

INSPECTION REPORT

GEOFFREY FIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Reading

LEA area: Reading

Unique reference number: 109781

Headteacher: Mr C Clare

Lead inspector: Paul Missin 19227

Dates of inspection: 24th – 26th May 2004

Inspection number: 256199

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 275

School address: Exbourne Road
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body, Geoffrey Field Junior School
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Lynda Miller

Date of previous inspection: February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Geoffrey Field Junior School is bigger than most other schools. The school serves a large housing estate in the south of Reading. This is recognised as an area with significant social problems. There are 11 more girls than boys in the school. Most pupils are from the white British ethnic group, but the most numerous of other ethnic groups are mixed white and black Caribbean, mixed white and Asian and Asian British Pakistani. Two pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) have recently joined the school. There are 75 pupils on the school's special educational needs (SEN) register which is above the national average. Eleven pupils have SEN statements. This is well above average. The most common area of need is social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school has received the following national awards: Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2001, School Achievement Awards in 2001 and 2002, Healthy Schools Award and an Investor in People Award in 2003. Since January 2004, the school has been a member of the Whitley Excellence Cluster. When they enter the school, most pupils are achieving standards that are well below those expected for their age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19227	Paul Missin	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, history, geography.
9691	Jon Vincent	Lay inspector	
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11769	Jim Bishop	Team inspector	Science, religious education, design and technology, physical education. Special educational needs.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Geoffrey Field Junior School is an effective school which provides good value for money. The outstanding leadership of the Headteacher and the way in which the school is continually seeking improvements in its work make this an exciting place to be in. The outstanding support of the deputy headteacher, the very effective management procedures and the very good support of the senior staff are major strengths of the school. The school has a high profile in the local area and embraces curricular change enthusiastically. The good teaching enables most pupils to progress well in their learning. Although standards attained in Year 6 in several areas are below national averages, most pupils, including those who have SEN, achieve well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The excellent leadership of the Headteacher with outstanding support from the deputy headteacher gives the school very clear educational direction, a very strong ethos, and a very high profile in the community.
- The good teaching across the school enables all pupils, including those with SEN, to achieve well and make good progress in their learning.
- Very good provision for pupils' personal development raises their self esteem and encourages very good relationships and very good attitudes to learning.
- The school improvement plan is thorough and detailed and is clearly at the heart of the school's work.
- A wide range of outside agencies and opportunities are used innovatively and very effectively to support and enhance what the school provides.
- Teachers and support staff are fully involved in the school's work so that they have high morale, are fully committed to the continued improvement of the school and take every opportunity to promote their own professional development.
- The care and welfare of pupils and their families are high priorities for the school.
- Insufficient attention has been given to the development of pupils' library and independent research skills.

Overall, the school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has been improved and the high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching identified at the last inspection has been eliminated. Very good improvement has been made in raising standards in important areas and in accelerating the progress that pupils make which were all key issues at the last inspection. Other important improvements have been to review the deployment of teachers, strengthen the school's leadership and the role of the governing body and to improve resources in music and ICT.

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	E	E
mathematics	E	D	E*	E
science	B	B	D	C

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - very low, in the lowest 5% nationally*

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

Analysis of recent trends in the results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds shows that standards have been consistently below and well below average in English and mathematics but higher in science, but that there was a significant dip in attainment in mathematics and science in 2003. This was because that year group contained a higher proportion of pupils with significant

learning needs and reflects the success of initiatives in English. The current Year 6 group are attaining average standards in mathematics, ICT, geography, music, religious education (RE) and physical education (PE), and below average standards in English and science. Currently, the development of pupils' library and retrieval skills is a relative weakness. **Pupils' achievement is good.** From a very low standard when they enter the school, most pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Pupils with SEN attain good standards for their capabilities and make good progress towards their own learning targets. **Pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Procedures to promote pupils' self-esteem and their personal development are very good. Pupils' attitudes and relationships are very good and their behaviour in class and around the school is good. Rates of attendance are improving and most pupils arrive at school punctually.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are also good. Strengths in teaching are the very effective way in which pupils are managed and encouraged, and in the consistent way in which the clear learning intended in the lesson is shown in lesson plans and shared with pupils. These strengths encourage effective learning by ensuring that pupils are fully involved, well motivated and know what they are expected to do in each lesson. Assessment procedures are good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enhanced through well planned visits and visitors. A very good range of extra-curricular opportunities is provided. The good links with parents and the local community and the very good links with other educational providers have a positive impact on the school's work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are very good overall. The Headteacher's leadership is excellent. He has a clear vision for the school's development and he communicates this very well with all involved in the school's work. The impact that he has made on the work of the local Excellence Cluster and the involvement of a wide range of other agencies adding quality to the support provided are outstanding. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher provide an excellent leadership team and they are very well supported by other key staff. Other strengths are the way in which the school improvement plan is at the heart of the school's work and the emphasis given to the professional development of staff. Governance of the school is good. The knowledge and enthusiasm of the chair of governors ensure that the governing body is now well placed to move the school forward. Governors meet all their statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has established good links with its parents and most have a positive view of the school's achievements. The school works very hard to ensure that parents are fully involved in its work and deals with concerns that they might have very effectively. Pupils also have positive views of the school. A very high proportion like coming to school and feel supported if they have a problem.

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Further develop pupils' library and independent research skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Overall, pupils attain below average standards when they leave the school. However, from a very low level on entry to the school, this represents good progress and most pupils are achieving well. The needs of all pupils, including those of higher ability, are met well. Pupils with SEN make good progress towards their own learning targets.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although standards overall are below average, this represents good progress for most pupils.
- In several subjects, pupils reach average standards.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress towards their own learning targets.
- There has been good improvement in the standards achieved in mathematics and ICT.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.5 (24.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.3 (26.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.7 (29.7)	28.6 (28.3)

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

1. Two important factors affect the standards attained by pupils and the progress they make. Attainment on entry to the school has been consistently well below and below average, particularly in all aspects of pupils' literacy work. Some pupils have significant communication problems. The school has also had an above average proportion of pupils with SEN and a well above average proportion of pupils with more severe learning difficulties including several with significant emotional and behavioural problems. These factors all have an impact on pupils' capacity to reach national standards. The dip in standards achieved in 2003 was the result of a year group with high levels of significant SEN and the impact of several pupils joining the Year 6 group who also had learning difficulties.
2. Analysis of the trends shown by the results of recent national tests for eleven-year-olds shows that standards in English have been very low, in mathematics they have been largely below average and, in science, mostly average and above. However, in both mathematics and science, there was a marked dip in 2003. The findings of the current inspection are that pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards in English and science that are below average, and average standards in mathematics, ICT, geography, music, religious education (RE) and physical education (PE). It was not possible to make judgements about provision or standards attained in history, art and design or design and technology. Since the last inspection standards attained have risen significantly, but mostly in mathematics and in ICT. There was no evidence during the inspection that there were any significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
3. Standards have been raised in ICT as a result of the increase in teachers' knowledge and confidence in the subject gained through targeted in-service training. Also, there has been a significant improvement in the resourcing of the subject since the last inspection, with the introduction of a new computer suite and interactive whiteboards. Standards have been raised in mathematics as a result of the school's efforts to increase opportunities for investigative work and the emphasis put on problem solving and applying the skills which pupils acquire.

