

INSPECTION REPORT

HAWBUSH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Brierley Hill, West Midlands

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103820

Headteacher: Alison Pell

Lead inspector: Raymond Jardine

Dates of inspection: 15 – 18 September 2003

Inspection number: 256361

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 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	320
School address:	Hawbush Road Brierley Hill West Midlands
Postcode:	DY5 3NH
Telephone number:	01384 816930
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Janet Parkes
Date of previous inspection:	29 October 2001

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is above average in size and includes a nursery. Almost all pupils are of white UK heritage; only two pupils have English as an additional language, both very new to the school. Most come from housing estates in the immediate locality and many of their families are considerably economically and socially disadvantaged. There are a small number from travellers' families. The proportion of pupils entering or leaving mid-year is about average. Eighty four pupils are identified as having special educational needs (above average). Of these, 25 receive additional support from outside agencies; four have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Most of them have speech and communication or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and some have moderate learning difficulties. The school is part of The Dudley Partnership for Achievement Education Action Zone (EAZ). The school provides community use of some facilities and family support services. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
7428	Raymond Jardine	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs
9883	Brian Silvester	Lay inspector	
31838	Martyn Williams	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education
8316	Josefa O'Hare	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Music Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hawbush is a fairly effective and improving school that provides satisfactory value for money. Pupils enter the school with well below average attainment, especially in their language and social skills. The school works hard with its partners to improve these quickly and to involve parents more in their children's education. Many pupils are achieving well because the teaching is good and, as a result, they learn well. Most pupils acquire good attitudes to school and behave well within a caring and encouraging climate for learning but a few have poor attendance. The school's leadership and management are good, particularly that of the headteacher.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve consistently well in Years 1 and 2 and throughout the school in English. In mathematics, pupils' achievements are improving but are not yet consistently good.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good; the curriculum is imaginative and teaching is very good so that children achieve very well.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and direction that has transformed the school's climate and committed all staff to close teamwork and improved standards.
- Most lessons are challenging and meet pupils' needs well, especially for those with special educational needs, but gifted and talented pupils could achieve more in some subjects.
- Pupils acquire sound basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT) but are not using them enough in some subjects because teachers' competence varies considerably.

Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good. Almost all the key issues identified two years ago have been addressed well, but attendance still shows no sign of improvement. Robust systems for monitoring teaching and pupils' progress are in place and their impact is now evident in improved teaching quality and rising standards in English, mathematics and science.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E*	E*	E*	E*
mathematics	E*	E*	E*	E*
science	E	E	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.*

Achievement is good overall and improved since 2002 when there was some underachievement. The table shows pupils' standards in 2002 were very low in English and mathematics compared to national and similar schools' standards. The results for the 2003 national tests show some improvement in English standards where the school exceeded its target, but not in mathematics or science. However, standards seen in the current Year 6 are better and are a little below average in all these subjects because of better teaching and management. Pupils achieve consistently well in English and in most aspects of science. In mathematics, pupils' achievements vary between years, the best being in Year 6. Standards are above average in art and design. However, gifted and talented pupils could achieve more in ICT and science.

Standards in Year 2 in 2002 were well below average in reading and writing and low in mathematics, but they rose dramatically in all these subjects in the 2003 national tests. They are now about average in all three

subjects in the current Year 2 and pupils of all capabilities achieve well. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well, particularly in their social, physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. In these most are likely to achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of their reception year. A minority are likely to attain them in language, communication and literacy and mathematical development.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good** overall. Most pupils show positive attitudes, like coming to school and behave well and there are relatively few pupils temporarily excluded. However, attendance is well below average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

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

Teaching and learning are good overall. Much of the teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in Year 6 is very good. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge but do not use ICT enough to improve learning in some subjects. Assessment is used well to adapt work to pupils' capabilities. Learning support assistants provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs so that they learn well. Adults have very good relationships with pupils and manage them effectively so that little time is lost. Occasionally lessons move too slowly; pupils lose interest and do not learn enough.

