

INSPECTION REPORT

HALL MEADOW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kettering

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 132769

Headteacher: Mrs Lorraine Cullen

Lead inspector: David Carrington

Dates of inspection: 26th – 27th January 2004

Inspection number: 256314

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	123
School address:	Packer Road Lakeside Avenue Kettering Northamptonshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr Terry Freer
Date of previous inspection:	N/a

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hall Meadow Primary School was established just over one year ago and is in the process of settling into new, purpose built accommodation. The school is situated in a new residential area to the west of Kettering town centre. There are 63 boys and 60 girls in school. The reception and Year 1 classes are full but the other years in school are below capacity and pupils in Years 2 and 3 and Years 4 to 6 are taught together. Overall, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average, as is the proportion with statements, which are for moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is broadly average. An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. When they start school, children have broadly average levels of skills and knowledge.

As the school is comparatively new, there is no previous inspection report available for comparison.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15414	Mr David Carrington	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, religious education, English as an additional language.
10965	Mrs Pat Edwards	Lay inspector	
27369	Mrs Carolyn Sandall	Team inspector	English, geography, history, areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, special educational needs.
8710	Mrs Julie Moore	Team inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hall Meadow Primary School is a new school that has quickly established itself and is providing a **good** quality education for its pupils. It is led by a conscientious, determined and highly effective headteacher who has led the process of staffing and resourcing the school and setting out its educational direction excellently. Other staff form a good team and, together with the effective governing body, all work successfully in the interests of the pupils. Standards are above average overall and pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good features. The school's overall effectiveness is good and it gives **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average overall and pupils of all backgrounds achieve well.
- The headteacher gives excellent leadership and management of the school is very good.
- Pupils' attendance, attitudes and behaviour are all very good and relationships with other pupils and adults are excellent.
- Teaching and learning quality are good in each of the four classes in school.
- The procedures for assessment are very good.
- There is a good curriculum, which is enriched very effectively by a wide range of additional activities.
- The care, guidance and support provided for all pupils is very good.
- The school has quickly forged very good partnerships with parents and the community.
- The role of subject leaders is not yet fully focused on raising standards.
- Improvement in the consistent application of handwriting skills is necessary.

The school has not been inspected before. It was established in September 2002 as a brand new school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Since there was only one pupil in Year 6 last year, it is not possible to report on standards achieved in that year group. However, there were enough pupils in Year 2 to make comparison of results reliable. Standards in the 2003 Year 2 SATs¹ were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in the teacher assessments for science were below average. This year, it is evident that standards are above average overall and that achievement is **good**.

- Children starting in reception have broadly average levels of skill and knowledge. They are achieving well and are already reaching their early learning goals.
- Achievement of infant age pupils is also good. Standards are well above average in English and science, above average in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) and average in religious education.
- The junior age pupils are also achieving at a good rate. Standards are well above average in English and science and above average in the other subjects, including religious education.
- There are very good patterns of attendance and punctuality in school. Pupils behave very well, they have very good attitudes towards school and the quality of relationships is excellent.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is **very good**. This makes a strong contribution to the very good ethos in school.
- Pupils' presentation styles in subjects such as religious education, geography and history require improvement.

¹ Standardised Attainment Tests

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**.

- Teaching quality is **good**. There are several specific strengths in teaching that include high expectations of all pupils, very effective teaching methods, the very good encouragement and motivation of pupils and absolute insistence on high standards of behaviour.
- Learning quality is good. Pupils build skills and knowledge well, they work very hard and their output is very good. They have very good skills of working independently, collaboratively and in using their initiative.
- Assessment is very good. It is used to respond to individual needs most successfully. Pupils' knowledge of their own learning is very good and this contributes much to the good achievement in school.
- The curriculum is good. School managers have ensured that pupils have equal access to all subjects of the curriculum. Excellent improvement has been made to the provision for science and curriculum innovation is a particular strength. Planning is good and there are very good opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum through participation in arts, sports and other activities. The provision for pupils' personal, health, social and citizenship education is very good. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are supported effectively and they achieve well as a result.
- The partnership with parents, the community and other schools and colleges is very good overall. The school has developed very good links with parents and the community in the comparatively short time it has been open. Links with the many schools where pupils have come from, or go on to, are positive in ensuring the continuity of education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership, management and governance is **very good**.

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and has given an outstanding steer to the school in its early days. The partnership with the deputy headteacher has excellent potential for the future.
- Governors are well informed and involved in the work of the school and are keen to ensure it provides a quality education.
- The staff form a strong team who work very hard and in a very well organised way to develop all aspects of school provision. Subject leaders have already demonstrated considerable strengths and are ready for the next stage in their development, namely to take more responsibility themselves for the quality of education and standards achieved. The secretary contributes very effectively to the school's efficiency.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils hold very positive views of the school.

