

INSPECTION REPORT

HARWOOD PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Heywood

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105796

Headteacher: Mrs J E Pickles

Lead inspector: Mr T Richardson

Dates of inspection: 17 – 19 May 2004

Inspection number: 256353

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:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	324
School address:	Hardfield Street Heywood Lancashire
Postcode:	OL10 1DG
Telephone number:	01706 369592
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Brown
Date of previous inspection:	July 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Harwood Park Primary is a community primary school for boys and girls aged three to eleven. It is larger than average with 324 pupils on roll, and slightly more boys than girls. The number of pupils is less than at the last inspection, due to a fall in the local birth rate. The socio-economic background of the pupils is below average, and children enter the Foundation Stage provision with standards that are below average, especially in their communication, language and literacy skills. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is average (24 per cent) and fewer than average numbers of pupils enter or leave the school other than at the usual times of admission. The school has an average proportion of pupils with special educational needs (18 per cent), and seven pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. These are mainly for moderate and severe learning difficulties and also for emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils are predominantly of White British backgrounds, with very few pupils from minority ethnic groups. At the time of the inspection, there were three pupils at the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language. Nursery and reception children are taught in the Foundation Stage Unit, and those children who are not yet four attend part time. The school is involved in the Leadership Development Strategy and is part of the 'New Deal for Heywood' initiative. It has gained awards for Investors in People and Healthy Schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16500	Mr T Richardson	Lead inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage; art and design; music; special educational needs; English as an additional language
9981	Mr S Hussain	Lay inspector	
32604	Mrs S Manning	Team inspector	English; geography; history; religious education
33708	Ms J McCarthy	Team inspector	Science; information and communication technology (ICT)
27423	Mr I Tatchell	Team inspector	Mathematics; design and technology; physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the school is **satisfactory**. The excellent leadership of the headteacher is rapidly improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, standards are rising and pupils have been achieving well since September 2003. There is still much to do, and improvements are not yet secure enough for the school to be judged good, but the previous decline in standards has been reversed. The quality of teaching and learning seen on inspection was satisfactory, but pupils' work showed that teaching has been better than this during much of the year. The school provides sound value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership for school improvement. She analyses and evaluates the quality of the school's work very well and sets appropriate priorities for improvement.
- Standards are now average in English, mathematics and science and most pupils show good achievement in English and mathematics since September 2003.
- There are still some inconsistencies between classes in the quality of teaching and learning and more challenge could be provided for higher attaining pupils in some lessons.
- Pupils show good attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
- Good provision is made for children in the Foundation Stage.
- There is very good provision for the care, welfare and safety of pupils, very good links with the community, and good links with parents.
- The very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are not always sufficiently included in lessons.

Since the last inspection in July 1998, satisfactory improvement has been made overall. For four years, unsatisfactory improvement took place and standards were in decline. The headteacher was appointed in 2002 and, since then, very good improvement has taken place. The key issues from the previous inspection are now being successfully addressed, standards are rising and the quality of education is improving.

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	D	E	D
mathematics	D	E	D	B
science	D	D	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Test data shows that, in 2003, a considerable number of pupils were underachieving. This trend has been reversed and pupils currently show **good achievement** in English, mathematics and science. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is below average. As a result of recent changes, children are achieving well this year and are likely to enter Year 1 meeting the goals expected for the end of reception in almost every area of learning. Good achievement is now evident in Years 1 and 2: pupils are catching up quickly, and their class work shows average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Most pupils are now achieving well in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and this year's test results are expected to be higher than 2003, and closer to average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in art and design are above average, and average in ICT. No judgements were made in other subjects as too few lessons were observed. Higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged in

mathematics in Years 5 and 6 but their needs are not always met in other subjects and years. The provision for the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is unsatisfactory, and these pupils are underachieving.

Pupils develop **good** personal qualities. Their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Punctuality and attendance have improved and are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. There are strengths in most year groups, and about two thirds of lessons were judged to be good, but during the inspection a small number of unsatisfactory lessons were also seen. The headteacher is working successfully to improve the quality of teaching and learning as the main priority for raising standards. Whilst many significant improvements have been made, some variations in quality were seen during the inspection in a minority of classes, and this slowed the pupils' rate of learning. Most teachers now assess pupils well in English and mathematics and use this information effectively so that pupils know what to improve. As a result, most pupils refer to their targets and try hard to meet them during lessons. There is good teaching in the Foundation Stage and the well planned activities and routines help the children to enjoy learning.

The curriculum is satisfactory and the school makes good use of the 'New Deal for Heywood' initiative to enhance the provision for teaching speaking and listening skills. The playgrounds are uninviting and scheduled for improvement later in 2004. Very good provision is made for the care, welfare and health and safety of the pupils. There are good partnerships with parents and very good links with the wider community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good overall**. The headteacher gives outstanding leadership for raising standards and the school shows significant improvement in a short space of time. Other key staff are now taking on more responsibilities for leadership and doing this well. There are good management systems and the school now evaluates its effectiveness very well. Governors are learning quickly and providing satisfactory governance to support the school through rapid change. The majority of staff are now working together to bring sustainable improvements to the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views of the school. A minority express uncertainty over behaviour, but inspectors find that pupils' behaviour is generally good.

Pupils like their school. Inspectors checked their concerns over behaviour and found evidence that pupils behave well. Inspectors support pupils in their concerns over the quality of the playground.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to eradicate the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning
 - Ensure that sufficient challenge is provided for higher attaining pupils in all lessons
 - Make sure there is sufficient provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language
 - Improve the quality of the play areas and outside of the school
- and, to meet statutory requirements:
- Make sure that the statutory requirements for sex and relationships education are met

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are average in English, mathematics and science and most pupils show good achievement since September 2003.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are now rising in English, mathematics and science
- Some higher attaining pupils are still underachieving
- Children in the Foundation Stage are achieving well
- The 'New Deal for Heywood' initiative is leading to good achievement in reading, speaking and listening
- Standards in art and design are above average
- The very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are underachieving