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good and for the rest of the school it is satisfactory. Pupils' personal, social and health education is developed well and good use is made of visits and visitors. However, the library is inadequate and aspects of the school's accommodation hinder its work. Care, guidance and support for pupils are good and foster a secure atmosphere for learning. Links with parents, the community and other schools are also good and are helping parents become more involved in their children's education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**.

The leadership of the headteacher is very good and has resulted in considerable improvements to the school's climate and ethos. Other senior staff provide good leadership but the role of some subject co-ordinators needs developing. The school reflects on its work and strives to improve. Teaching is monitored and supported well and training has led to improvements in the quality of teaching. Pupils' achievements are monitored and analysed and action taken where necessary. Resources are used effectively and the school's finances managed well. The work of the governing body is satisfactory; governors are very supportive and know the school's strengths and weaknesses but do not do enough to challenge the school's work in priority areas.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are satisfied with the school. They feel their children make good progress, the teaching is good and staff approachable but some have concerns about incidents of bullying. While these sometimes occur, inspectors judge that the school treats them seriously and appropriately.

Pupils like school and think they work hard. They think teachers help them to improve and that they are fair but find some lessons not very interesting and think some pupils could behave better.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the teaching of mathematics in Years 3 to 5 so as to raise standards further in Years 3 to 6;
- increase teachers' competence in ICT so as to improve pupils' standards and their use of ICT across subjects
- take steps to improve pupils' attendance

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- monitor the impact of the school's race equality policy

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is very good and it is good in Years 1 and 2. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is mainly good, especially in Year 6. Pupils' standards are about average in Year 2 while in Year 6 they are below average in all three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Those with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well in most areas of learning because teaching is very good, the curriculum stimulating and varied and the provision very well led.
- Consistently effective teaching and close teamwork is ensuring good achievement in reading, writing and mathematics for all pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils achieve well in English throughout Years 3 to 6. Achievement in mathematics is more uneven but is mainly good, particularly in Year 6.
- In most aspects of science, pupils achieve well but the more able are not achieving as much as they could in their scientific enquiry skills.
- Pupils acquire sound skills in most aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) but are not applying them sufficiently in some subjects to help raise standards.

Commentary

1. In 2002, standards by the end of Year 6 were low when compared nationally (see table below) and to similar schools in English and mathematics. Science standards were better, but still well below average. The results for 2003 show some improvements in English but not in mathematics and science. The school met its target for English but fell well short of it in mathematics. Girls have tended to do better than boys in English by more than the difference found nationally.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.0 (23)	27.2 (27.2)
mathematics	22.4 (21.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.1 (27.1)	28.6 (28.5)

There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The table below shows that the school's standards at the end of Year 2 have been well below those nationally in reading and writing and low in mathematics. However, more recent results for 2003 show standards have improved very substantially and pupils achieved well in all these areas. The average point scores in 2003 for reading, writing and mathematics rose to 16.1, 14.7 and 16.4 respectively.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.5 (13.6)	16.0 (15.9)
writing	12.0 (12.7)	14.5 (14.5)
mathematics	13.3 (14.4)	16.6 (16.4)