Parents hold very good views of the school, which are fully supported by the outcomes of this inspection. The pupils also view their school most favourably. The school values the opinions of parents and pupils and works hard to reflect them when making improvements.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to develop the role of subject leaders.
- Develop the consistent application of handwriting skills across the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are above average and achievement is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in English across the school.
- Mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) standards are above average in all classes.
- There has been excellent improvement to standards in science, which are now well above average.
- Standards in religious education are average by the end of the infants and above average by the end of the juniors.
- Most children in reception are well on course to meet their learning targets before they join Year 1.
- Achievement is good in all classes and for pupils in different attainment groups.
- There is effective provision for gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs that ensures good achievement.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well.
- The development of pupils' presentation styles requires improvement.

Commentary

1. It is not possible to discuss the 2003 SATs results in Year 6, as there was only one pupil in that year group. There were, however, enough pupils in Year 2 to evaluate the outcomes of the SATs in that class last year. Since the school is relatively new, there are no past trends in achievement and standards, so these cannot be discussed here or in the subject sections later in the report.
2. Last year's results in the Year 2 SATs were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the results were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Pupils did not do as well in science as the school expected, with below average results in the teacher assessment for the subject.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.8 (-)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.2 (-)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.3 (-)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The school very quickly evaluated the reasons for the disappointing science results and made major changes to the curriculum and how the subject is taught. Based on the results, school managers also identified areas for continued improvement in writing. The impact of their efforts is clear this year as the standards being achieved compare favourably with those in the 2002-3 Year 2 class. They are also affecting results in other classes well.

4. This year, pupils in Year 2 are attaining well above average standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Standards are also well above average in science, which is a major improvement on last year. In mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), standards are above average and they are average in religious education. In this last subject the comparative lack of opportunities for writing are holding back the standards attained. This also applies to geography and history. However, in the art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, attainment is above average.
5. The number of pupils in Year 6 is still small and so comparison with national standards may not be reliable. However, evidence from the inspection indicates standards that are well above average in English and science and above average in all others, including mathematics, ICT and religious education. There is good promise for results in the SATs at the end of the school year.
6. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. The current reception children started their school life with broadly average standards in the six areas of learning. Some of the pupils had above average levels of skill and knowledge, though others started from a lower than average base. The reception children settled quickly to school and already show great confidence and involvement in their work. They speak clearly and affably to others and are building the early skills of reading well. Their personal and emotional development is a strength of the reception class. It is likely that nearly all these children will exceed the early learning goals before they join Year 1.
7. Good achievement is maintained in other years. Pupils in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 are also attaining standards that are above average overall. The structure of the curriculum and teachers' thorough preparation for lessons ensures that skills, knowledge and understanding are built systematically and consistently from year-to-year. Pupils in the two mixed-age classes are provided for as effectively as those in the single age reception and Year 1 classes. Boys and girls achieve equally well as their motivation, interest and enthusiasm is similar and they are hard working and productive in output.
8. Pupils from different backgrounds are also catered for effectively. Higher attaining pupils are consistently set work that challenges them and extends their thinking. The scrutiny of past work demonstrated that higher attaining pupils are expected to work hard and do well and to go beyond the level of skills, knowledge and understanding shown by the others. The school has also identified a number of gifted and talented pupils and has established clear programmes of work to extend their learning. It is a clear characteristic of teaching that all staff hold high expectations of their pupils and this contributes much to the effective provision made for the pupils who have outstanding features in their learning.
9. The middle attaining pupils are catered for well. Because the work is motivating and enjoyable these pupils often produce work that comes close to that of the higher attainers in its standard. This was observed in the mathematics scrutiny, for example. As is the case for other groups of pupils, the further development of writing styles is something that the school recognises will have good impact on the overall standard of work for middle attaining pupils. This is an appropriate priority.
10. Pupils with special educational needs are provided for well and their achievement is good. The support staff have good impact in their work to encourage, reinforce and extend the learning of these pupils. Most pupils with special educational needs have learning difficulties of some form but many show good improvement to the standard of their work over the time they have been in school.
11. The pupils come from diverse ethnic backgrounds, though the majority group is of white, British origin. Pupils of all ethnic backgrounds do equally well. There are some high attaining pupils and those with gifts and talents amongst them and they achieve as successfully as the other pupils.

12. The pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well and have equal opportunities to succeed. Most of these pupils have good bi-lingual skills and have few difficulties in completing their work. A few are at the early stages of English acquisition, though most of these understand what is asked of them and can speak basic English. Regardless of their background in speaking English, this group of pupils show good achievement in their work in school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' relationships with each other and adults in the school are excellent.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school.
- The behaviour of pupils is very good and they respond well to the school's efforts to encourage good behaviour.
- Pupils' attitude to their learning and the activities provided is very good.
- The pupils learn to respect others and act responsibly, honestly and fairly.
- Attendance and punctuality are very good.