Commentary

1. Since the last inspection, school performance data shows that standards in English, mathematics and science have declined each year. The headteacher recognised, upon appointment in 2002, that considerable underachievement was evident and began, systematically, to work with the staff and governors to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to raise standards and achievement. The 2003 test results give early indications of the success of this work as they show an improvement in reading and mathematics for the first time since 1998. The inspection took place just after the Year 2 and Year 6 pupils had taken their 2004 national tests, but before the results were announced. Inspectors evaluated the attainment of pupils in lessons, and the standards evident in the work in their books. This shows that teachers' assessments of what pupils can do are accurate, and that the school's own assessment and performance data is valid. Detailed analysis of the school's data shows that, in almost every class, there has been a significant up-turn in pupils' achievements since September 2003. In English and mathematics, most pupils are now making progress at a faster rate than expected, and catching up the ground they have lost in previous years. In a very small minority of classes underachievement in lessons was evident during the inspection, though not in pupils' work over the year. Appropriate and effective action is already in place to remedy this and improve the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.4 (14.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.0 (13.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.0 (15.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.7 (26.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.2 (25.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.1 (27.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Results of the school's actions to raise standards are becoming increasingly evident. The pupils currently in Year 2 are likely to show test results in reading, writing and mathematics that are closer to average than in previous years. This shows that their achievement is now good. The class work of the pupils in Year 6 shows that standards are now meeting the national expectation in English, mathematics and science for most pupils. School data show that though Year 6 pupils underachieved in the earlier years since their Year 2 national tests, since September they have made rapid progress. This is why their achievement is judged to be good despite the more variable quality of the teaching seen on the inspection. In past years the average of the school's test results has often been well below the results of other schools. This is because too few pupils have been attaining the higher Level 5 in their Year 6 tests. The previous inspection pointed out that not enough was done to help higher attaining pupils reach this standard. Since 2002, efforts have been made to address this. The grouping of pupils by ability for Year 5 and 6 mathematics lessons is showing success as the higher attaining pupils are able to work at an advanced level and extend their skills as they should. However, while these pupils are doing better than they were, more attention can still be given to providing sufficient challenge for them in every class and in every lesson.
- Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is below average in most of the areas of learning. Children's communication, language and literacy skills are usually well below average. School assessment data shows that, in previous years, children left the Foundation Stage and entered Year 1 with attainment levels that were still below average. Changes were made to the Foundation Stage provision in September 2003 and children now benefit from good quality teaching and learning that is leading to good achievement. As a result, the children currently in reception are likely to enter Year 1 with average standards in all areas of learning except for their speaking and listening skills, which are still below average. This, in time, is likely to lead to improvements in overall test results as these children move through the school. In addition, part of the 'New Deal for Heywood' initiative is helping teachers to gain skills in helping pupils to develop their speaking and listening ability. The results of this are already evident in a mixed Year 1 and 2 class where pupils are making rapid progress in response, and have already caught up, so that their speaking and listening skills are now average, and still improving! Another successful initiative is seen in the Better Reading Partnership Programme. Here, pupils who are finding reading difficult are given extra support and tuition. This is leading directly to improvements in reading ability for these pupils, as well as boosting their self-esteem, confidence and enjoyment of books.
- Due to the previous decline in standards and the possibility of wide-spread underachievement, inspectors focused on pupils' standards and achievement in English, mathematics, science and ICT. This means that other subjects were not inspected in depth and insufficient evidence was obtained to judge the provision, standards and teaching and learning in these areas. Standards in ICT are average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils show satisfactory achievement over time in developing their knowledge and application of computer skills. Sufficient work was seen in art and design to judge that standards are above average throughout the school, and pupils achieve well. This is because the subject is taught well and pupils learn how to develop and extend their creative ideas and practical skills.

- Pupils with special educational needs are identified well and benefit from detailed and thorough assessment that shows what they need to work at to improve. Targets are set for these pupils in their individual education plans and teachers and assistants generally make sure that attention is given to these in most lessons. As a result, these pupils achieve well. However, not enough attention is given to pupils who speak English as an additional language. At the time of the inspection there were three pupils in the early stages of acquiring English. They are accepted socially into their classes but teachers and assistants are not doing enough to help them to learn vocabulary sufficiently quickly to continue with their learning. As a result, these pupils are underachieving.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils’ good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in lessons help them to achieve well.
- Pupils form good relationships with their peers and this supports their learning well.
- Pupils’ are developing very good moral values because the school provides good opportunities for them to discuss important issues.
- Provision for social development is very good and pupils benefit from being given responsibilities.

Commentary

- Pupils show good attitudes to learning in the great majority of lessons. This is a very similar picture to that of the last inspection. They show high levels of interest in their work, listen well and do their best in lessons. This is especially noticeable where teaching is good and lessons are well presented and challenging, so that pupils of all levels of attainment have the chance to achieve well. However, on the occasions when teaching is weak there is a tendency for pupils to lose interest and concentration. Behaviour is good in the classroom, in assembly, in the playground and in the dining hall. There are many friendships among individuals and groups. All pupils are aware of the ‘golden rules’ and how they can earn ‘golden time’ each week. The school has very high expectations regarding behaviour in and around school. Although a very small number of pupils and parents say that there is a little bullying, the great majority agrees that problems are handled well by staff and this is confirmed in the school’s records.
- Relationships are good and pupils play and work together well. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 physical education lesson, pupils worked effectively in team games to develop their passing and defending skills. Children in the Foundation Stage show good achievement in their personal and social development and are likely to meet the goals expected by the end of their reception year. For instance, in a mathematical development lesson, the youngest children listened well and showed much interest in the ‘roamer’, an aid the teacher was using to develop their understanding of numbers. These factors make a good contribution to children’s achievements in the nursery and reception.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.5
National data	0.4

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

8. Attendance has improved significantly since the start of the school year because of the school's very good procedures to monitor and promote attendance. For instance, unauthorised absence has reduced considerably because of the first day of absence telephone calls home. Three boys and two girls were given fixed period exclusions in 2003 to 2003. These were due to the consistent application of the school's behaviour policy and its agreed rewards and sanctions. There were no permanent exclusions.

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	246	5	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	6	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0

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

9. Spiritual development is good. For instance, a 'family assembly' led by Year 6 pupils provided several spiritual moments through singing, dancing, role play and, finally, prayers. The 'talent show' was highly successful and parents, pupils and staff alike commented on how they were 'moved' by the performances. Opportunities in subjects such as art and science allow pupils to marvel at the beauty of the world around them. The school has made good improvement regarding moral and social development since the last inspection. Discussions with pupils confirm that their moral development is now very good. There are many opportunities for pupils to consider school and world issues in a moral context. For instance, in circle time they have considered behaviour in school, bullying, discrimination, animal rights, conflict and war. Provision for social development is very good. The 'break-time buddies' system makes a very strong contribution. Buddies are trained very well and have clearly defined roles such as being friendly, responsible and assertive and these are helping pupils to develop their maturity very well. Pupils' cultural development is good because they have many opportunities to learn about their own culture and that of others in our multicultural society. For instance, school trips include many places of local interest. Pupils also learn much about other cultures and traditions through religious education.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, and improving. There are good procedures for assessment and the curriculum is sound. The school makes very good provision for the care, welfare and safety of pupils and they receive good support and guidance. There are good links with parents and very good links with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There are good procedures for assessment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning take place in the Foundation Stage
- Pupils' progress and achievement in English and mathematics are assessed well
- The quality of teaching and learning is improving
- Work to improve teaching and learning is not yet complete and there are still variations in quality between some classes