3. Children's achievements throughout the Foundation Stage are at least good in all the areas of learning. Their achievements are very good in social, physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because teaching is of consistently high quality, the curriculum is stimulating and imaginatively planned and the Foundation Stage very well led. The majority are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of their reception year in knowledge and understanding of the world, and in physical, creative and social development. A significant minority are likely to reach the expected standard in their mathematical development but few will reach it in their communication, language and literacy because the level of their language development on entry to nursery is so low.
4. Inspection findings confirm that the pattern of improvement seen in the school's 2003 national test results is being built on. By Year 2, pupils show broadly average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In relation to their well below average standards on entry to school, they continue to achieve well in all these areas as they did last year. The co-ordinator for Years 1 and 2 provides good leadership, monitors and supports teaching and teachers' plans and reviews pupils' progress with their teachers. Teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the core subjects as a result.
5. In Year 6, pupils are likely to attain standards a little below the average nationally in both English and mathematics and are achieving well in both, including those with special educational needs. The school's challenging targets for 2004 in both these subjects are likely to be met. Part of the reason for this is that pupils are strongly encouraged to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in a wide range of contexts across many subjects. Teaching in Year 6 is also particularly effective. The upward trend in English has now been sustained for two years but the considerable rise in standards in mathematics seen in the current Year 6, though welcome, is not yet secure. Pupils' progress in mathematics is uneven between Years 3 and 6 because attention to improving numeracy has been behind that of literacy and teaching quality still varies significantly across these years within the subject. More work needs to be done to make teaching consistently good or better and to improve pupils' mental recall of number facts, such as multiplication and division.
6. In science, pupils are also achieving well in their knowledge and understanding of key concepts and standards by Year 6 in these aspects are close to the average. However, more able pupils are not achieving as much as they could in their scientific enquiry skills in Years 5 and 6 because higher investigative skills such as checking observations, reviewing their work and suggesting improvements are not emphasised enough. Pupils acquire sound basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and their achievement is satisfactory in most aspects, an improvement since the last inspection. However, they are not applying their skills enough to raise standards across some subjects, for example, in science. The main cause is the considerable variation in teachers' competence with ICT and awareness of its potential use in raising standards. Pupils achieve very well and attain above average standards in art and design but standards in physical education are broadly average by the end of Year 6. This subject went through a period without leadership but the new co-ordinator has made a brisk start and improvements are already underway. In religious education, pupils' achievements are satisfactory, although they achieve below the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus by Year 6.
7. The upward trend in standards is the result of key changes made by the headteacher following her appointment in January 2002. She has transformed the school's climate and ethos and has raised the ambitions of staff, pupils and parents and established close teamwork and co-operation. Teaching and learning is closely monitored, supported and developed and has improved substantially as a result. Training has played an important role in improving both the quality of teaching and the management role of key team leaders who now have much more delegated responsibility. The school's practice of withdrawing pupils with special educational needs in Years 3 to 6 from main classes was reversed and a much improved provision is now made for them. The impact of this is particularly noticeable in mathematics.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Teachers use their assessments and objectives in very clear education plans for these pupils to adapt work to their needs and learning support assistants provide effective support and guidance when working with them. More able pupils also achieve well in their literacy and numeracy; most classes are set by ability and the level of challenge is high. However, more able, gifted and talented pupils could achieve more in some subjects, notably aspects of science and ICT.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. The school has adopted a number of strategies to improve attendance but it is still well below the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitude to their work is good because teachers and support staff encourage them and work hard to raise their self-esteem.
- Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their emotions and feeling towards others and their behaviour, in class and around the school, is generally good.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The level of attendance is well below the national average despite the school's efforts to improve it.

Commentary

9. Pupils have a good attitude to their work and this makes a major contribution to their learning. Most say they like school and many feel they are working hard and gaining a lot from lessons, although some would like them to be more interesting. Pupils get on well with the task given, persevere and concentrate. There is a calm, quiet, friendly atmosphere in the school. This is reflected in the good relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults. The headteacher's determination to raise staff and pupils' expectations and to celebrate their achievements is a major contributory factor. Pupils of all ages and ethnicity work and play together well. The good social and moral education provided, including lessons in personal, social and health education (PSHE), has a clear and positive impact on their good behaviour. Children in the Foundation Stage are on course to achieve the goals for learning in their personal and social development. Training provided for all staff in developing pupils' emotional intelligence together with the school's strong emphasis on recognising achievement, for example, through achievement assemblies, are doing much to raise pupils' self-esteem and develop their relationships. As a result, behaviour has improved, although incidents of bullying and harassment do occasionally occur. This is one of the few areas of concern expressed by both parents and pupils, although most parents who expressed a view commented that they felt the school deals quickly with bullying. Inspectors judge that the headteacher and staff take such incidents very seriously and involve parents in dealing with them, but more should be done to inform them of the school's actions and how its impact is being monitored. There are few recorded bullying incidents and the level of fixed period exclusions is falling.