Commentary

13. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very positive. They like being part of the school community and join in the many activities provided with enthusiasm, which encourages their social development. The behaviour of pupils in and out of lessons is very good. They respond very well to the various strategies employed to encourage good behaviour. Pupils have a very good regard for the school and its staff. They get on very well with each other. In discussions with pupils none expressed any concerns about bullying or harassment. The personal development of pupils is very good. They are friendly and confident amongst adults. Pupils clearly enjoy working together in the friendly atmosphere. The relationships formed between pupils and teachers are excellent. Pupils are comfortable chatting to adults about work and personal issues and there are high levels of mutual respect. Pupils know they have to work hard and try to do their best.
14. The school provides pupils with knowledge of the values and beliefs of others through its religious education programme and collective worship. Within lessons staff provide opportunities for pupils to reflect, for example when writing poems and prayers. Pupils are willing to take responsibility and they carry it out to the best of their ability as when acting as reading partners and serving on the school council. Pupils are encouraged to use their initiative and carry out independent research to aid their learning. The school is successful in teaching its pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions through the curriculum, by visits to places of interest and visitors such as drama groups and a local artist to the school.
15. Attendance is well above the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school and staff monitor attendance very well. Teachers call registers at the beginning of every session. Parents know the school rules regarding absence and most notify the school of the reason for non-attendance on the first day. The vast majority of pupils arrive punctually for school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are both of good quality. Assessment is very good and there is a good curriculum that is very well enriched.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is consistent in all four classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching results in good learning, which ensures that pupils achieve well.
- There are some very good features to teaching and learning, including high expectations and very effective methods.
- Assessment is a considerable strength and pupils have very good understanding of the effectiveness of their own learning.

Commentary

16. The quality of teaching is good through the school. The consistency of teaching quality is one of the main factors that ensure pupils achieve well. A number of aspects of teaching are very good and there is no evidence of any teaching that is unsatisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4 (13%)	22 (71%)	5 (16%)	0	0	0

17. The chief strengths of teaching are the high expectations that staff hold of all their pupils, both in work and behaviour. Teachers are, for example, insistent that pupils maintain high standards of behaviour and they have very good expectations of gifted and talented pupils. The challenge presented in the work applies to pupils from all attainment groups and is reflected in the methods used by teachers. There is very good variety in the work set, with much focus on practical, active learning. The emphasis on the development of speaking skills is strong and this builds confidence and self-esteem in the pupils very effectively. The pupils are all very well motivated towards their work and their concentration and productivity is held very successfully in lessons.
18. Pupils are given ample opportunities to take charge of their own learning. The promotion of the skills of independent, collaborative working is very good. Pupils of all ages are mature and sensible workers who show considerable initiative in their approach to investigations in mathematics and science and research work in ICT and other subjects. The school has carefully analysed the learning styles of pupils of different ages and has altered the curriculum to ensure that all pupils learn successfully. There is as much focus on learning as teaching in lesson planning, which results in stimulating lessons that keep pupils focused over the comparatively long school day.
19. Teaching and learning are good in the reception class. The staff work as a good team and there is careful planning of activities to support the development of skills and knowledge in the six areas of learning. Staff know when to let pupils work independently and when to intervene to ensure that language skills, for example, are developed thoroughly. The children in reception work well with each other and unlike many such youngsters, they relate very well to each other,

know each other well and have levels of confidence and self-esteem that are standing them in good stead as they learn.

20. There is good support given to pupils with special educational needs and to those who speak English as an additional language. The teaching assistants know their pupils well and are responsive to their needs. They provide good reinforcement and extension to learning and, as an additional benefit, their influence extends to other pupils in the class. Occasionally, teaching assistants are not as heavily involved as they could be in activities at the beginning or end of lessons, but generally their work is of good quality and has good impact on learning.
21. One characteristic of learning is the focus on targets for improved work and the self-assessment by pupils of the results. Assessment is very good because the outcomes are used to plan work that responds to the needs of classes, groups and individuals. The system is manageable and consistent across subjects and the results are used to track the achievement of individuals. The school has very good insights into the value being added to achievement across all classes. The marking of pupils' work is often exemplary. Pupils in each class are encouraged to discuss how well they have learned and to set their own targets at the end of many lessons. As they get older this is extended to include written evaluations by the pupils. This is especially the case in English, mathematics and science, where the oldest pupils write detailed evaluations and set their own personal targets at the end of each piece of work.

The curriculum

There is a good curriculum. It is very well enriched by numerous sports, arts and other activities. Innovation and development of the curriculum is a particular strength.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well balanced and covers all subjects well.
- Curriculum development and innovation is very good.
- There are very good opportunities for enrichment.
- Pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- Accommodation and resources are very good and are used effectively.

Commentary

22. The curriculum is planned well to include all the necessary subjects and other aspects of work. It fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, the literacy and numeracy strategies, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and the six areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. The school has given careful thought to the evolution of a practically based, involving curriculum that motivates the pupils well. As pupil numbers grow, provision is adapted to ensure all pupils benefit from a good curriculum. Thus, the curriculum in the mixed age classes for pupils from Year 2 on is well planned to ensure pupils maintain the consistent development of knowledge, skills and understanding, even though they may remain in the same class for up to three years. Provision is similarly good for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. All these pupils achieve well because of the calibre of provision.
23. Curriculum innovation extends beyond this attention to planning. The school has introduced formal provision for curriculum extension and enhancement in the last half hour of each afternoon. This is very successful in making links between subjects, such as the work that was observed in Year 1 that linked literacy and art and design effectively as pupils worked to portray the characters in a familiar story using their own choice of media. These sessions also ensure that the pupils themselves have responsibility for their own learning as the work centres on them making choices and evaluating the outcome. The school is currently working to

extend the writing styles of pupils, which is an appropriate priority. There is now a need to ensure that writing activities are promoted as successfully in geography, history and religious education as they are in English and science. However, in all, curriculum development and innovation is very good and there is every chance that provision will be even better in the future.