Commentary

10. The headteacher identified, in February 2002, that improvements were needed in the quality of teaching and learning. Since then, a systematic programme of monitoring and evaluation has taken place, with clear guidance produced for teachers showing what works well and what could be improved. The headteacher and governors have made sure that teachers are supported, guided and helped to improve their practice. Much of this work has been successfully completed and inspectors note that a predominance of good quality teaching and learning is now the norm in most classes. This is also seen in the proportion of lessons judged to be good or better, which has increased from one third of all lessons seen in the last inspection to almost two thirds of all lessons this time.
11. Good arrangements are in place to support learning. Continuity of teaching was maintained during the inspection in one class by a supply teacher staying on, even though the regular teacher had returned from long-term absence, and another class has benefited from the weekly input of an advanced skills teacher from another school. However, during the inspection some unsatisfactory lessons were seen, the quality of which was at odds with the evidence from pupils work taken over the whole year. There have been a number of changes in the teaching staff, and some prolonged absences that mean some classes have had temporary teachers for most of the year. This explains why inspectors' judgements about teaching are not the same as their judgements about achievement in Years 1-6. The headteacher and governors have already identified what needs to be done and are directing considerable energy and investment towards bringing about further improvements. The results of previous, similar work give inspectors confidence that these initiatives will bring further success.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	6 (12%)	23 (47%)	15 (31%)	4 (8%)	0	0

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

12. A result of the improvements made so far, is that pupils are assessed carefully in English and mathematics. This helps teachers to see how well each pupil is doing and the information is used well to plan what pupils should do next to improve. Analysis of this information shows that the majority of pupils are achieving well in these subjects and are now making progress at a faster rate than expected for their age. Good teaching is provided for the Better Reading Partnership Programme and this gives pupils confidence in reading, as well as improving their skills. The 'New Deal for Heywood' initiative is being used well and teachers are learning how to help pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills. Positive outcomes from this are already being seen in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and the increased oracy skills observed in the children and pupils are helping them to learn more effectively in all subjects. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are grouped by ability into sets for their mathematics lessons. This is helping the teachers to provide suitably challenging activities in lessons, as well as making lessons more stimulating and interesting so that pupils are motivated to work harder and learn more. The staff team in the Foundation Stage work together very well, assess the children's abilities very well, and plan a good range of activities that are interesting and fun. The result is

that adults provide a consistent approach to the children and know what each child should work at next to advance their development. Activities take place at a brisk pace and the children develop good learning habits of concentration and application in response to the good quality of input they receive from all staff.

13. In the best lessons seen during the inspection, the following features were noted:
 - There are examples of excellence in the teaching of speaking and listening skills in Years 1 and 2, and these are detailed in Part C of the report.
 - Teachers make lessons interesting and challenging for the pupils. For example, in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 6, the teacher set a real-life problem about the costs of feeding and caring for pets. This involved a series of careful calculations and full consideration of all costs that may be involved. As a result, the pupils enjoyed having to think hard and applying what they had learnt previously to new situations.
 - Teachers demonstrate carefully and help pupils to learn new techniques so that they achieve success. For example, in an art and design lesson for pupils in Year 5, the teacher used the Internet to show the class how other artists developed abstract ideas, then demonstrated with a torch the patterns of light and shade on foliage before showing the class how to use pastels to achieve similar effects. This led to the pupils trying very hard to develop their own ideas and show light and shade in their drawings. The outcome was that pupils were pleased with their creativity and achieved success at a higher level than they thought possible.
14. In the lessons that were unsatisfactory, pupils were unclear about what they should be learning, and teachers had a tendency to make negative comments and were authoritarian in their control of the class. As a result, pupils were reluctant to join in and were not learning as well as they could.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. Statutory requirements for all subjects are met except for the provision of sex and relationships education. The curriculum is enriched satisfactorily. Accommodation and resources are adequate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The timetable is well designed so that flexible amounts of time can be given to subjects other than English, mathematics and science
- The initiatives of 'Better Reading' and the 'New Deal for Heywood' are showing success
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs
- Not all subjects are planned to provide sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils
- The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is ineffective

Commentary

15. The school's curriculum, overall, is suitably broad and balanced and is securely based on national planning guidance. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a good curriculum which is planned well by staff, so that all the areas of learning are included within topics and themes that interest the children and encourage their learning. Good arrangements are made for promoting pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. However, statutory requirements for providing sex and relationships education are not met. The governors have delayed somewhat in addressing this and now have appropriate plans to rectify the situation. The provision for English, mathematics and science has been improved over the past two years and this is now good. In these subjects, the curriculum has been well designed to meet the needs of all pupils as they progress through the school. Foundation subjects have been timetabled effectively with 'blocked times' providing teachers with the flexibility to plan and

deliver these subjects appropriately. For example, the extended teaching time for art contributes to the good achievement in this subject.

16. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support the teaching in a range of subjects. New initiatives are being introduced. The Better Reading Partnership Project is already helping pupils to gain confidence and most of the pupils taking part show good achievement in reading as a result. The New Deal for Heywood is providing an opportunity for the school to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. One teacher has, so far, being trained in this work and the impact on standards in this class is dramatic. Appropriate plans are already being implemented to spread this initiative throughout the school.
17. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The good quality individual education plans (IEPs) are written well and targets are set for the pupils that teachers address well in lessons. As a result, the needs of the pupils are met, and they achieve well. Rigorous monitoring is carried out by teachers, the headteacher and subject leaders to identify those pupils who may be finding learning difficult and the information is used well to plan and provide the support the pupils may need in class. This information is also used to identify the pupils who have the potential to attain highly and some of these pupils attend additional lessons in some subjects at a local secondary school. However, not all lessons in school include plans for how to extend and challenge the higher attaining pupils and there are still a few occasions when these pupils could achieve more. All pupils have, and are aware of, individual targets for how to improve their English and mathematics. These are available in their books and are referred to in lessons. The school shows insufficient awareness of how to help pupils to quickly acquire English as an additional language and there is a lack of guidance to help teachers know what to do about this in planning their lessons.
18. The curriculum is enriched by the opportunities pupils have to participate in sporting and other activities provided by the school. An appropriate range of activities and visits (including residential) provide adequate learning opportunities. The school has recently been active in forming partnerships with sporting clubs and becoming involved in local and national initiatives to enrich children's' learning, for example the school participated in national science week.
19. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The new 'unit' for the Foundation Stage children has good accommodation and resources. The school's outdoor space, however, has been identified by pupils, parents and staff as in need of development and appropriate plans are in place to improve the playground this year. The indoor accommodation is good. There is a generous amount of space and the rolling programme of refurbishment is steadily improving the quality of the rooms. The interior is well maintained and a good range of displays of pupils' work are attractive, reward effort and contribute to the positive ethos within the school. There is a good number of teaching and learning staff to meet the needs of the curriculum, resulting in a better than average ratio of teachers and assistants to pupils. This is currently targeted to ensure that all pupils are being taught to a satisfactory standard. There are also some good examples of innovative practice. For example, a specialist assistant provides good support in information and communication technology lessons and teaches small groups well. Teachers are successfully improving their skills and expertise through structured professional development. This has been furthered by opportunities to work with colleagues from other schools, involvement in targeted initiatives and links with external consultants and advisers. There are sufficient resources for all subjects to be taught.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides pupils with good support and guidance and involves them well in aspects of the school's development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are introduced to school life very well.
- Pupils feel valued and cared for because of the very good arrangements to ensure health and safety.
- Pupils achieve well because their progress is monitored well.
- Pupils form very good, trusting relationships with adults because of the school's family ethos.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language are not always effectively engaged in whole class work.

