behaviour. While this is handled very skilfully by the teacher, it diverts attention from the work in hand, and prevents pupils from gaining the full benefit of their teaching. Learning in these lessons is satisfactory. Attitudes, teaching and learning in violin lessons were very good. Teachers keep careful records of performances and use them to track progress and for planning.
88. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has identified weaknesses in the skills of its own teachers, and its grant from the New Opportunities Fund is used very effectively to supplement these and extend pupils' experience of music of professional quality. The scheme of work has been planned in great detail and provides an effective framework for teaching. There are satisfactory opportunities for learning outside lessons, with a choir and recorder group and an annual production. Instrumental teaching is affordably priced to ensure equal access and opportunity for all pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching with high expectations of work helps to develop pupils' skills well.
- Pupils participate in a good range of extra-curricular activities with interest and enthusiasm.

Commentary

89. Standards have improved since the last inspection from below average to average at the end of Years 6 and 7. This represents good improvement. Achievement is good. This is a result of the good quality teaching that the pupils receive and the emphasis the school places on this subject. Two lessons were observed during the inspection and judgements are based on these lessons, planning and discussions.
90. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in the development in their skills and knowledge as they move up through the school. Pupils in Year 6 show increasing control as they develop their balancing skills. In Year 7 pupils continue to build on earlier skills as they develop a sequence of symmetrical and asymmetrical balances on the floor to begin with and then transfer them to apparatus. Pupils showed developing skills and worked hard, and were aware of each other's space. They took great care to work safely. The classroom assistant helps pupils with special educational needs to develop their ideas, guiding and encouraging them in a quiet, confident way so that they make good progress. Teachers build up pupils' understanding and skills during lessons and use some pupils to show a high quality performance. As a result, others know how to improve their own.
91. Teaching is good. This helps pupils to build on their early skills, both in lessons and in the well-planned range of after-school sporting activities. Standards are also further raised in games, and gymnastics. Relationships are good and, as a result, pupils respond quickly to their teachers' explanations and guidance. Pupils work well together and help each other to improve their performance.
92. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Since his arrival at the school, the provision for physical education has improved. This is because he has introduced many new sporting activities for pupils to engage in. For example, both girls and boys play football, and take part in local football leagues. Girls play netball and participate in local tournaments. A cross-country team takes part in an inter-schools tournament and the school is developing 'fun sports' with parents also being involved. To develop pupils' skills further a residential trip is organised where pupils take part in a wide range of sport including abseiling and canoeing.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Programmes are well planned and cover the issues that the pupils face as they mature.
- The school makes good use of the programmes to promote high standards of conduct.
- Pupils develop an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in society and their local community and know what it expects of them.

Commentary

93. Starting with the youngest pupils, the school offers a programme of personal social and health education that is well thought out and continues throughout the classes. Pupils learn about the benefits of healthy eating and looking after themselves. As the pupils mature, the teachers deal with more sensitive matters and alert the pupils to the dangers that can arise such as drugs and substance abuse. Relationships and feelings are discussed sensibly and in a sensitive manner.
94. The school uses its personal, social and health education lessons to help the pupils to understand the need to avoid all forms of oppressive behaviour. An interesting project has, for

example, been completed by the Year 6 pupils who researched cause, effect and prevention of bullying. They presented an interesting assembly on the topic and this gained valuable presentational skills. The school works with the community and pupils to enhance their social roles. The pupils respect the contribution that visits make to learning about social conditions and the needs of the locality.

95. Developing the pupils into responsible citizens is a key aim of the school. Staff work hard in lessons to help the pupils to understand the complexities of society. Residential visits give the pupils opportunities to develop independence and to appreciate life beyond school and their immediate environment. The pupils are active in developing their own rules and take leading roles in matters like the house system and school council. Through these facilities they develop an understanding of the need for rules and standards in an orderly and democratic society.

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 | 5 |
| 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 | 3 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 3 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 2 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 3 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 3 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 3 |
| The effectiveness of management | 3 |

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