4. The achievement of pupils is good. From a well below average level of attainment when entering the school, most make good progress in their learning to achieve below average standards overall when they leave. Pupils with SEN make good progress because their learning targets are in appropriately small steps but are challenging and the teachers and their assistants give them good levels of support. The grouping of pupils by ability is helping to ensure that all pupils' needs are being met. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged and below average pupils are well supported with work that matches their ability. Pupils who have SEN make good progress towards the targets set for them. The targets set in their individual learning plans are relevant and appropriate to their needs. The pupils also achieve well because of the good quality of the care and support provided by the adults who work with them.
5. Until very recently, there were no pupils in the school who spoke English as an additional language. Two pupils who have very recently been admitted have been assessed and appropriate provision has been planned.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are very good. Their behaviour is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very rigorous procedures for promoting good attendance.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are very good and the school takes every opportunity to foster responsibility and self-reliance.
- Pupils' freedom from bullying and other forms of harassment is very good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good.
- Pupils have a good awareness of right and wrong and show respect for others' feelings.
- Pupils' appreciation of their responsibilities of living in a community is good.

Commentary

6. Attendance is satisfactory and, although slightly below the national median in the 2002/2003 academic year, the rate is steadily increasing. A check taken during the inspection showed an attendance figure above the national average for similar schools.
7. The rigorous procedures instigated by the school ensure that the majority of parents and pupils understand the need for prompt and regular attendance at school. These systems of monitoring and promoting attendance have resulted in steady improvement in attendance and a very low rate of unauthorised absence. During interviews and discussions with pupils, it was very evident that they enjoyed school and, indeed, many volunteered that they wanted to come to school because they so enjoyed their learning and the many activities that the school provides. There have been 11 fixed period exclusions during the past school year. These exclusions were the final sanction in the school's behaviour programme after all other methods of help and support had been exhausted. It demonstrates the school's determination to re-inforce the need for acceptable standards of behaviour. There are no excluded pupils at present.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.4	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	222	11	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	31	0	0

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

8. Most pupils show great interest in their lessons and strive hard to achieve the expectations of their teachers. The very good methods of behaviour management adopted by the whole school staff have a positive effect on pupils' learning. Overall, behaviour is good in lessons, around the school and in the playground. These standards have improved since the last inspection. This has been achieved through the committed work of the whole staff team and the use of external agencies such as the Behaviour Improvement Team. Pupils are all aware of the school and class rules and fully understand the difference between right and wrong. Positive attitudes are constantly promoted and fostered by the school. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding are good. The school has made good progress in improving provision for pupils' spiritual development since the last inspection. The environment provided by the school is one of a large and happy family where everyone is valued and respected. Both parents and pupils confirm how much they enjoy, and benefit from, this caring environment.
9. Pupils have many opportunities for taking on additional responsibility and they respond very well to them. The school council ensures that pupils' views are heard and listened to. Every year group has representatives on the council. All school council representatives interviewed during the inspection displayed very responsible attitudes and were confident, courteous, articulate and mature for their age. The school ensures that every pupil, regardless of age, gender or ability has some opportunity to enjoy responsibility. Parents acknowledge this and, in particular, the 'mediator' system where pupils can seek help and advice from their peers.
10. Pupils have a good level of respect for the feelings and values of others and are given many opportunities to reflect on these feelings. The culture of the school, coupled with school assemblies and lessons, ensures that a good level of spiritual and moral development is achieved. During the inspection, members of the school council gave a whole school assembly based on the theme of standing up for what is right. The pupils involved gave a confident and dramatic presentation on the start of the Civil Rights Movement in America and held their audience spellbound.
11. The ROPES initiative rewards pupils who learn the 'ropes' (responsibility, ownership, participation, exploration and self-motivation). Pupils' successes in these areas are monitored on a termly basis. These successes are acknowledged by certificates awarded by a prominent local

businessman at an end of year ceremony. He supports the programme and pupils are keen to succeed in all the areas promoted by the scheme.

12. Pupils are constantly encouraged to think of others by means of the school's innovative and nationally recognised peer mediation' system. Pupils are trained as mediators and offer their services in playground and classroom to those who need them. They advertise their service with their own individually designed posters displayed in the corridors. There is also a school council, with representatives elected by their peers, and this council plays an active and responsible part in school life. These activities, together with the family atmosphere that permeates the school, ensure that pupils' social development is good. The very good relationships between pupils and all adults are based on mutual respect and enhance the learning environment.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good overall and this enables pupils to learn well and make good progress. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Provision is supported very well by a very effective PSHCE programme, interesting visits and links with other schools and colleges. The school looks after the care and welfare of the pupils very well.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment procedures are all good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Teaching and learning are good and support the good progress which most pupils make.
- Teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is particularly strong.
- The sharing of the learning goals for each lesson and the effective management of pupils are important strengths in teaching.
- Comprehensive assessment data are collected and these are beginning to be used well to set learning targets for pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6 (17%)	16 (46%)	13 (37%)	0	0	0

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

13. Teaching and learning are good. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory overall but included a high proportion which was unsatisfactory. The good teaching confirms both parents' and pupils' positive views of teaching across the school. In the lessons observed during the inspection, nearly a half were good and almost a fifth were very good. There was no significant variation between the different year groups across the school, but the highest proportion of very good teaching was observed in Year 5. Across the school, the quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and music and satisfactory in all other subjects which were inspected.
14. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has been improved in mathematics, science, ICT and music and the effective teaching in English has been maintained. This improvement has been achieved as a result of the whole school work done in the previous academic year on agreeing a whole school teaching and learning policy. It also reflects the impact of the effective monitoring and support procedures provided in the school.