Commentary

20. The school has made good improvements in these areas and addressed effectively the key issue regarding health and safety, since the last inspection. New children to the school benefit from a gradual and sensitive induction. They are given very good chances to experience the learning routines before they start school. Parents are given a very good information pack and invited to individually meet staff in the nursery. Transition into reception is also very good. For instance, the part time nursery children have lunch with reception before they attend full time.
21. Arrangements for child protection, and also for giving support to children in public care, are very good. There are two designated officers for child protection and the lead officer is trained very well. The Local Authority's procedures are followed fully and the school works very closely with other agencies. General health and safety risk assessments are undertaken as required to ensure a safe school environment and also regarding school trips. There are very good procedures for first aid, fire and evacuation. The school works closely with the school nurse, the 'eat to be fit' group, the road safety officer and others to promote pupils' health and safety.
22. There are good procedures to assess the academic progress and personal development of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Staff use information well to provide good advice, support and guidance. This makes a strong contribution to the standards attained. The school works well with the Local Authority in providing additional support to pupils whose behaviour is a concern. For instance, much support is targeted at pupils through the 'pyramid club' initiative. This is a good example of the school's inclusive approach to learning.
23. The school has a family ethos, underpinned by very good, trusting relationships between pupils and staff. This gives pupils confidence in raising any concerns they may have, for example, if they feel bullied. The school has also developed an effective race equality policy and relationships between different racial groups are good. However, the policy does not give sufficient detail about how staff can help and support pupils with English as an additional language and, as a result, these pupils are not always effectively engaged in lessons.
24. There are many opportunities for pupils to make their views known to staff and become involved in the school. A broad-ranging questionnaire was issued recently to pupils in reception, Years 2, 4 and 6. Pupils' responses included concerns about the playgrounds. It is pleasing to see how seriously pupils' concerns and suggestions are treated. For instance, pupils were able to influence the plans for the layout and design of the new playgrounds. On another occasion, pupils were invited to design the tee shirts for 'break-time buddies'.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents and very good links with the community, including other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very good opportunities to express their views and make suggestions to the school.
- They are very well informed about the school and their children's standards and progress.
- Parents' involvement in their children's learning at school and at home, is good.
- Very good links with the community help to enrich the curriculum and support learning very well.

Commentary

25. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the quality of information for parents. The school welcomes parents as partners in their children's education. A questionnaire is sent to parents each year and this allows them to express their views about the school. Prudent changes are made where appropriate. For instance, the timing of 'family assembly', a 'maths curriculum evening' and a booklet about homework, all resulted from parents' suggestions.
26. Parents are very well informed about the school through the prospectus, annual reports, newsletters and various other publications. Booklets regarding complaints, the Foundation Stage, homework and the National Numeracy Strategy are also very helpful. Pupils' annual reports are concise, easy to understand and state clearly their academic and personal developments targets.
27. The 'Friends of Harwood Primary School' organise many successful children's and fundraising events. The money they raise goes towards increasing learning resources and providing additional equipment for the school. Some parent helpers give their time generously to the school by listening to readers, working with small groups in the classroom and giving support with school trips. Parents help as much as they can with homework tasks.
28. Very good links are maintained with the community including strong links with the church and other places of worship. For instance, a church is used as a learning resource and there are regular school trips to a mosque and synagogue. Links with sports clubs provide pupils with very good opportunities for coaching in many sports including football, cricket and lacrosse. Year 3 and 4 pupils frequently visit Heywood Library and this includes sessions led by the library staff for improving literacy. Visitors to the school include a theatre group, poet and author. The school supports several charities and good causes each year and also does good work at harvest time for a local family support agency. The 'open day' for the community this year will include celebration of the school's ninetieth birthday.
29. There are very good links with local secondary schools. Staff from one school often lead physical education lessons and there are very good arrangements to enrich learning for several of Harwood Park's 'gifted and talented' pupils. Another school operates a summer school and this supports learning well. There are very good mechanisms in place to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are good. Within this, the headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Management, and the leadership provided by other key staff, is good. Governors fulfil most of their responsibilities and provide satisfactory governance.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership for school improvement
- The school analyses and evaluates the quality of its work very well and sets appropriate priorities for improvement
- Senior staff inspire and motivate teachers to improve their effectiveness
- The drive for raising standards, started by the headteacher, is increasingly being taken up by subject leaders and other staff
- Statutory requirements for providing sex and relationships education are not met

Commentary.

30. The headteacher identified in February 2002 that standards were falling and a considerable number of pupils were underachieving. She provided governors with a detailed review of what needed to be done and set about systematically implementing a very clear action plan. Since the last inspection in 1998, very little work had been done and the headteacher's analysis shows that most of the key issues identified then were still to be addressed. In addition to addressing these key issues, the headteacher's plan contained a very strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Since 2002, a considerable amount of success has been achieved and the headteacher's insistence on 'doing the right thing' for the pupils has led to significant changes in staff and current arrangements whereby teachers are supported, helped and developed to improve their practice. This excellent leadership of the headteacher is very rapidly improving the quality of teaching and learning. Results of this work were first seen in test results in 2003, where standards in mathematics and reading improved for the first time since 1998. This year, inspection shows that standards are rising further and pupils are now achieving well in English, mathematics and science.
31. The headteacher and other senior staff evaluate and analyse the performance of pupils and other aspects of the school, prior to setting relevant priorities for improvement. This analysis is done very well and the findings of inspectors match those of the school. The priorities for improvement are selected very well and good quality action plans are now in place that are supported by careful financial planning. Financial management is good and the office staff provide very good financial support to the headteacher and governing body.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	862,709
Total expenditure	878,959
Expenditure per pupil	2154

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	16,272
Balance carried forward to the next	22

32. The improvements are implemented very well and there is a strong vision for raising standards and providing pupils with the best deal possible. Governors are learning quickly about how best to support and help the school through rapid change and now provide satisfactory governance. The headteacher empowers other key staff, the deputy headteacher and subject leaders to lead developments and, as a result, there is now a shared drive to improve the school and a large number of staff are working together effectively to bring about substantial improvements.
33. The school development plan gives a clear road map for the future and is supported by efficient financial management. The headteacher is continually improving the quality of teaching through very rigorous performance management. However, a barrier to improvement is seen in the reluctance of a very small minority of staff to embrace change and develop the quality of their work. The school has identified what needs to be improved, has agreed what needs to be done, and is systematically and thoroughly doing it. Inspectors are confident that the school now has

the capacity to continue to improve, and that standards are likely to rise as more and more pupils achieve as they should.