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	231	15	0
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

10. Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility, both in their class and around the school. There is a lively school council although pupils from Years 1 and 2 are not included in it. Pupils generally have positive views about the school; they feel that teachers listen to their ideas, trust them to do things on their own and that they are treated fairly.
11. The school's provision for spiritual and cultural education is good and is seen, for example, in the prayers written and read by pupils and in the range of good quality art work that is influenced by a range of artists and cultures such as that of Picasso and African artwork.
12. The level of attendance is poor. It is well below the national average and has not improved since the previous inspection. Numerous strategies have been adopted, such as incentives and involving parents more, but these have not yet resulted in an increase in attendance. Most pupils are punctual but a few do arrive late each day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.2	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. It is particularly effective in the Foundation Stage and Year 6. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is satisfactory, but there are weaknesses in the school's accommodation. Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support are good. The school's partnership with parents, other schools and the community is good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good and are especially effective in the Foundation Stage and Year 6. Good assessment, particularly in the core subjects, helps focus work to pupils' individual needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Generally, teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and support assistants are well briefed, trained and deployed. In a small minority of lessons teachers' grasp of some subjects is insecure so pupils do not learn as well as they should.
- Assessments help pupils understand clearly what is needed, but some higher attaining older pupils are insufficiently challenged in their ICT because assessment is underused.
- Lessons are imaginatively planned to include stimulating visual and first-hand experiences but ICT is not used consistently well to help raise standards in all subjects.
- Very good relationships greatly support the teachers in developing pupils' confidence, skills and understanding. In a very few cases pupils are not managed well because lessons move too slowly.

Commentary

13. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the school has improved since the 2001 inspection, reflecting the close attention given by the headteacher to its development both for teachers and support staff. There is now little unsatisfactory teaching, whereas in 2001, about one lesson in ten was unsatisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 51 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	13 (25%)	25 (49%)	11 (22%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. The quality of learning is of a similar standard, helped by the good attitudes and behaviour shown by the pupils. In the Foundation Stage, teachers plan a rich and stimulating environment where children grow and develop successfully in both nursery and reception. The consistently good and very good teaching in Year 6 ensures that pupils make rapid progress in all areas. The thorough assessment systems, notably in the core subjects, help teachers ensure that pupils' work is targeted to their needs, and so they move on quickly in their learning. The current Year 6 pupils entered the school with well below average standards. They have improved to below average and are poised to exceed their targets in English and mathematics. These improvements are working their way well through the school. In consequence, Year 2 pupils who also entered the school with well below average standards are now working at average levels.
15. Most teachers have wide-ranging subject knowledge which enables them to set a variety of different tasks at the right level for all pupils. A very good mathematics lesson in Year 2 began with clear objectives setting out what the pupils would learn in activities for the whole class, as pairs and individually. The teacher used skilful questioning, tailored to pupils' ability in order to involve everyone, test their understanding and challenge them to explain their reasoning. The knowledgeable support assistant adopted a similar approach, which enabled a group of pupils with special educational needs to play a full part in the lesson and learn effectively. As a result, everyone achieved well and talked enthusiastically about what they had discovered. This good support provided for pupils with special educational needs is typical of many lessons. In contrast in a Year 1 physical education lesson the teacher's insecure subject knowledge produced undemanding activities and insufficient opportunity for questions and review to stimulate learning.
16. Throughout the school, teachers' marking is diagnostic and well focused. There are targets set for classes, groups and individuals, which are regularly reviewed and continually reinforced in lessons. Detailed records allow teachers to track pupils' progress well in reading, writing and mathematics. Assessment systems are steadily being refined in other subjects so that pupils have increasingly detailed feedback to show them how well they are doing and what they need to do next. Pupils themselves are now beginning to evaluate their own work against their targets for improvement. In an ICT lesson for

Year 4, however, all pupils undertook the same task because their skills had not been assessed. Lower attaining pupils were well supported by the classroom assistant but some higher attaining were not challenged enough and did not learn to the extent that they should have done.