15. Strengths in teaching include the positive way in which pupils are managed. Teachers consistently have high and clear expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour and create supportive and challenging learning environments in the classrooms. This is encouraged well by the good relationships between staff and the attractive displays of work in the learning bases. All teachers work hard to promote pupils' self-esteem in the way that they value their contributions and use praise and encouragement effectively. Another strength is the way in which the specific learning goal for the lesson is clearly shown in teachers' lesson planning and shared with the pupils. This ensures that they know clearly what is expected of them. Often the learning goal is used as a way of assessing what has been learnt at the end of the lesson. These strengths improve the pupils' capacity to learn. Most are well motivated and keen to do their best. Teachers' lesson planning in literacy and numeracy is very full and detailed and satisfactory in other subjects.
16. A very good lesson to pupils in Year 5 in the computer suite illustrated several other features of very effective teaching. The class were using sensors to measure light, sound and temperature in the class and displaying data through their computers. The teacher managed the activity very well and pupils were interested and fully involved in the lesson. The theme was introduced clearly and good links were made with pupils' previous work. The teacher's approach was direct and challenging and pupils were continually being asked to use subject specific vocabulary in their answers to the teacher's questions and to explain and justify their reasoning. The teacher cleverly allowed pupils time to try out and experiment together with this relatively new equipment. She showed very good subject knowledge as she demonstrated the different graphic profiles generated by the computers and drew pupils' attention to important differences in scale. By the end of the lesson, pupils' appreciation of sensors and data displays was developed very well. Pupils were delighted to be able to recognise the difference between the graphical representation of speaking, banging a drum, pop and classical music.
17. The quality of teaching of pupils with SEN is good. Pupils make good progress because they receive work and activities that are well matched to their individual needs and levels of attainment. They also progress well because the school has effective processes for identifying them as early as possible. Most support is provided in each class setting. This enables the school to offer individual and group support which successfully boosts individuals' success and raises their self-esteem in normal lessons. All SEN pupils are included well in every aspect of class lessons and extracurricular activities. Pupils receive good support from all teachers and learning support assistants, who adopt positive attitudes towards their pupils and their needs. They work effectively as a team to plan, provide and assess learning. Pupils are also provided with resources that have been specially selected, adapted or modified to enhance learning.
18. The provision for assessment across the school is good and is a significant improvement on the judgement of the last inspection where it was judged to be a major weakness. The school has placed considerable emphasis upon assessment in its school improvement plan in recent years and still has a comprehensive plan for further actions. The school now has well-organised and comprehensive systems for assessment. Procedures for assessing English and mathematics and the termly assessment tasks in writing are particular strengths. A wide range of assessment data is maintained and detailed analysis is done of the trends shown by performance data. Data are used effectively to give the school a clear view of the progress that pupils are making. A programme for recording what has been taught and achieved, which is matched to National Curriculum criteria, has been devised for each subject. However, at the time of the inspection, many of these records were not due to be completed for the current year groups. The information provided by the school's assessment procedures is used to set individual targets for pupils, informs the grouping by ability arrangements and enables teachers to make predictions about future needs and achievements of groups, classes and year groups.
19. Teachers make good use of assessment to inform their medium term planning and in order to meet the needs of individual pupils, groups and whole classes. Careful checks are made by teachers concerning the progress which most pupils have made in reaching the expected learning goal for each lesson. The way in which teachers adapt their teaching plans to take account of assessments they have made is starting to become a strength of the school's provision. Marking

helps most pupils to improve their work and helps their teachers to obtain more detailed information about pupils' understanding and knowledge. However, there are some shortcomings in the quality and the frequency of the marking of pupils' work across the school. Through knowledge of their own targets and evaluating their own progress, pupils are beginning to be more involved in the assessment of their own work.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is good and is relevant to the ages and interests of pupils. The curriculum is enriched well. The school's accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall.

Strengths and Weaknesses

- The curriculum is both broad and well balanced, and is planned to promote pupils' continuing progress.
- Curriculum innovation is very good indeed
- Equality of opportunity for all pupils is very good, including arrangements for pupils who have special gifts and talents.
- Personal, social and health education together with citizenship studies, and the impact this has on relationships and behaviour in school, is an important strength of the school.
- Good opportunities are provided to enrich and enhance the curriculum.
- The siting of the library inhibits opportunities for free independent research.

Commentary

20. Curricular provision is good overall, and the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which meets all statutory requirements. Provision, co-ordination and monitoring are particularly strong in the main core subjects of English and mathematics. Music is also a strong subject, and ICT has improved considerably since the last inspection. PSHCE, which includes drugs education and sex and relationships education, together with citizenship studies is a strength of the school. The influences of this area of the curriculum form an essential part of the school's very positive ethos. This pervades the school and relationships within it and includes aspects such as the strong emphasis on equality of opportunity, on behaviour and motivation, as well as the operation of a peer mediation service and the school council.
21. Good cross-curricular integration of subjects is developing well, and special topic days and themed weeks add to this enrichment. The curriculum is additionally enhanced by a variety of events, visiting specialists, speakers and performers, and visits to places of interest, including a residential visit to the Lake District for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Added to this, the range of extracurricular activities is very good, and includes opportunities for sport and the arts. There is good uptake for these activities from among the pupils.
22. A strength in provision is the way that the school is open to curriculum innovation. Careful thought is given to the effectiveness of the way in which several subjects are taught in groups organised by pupils' ability. The Headteacher and staff of the school play a major role in the local Excellence Cluster of schools. The most recent Cluster initiatives concerned with the creative curriculum, gifted and talented and inclusive schools are areas being developed at Geoffrey Field School. Although the school gives priority to the development of literacy and oracy skills other aspects of the curriculum are given satisfactory prominence.
23. Governors play a role in monitoring curriculum development, and there are specific governor roles linked to some subjects, such as English and mathematics. There is a policy for pupils with special gifts and talents, with a very good programme of opportunities which has recently been established and which is still developing further. The match of both teachers and assistants to the demands of the curriculum is good, and this adds to the quality of support the school provides for its pupils in their learning. Resources are satisfactory, and the accommodation is good and well kept, apart from the siting of the library which inhibits free use of its facilities for research due to its

relative isolation from the rest of the school. The premises occupy a most pleasant environment which adds to the resources available.

24. The curriculum provided for pupils with SEN is good. Targets are well matched to pupils' specific needs. Pupils' individual learning plans are of good quality, carefully planned and reviewed. The school ensures well that the needs of these pupils are met within every area of the curriculum, and in giving them equal access to it. Pupils are fully integrated into the school's curriculum provision and are offered activities and tasks that have been carefully selected to match their developmental and individual needs.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring of pupils' achievement is good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures for health and safety and child protection.
- Relationships with adults in school are very good.
- The school has good systems to monitor pupils' academic standards and progress and these are well used to provide pupils with advice and guidance.
- All staff know pupils and their backgrounds very well.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is very good.