24. The curriculum is enriched very well by a wide range of additional activities. There is a very good programme of extra curricular activities that is supported well by the pupils. There are numerous visits made to places of educational interest, including residential experiences for pupils of different ages from Year 2 onwards. The school participates very successfully in arts activities and its sporting record is improving consistently.
25. The programme of personal, social and health education is very good. It sits at the centre of the school's priorities, alongside their academic development. Pupils are valued by this provision and they are encouraged to develop very good personal and social traits and follow a healthy lifestyle. The fruit scheme is a good development of provision that is managed very effectively as an opportunity for pupils to eat well and to interact with their friends at the same time. The daily assembly is an uplifting experience that encourages pupils to work for the best outcome in their personal and social development.
26. The brand new buildings are maintained to a very high standard by the team of site staff. The pupils are also encouraged to respect their environment and they show high regard for the buildings and grounds. Eighteen months on, there are very few signs of wear and tear and the site is clean, tidy and attractive. The teaching staff use the very good accommodation effectively to enhance learning. The covered space for outdoor activities for reception children is used very well to develop physical and creative skills. Teachers and teaching assistants also use the very good resources imaginatively in providing learning experiences for the pupils. The high level of practical work is supported very well by such use of the learning resources.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very caring environment where teachers know their pupils very well.
- The pupils are provided with very good guidance and support.
- Parents are happy with the school's induction programme.
- Pupils are fully involved in discussions on what they need to do to improve.
- Staff training in child protection procedures is in need of updating.

Commentary

27. Teachers know their pupils very well and value them as individuals. Pupils and their teachers discuss their work together and the pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve through evaluating their work. The personal development of pupils is closely monitored and teachers make every effort to improve their self-esteem by acknowledging achievement. Pupils and parents have been consulted on a range of issues, for example as part of the healthy schools initiative. Child protection procedures are well understood by staff. However training for staff with the responsibility for child protection issues is in need of updating. The school has an appropriate health and safety policy. School governors carry out regular risk assessments and all safety checks are up to date. Arrangements for first aid and informing parents of any accidents and the treatment given are very effective.
28. In reply to the questionnaire most parents say they are very happy with the school's induction programme. This allows children to settle quickly and feel secure in their new surroundings. The pupils have very good and trusting relationships with adults working in the school,

including the lunchtime staff. There is a school council, which meets weekly and successfully contributes to the life of the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents, the community and other schools and colleges is **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very happy with the information they receive from the school.
- Class teachers hold a weekly 'drop in' session for parents after school.
- Pupils' annual progress reports are very detailed and effective in providing information on how pupils can improve their work.
- The school has developed very good links with the local community.

Commentary

29. Most parents are proud of the school and feel comfortable about approaching staff with any questions or concerns. Class teachers make themselves available to parents at any reasonable time and hold a weekly after school 'drop in' session. The information provided for parents in regular newsletters and at termly parent teacher consultation meetings is very good. Pupils' annual progress reports are full and very detailed about what they know and the progress made. There is very specific information included regarding what needs to be done to improve and ways in which their parents might help them at home. Most parents and pupils are happy with the amount of homework given and feel it successfully supports learning in school. Staff appreciate the regular help given by a small number of reliable parents. The Parents and Teachers Together group assist with fund raising and in the school. Parents help with netball, art club and book club.
30. The school's partnership with the local community contributes very effectively to pupils' learning through visits to places of worship, entry into art competitions and trips to the local environmental study centres. Plans are in hand to further extend its links within the community as the school grows and develops.
31. The partnership with secondary schools effectively enriches learning by specialist teaching, for example in dance, football coaching, science and information and communication technology. The school has established links with DeMontfort University to enable support for initial teacher training.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are **very good** overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. Her deputy, who was appointed relatively recently, supports her very ably and together they make a really strong leadership team. Key staff are effective in their leadership roles, and the next stage in their development is to take greater responsibility themselves for the continuous development of their subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. She has steered the school forward in a first rate way, appointing a strong team and creating outstanding teamwork.
- Governors work in an effective partnership with the headteacher, staff, parents and pupils, successfully ensuring that the school moves forward with confidence.
- The role of subject leaders is not yet extensive enough.
- The school's management systems are very good. Finances are carefully tracked and the school functions very well in a calm and orderly way.