17. The school has given a strong focus to the techniques of accelerated learning¹. Teachers and classroom assistants employ drama, music and a wide range of activities to give pupils vivid ‘hands-on’ experiences. These methods enhance virtually all subjects. For example, teachers set up camp and donned period costume to re-enact the discovery of Tutankhamen’s tomb, bringing history alive for Year 2. In science, Year 6 pupils pushed and pulled against each other in pairs to explore forces and their direction and state of balance. The use of ICT across the curriculum is not developed to the same extent. For example, although a computer was used by some Year 5 pupils to research information on the solar system, the task was too vague to be of real value in guiding learning.
18. Teachers enjoy good relationships with the pupils. Most teachers have high expectations of their behaviour and of what they should be able to do. Most lessons are conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and good humour where the pupils settle quickly and eagerly to the tasks ahead. In a small number of lessons the pace of learning is too slow; pupils lose interest and time is lost by the teacher in controlling chatter. In the vast majority of lessons, however, the high expectations of the teachers, the way they ensure pupils know where they stand and the response of the pupils themselves combine to create the positive atmosphere of learning that is characteristic of lessons throughout the school.

The curriculum

The breadth of curricular opportunities and opportunities for enrichment are satisfactory. They are very good in the Foundation Stage. Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation stage is rich and imaginatively planned to promote good achievement.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are supported effectively by well-trained learning support assistants and make good progress towards their objectives.
- There are interesting enrichment activities through visits and visitors to the school, but too few activities such as participation in sports and music to cater for the gifted pupils.
- The school places strong emphasis on pupils’ personal, social and health education, which enables them to grow into mature and responsible members of the community.
- The school has a good match of teaching and support staff, who all work as an effective team.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory – long linear buildings and corridors that are very hot in summer make access to key areas difficult and most classrooms are relatively small.

Commentary

19. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection in developing pupils’ literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. The school recognises the importance of these skills, together with speaking and listening, as a foundation for learning and has focused attention on them in recent years. Good examples were observed of pupils applying basic skills, showing that they can see connections across subjects, such as in mathematics, the humanities and art. ICT provision is sound. but teachers currently make insufficient use of it to help raise standards in some subjects. This is mainly due to teachers’ varying competence in the subject. The school is also working to develop the curriculum and some teachers’ skills in physical education. The new co-ordinator has already made good effective plans towards addressing weaknesses in this area of the curriculum.

¹ These are teaching methods based on educational research into how we learn.

20. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is stimulating and planned carefully to provide for their varying learning needs. In particular, the work of teachers and support staff and the teamwork evident between the adults, including members of various agencies, is impressive. As a result, the children achieve very well across most areas of their learning. All staff work hard to build strong partnership with parents and members of the community, for the benefit of children's development.
21. A strength of the school curriculum is the way that it is enhanced through enrichment activities such as visits and the use of visiting speakers. Strong links with outside agencies such as a Sure Start programme and the Education Action Zone (EAZ) provide extra support and expertise. Their impact is seen in the way that pupils are helped to overcome barriers to learning and participation, such as poor language skills. Personal, social and health education is also well developed. It includes sex and relationships education and gives appropriate attention to the danger of alcohol and drugs misuse, helping pupils to value themselves and to respect others.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are provided for and supported well. Their needs are assessed with help from experts from the local educational authority and detailed individual education plans are made. These are monitored and pupils' progress assessed with them and with their parents regularly. Teachers and support assistants understand their needs and provide well for them in lessons. Two pupils new to the school at the time of the inspection whose English is at an early stage are being assessed and arrangements made to address their needs. Pupils of different capabilities and backgrounds have good access to the school's curriculum.
23. The opportunities for enrichment and support of the pupils' learning are satisfactory, overall. There is a varied programme of visitors and educational visits both locally and further afield, such as a residential experience to Wales, to enhance learning. There are also opportunities for pupils to participate in sport and music, for example, through a summer Sports-link programme and peripatetic music specialist teaching, but more could be done to encourage talented pupils in these areas. Very able pupils are extended well in English and mathematics where setting arrangements are effective, but not so well in scientific investigations, nor in ICT.
24. There are sufficient teaching and support staff with qualifications and appropriate training to meet the demands of the curriculum. There is a strong team spirit among staff, which contributes greatly to an effective learning environment. Accommodation is unsatisfactory and puts considerable limitations on learning across the whole school, including the Foundation Stage. Classrooms are small and corridors are overwhelmingly hot in the summer months and cold in winter. The fabric of the building is poor, but staff make the best of it by displaying pupils' work attractively to enhance the internal appearance. Long, linear buildings make access to key areas, such as the library, difficult and limit the scope of pupils' independent learning. There are too few books in the library to enable the pupils to undertake independent research to consolidate and extend their learning.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare and health and safety provision for the pupils is good. The support, advice and guidance given to them are good. The school's involvement of pupils by seeking and acting on their views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good access to well-informed support, advice and guidance that contributes to a secure and supportive climate for learning.
- There are very good arrangements for the induction of new pupils through it's the school's partnership with a Sure-Start scheme.
- More should be done to seek, value and act upon the views of pupils.

Commentary

25. The arrangements for introducing new pupils into the school are very good. The school's links with the local Sure Start initiative are productive and parents praise the smooth and successful way that new pupils are inducted into the school and the help given to improve some children's social and language skills through a Play-Talk programme. Care is central to the school's ethos. The teachers and other staff know the pupils well and give them good levels of care and welfare. The provision to protect the pupils' health and safety is good and appropriate child protection procedures are in place.
26. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are good. Pupils feel they can go to an adult for help when they are worried and that teachers listen to their concerns. The learning link worker, part of the school's partnership within the EAZ, liaises with pupils, parents and the wider community, for example, to try and improve attendance and to raise awareness about healthy eating. The school also has a close working relationship with other agencies, like the social services, the local police officer who is also a school governor, and the educational welfare service. Overall, these arrangements and partnerships form an important element of the school's caring and secure climate for learning that is helping pupils of all abilities to achieve.
27. There is a school council but its membership extends only to pupils in Years 3 to 6. Those pupils with special educational needs are involved in their reviews and pupils generally are encouraged to reflect on the progress they have made towards short term curricular targets set for them in literacy and numeracy. However, the school should do more to seek, value and act upon the views of pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's links with the community, other schools and colleges and parents are good and it is seen as a hub of the community.
- Links with the EAZ and the Sure Start programme are working well and are effective in addressing some barriers to learning such as poor language skills.
- The learning link worker enjoys very good relationships with parents and this assists the pupils' learning but some parents do not give high enough priority to their child's attendance and the completion of homework.
- Parents are satisfied with the school but some have concerns about behaviour and bullying.

Commentary

28. The work the school does to involve parents and raise expectations is good. The learning link worker, who is part of the EAZ project, has good working relationships with parents and the community. A range of classes is made available for parents to continue their own education and to assist their child's education, provided at no cost by the local college. Many parents now view the school as a hub of the community. For example, organisations like the Crusader Christian Group, who have membership from the school and the wider community, meet in the school. Overall, parents are satisfied with the school; their main concern is about behaviour and bullying, although almost all who commented on this at the parents' meeting expressed satisfaction with how such incidents are dealt with. A minority of parents do not give high enough priority to their child's attendance, the completion of homework or attendance at parents' evenings despite the school's efforts to encourage them.
29. There are good links with other schools within the EAZ and the high schools that Hawbush pupils move on to. Through this partnership, training has been provided to all staff on accelerated learning techniques and developing pupils' emotional literacy that is influencing teaching approaches and improving pupils' learning and achievement. Through the school's links with Sure Start, children new to the school settle very quickly and help is given to improve some children's language skills.