Commentary

25. The school has very good health and safety procedures in place and these have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory. Safety and care for pupils are paramount throughout the school. There are full child protection procedures and all staff know the pupils and their backgrounds very well. The school has close relationships with all the appropriate welfare and support agencies.
26. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils. They know them well and provide good role models for behaviour. Discussions with pupils show that they feel very safe and secure and would turn to any adult in school should they need help, comfort or advice. However, the success of the peer mediation scheme is such that those pupils spoken to said that they would approach a mediator before an adult and were confident that this move would probably resolve any problems they might have. The views of pupils about different aspects of school life are welcomed and encouraged through the school council.
27. The school's good systems to monitor pupils' standards and progress include pupil tracking systems that allow accurate and challenging personal learning objectives to be set. Progress towards their targets is discussed with pupils on a regular basis thus ensuring that pupils become more committed to the successful improvement of their work. Learning objectives are also made clear for all lessons and effective lesson summaries provide information for planning future lessons.
28. The school council ensures that all pupils are totally involved in the work and future plans of the school. A very professional presentation from the council resulted in the release of funds to improve the condition of outside toilets. Council members of all ages and both genders are responsible for a monetary budget and are very aware of their duty to their peers. Pupils take full advantage of the many opportunities for personal and social development that the school offers. They respond very positively, show maturity beyond their years and thoroughly enjoy the discussions and debates they become involved in. Pupils' personal and social development is enhanced by this very good involvement in the work of the school.

29. Induction arrangements for new pupils are good. Year 3 staff introduce themselves to children in the neighbouring infant school and ensure a smooth transfer to junior school education.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are good. There are very good links with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides parents with good information about the curriculum and how to help their children at home.
- There is very good involvement with parents through seeking and acting on their views.
- Procedures for dealing with complaints and concerns are very good.
- There are very good links with educational partnerships, other schools and good links with the local community.
- The systems for the transfer of pupils are very effective.

Commentary

30. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school and the school works very well with parents by encouraging them to support the school and to help their children at home. Parent' contribution is good and they support the school in many differing ways. The school prospectus provides clear and detailed information for parents, fulfils statutory requirements and is written in a very friendly style. Similarly, the governing body's Annual Report to parents also meets statutory requirements and is much improved since the last inspection. Regular letters and bulletins ensure that parents and carers are kept up to date with school news. Although there is no formal parent/teacher association, parents and friends of the school organise various social functions and also raise funds for the school. Some parents and friends help in school and with escorting school trips.
31. The school has gone to great lengths to make parents and other visitors feel at ease. The Headteacher, his Deputy and the school administrative staff have an open plan office in the reception area of the school. This ensures genuine 'open door' access to the senior staff and ensures that they are available and approachable. Parents and carers appreciate this and feel more comfortable about approaching the school. Teachers also make themselves available for informal contact at the end of the school day. Apart from the three scheduled parents' meetings a year, parents are welcome to arrange any additional meetings with teachers should the need arise. The school is always quick to respond to any parental requests for information and any additional contact. It is also pro-active in arranging parental contact when pupils cause concern with academic or behavioural problems. A parental questionnaire is also sent out twice a year.
32. There are very good links with other schools and colleges. The Headteacher is chair of the local Excellence Cluster and has been instrumental in the achievement of Excellent Cluster status. Other senior members of the teaching staff are working with other schools as advisors and mentors and sharing their expertise. There are effective procedures to ensure the smooth transfer of pupils from the infant school. There are also strong links with the secondary schools and very good liaisons are in place. A 'learning mentor' accompanies Year 7 pupils for their first six months in secondary school. Transfers to secondary education are very smooth as a result of these very good links.
33. The school has very good links with the local community. The school makes very good use of contacts with local businesses. Reading Football Club provides training at an after school club. An advertising agency provided practical help and support for pupils in the design and production of a logo for the Whitley Excellence Cluster. Another local business donated surplus stationery supplies to the school. A prominent local businessman supports the school with the ROPES initiative and presents the awards. The local Rotary club is very involved with after school clubs on

many different activities. These activities with both educational and business establishments, together with parental involvement, greatly enrich pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is outstanding and management is very good. Governors support the school well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Headteacher is a charismatic leader and shares his vision and enthusiasm for the school effectively with all other parties.
- The Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher provide an excellent leadership team.
- The school is self-critical and continually seeks to improve its effectiveness.
- School improvement planning and Performance Management procedures are securely at the heart of the school's work.
- The school gives a high priority to the professional development of its staff.
- The work of the school has a high profile in the local area.
- The impact of the work of some subject co-ordinators is not sufficiently strong.

Commentary

34. The leadership and management of the Headteacher are excellent and the support which the Deputy Headteacher provides is outstanding. Together, they form a very effective leadership partnership. The Headteacher's excellent leadership is based on the very clear vision which he has for the school and his ability to communicate this effectively to all involved with its work. The very strong ethos is focused on providing a safe but challenging environment where all resources are mobilised to raise the standards that pupils achieve. The Headteacher has been able to give the school a very high local, and sometimes national, profile. His input and continuing commitment to the recently established Whitley Excellence Cluster are outstanding. This and other local outreach programmes have added significantly to the opportunities offered by the school and the effectiveness of its work.
35. The Headteacher's leadership style encourages the commitment and secures the enthusiasm of others connected with the school. The impact of the close working relationship between the Headteacher and his Deputy is a strength of the school. This team ensures that the effectiveness of the school is continually being monitored and action taken. The leadership of the school is always open to change and is continually analysing practices to ensure their effectiveness. For example, the school is currently looking at research which might encourage them to modify the well established and extended procedures of grouping pupils by ability in several subjects. Very good links with other local schools through the Excellence Cluster, and with teacher training establishments mean that the school is committed to innovation and looking both to share and to copy good practice elsewhere.
36. Management procedures are very good, with some excellent features. The process by which the school improvement plan is devised and monitored is outstanding. All staff and some governors are involved in an annual Conference during which progress in meeting the previous targets and subject action plans are discussed and co-ordinators plan carefully for the following year. The current plan is comprehensive and clearly charts the work of the school. The raising of standards and the importance of the work done in literacy and numeracy are clear priorities. Performance Management procedures are very effective. Teachers' objectives are clearly part of the overall development of the school and teachers' individual development plans enable clear links to be made with the school's need for in-service training and the teachers' own professional development. The school takes the professional development of staff very seriously. Several of the teachers are involved with outreach work in other schools, one as part of her Advanced Skills Teacher responsibilities and another supporting an extended LEA project.