Commentary

32. The headteacher has played a key role in setting up her teams and making sure that Hall Meadow School provides an education of the very highest quality for every one of its pupils. Much has been achieved, and this stems from the outstanding leadership of the headteacher. Teamwork is very good, and everyone pulls together with a common purpose. They are part of a well-managed team, and this is one of the key factors in the school's success.
33. The school is managed exceptionally well. Everything runs smoothly and according to plan. Teaching and support staff are well trained and the system for setting targets is securely in place. Individual targets are set for pupils and staff, and progress towards targets is carefully checked. Adults and pupils alike have a clear understanding of what has to be done next so that success continues to be assured.
34. Teaching, learning, standards and achievement are monitored with great efficiency. Full use is made of all the data about the school's performance, and this information guides future plans as the school evaluates its performance effectively.
35. Governors are strong members of the school team. They are analytical in their approach and they are always ready to put forward another viewpoint, or to ask questions. Governors are effective as 'critical friends' of the school. They know where the school's strengths and weaknesses are through their very effective systems for monitoring what is happening. The information they gain allows them to check pupils' standards, progress and achievement, as well as having oversight of all the finances. This means that they can plan the way forward with confidence, as their information is accurate and up-to-date.
36. As the school opened in September 2002, it is not possible to publish budget data for the complete financial year from April 2002 to March 2003. However, it is evident that financial management is very good. The school has settled very well, the quality of education is good, standards are above average and achievement is good. It is clearly giving good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is one of the strengths of the school. The atmosphere is exciting and welcoming and provided by a good team. The children enter the school with attainment that is average overall but a significant number of children achieve above this level by the time they reach Year 1. As a result of good and sometimes very good teaching, children make a positive start, progressing well during their first year. Most children achieve well above the expected levels in their personal, social and emotional and physical development. In their communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, most children achieve above average standards. Children come from a wide range of pre-school providers and benefit from a smooth start to school. Parents receive useful information and value the smooth and well-organised transition into school.
38. The curriculum is well planned and daily sessions are carefully organised. Assessments are used to ensure that the teaching meets all children's individual needs, paying very good attention to the personal, social and emotional development of children. There is no designated leader of the Foundation Stage at the present time, but the provision for children in this stage is ably organised by the reception teacher and leadership and management are good. The accommodation and resources are very good in quality, quantity and accessibility.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve very well because the very good teaching in this area ensures that they are encouraged to take responsibility and think for themselves.
 - Children are on target to reach standards that are well above those expected for their age by the end of the reception class.
 - Behaviour and relationships with others are very good.
 - Children's self esteem is high because all contributions are valued.
39. Children are keen, interested and enjoy coming to school. They behave very well and are very clear about what is expected of them throughout the day. Reception staff provide a warm welcome as children arrive with their parents. As a result of the very good teaching children are very aware of the routines, working confidently and sensibly. Because relationships with staff and other children are so good, children work together happily both in and out of doors, feeling very much part of a community.
40. Children work sensibly in activities that are not led by an adult because the planning is well organised and children are assessed throughout the day. In the 'snack bar' children decide when they eat their fruit, and scan their books into the computer in their library session. Children confidently use headphones to listen to a story, or use the interactive whiteboard and laptop to draw and write. Children achieve standards that are well above the expected level by the end of the reception year.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well, resulting in standards being above those expected by the end of the Reception year.
 - The attractive and well-planned environment enhances and promotes children's learning.
41. Most children achieve well and exceed many of the early learning goals in this area of learning because good teaching uses assessment to ensure that all work is pitched at the right level for each child. The good curriculum ensures that children have a breadth of opportunities in which to develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. Through all activities, including the 'travel agent' role-play, children are encouraged to express themselves and listen to each other. Children talk to each other, negotiate and compromise in their play activities both indoors and out. They are encouraged to discover for themselves and evaluate reasons why, for example, the ice in the water tray has 'changed' during the morning.
 42. When the teacher leads small groups of children they are encouraged to respond in sentences and sufficient time is given for them to reply. Lower attaining children achieve well because teaching is well focused and is appropriate for their level of ability. Both in reading and writing a good balance of teacher led and 'free choice' activities ensure that children have the opportunity to practise what they have been taught. In the writing areas children industriously make books and cards, writing their names and words found around the room, with many letters formed accurately.
 43. Children read together, with most blending sounds and using their knowledge of initial sounds to write their own words such as 'Sebastian!' Children develop their skills in this area of learning through planned and well-structured experiences rather than through more formal tasks. This is very effective and fully reflects the expected emphasis of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Mathematical Development

Provision in Mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are good.
 - Staff are an effective and well-informed team, which contributes effectively to the good quality teaching and learning in mathematics.
 - There is good emphasis placed on the use of mathematical language.
 - Both indoors and outdoors, the teaching of mathematical concepts is made fun.
44. Children achieve well in their mathematical development. Many children are in line to exceed the levels expected by the end of the Reception year because the teaching is good. The appropriate emphasis placed on the building of mathematical experiences before the introduction of more formal recording is a reflection of the knowledge and expertise of the staff. Their awareness of children's individual needs is strengthened by well-focused assessment procedures.
 45. Adults question the children whilst engaged in a variety of activities, drawing out and encouraging mathematical understanding. For example, children sort wooden blocks using a balance and observe that, *this side has gone down, it is the heaviest*. Vocabulary such as *long, short, under* and *through* is extended into other areas such as physical development. Children are encouraged to estimate how many small bottles fill a large container and make comparisons by making play dough shapes. Mathematics is continued in the outdoor area as the children decide which pairs of socks on the washing line are long or short. Children make good progress because the experiences provided are interesting and fun.