34. The headteacher is empowering other members of staff to take on responsibilities and lead effective improvements. The deputy headteacher has been given sufficient time to develop her role and, consequently, provides good support for the work of the headteacher. Subject leaders have planned non-contact time which they use well to improve the provision in their subjects. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well led by the subject leaders and, as a result, standards are continuing to rise. The co-ordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs across the school is presently the responsibility of the headteacher and is working well. All statutory requirements for special educational needs are met and annual reviews are managed well. Additional support and relevant teaching strategies are provided to ensure these pupils are included effectively in their classes. However the management of some of the other subjects and aspects of the school's work is still at an early stage of development and requires improvement. Design and technology, for example, is the responsibility of a part time teacher and its co-ordination is supported by the headteacher. Leadership of the music curriculum is an area identified as needing some improvement. Governors have delayed updating and implementing the school's arrangements for sex and relationships education while other initiatives took place and are now working to make sure this statutory requirement is met. However, this omission is not having a detrimental effect on the pupils' personal development, attitudes and values.
35. The governing body keeps itself well informed about the work of the school; some are regular visitors to the school and are linked to particular aspects or subjects. A regular visitor is the governor for special educational needs who makes a most worthwhile contribution to helping children with their reading, especially in the Foundation Stage. Governors understand the main strengths and weaknesses of the school and are committed to meeting the needs of all its pupils. However, the governing body is still learning how best to fulfil its role and currently relies too heavily on the headteacher and staff to shape the direction of the school.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, AND SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

36. Children in the nursery attend for either the morning or the afternoon sessions and are part of mixed class groups with the reception children. At the time of the inspection there were 33 children of nursery age and 45 children in their reception year. A good quality curriculum is provided and delivered through the very good teamwork of all staff (teachers, assistants, nursery nurses and volunteer helpers). The result is that children experience a mixture of formal tuition in separate age groups, and play experiences together with children of other ages. Teachers assess the children's abilities very thoroughly and use this information to plan activities that are well designed to move the children on to new levels of knowledge and understanding. A complete reorganisation of the provision began from September 2003. This was started by the headteacher, as her evaluation had shown there was considerable scope for improvement. Since then, the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage is providing good quality leadership and promoting very good teamwork among staff so that all personnel are continually seeking, with success, to further improve and refine the provision. The school's assessment data shows that the pupils currently in Years 1, 2 and 3 entered and left the Foundation Stage with standards that were below average. The re-development of the provision is bringing considerable success and children are now achieving well. A measure of this success is that the children currently in reception had below average attainment on entry, but are now about to enter Year 1 meeting the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning, and with average standards for their age.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The mixed groups of nursery and reception children are beneficial
- Adults provide consistent guidelines and routines
- Children achieve well and are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1
- More can be done to help children to initiate their own ideas

Commentary

37. This area of learning is taught well. Teachers' assessments show that children's skills are generally just below average in their personal and emotional development before they begin their reception year. The new arrangements to have children of mixed ages together for some activities are working well and the younger ones benefit from seeing what the older children do. As a result, they quickly learn how to behave and follow the guidance given, for example, in washing their hands before lunch and putting on aprons for 'messy' activities. Adults provide daily routines for the children that help them to feel secure and are consistent in their expectations for how the children should behave. This leads to the children demonstrating good attitudes and being keen to play together and join in activities with the others. Children in both the nursery and reception groups concentrate well, know there are class rules, and understand what is acceptable and what is not. They show concern for others and consider their feelings. The children enjoy playing together at the activities selected by their teachers, but could have more opportunities to plan for themselves what they might like to do during the day.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good attention is given to helping children learn how to listen and to develop their phonic skills
- Reading and writing skills are taught well
- Children achieve well and are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals for reading and writing by the time they enter Year 1
- More can be done to help children to say more and to use longer sentences

Commentary

38. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' assessments show that children in the nursery generally have speaking and listening skills that are well below average. The 'New Deal for Heywood' initiative is helping teachers to address this, and success is already being seen in helping children to learn how to listen. For example, all formal sessions where children are expected to listen to an adult begin with, 'What makes a good listener?' and children reply with, for example, 'Look at the person speaking; concentrate on what they say' etc. As a result, children listen well and are careful not to interrupt one another when they are talking. Another benefit of this approach is seen in both reception and nursery classes where children are learning their letter sounds. Because the children are listening carefully, they quickly learn the links between letter shapes and their sounds and can, for example, identify a range of consonants and vowels and combine them to construct words they recognise.
39. Teachers make books interesting and fun experiences. They make books about the children, using digital images, and these capture their imagination and make them want to read more. Daily routines, such as placing a name card in a tray on arrival, help the children to recognise their own, and others', names. In addition, children trace and copy patterns that help them to form letter shapes correctly and also have good opportunities to use writing in their play each day. As a result, the reading and writing skills of the children show an improvement over previous years and they are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals in these areas. Good opportunities are provided throughout the day for children to develop their speaking and listening skills and join in conversation with adults and one another. These are effective and the children currently in reception have achieved well so that their skills have improved from well below average to now being below average. However, for these children, and for children with English as an additional language, more can be done to introduce new vocabulary, with pictures as well as words, to show the meaning. Also, adults tend to ask the children questions, or instruct them about what to do and do not give enough opportunities for children to extend and develop what they have to say or to practice using more interesting and varied vocabulary.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults have high expectations for what children can learn
- There is a good focus on learning numeracy skills throughout the day
- Children achieve well and are in line to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they begin Year 1
- There are occasions when assistants could be better deployed to help the children learn more effectively

Commentary

40. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have high expectations and show delight when children take risks and try out their counting skills with larger numbers. As a result, the

children are eager to demonstrate how far they can count and quickly learn what follows, for example, 19 and 99. Nursery children are encouraged to use numbers and recognise shapes and reception children are expected to be able, for example, to count in tens and to recognise symmetry in patterns. Throughout the day, adults take every opportunity to reinforce number skills while children play, and a wide range of well planned activities is provided so that children learn to, for example, use coins, sort shapes, recognise relative sizes, count, and use sequences. There is also a daily session for the children in reception where they focus more formally on number skills and this is successful in preparing them for entry to Year 1. Teachers assess accurately what each child can do and use this information to make sure they keep learning and building on their previous knowledge. As a result, children show good achievement from their below average skills in nursery, to meeting the Early Learning Goals as they enter Year 1, and average for their age. In the more formal 'numeracy' sessions, there are some occasions when assistants are sitting with the children rather than being deployed to help individuals and groups with their learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a good challenge that helps children to learn
- Activities and themes are well planned
- There is good achievement and most children are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals as they enter Year 1
- More use could be made of current technology

Commentary

41. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are interested by the themes chosen by their teachers and, for example, through a theme about 'on the move', they know that wind is a force that can turn a mill as well as move a boat and support an aircraft in flight. They are also helped to develop their understanding through the challenge adults provide in continually asking the children to think 'why?' and 'how?' such things take place. As a result, children of both nursery and reception age are developing enquiring minds and want to find out more about the world around them. This approach is raising standards and the children are achieving well, from having below average knowledge and understanding in nursery to average standards by the end of the reception year. Children use computers as expected for their age and have appropriate experiences of using digital images and audio equipment. However, there could be more opportunities provided for children to use everyday equipment such as CD and audio tape players etc.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of activities is provided to help children develop their fine motor skills
- Good activities for outdoor play help children to extend their gross motor skills
- Children achieve well and are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1
- The outdoor environment could be further improved, and children could have increased access to it.