37. Management procedures are strong. The creation of effective Year group teams strengthens the morale of teachers, increases the professional responsibility of the team leader and improves communications. This structure provides a good means of sharing information and of involving the staff in decision making processes. The primary leadership team, made up of senior teachers, has an important function in monitoring teaching and learning across the school and reviewing school effectiveness. This is done well. The strength of these management systems has meant that the roles of some of the subject co-ordinators across the school have not been developed to their full capacity.
38. The governing body gives the school good support in its work. The governing body has been through a time of change recently but it is now well placed to support and challenge the school's work. Minutes of the full governing body meetings and the different committees show that a good number of relevant issues are discussed. The Headteacher provides comprehensive and realistic reports of the school's work and these help to ensure that governors have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. The governors' clear involvement in strategic planning issues is a good response to the key issue from the last inspection. An indication of the governors' commitment to the school and their concern for excellence is that the new chair has successfully gained a national qualification in school governance.
39. The leadership and management of SEN are good. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has ensured that there is a whole-school approach and consistency within the school's provision for its pupils. She has also established good arrangements for the early identification of pupils with SEN and a process for tracking and assessing their progress. The SENCO has established good links with outside agencies such as the Behaviour Support Team. Good use of funding has enabled the provision of good learning resources and additional training for teachers, and learning support assistants. A shortcoming is that the procedures for ensuring that pupils move down the register and no longer need SEN support when appropriate are not sufficiently clear.
40. The financial management of the school is good. The conclusion of the most recent financial audit in May 2003 concluded that the financial administration of the school was well maintained. The school indicates that the minor control weaknesses identified have been rectified. The school is currently in a deficit budget situation. This has been planned and is monitored carefully by the governing body and the LEA. The school is on track to balance its budget by the planned date of 2006. Procedures for costing developmental priorities and for monitoring spending are secure. Careful records are maintained of other budget inputs, for example, the school's share of the Excellence Cluster funding.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	694702
Total expenditure	747140
Expenditure per pupil	2648

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	10903
Balance carried forward to the next	-41535

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching impacts well on the pupils' progress.
- While standards of attainment are low, they are improving and pupils achieve well in the subject.
- Plenty of recent staff training ensures up-to-date use of methods and approaches.
- Good emphasis is placed on comprehension and oracy in literacy hours.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Despite improvements in the organisation of the library, its siting is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

41. Standards in Year 6 are below average. However, this is an improvement on both those reported in the last inspection and those indicated by the 2003 national tests, when standards were well below the national average. This is due to the impact of good teaching and learning. The achievement of pupils overall is good, since most enter the school with standards that are well below average. All pupils, including those with SEN do well against their previous learning and for their capabilities, and the more able are well challenged. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils' attitudes to work and study are good.
42. Standards in speaking and listening are below average in Year 6, although pupils generally speak with confidence and clarity, and are eager to enter discussions and to ask and answer questions. Their vocabulary is limited and this sometimes affects their understanding and the expression of their ideas. However, they readily talk about the books they read and express their own opinions about texts they study and topics they learn. They make good progress in speaking and listening and their achievement is good. Teachers and their assistants extend speaking and listening by the skilled use of questioning to promote thinking, by including opportunities for paired and small group talk, and by using oracy in plenary sessions.
43. In reading, standards are below average in Year 6, although achievement against previous learning and the capabilities of pupils is good. Pupils generally read accurately the texts they are given, and more mature readers enjoy selecting books of their own choice, as well as being introduced to new authors for their class and group reading activities. Pupils are encouraged to read at home on a regular basis. Guided reading activities focus on reading for meaning, aiding and deepening understanding. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on and evaluate what they have read, and by the end of Year 6, most are able to do so with some success. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, library skills are insufficiently practised, and opportunities for developing free independent research skills are limited by the siting of the library separately from the main areas of the school.
44. Standards of attainment in writing in Year 6 are below average. However, pupils make good progress. Pupils' writing shows imagination and the use of good ideas, although, especially for less able pupils, slow writing skills tend to impede the full expression of these ideas. More able pupils adapt their writing well for the purpose of their audience, in terms of style, and the choice of vocabulary. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A wide range of purposes for writing is introduced to pupils, and good attention is paid to organisation and structure, with plenty of support provided to help them in this aspect of their work. Pupils try hard and generally present their work neatly.

45. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall throughout the school, ranging from good to very good. There has been substantial and recent in-service training for staff in the subject. Skilled questioning and the use of focused discussions which develop thinking and reasoning are strengths of the teaching. Handwriting, spelling and grammar are carefully and thoroughly taught. Tasks are generally well matched to pupils' capabilities, and both formal and informal ongoing assessment is used to achieve this. The good teaching is also well planned and imaginative, and is aimed at capturing the interest of pupils.
46. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge, and has introduced a number of ideas to improve provision in the subject. Recent initiatives include thorough training for staff in new assessment procedures for reading, and the inclusion of more oracy content in the literacy hours. Further work on oracy is planned to follow soon. The co-ordinator monitors lessons on a systematic basis, sees planning, and surveys assessment data, providing the foundation for target setting for individuals, groups, classes, and year groups. However, the school's targets for the end of year national results in 2003 were not quite achieved. Resources in the subject for lessons and the literacy hours are generally good. The library is well organised with a computerised accessing and borrowing system which pupils operate with ease. The stock of books, however, is only just adequate for the size of the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. The school has made a good start in exploiting the opportunities in other subjects for developing literacy skills. Standards of literacy and oracy in other subjects are at similar levels to those in English itself, although in some subjects opportunities are not always exploited fully for writing. ICT is incorporated satisfactorily into the pupils' work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good, effective teaching enables pupils to achieve well and make good progress.
- The school has made very good progress in this subject since the last inspection.
- Pupils are introduced to a wide range of mathematical experiences.
- Assessment procedures are good.
- The oral starter at the beginning of lessons is not used consistently to develop the speed and accuracy of pupils' mental work.