Physical Development

Provision in physical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in physical development are high and children achieve well.
 - Teaching is very good.
 - Good accommodation enhances this area of learning.
 - Children have a wide variety of opportunities to develop their skills.
46. Children achieve very well in their physical development. The teaching and learning is very good in that it provides a wide range of physical opportunities, both large and small, indoors and out, resulting in children achieving well above average standards by the end of the Reception year. When using apparatus in the hall children work sensibly, developing their skills of travelling under and over the apparatus. Because the teacher and support staff have high expectations, are clear in their instructions and encourage the children to succeed, standards are high. The accommodation and learning resources are very good and enhance all aspects of the provision.

Knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development

47. These areas are planned for in the Foundation Stage curriculum, but insufficient evidence was gathered to make a judgement on provision. Religious Education is planned for, and is taught in accordance with the agreed syllabus.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well.
 - Standards in reading and writing are well above average through the school.
 - Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed right from the beginning.
 - Teaching and learning is very good overall.
 - English is well led and managed.
 - Marking and assessment are of a high standard.
 - A strong emphasis on building relationships and developing pupils' personal qualities underpins learning.
 - The development of pupils' personal writing styles is inconsistent.
 - There are limited opportunities to develop writing in religious education, history and geography.
48. Pupils achieve very well throughout the school. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average in speaking and listening, reading, and writing. Most pupils in Year 2 read a range of texts fluently and accurately. They read independently using a range of strategies, both fiction and non-fiction. Reading is systematically taught, and a very good stock of books is readily available in both the library and the classrooms. Throughout the school pupils develop good library and research skills.
49. The number of pupils in Year 6 is small. However, evidence from the inspection indicates that standards in all areas of English are well above average and pupils achieve very well. Older pupils read confidently and discuss characters and plots, making predictions about how the

book will develop. They have very good skills when selecting a new book and discuss their choices with a good level of awareness and maturity. The library forms part of the ICT suite, making it an effective research unit. Home-school reading logs are used well and parents support their children's reading effectively.

50. Pupils write in a variety of forms including poetry, reports, lists and narrative writing, all to a very good standard. Younger pupils explore rhyme and language when writing their poems entitled *Jump or Jiggle* and Year 2 pupils write an *Underground Poem* inspired by Tony Mitton's poem *Underground Dance*, representing a very good level of individuality and perception. Pupils re-tell a story in their own words paying good attention to the structure and punctuation. The development of good skills in report writing is systematic through the school. Pupils produce imaginative compositions to a very good standard, and write book reviews and play scripts with very good detail. Pupils' writing styles are an area identified for development although good attention is given to practising their writing and spellings on a regular basis.
51. Teaching is very good and has a clear impact on achievement. Teachers plan their lessons well, sharing their learning objectives with the class, using an interactive whiteboard. They keep the lessons moving at a good pace and have high expectations of what they want the pupils to achieve. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to use their speaking and listening skills in lessons. Opinions are sought, ideas appreciated and learning extended through the very good emphasis on speaking and listening. Working in pairs, pupils are frequently asked, '*What do you think? Discuss together – you have two minutes.*' Pupils respond well to the challenge and sensibly discuss the issues. This is further developed through drama where older pupils achieve very well over a short period of time, raising pupils' self-esteem and improving confidence.
52. The marking of pupils' work is very good. Comments are supportive and provide good detail on aspects of improvement. Pupils also contribute by saying whether they feel they have achieved the objective of the lesson. All pupils' contributions are valued. Targets are included in the front of pupils' books and are replaced when existing targets are achieved. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported during literacy sessions by skilled learning support assistants, resulting in these pupils also achieving well. Higher attaining pupils and those with gifts and talents are challenged well and their achievement is good.
53. English is very well led and managed and careful attention has been given to the learning styles of pupils of different ages, as well as the curriculum and approach to teaching. The management of English is a model for other subjects as the perceptive vision of the subject leader has been instrumental in raising standards. The resources for English are very good and pupils look after them well.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. This aspect is good overall because of the particular emphasis teachers give to discussion and the sharing of opinions as well as links made between subjects. Writing in subjects such as science is very good and the use of ICT in word processing and publishing is also very good. There is a need to develop writing strategies in religious education, history and

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics are above average in all parts of the school.
- Achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good features.

- Mathematics is well led and managed.
- There is a good curriculum for mathematics that is practically based.
- Assessment is a strength.
- There are good opportunities to develop mathematics skills and knowledge in other subjects.