Commentary

42. This area of learning is taught well. Teachers provide a good range of activities to help the children develop their fine motor skills. Children learn to use scissors, needles and thread, pencils, crayons and brushes, and learn to use glue effectively. As a result of these activities, and the help they receive from adults, the children learn to manipulate small objects well and control their movements with increasing accuracy. When they play outside, the children are adventurous and enjoy the challenges provided by their teachers. For example, they work together to raise and lower a large parachute and take turns in climbing on the benches and using one as a slide. Their play area has a slight slope, and this leads the children to, for example, pedal their cycles harder and give more effort to their play. As a result, they are energetic and the reception children are showing the physical skills expected for their age. This is a good achievement over their time in the Foundation Stage. However, the play area is in need of refurbishment, and this is included in the school's plans to improve the playgrounds. Also, the children are only able to play outside at certain times of the day and more could be done to increase this access.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide good resources and activities to help children's creative development
- There are high expectations for what children can do
- There is good achievement and children are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals as they enter Year 1
- Children's imaginative development is slowed by the limitations in their speaking skills

Commentary

43. The quality of teaching and learning is good. nursery and reception children play together and enjoy the activities that their teachers set out for them each day. These include using paints, glues, papers, playdough and other materials to create imaginative pictures as well as improving the children's practical skills. Areas of the rooms are set aside, and decorated well so that they 'invite' children to play. For example, one area is darkened and contains displays that simulate space travel. As a result, children are eager to dress in the silver suits provided and go on an imaginary journey into space. Good opportunities are provided for musical activities and, as a result, children in reception are able to march in time to a steady beat. However, the limitations in the development of children's speaking skills, already mentioned above, mean that they are slower in acquiring the skills of negotiating roles and defining their characters in role play than in other aspects of their creative development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Since September 2003, pupils are achieving well and have positive attitudes towards the subject
- Rigorous systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress are now in place and these are helping to drive up standards
- Despite improvements this year, the quality of teaching seen was inconsistent in a few classes
- The subject leader provides effective leadership and is very well supported by the headteacher
- The school has no clear learning plans for pupils with English as an additional language. As a result, the provision for this very small number of pupils is unsatisfactory
- Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in some lessons

Commentary

44. The 2003 tests for seven and eleven year olds showed standards to be falling and well below those achieved nationally, although some improvement was seen in reading. The new headteacher's drive to raise standards has ensured that rigorous systems are now in place for regularly assessing and tracking pupils' performance in reading and writing and this is identifying weaknesses which the school is now addressing through developments such as The Better Reading Partnership Programme and the Heywood Speaking and Listening Project. As a result, the work seen in lessons and in pupils' books during the inspection indicates that the previous decline in standards has been reversed. Most pupils across the school are now catching up and working within national expectations. Current assessment data shows that the majority of pupils now achieve well in relation to what they were doing in September 2003. Pupils enter the school with well below average language and literacy skills. The pupils currently in Year 2 show skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening that are average. This is the first time since the last inspection that standards have been average, and this increase in performance is due to the good, and often very good, teaching that is now provided for these year groups. There has also been a recent improvement in standards in Years 3 to 6, and most of the pupils are catching up so that, they show standards that meet expectations. A small minority of the higher attaining pupils, however, do not progress quite as well as they might, due to lack of challenge in a few lessons. The school has recently surveyed boys' opinions about reading and writing and has purchased books that interest and motivate them to learn. As a result, boys and girls are now achieving equally as well and the attainment gap is narrowing. In most classes, pupils have very good attitudes towards their work; they apply themselves to their tasks and take pride in what they do with the result that they achieve well.
45. The majority of pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress. In most classes the tasks are well matched to their needs and teachers and teaching assistants are effective in providing the support they need in order to learn. However, provision for the very small number of pupils with English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. The school is unsure about what to do with these pupils and interim measures, such as using objects and pictures to teach vocabulary, have not been put in place. As a result, the pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
46. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There has been a recent improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, and literacy skills are now taught well in most classes. However, there are still some inconsistencies in teaching quality, and some unsatisfactory lessons were seen in a few classes. The features of the good and better teaching observed included careful planning and preparation with clear lesson objectives, which were shared and understood by all pupils. In these lessons a brisk pace was maintained and teachers demonstrated good understanding of the subject. They challenged their pupils and provided interesting and exciting activities which engaged the pupils in lively discussion. Teachers asked effective questions that extended pupils' thinking and rewarded them with praise and encouragement so that they developed confidence in their own learning. The excellent lesson observed contained an example of outstanding practice.

The teacher helped pupils to build complex sentences and to use them in their speaking and writing. This is leading to very rapid improvements and higher standards.

In a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the teacher and pupils rehearsed orally the stories the pupils would write later. The teacher counted the words in her sentences on her fingers and the pupils followed suit, trying desperately to make their sentences as long as hers. Because the pupils counted the words, this helped them to remember their sentences and use them in the class discussion. When it came to writing, the pupils all still remembered their sentences and were able to write them in full, so that their stories were rich and interesting and of a much higher standard than expected for their age. The teacher also enthused the pupils by using interesting vocabulary herself and praising the pupils every time they used exciting words. This led the pupils to compete with one another as to who could make, say and write the most vivid and colourful sentences. The pupils were caught in a whirlwind of creativity and were amazed by what they could do. The teacher's emphasis on practising sentences orally is not only raising standards in English, but is also clearly giving the pupils higher level speaking and listening skills that help them to learn in other lessons.