Commentary

48. At the end of Year 6, pupils attain average standards. This represents a significant improvement on the well below average standards found at the last inspection and indicated by the national test results in 2003. The improvement has been achieved by the quality of the school's remedial action plan and the high priority given to increasing the opportunity for pupils to investigate and to apply what they know. The current inspection findings are broadly in line with the school's own assessment of the year group. From a very low level on entry to the school, most pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress in their learning and achieve well. The needs of pupils are met well. The approach with below average ability pupils and those with SEN is appropriately practical and higher attaining pupils are challenged well.
49. Strengths in provision across the school include the detailed and systematic way in which a good range of mathematical elements is introduced to pupils. Pupils' use of number is developed well. Younger pupils confidently double single digit numbers and recognise the pattern of odd and even numbers, while older pupils multiply and divide numbers with three digits and understand equivalent fractions. However, the school has not concentrated solely on number work. Some younger pupils use standard and non-standard units in their measuring work and others interpret

data on Venn and Carroll diagrams. Older pupils draw the angles around a central point with reasonable accuracy and identify the lines of symmetry in different geometric shapes. The promotion of pupils' thinking, reasoning and investigative skills has been a developmental priority in the school and has been achieved well. Pupils are constantly being encouraged to solve problems and to investigate number patterns. This weakness at the last inspection is now done well. Below average ability pupils work out the number of batteries costing different amounts which could be purchased for £20 while others calculate the cost of different types of holiday accommodation. A minor shortcoming is that the oral and mental starter to lessons is not always used to develop the speed and accuracy of pupils' mental work.

50. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was sound overall but with much that was unsatisfactory. Teachers' lesson planning and organisation consistently follow that recommended in the National Numeracy strategy. Planning is detailed and clear. A strength is the way in which clear reference is continually made to the specific learning goals for each lesson. This influences positively the quality of pupils' learning as it ensures that they know what they are expected to learn. In the lessons observed during the inspection, most teaching was good or very good. Where teaching is very effective, teachers develop pupils' understanding by continually asking challenging questions and giving pupils good opportunity to talk about what they know both in class discussions and in discussions with their partners. Lessons are taught at a brisk pace and new concepts are introduced clearly and reinforced effectively. These strengths increase pupils' capacity to learn.
51. The subject is led well by a co-ordinator who has ensured that mathematics has continued to have a high priority in the school. The numeracy action plan is detailed and identifies the main priorities for the continued development of the subject. Monitoring procedures, which involve lesson observation and work sampling, are sound. Useful whole school work has been done recently in agreeing an approach for the recording of computational work. Assessment procedures are good. Data are collected and analysed and are used to set both year group and individual development targets. Data are also used to plan the setting by ability in Years 4 and 5. This organisational method is helping to raise standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Mathematics is integrated well with other subjects. This has been encouraged well by the planned time for applied mathematics in the timetable. In an activity observed during the inspection, Year 5 pupils were using their numeracy and geographical skills as they used co-ordinates to plan the location of features in an imaginary environment. In science, younger pupils draw bar graphs to show the favourite foods of pupils in the class and others use time lines in the study of Ancient Greece and the Victorians.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress.
- The quality of teaching and learning and curricular provision are good.
- There are regular opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' work require further development.
- Insufficient use is made of pupils' writing skills.
- Leadership of the subject is satisfactory but the co-ordinator does not have a sufficiently clear understanding of performance data as an aid to improving standards

Commentary

53. Standards are below average in Year 6. This judgement is higher than that made by the school's last inspection but it is in line with the results of the national tests in 2003. For the three years prior to 2003, the school had consistently achieved even higher standards in the national tests. The fall in standards in 2003 was largely due to the previous year group containing fewer more able pupils and more pupils with significant SEN. Most pupils enter the school at well below average standards. The current Year 6, although not reaching the very high standards of previous years, still make good progress in their learning. Across the school, all pupils make good progress and achieve well. The good achievement and progress are promoted by the good quality of teaching and learning in the subject.
54. The school ensures that pupils have opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in all elements of the subject. Most younger pupils have a good knowledge of materials and living things, and know the conditions necessary for healthy plant growth. Older pupils provide clear explanations, use scientific vocabulary and have a good understanding of physical processes. They know about insulators and conductors and make accurate generalisations about such phenomena. Strengths in pupils' achievement are in their understanding of fair testing and their ability to undertake investigations. By Year 6, pupils are confident with the principles of fair testing and are able to explain why it is important to evaluate the conclusions they reach. Pupils receive regular experiences of exploring and establishing links between causes and effects. They also learn how to test ideas using evidence from observation and measurement. These strengths show that the school has made good progress in responding to the findings of the last inspection. Then, the pupils were judged to need far more practical opportunities for developing their skills of scientific investigation and enquiry.
55. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are skilled at developing the appropriate scientific vocabulary that pupils need to talk about their work. Lessons are well planned, organised and sufficiently interesting for the pupils to enjoy their work. Teachers make effective use of resources, and are beginning to take full advantage of ICT to enhance the quality of their teaching. As a result, pupils concentrate and behave well. A strong feature of the teaching observed was the quality of teachers' questioning of pupils. This successfully encourages the pupils to predict what they think might happen and to explain results and findings from their investigations.
56. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator encourages her colleagues to share ideas about effective teaching of the subject and promotes the availability of training opportunities. She has provided teachers with good curricular plans and an effective action plan for the development of the subject over the next two years. This plan recognises some important areas for development of the subject. These priorities are confirmed by the inspection findings. Opportunities to use literacy skills to write more extended reports and descriptions are not sufficiently taken. There is an overuse of photocopiable worksheets. Some of the work set does not consistently challenge the more able pupils. The current assessment procedures are insufficiently detailed, especially in relation to the assessment and recording of investigation skills. The plan also highlights the need for the co-ordinator to be able to increase her monitoring of teaching and learning and the quality of pupils' work. The co-ordinator has an insufficient appreciation of the trends in attainment in the subject or the potential of performance data to help raise the standards in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good improvement has been made since the last inspection.
- Pupils enjoy their work and behave well.

- In their work on using sensors, pupils in Year 5 reached standards above those expected for their age.
- Pupils are introduced to a good range of concepts and skills.