Commentary

55. Standards in mathematics are above average from Year 1 to Year 6. In each year group there are an above average proportion of higher attaining pupils and in some years there are pupils with gifts in mathematics. The school caters well for the different attainment groups, including those with special educational needs and so, achievement is good. Boys and girls achieve as well as each other and those who speak English as an additional language, who are represented proportionally in each attainment group, do well in mathematics.
56. Mathematics lessons are characterised by good opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve problems. The focus on speaking and thinking skills in lessons does much to help pupils find personal methods to answer mathematical problems. There are also good opportunities for pupils to compare methods and to evaluate the successes achieved. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good though there are a number of particular strengths including the very good expectations of work and behaviour, the provision of a varied range of activities and the matching of work to needs. The level of challenge in the work is good for all pupils. In return, the pupils work hard, they enjoy their activities and produce good amounts of work.
57. The successes of mathematics are due to the very good leadership and management of the subject. There is a shared determination amongst staff to improve the quality of provision and all staff work very effectively in this direction. The systems to monitor and evaluate the strengths and areas for improvement are very good. Curriculum planning, for example, is monitored rigorously and there is very clear indication of areas for enhancement in the written reports that follow.
58. Assessment is another particular strength of mathematics. The formal systems in place keep very good track of how well each pupil is achieving and quickly flag any shortfall, or conspicuous success in achievement. Targets are set regularly and consistently for the improvement of pupils' work. The pupils know these targets thoroughly and work well to meet them. Most lessons have good opportunities for pupils to discuss the effectiveness of their learning in relation to their targets. Finally, there is a very good system of pupils recording their own targets and their evaluation of achievement in their mathematics books at the end of each piece of work. The pupils know where they are in mathematics and what they need to accomplish next in order to meet their targets.
59. Mathematics has a bright future in school. The pupils are being equipped with the knowledge and skills that prepare them effectively for the next stage of education and to solve problems in their daily routines. There is good potential for the well above average mathematics standards in last year's SATs in Year 2 to be maintained and extended to other year groups.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. There is good development of mathematical skills and knowledge in other subjects. This is especially the case in science and ICT. Pupils have good opportunities to practice basic arithmetic, data handling and measurement skills, as seen when Year 1 pupils worked in the ICT suite to produce graphs of their favourite animals and to answer questions about the numbers involved.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in Year 6, and above average in Year 2. Pupils' achievement is very good.
- Effective leadership, and a strong focus in the school improvement plan, are the main reasons for the excellent improvement since the previous year.
- High quality teaching develops pupils' thinking and investigative skills very successfully.

Commentary

61. Since it opened, the school has targeted achievement in science for improvement. It has been very successful in this. Teaching is very good, and pupils respond very well. They are keen and interested because their tasks are challenging and exciting, making them want to learn. Investigations underpin all work in science and pupils are adept at identifying what they are going to investigate and how they are going to set about it. The school has worked hard, with the support of an advanced skills teacher, to make sure that pupils' thinking skills are extending their ability to learn and to do well. The success of this strategy is manifest in the pupils' very good achievement across the board. This includes higher, average and lower attaining pupils as well as those pupils with special educational needs.
62. Younger and older pupils are well aware of what constitutes a 'fair test'. They know that certain elements of their investigation have to remain the same, whilst other can vary. This was observed in a Year 1 lesson focusing on the amount of light and its impact on sight. As they planned their investigation the pupils approached the task logically, and the teacher visited all the groups, effectively reinforcing their thinking and extending their ideas. This worked well, providing a good opportunity for the pupils to plan their approach and to work as a team. Pupils' achievement was good. Their predictions were carefully thought out as pupils suggested that they find out about light intensity and its impact on sight by collecting the data from their investigation. Valuable discussions took place, resulting in well-planned investigations, which culminated in well above average standards for the year group.
63. Year 6 pupils are clearly focused on their learning. They are intent on achieving very well, and they are successful, as in their lesson on reversible changes. One of their challenges was how to turn their ideas about physical change into an investigation. Pupils rose to their teacher's very high expectations of their ability to complete the task, well exceeding the expected standards for their age.
64. Another strength in science, as it is throughout the other subjects, is the pupils' knowledge of their own learning. This is so embedded in the work of the school that it is second nature to the pupils. They are clear about the steps needed to achieve their objectives, and they are adept at judging their success or otherwise. Importantly, pupils' evaluative skills are honed well, enabling them to have an accurate insight into how well they are doing. This guides their learning forward very effectively indeed.
65. Currently, the subject leader is on leave from school. In her absence the headteacher has the responsibility for guiding the subject forward. The leader's clear vision, strong and effective teamwork on everyone's part, and a crisp and secure knowledge of how to improve, are the main reasons for the excellent improvement. Resources are very good. They are very well prepared and organised, making a positive contribution to pupils' achievement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT are above average and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching and learning quality is good.
- ICT is well led and managed.
- There is a good curriculum.
- The accommodation and resources are very good.
- There are some very good cross-curricular links between ICT and other subjects.