47. Where lessons were unsatisfactory, this was largely due to lack of pace with too much time sitting listening to explanations, leaving insufficient time for pupils to develop their skills through independent tasks. In some lessons pupils were not given work which was sufficiently matched to their learning needs. A minority of pupils presented challenging behaviour which disrupted learning in some classes.
48. Initiatives to improve speaking and listening skills are beginning to make an impact. Most teachers use good levels of subject related and general vocabulary in lessons and expect pupils to respond appropriately. Pupils are encouraged to listen attentively and to discuss their own and each other's work. In the Foundation Stage, children identify every day what makes a good listener and are likely to enter Year 1 with higher listening skills than in previous years. One teacher is working closely with the Heywood Speaking and Listening Project and this is giving her skills that are rapidly raising standards in Years 1 and 2. These skills are being shared with other colleagues and the school has, rightly, identified that this priority for raising the standard of speaking and listening skills is the key to higher achievement in all subjects. However, there are still too few opportunities for pupils to explore language through drama and debate and this is an issue from the previous inspection which has still to be addressed.
49. Pupils make good progress in reading. Standards are rising and are now average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils are developing a love of books. They talk with interest about what they are reading and can explain who an author and illustrator are. They know how to find information in a non-fiction book by using an index, table of contents and a glossary. They read aloud with confidence and are developing a range of strategies to help read unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils read with good expression and recognise that punctuation marks add tone to the text. By Year 6, most pupils are reading with satisfactory fluency and confidence. They have the opportunity to read from a wide range of books and are developing their independent research skills through use of non-fiction books and the Internet. They have a good understanding of how a library is organised and can talk with confidence about the Dewey system for classifying books. Teachers keep careful records of pupils' progress in reading and this enables them to target pupils for extra support when needed. The Better Reading Partnership Project is proving very successful with these pupils and they quickly gain confidence and improve their reading skills as a result.
50. Standards in writing are average across the school, although too few pupils attain the higher levels in national tests. Pupils are taught to write for different purposes and in a range of styles. However, not enough use is made of other subjects such as geography or history to enable pupils to practice and develop their writing skills. Standards of handwriting and presentation are inconsistent across the school. Where teachers have high expectations, pupils demonstrate the ability to write in a neat, cursive style. Standards in spelling are satisfactory overall. Pupils systematically learn basic and complex spelling patterns as they progress through the school and have regular opportunities to practice what they have learned. Pupils' work is regularly

marked, but teachers' comments do not always indicate to pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

51. The headteacher has provided a very good start for the raising of standards and has clearly identified for teachers what works well, and what they can improve. The recently appointed subject leader provides good leadership and has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards further through her regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Effective use of literacy skills is made in ICT where pupils use word processing software. However, opportunities are often missed for pupils to practice their writing skills through other subjects and greater emphasis needs to be placed on this in teachers' planning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- The school analyses and evaluates pupils' performance in mathematics and sets appropriate whole school and individual targets.
- Higher attaining pupils in Years 1 to 4 are not always given sufficient challenge.

Commentary.

53. Test results in 2003 showed that standards were well below average in Year 2, although improvements were seen in Year 6, where test results were below the national average. These Year 6 test results were an improvement on the previous year and further analysis shows that most of the pupils involved achieved well. Children enter the school with below average attainment. Analysis of pupils' work and the school's assessments show that since September 2003, most pupils are now achieving well and making progress at a faster rate than expected. This good achievement is helping them to catch up, and inspection evidence shows standards are now close to the national average in Years 2 and 6. This improvement is a direct result of the drive of the headteacher to improve the quality of teaching and learning and raise standards.
54. The quality of teaching is good overall. The most effective lessons seen are characterised by teachers' clear, expressive explanation that provides an interesting and sufficiently challenging learning atmosphere. Very effective use is made of grouping pupils in Years 5 and 6 by ability. This means that teachers can provide challenges that stretch all groups and higher, lower and average attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 are generally doing better as a result. However, there are still some occasions in other Years where higher attaining pupils could be given more challenging tasks to do. Effective use is made of modern technological aids such as computer-linked whiteboards and calculators. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, both by teachers and support staff, and make good progress. Teachers' planning is generally strong and they show improved knowledge and understanding of the subject. As a result, lessons contain interesting topics that help the pupils to develop good attitudes to the subject. The learning intentions of each lesson are shared with pupils at the outset and this gives them a clear understanding of what they are to learn. Pupils generally work well together, discussing their work sensibly in pairs or groups, and appreciating each other's efforts.
55. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader is well informed about the quality of teaching and learning across the school, as a result of the school's programme of monitoring and analysing pupils' performance. This careful analysis of pupils' progress in mathematics is

used effectively to focus on strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and to set whole school and individual targets for improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. Mathematics is used well to support work in other subjects and in turn these subjects support learning in mathematics. Data handling in science and ICT make good contributions to mathematics, and work such as comparing climates across the world and using co-ordinates in geography make a sound contribution to learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and pupils enjoy their interesting science lessons
- Achievement is generally good, but some improvements can still be made
- There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the subject is well led and managed
- Investigative approaches to science have been well developed throughout the school
- There are some inconsistencies in the way pupils record their science work

Commentary

57. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations for most pupils. In Year 2, pupils can explain the process of pollination and are aware that this can be carried out by wind, birds and insects. Pupils in Year 6 show a clear understanding of what makes a fair test and conduct their investigations in a scientific manner. However, most pupils do the same activity in the lesson and there is little evidence of more challenging work being given to the higher attaining pupils. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. The subject leader has identified that there are occasions when some girls underachieve, and has already put appropriate measures in place to address this. Inspection shows that these are being effective and very positive attitudes towards science are expressed by both girls and boys with no evidence of underachievement of girls observed in lessons.
58. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when it was satisfactory. The most successful aspect of the teaching is the investigative approach taken by all teachers. This engages pupils and they enjoy their science lessons as a result. Teaching and learning has been improved in a measured way, making good use of an independent consultant to develop teachers' skills and expertise. This has impacted well in lessons and, for the majority of pupils, achievement in science is generally good. In the best lessons, teachers use illustrations very well to support their careful explanations of scientific processes. This engrosses the pupils and leads them to question and investigate with enthusiasm. This was observed in a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 who quickly understood the processes of pollination as a result. However, an improvement point for teaching and learning throughout the school is to provide more extended work and challenging opportunities for higher attaining pupils.
59. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has motivated other staff and this is a significant factor in the successful development of this subject. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and standards in science are all good and the information gained is used well to plan future developments.
60. The curriculum for science is organised effectively and teachers have access to well organised resources and equipment. Pupils are encouraged to work together in lessons and this has a

positive effect on their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils are encouraged to make their own decisions about recording investigations and there is some very good quality work as a result, particularly in Year 6. However, this means that there is not a consistent approach to how pupils record their work and there is too much variation in quality between classes in this respect.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a specialist assistant who provides good support, particularly for pupils in Years 1 and 2
- Good leadership and management of the subject are provided by the subject leader
- ICT is used well by staff to track the progress of pupils and analyse whole school assessment
- The layout of the ICT suite creates difficulties for teachers
- The recent development work has not yet fully impacted on teaching, learning and standards