Commentary

57. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain average standards. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to have been well below average. This improvement has been achieved as a result of increased confidence and subject knowledge of teachers and through good improvements in resources which now include school curriculum networking, a computer suite and interactive whiteboards in some teaching areas. These improvements have ensured that all pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress in their learning and achieve well.
58. Across the school, pupils have opportunities to use a variety of approaches and to develop a range of ICT skills. For example, younger pupils combine text and pictures as they plan and print invitations to their Christmas production of 'The Little Fir Tree'. Others draw colourful patterns using an art program. Older pupils construct a spreadsheet to show the cost of various items required for 'My Party' and others plan, show and print, an effective PowerPoint display showing information about the Gods of Ancient Greece.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although some good and very good elements were observed during the inspection. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to have been unsatisfactory. Strengths in teaching are in teachers' good, confident subject knowledge and the way in which lessons are balanced well between pupils listening to instructions and having opportunities to use computers. Teachers and their assistants help and encourage pupils well as they work at their computers. A lesson to pupils in Year 5 where pupils were using sensors to measure the temperature, sound and amount of light in the classroom, illustrated several features of very effective teaching. Good links were made in the lesson with work in other subjects as pupils' attention was drawn to the mathematics of different measuring scales and the science relating to light and sound. The teacher taught the lesson at a brisk pace and used questioning very well to continue to interest and challenge the pupils. As a result, they made very good progress in their learning and most were able to reach standards above those expected for their age. Some shortcomings in otherwise satisfactory lessons were where lesson objectives were too detailed and, as a result, lessons lost an important focus, and where too many pupils shared equipment.
60. A strength in provision is the positive attitudes which pupils display towards the subject. Pupils are interested and well challenged and demonstrate good levels of concentration and commitment to their individual or group work. Substantial improvements have been made in the resourcing of the subject since the last inspection. Resources are now satisfactory, although the effectiveness of some teaching is still limited by lack of access to enough specific resources such as sensors and control boxes. The computer suite is well equipped and well used. The fact that the computer suite shares the same room as the school library is a disadvantage because the space that pupils have to work at their computers is sometimes too restricted.
61. The subject is led well by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who has produced a clear and relevant development plan. The priorities identified, which are to support the effective delivery of the scheme of work and to further promote cross curricular links, are relevant ones. Some teachers use ICT facilities effectively to increase pupils' learning. This was seen in Year 3 geography lessons where a lesson on changes in the local environment which used photographs projected on the whiteboard was more effective than one that did not. A relative weakness is that the use of the classroom computers is not sufficiently planned.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. Computers are used soundly to support work in other areas, but this has been an area that has rightly been identified for improvement by the school. The Internet is used by pupils to send short

e-mail messages to each other and their teacher and older pupils discover information about their history project on the Ancient Greeks. Across other subjects, the use of word-processing facilities such as printing work and decorating it with clip-art features and some use of graphs and spreadsheets is evident. However, in both these aspects, there are opportunities which are not taken systematically.

HUMANITIES

63. There was insufficient opportunity to gather evidence for overall judgements to be made about standards and provision in **history**. However, indications from a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work were that pupils were covering appropriate topics and developing appropriate knowledge and skills. Younger pupils cover in some detail the life and times of the Romans and learn about their impact in Britain. Older pupils consider aspects of the Ancient Greeks and life in Victorian times. Across the school, numeracy skills are used well to help pupils' understanding of chronology as they draw timelines to link previous eras with the present day. Opportunities are taken for the development of pupils' literacy skills. For example, writing about what it might have been like if a modern time machine had gone back to Ancient Greece, or what it might have been like to be a young child in Victorian times, gave good opportunities for writing and developed pupils' empathy with the past well. Opportunities to use ICT have not been fully taken.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Interest in the subject is encouraged well by well planned visits.
- Pupils develop a good appreciation of their local area.
- Pupils' map interpretation skills are developed well.

Commentary

64. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards which are average for their age. This was also the judgement of the previous inspection. Across the school, all pupils, including those with SEN make good progress in their learning and achieve well.

65. Across the school, pupils are introduced to concepts and develop skills that are appropriate to their age. For example, younger pupils have a sound understanding of their local area as they draw sketch maps of their journey to school and consider some of the amenities in the local area. Others extend their understanding to the wider neighbourhood and begin to talk about recycling and other ways to improve the environment. Older pupils consider the water cycle and the importance of ensuring a clean water supply and others use atlases to locate the world's main mountain ranges.

66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. This was also the finding of the previous inspection. Features of effective teaching are the way in which the specific learning goals are clearly shown in teachers' planning and are consistently shared with pupils at the beginning of their lesson. Often this goal is used to assess the quality of pupils' learning at the end of the lesson. Maps and map reading skills are taught well. During the inspection, older pupils were considering the route that they intended to take in order to walk from the school to undertake their survey of a nearby river. In a lesson to younger pupils, effective use was made of the interactive whiteboard to display photographs of Reading taken at different times. This helped the pupils to appreciate changes in land use that had taken place.

67. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. She is in the process of collecting a useful portfolio of some pupils' work which is to be assessed according to National Curriculum criteria. The process of assessing the key skills acquired in each year is appropriate, but no records have been

completed so far. Pupils' interest in the subject is encouraged well by colourful and well presented displays in several classrooms. A display of the work done in Year 4 of the traditions and lifestyle of people in Mali was attractive and interesting. Good use is made of the school's environment and visits to the local area. Pupils' appreciation of contrasting locations is developed very well by the opportunity that older pupils have of going on a residential visit to the Lake District.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve satisfactory standards that are in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity are well established and they are beginning to develop a deeper appreciation of other world faiths.
- The subject has good cross-curricular links, for example, with citizenship.
- Some pupils' work is not marked with sufficient rigour.
- Pupils do not use their writing skills enough to record their work.

Commentary

68. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. This was also the judgement of the last inspection. Across the school all pupils, including those with SEN, achieve satisfactorily and make sound progress.
69. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of some important details from the Bible. For example, older pupils know stories from the Old Testament such as the birth of Moses and the conflict between David and Goliath and the events from the New Testament concerning the birth and death of Jesus. A strength is their understanding of the main aspects of several other world faiths. They know, for example, the main characteristics of Islam and understand the importance of Hajj and Ramadan. Additionally, they know about Buddha and what he taught. Most pupils know about the significant experiences of key figures from Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Christianity. A further strength in provision is the way in which elements of the subject are taught using a cross-curricular approach, with subjects such as citizenship. Pupils respond well in their lessons and show positive attitudes. A shortcoming in provision is that insufficient emphasis is put on the quality and the amount of recorded work.
70. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It was also satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. In lessons observed during the inspection, teachers planned their lessons well to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. They reviewed previous work by effective questioning and by using appropriate visual aids, which enhanced pupils' understanding of religious beliefs and concepts. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson when they discussed how different people have different ideas about God. The teacher used a 'sense circle', where pupils sat in a circle and shared ideas about God in a sensitive and respectful way. In a Year 6 class, good use was made of ICT to project images of Mecca, to help the pupils share the feelings of a pilgrim attending the Hajj. A shortcoming in teaching is that, sometimes, pupils' work is not marked sufficiently regularly or rigorously.
71. Resources are sound and the subject is managed satisfactorily. Progress since the last inspection has also been satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been trialing techniques for assessing the subject in Year 5. The school intends to introduce this as a whole school assessment procedure from the beginning of the next academic year. The monitoring role of the co-ordinator is insufficiently developed. The school makes insufficient use of the opportunity to make visits to other places of worship.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. There was insufficient opportunity to gather the available evidence in this inspection for overall judgements about provision or teaching and learning to be made in art and design or design and technology.
73. In **art and design**, evidence from pupils' sketchbooks and from work on display indicates that appropriate skills are being taught and practised. Studies of the work of famous artists are being well integrated with pupils' general topic work, as seen in a display of work in the style of Matisse, or with craft traditions from around the world as evidenced by the Mayan mask designs and models. There is also evidence of good integration of subjects, with art used in history, science, geography and RE, such as the striking mandala designs in the latter subject. Resources and enrichment in the subject are good. There are visits to galleries and the use of the local environment as a stimulus for inspiration. Exciting work has been produced using ICT as a starting point, and there is also useful software available and the recent purchase of a digital camera for developing the use of photographic images in art.
74. In **design and technology**, a scrutiny of teachers' planning indicated that an appropriate range of topics is considered. From a very limited amount of evidence from the pupils' work, pupils in Year 6 undertook several preparatory exercises in working with a variety of forms of stitching before making their fabric slippers. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make judgements about the quality of pupils' design or evaluations of their work.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and pupils achieve well.
- Enrichment in the subject is good
- Pupils enjoy music.