Commentary

66. The school has very good facilities for ICT, including a very well equipped suite, ample computers and other hardware, a good range of software and interactive white boards in the classrooms. These facilities are used well to help pupils build skills, knowledge and understanding effectively. Because practice is regular and well integrated across the curriculum, achievement is good and standards are above average in each age group.
67. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All lessons observed were ranked as good and there is ample evidence to show that such good teaching extends across the school year. Teachers have good subject knowledge, they are confident in their work and they link the use of ICT well to other subjects. The ICT lessons are active learning sessions where pupils can develop their skills of independent, responsible working and collaboration with other pupils. Teaching is well focused on skills development and ample time is left for pupils to reflect on their learning and to identify the next steps they must take.
68. The curriculum is well planned and the work provided sets good challenge for the pupils, whether higher or lower attaining. In one lesson observed, the Year 1 pupils were set the task of producing a graph of favourite animals. At first this seemed straightforward and pupils confidently set about transferring the tallied numbers for each animal to the screen. However, several pairs soon noted that there were twelve bears but that the scale only went to ten. Two pupils explained this to the rest of the class and several minutes were spent suggesting how to overcome the problem. Some novel ideas were expressed and pupils returned to the task with enthusiasm to investigate the potential for extending the scale or using more than one column to represent the data.
69. ICT is a well led and managed subject. Careful evaluation is made of pupils' achievements and strengths and areas for improvement in provision. There is a good subject action plan, which has entirely appropriate priorities. There is good potential to build on the good start made to the teaching of ICT.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. As shown in the Year 1 graph work, above, there are some very good opportunities to link the work in ICT to that of other subjects. Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils were observed to research the Indus Valley civilisation via the Internet and to use the fruits of this work to enhance their ICT presentations. They also added hyperlinks to useful websites to assist users find out more about the topic. The resulting presentations were of very good quality. There is evidence also of some good use of ICT in English, science and religious education books.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average in Year 1 and above average in Year 6.
- Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching and learning are good overall, especially for older pupils.
- There is a good curriculum for religious education.
- Religious education is led and managed effectively.
- There is room for improvement in writing styles, especially in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

71. Although no religious education lessons were observed during the inspection, there was ample evidence in the form of pupils' past work to allow the complete evaluation of the subject. Currently, standards are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.
72. The curriculum is rooted well in the locally agreed syllabus and gives equal emphasis to learning from religion and learning about religion. A strength is the focus on other faiths, with much work completed in the infants on Islam and in the juniors on Sikhism and Buddhism. Pupils have visited the local Sikh temple and they wrote well of the experience, identifying similarities and differences in the symbols, ceremonies and beliefs of Sikhs and Christians.
73. Teaching and learning quality is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The difference in quality between the two phases stems from the focus on the development of writing styles in the two parts of the school. There is less evidence in younger pupils' books of the consistent development of writing about religious education topics. It is evident from planning and the outcome of monitoring that regular experiences are provided, but the books do not present a complete record of quality work. The picture for older pupils is more positive and some very good work is in evidence, such as the balanced arguments presented by Year 6 pupils on the merits and otherwise of being rich. Some writing in the older classes is of considerable length and shows good knowledge and insights into religious stories such as that of the *Ten Human Gurus*.
74. Religious education is a well-resourced subject that is well led. There are good plans for the development of the subject and the systems in place to check and evaluate the quality of provision and standards are effective. There is good commitment amongst staff to religious education and the main area for development, focusing on writing styles, has good prospects for improvement.

Geography and history

75. Geography and history were sampled as subjects rather than inspected in detail. It is evident that there is consistent provision in these subjects across the school and that there are some good links to ICT that enable pupils to consolidate and extend their skills well. However, the development of writing styles is an aspect for improvement in both geography and history. The curriculum for the two subjects is well enriched by the programme of visits and visitors and the school has good plans for the development of the environment and resources for geography in particular.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

76. Provision in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education was also sampled rather than inspected at length. Provision in these subjects is rooted in a good curriculum where cross-curricular links are promoted very effectively. The final half hour every day is focused on development of skills in art and design, for example, in tandem with the improvement of literacy skills. There are also some effective links to mathematics, science

and ICT in building skills in design and technology. The pupils have good singing skills; singing in assembly is a joyous and melodious affair and pupils are introduced to a broad range of western music, though the amount of music heard that originates in other cultures could be enhanced. The school's very good resources are used well to promote pupils' learning in all these subjects. In particular, the very good facilities in the hall are used effectively to develop pupils' physical prowess. The school is developing a good sporting tradition and participates in a good range of sports and games activities locally. There is very good participation in arts activities. Displays around the school celebrate achievement in these and other subjects, and there is some very good artwork to be seen.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very well planned programme of personal, social and health education.
- Circle time is a successful part of provision.
- Assemblies contribute well to the personal development of pupils.
- The reading buddies scheme benefits the pupils involved very well.

Commentary

77. The school places pupils' personal development at the heart of its work. There is a very well thought-out and planned programme of personal, social and health education that includes the necessary focus on anti-smoking and anti-drugs education and the need to develop a healthy lifestyle. The fruit scheme has been introduced very successfully and pupils happily choose fruit in preference to other snacks. Even the often less-popular fruit, such as pears, are eaten with enjoyment.
78. Circle time is used effectively to promote reflection and consideration of the needs of others. Relationships are excellent in school. Pupils work exceedingly well together and with adults. There is a spontaneous and heart-warming welcome given to visitors to school and the pupils are invariably friendly, polite, mature and sensible in their interaction with others.
79. Assembly is a regular feature of the school day where the pupils come together as a community and share and celebrate their successes. Staff use assemblies well to promote strong messages about good personal habits, attitudes and actions and the pupils have ample opportunities to join in discussion about the best way to behave.
80. The reading buddy scheme, where older pupils are paired with younger ones to promote good reading habits is another example of the strengths of personal and social education. The younger pupils enjoy the additional attention they receive from their buddies when learning to read. In turn, the older pupils adopt a responsible approach to their roles and they grow in personal stature because they are trusted with an important task and clearly make a difference.

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	N/a

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

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