Commentary

61. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory in both key stages. This reflects the findings of the last inspection for pupils in Year 2 and shows an improvement in standards for pupils in Year 6. There are no differences between the achievements of boys and girls.
62. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. However, there are differences between teachers and, during the inspection, the lessons seen were judged in a range from good to unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, pupils receive tuition in small groups from the specialist assistant and this individual attention helps them to make good progress within the lesson and quickly learn new skills. In the lessons observed in the ICT suite, the quality of teaching and learning is hindered by the layout of the room. There is a bank of computers down the middle of the room and the chairs are not high enough, so not all the pupils can see the teacher's demonstration and the large screen. It also restricts the teacher's view of the pupils. The school deploys the specialist assistant effectively to provide good quality support to teachers in lessons that helps to overcome some of the difficulties created by the room. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, not enough challenge is provided for higher attaining pupils and they become restless so that too much time is spent in controlling behaviour.
63. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and has been very active in taking ICT forward over the past two years. A clear plan has been devised and is being effectively implemented and staff are now well supported in developing their confidence in the use of ICT. The impact of this work is not yet evident in pupils' standards and teaching and learning. The assessment of pupils' computer skills is underdeveloped. The teachers and assistant provide good oral feedback to pupils, and this helps them to make progress. However, there is little evidence of written assessment and regular marking of pupils' work. The subject leader is aware of what needs to be done and is now working with colleagues from other schools to improve this.
64. The quality of computers is satisfactory and they are well maintained. Interactive whiteboards and classroom computers are networked and are used well to support teaching and learning for all pupils, especially the pupils with special educational needs. The recently updated policies, including Internet access, are now in place and all aspects of the National Curriculum for the subject are suitably covered.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. ICT is used satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects. For example, in Year 6, pupils use computers to present ideas using 'PowerPoint' linked to their work in literacy (biography and autobiography), science (circuits) and the Internet for research (History and Art). Displays around the school include examples of ICT being used in art and geography as well as good use of digital images to help pupils recall what they have seen and learnt.

HUMANITIES

History, geography and religious education were sampled and not inspected in depth. No lessons were observed in geography and none could be seen in religious education because of the school's timetable. Two history lessons were seen.

66. In **history and geography**, there is evidence from discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work that by the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average. This was also the finding at the last inspection. In both subjects there is a policy and scheme of work in place. From discussions with pupils, many obviously enjoy history and are developing average skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject. In geography, however, pupils are limited in their use of key geographical vocabulary and have gaps in knowledge and understanding about some aspects of the planned work, particularly environmental matters and knowledge of places outside the British Isles.
67. In **religious education**, much of the work undertaken in lessons is discussion and there is very little evidence in pupils' books to assess the quality of teaching and learning or standards in the subject. In discussion with pupils they are positive about their work, and have appropriate knowledge of Bible stories, different world religions and religious festivals. The school has adopted the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and the subject leader is developing the scheme of work in the subject. However, she does not yet undertake any monitoring of pupils' work to ensure that what has been planned for, actually takes place. There are no assessment procedures in place yet and, as a result, teachers do not know how well pupils are achieving in the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design was inspected in full and is reported below. Insufficient music was seen to judge the provision, standards, teaching and learning. Too few lessons were observed to judge the provision for design and technology and one lesson was seen in physical education.

68. **Music** is included within the school development plan as in need of improvement, and work on this is scheduled to begin later this year. In **design and technology**, the subject was sampled through an examination of pupils' work and discussions with the subject leader and the headteacher. These show that: pupils work with a good range of different materials; the curriculum has recently improved; and the headteacher's drive for development is having a positive impact on the quality of design and technology across the school. The provision for **physical education** was sampled. An after school football club was seen, the curriculum was analysed, and discussions took place with the subject leader and pupils. These indicate that: pupils' standards in Year 2 games are as expected for their age; the curriculum contains all the aspects it should; and that the school has identified dance and gymnastics as areas for further improvement. Also, pupils are taught to swim before they leave school and benefit from a range of extra curricular sporting activities and clubs, including football and cricket. The school's programme of residential visits provides pupils with an appropriate range of outdoor and adventurous activities.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6
- Teachers place a good emphasis on pupils applying artistic method to their work
- The curriculum is planned well and sufficient time is given for pupils to develop their ideas and finish their work
- There is good leadership for the subject
- The subject leader has yet to support colleagues in their lessons.

Commentary

69. Pupils' art work is attractively displayed throughout the school. A common feature is that work is finished to a good quality and is generally of good scale and proportion. Year 2 pupils do observational drawings of flowers that show fine detail and include attempts at shading as well as contrasting light and dark tones. Pupils in Year 6 spend time developing their ideas and do small versions of these ideas which they evaluate and refine before scaling them up to complete the final work. Pupils' questionnaires indicate that a large number of pupils enjoy art and design and discussions with pupils reveal that they are challenged by their art work and feel pride at being able to finish their work to a high standard. This is because all classes follow the same theme in their art lessons. During the inspection the theme was 'Flowers in Art' and each class was interpreting this in a different way, teaching a range of skills, and expecting the work of each Year group to be progressively more difficult. As a result, teachers as well as pupils, could see what could be achieved. In addition, the timetable is designed to allow flexibility between some lessons and this enables pupils to have the satisfaction of completing their work.
70. The quality of teaching and learning is good in most classes. Pupils' work shows they learn skills at a higher level in each Year group and that teachers help pupils to evaluate and improve their drawings and paintings. During the inspection, examples of very good teaching were observed in Years 5 and 6 and teachers were demonstrating techniques as well as using Interactive White Boards and the Internet to help pupils to develop abstract pastel drawings from their observations of flowers. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and provides good leadership so that the developments planned for the subject actually take place. The subject leader provides valuable help and guidance to colleagues, and this helps to make sure that pupils are challenged to improve their skills. However, she has yet to support her colleagues during their lessons to raise, even further, the quality of teaching and learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

71. Two lessons were observed, discussions were held with pupils and analysis took place of relevant curriculum documents. In one of the lessons seen, the teacher led a good quality discussion so that pupils listened well to each other and formed their own opinions, for example, about the relative merits of different sports and leisure pursuits. They also learnt to value and respect the opinions of others. In the other lesson, good use was made of relevant stories to stimulate the pupils into thinking about the moral and criminal aspects of drug abuse. Assemblies also contribute to the effectiveness of the provision and the good work assembly seen, clearly helped the pupils to gain pride and self-esteem in their achievements. The family assembly observed helped the pupils to appreciate the impact of the quality of their performance upon others.
72. The planning for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education within the curriculum is generally good. Appropriate emphasis is given in subjects such as science and physical

education on healthy eating and the benefits of exercise. Teachers use positive strategies to develop pupils' pride, initiative and responsibilities. Most classes devote some time each week to PSHCE and use opportunities such as 'circle time' to help pupils discuss issues that affect them. Pupils' views are sought, valued and contribute to decision making in the school at many levels. For examples, pupils have been consulted about the development of the outdoor space and their ideas are incorporated in the designs and plans for the new playground. The statutory requirements for providing sex and relationships education are not met. However, facts about reproduction are included in the science syllabus and the emphasis on relationship building in PSHCE lessons mean that there is no negative impact of this omission on pupils' development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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