Commentary

75. Standards attained by pupils in Year 6 are average. All pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress against their previous learning and their capabilities. Pupils' attitudes to music are good. They are keenly interested and try hard with their compositions and performances. Their work is productive and they show good achievement in the subject by the time they leave the school.
76. Pupils are familiar with a wide range of instruments, both tuned and untuned, and can identify a number by timbre when listening to music. They are able to appreciate different genres and styles of music, such as the blues, folk songs, and opera arias, and often to identify and name them. They study the work of famous composers, and the music of different cultures around the world. They enjoy working in groups to compose, evaluate, modify and perform multi-layered sequences to represent moods or scenarios, and they are able to record these to repeat them, using simple forms of notation. Singing is generally of a sweet and musical character, although group tone and volume are not fully developed.
77. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching was good in all the lessons observed during the inspection. Strengths in teaching are in their use of questioning to promote pupils' thinking and appreciation, and the way they include different elements in each lesson to maintain interest and enjoyment. There is a structured programme which is both broad and balanced, including aspects of the four strands of the subject, and give due attention to the way that musical elements produce different effects.
78. The co-ordination of the subject is effective. The co-ordinator monitors planning, and sometimes hears performances for groups and classes. There is a satisfactory system of assessment in the

subject. Enrichment is good. There are workshops and special tuition for different year groups from a local music service. Concerts and performances are given by musicians, and the school is involved in local festivals and events. The choir meets regularly, and pupils have the option if their parents wish it, to take paid tuition in recorder, guitar or keyboard. Resources are satisfactory, with more than sufficient instruments for each pupil in a class to select and play an appropriate instrument. There are also items of software for computer use in the subject. Accommodation is good as there is a separate music room for music lessons. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and the resourcing of the subject have improved.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well structured.
- The sound curriculum ensures that all aspects of the subject are addressed.
- Pupils co-operate well in group and shared work.
- Standards in dance are above average.
- On-going monitoring and assessment of pupils' performance and progress are not sufficiently developed.

Commentary

79. Standards are average in Year 6. This judgement matches the findings of the previous inspection. However, since then the school has improved pupils' attainment in swimming and in dance. Pupils make sound progress in their learning and achieve satisfactorily. Most make good progress in dance.
80. Most pupils in Year 6 show precision and control when throwing, catching and hitting a ball. They can link skills and techniques and apply them appropriately, especially in dance. They show sufficient knowledge and understanding of fitness and health. Most pupils have ten weeks per year of swimming instruction although swimming was not observed during the time of the inspection. The school's records indicate that most pupils now reach the standards required by the time they leave the school. This represents good improvement since the last inspection which found that standards in swimming were below average. The school makes good use of a local water activity centre to provide its outdoor education.
81. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers plan well and consistently ensure that lessons begin with a warm-up and conclude with a cooling down session. Most pupils clearly enjoy their lessons. A strength in teaching is the consistently good co-operation between pupils when they are involved in paired or group activities. For example, in a good Year 3 dance lesson the pupils developed and mastered the skill of working in unison with a partner. They were particularly interested, behaved very well and related well to one another throughout the lesson. Teachers deal sensitively with pupils who may find the subject more difficult. They also handle gender issues very effectively, for example, boys and girls dance uninhibitedly and enthusiastically together. Some shortcomings in otherwise satisfactory lessons were where teachers did not emphasise the importance of high standards of presentation when pupils performed for others and did not consistently encourage pupils to aim as high as possible in all their activities. In some lessons, insufficient emphasis is placed on promoting pupils' ability to evaluate the performance of others.
82. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has ensured that the curriculum is carefully planned to include a balanced provision of the required elements of the subject. Resources are sound and the co-ordinator makes particularly good use of sponsorship from local businesses to fund equipment. However, equipment is not always well stored and easily accessible for pupils. Good use is made of the spacious school field. Assessment procedures and the monitoring role of the co-ordinator are areas for further development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education, together with citizenship studies (PSHCE), is **very good**, and is a strength of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- PSHCE and the way it is carried through characterises the ethos of the school and the relationships within it.
- Teaching and learning in lessons are good overall and pupils' achievement is good.
- Pupils' successes in citizenship are monitored termly and annually and a system of rewards is used for recognition of these successes.
- Peer support and a peer mediation service operate in the school, and are supported both by special training and through lessons.

Commentary

83. Pupils in Year 6 attain average standards. No standards were reported in the previous report, although 'circle time', was said to encourage understanding of the needs of others. It has now become a full subject and it receives a very high profile indeed. Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN make good progress. Their attitudes are developed well, and they learn to respect the views, opinions, cultures and needs of others very well for their ages. Achievement in this subject has a very positive impact on the very good promotion of pupils' personal development across the school.
84. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject is good, with all lessons either good or very good. There is a structured programme designed to support continuous progress in learning. Topics are taught sensitively and calmly, and thinking and reflection are well promoted. However, the thread of positive approaches to PSHCE is not limited to lessons, and runs through all that the school does or initiates for its pupils. This creates a very positive ethos within which individuals and their relationships can flourish. Peer support is encouraged, and there is a peer mediation service operating in the school.
85. The co-ordinator, who has advanced qualifications in the subject, has carefully monitored the early establishment of citizenship studies and award system, and the school has participated in the making of an official training video for schools. Future plans include further guidance for staff on aspects of assessment, additional monitoring, and more integration of the use of ICT in the subject. There is also a reward system for the development of citizenship attributes, which contains options for pupils to select from to carve their own profile of development. This is monitored termly and annually, and annual rewards, known as the Madejski awards, celebrate and record these achievements.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