30. There is an active 'Friends of the School' and parental helpers assist in classes and elsewhere. Regular information newsletters are sent out. In the parental and pupil questionnaires prior to the inspection, parents and pupils were generally very supportive of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher, in post for 18 months, provides very effective leadership and direction for the school. The leadership of other key staff is good. Management has improved as a result of restructuring of roles and responsibilities and is good. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has been very effective in transforming the school's climate and ethos to one of high expectations, inclusive education and close teamwork.
- Arrangements for monitoring, supporting and developing teaching are good and have led to substantial improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Senior managers and those for literacy, numeracy and ICT provide good leadership and manage their areas well but the role of some subject co-ordinators needs developing further.
- The school's budget is carefully monitored and finances used efficiently within a very good school improvement plan.
- Governors are very supportive but make few focused visits on school priorities; the impact of the school's race equality policy has not yet been monitored.

Commentary

31. The headteacher provides very good leadership and direction that has transformed the school's climate. Staff and pupils have higher expectations and a calm, caring and purposeful working atmosphere now pervades the school. Following her appointment in January 2002 she set about raising expectations amongst all the staff, pupils and parents and made some critical changes and developments. The role of members of the senior management team was altered; key managers, including subject leaders were given much more responsibility, crucially in developing teaching and learning and monitoring pupils' achievements. The policy for supporting pupils with special educational needs was radically changed to a much more inclusive arrangement. New and robust systems for assessing and monitoring every pupil's progress towards targets in English, mathematics and science were introduced. Much work has also been done to improve links with parents to involve them more in their children's education. Staff morale is now much higher, they work closely and show a strong determination to improve standards. Governors, teachers and support staff are now very aware of the school's priorities, were fully consulted about them and understand their role in addressing them. One impact of these changes is that key staff, such as leaders of key stage teams and the SEN co-ordinator, are providing good leadership and there is a shared commitment to inclusive education for all pupils. While the role of some subject co-ordinators needs developing further, those for literacy and numeracy are fully involved in monitoring pupils' achievements, addressing weaknesses and guiding staff.
32. Teaching and learning have improved substantially since the last inspection because teachers are monitored and supported regularly by team leaders and leaders of key subjects. For example, training given to all staff in techniques for accelerating pupils' learning is being implemented and its impact seen in the variety of teaching styles and approaches used. Pupils' work is regularly reviewed, standards compared with national benchmarks and action taken, for example, to improve the use of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Arrangements for teachers' performance management are linked closely to both school priorities and their individual needs and their work is regularly reviewed. The school is aware that teaching quality varies and is targeting support to where it is most needed. New systems for tracking pupils' progress in key subjects towards their curricular targets are very good and being used well by teachers to guide teaching and learning. The school is also now analysing both the progress and attendance of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, the children of travellers and those few from minority ethnic backgrounds. Overall, the school's commitment to and

impact on inclusion and equal opportunities is good and reflected in its work, for example, in setting specific short term goals for pupils in their literacy and numeracy and reviewing their progress with them.

33. The school's three year improvement plan is very good and is securely based on its self-review procedures and reports from local education authority reviews. Action plans are detailed and prioritised over time. All staff are aware of their role within it and what resources are to be made available to them, including time to monitor teaching and pupils' achievements. The headteacher and governors monitor the school's finances carefully and spending is linked closely to school priorities in its improvement plan. For example, the school has made a major investment in training focused on improving teaching and learning and the effectiveness with which key staff carry out their roles. Major spending such as that for furniture and carpets has been put out to competitive tender and the school seeks good value in its purchases. The relatively high budget surplus in 2002 was due to funds earmarked for spending on building works that were delayed and budget surpluses since have been carefully planned. Spending on pupils with special educational needs is fully accounted for and used appropriately.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	870,308	Balance from previous year	20,794
Total expenditure	827,185	Balance carried forward to the next	63,917
Expenditure per pupil	2,472		

34. Significant additional funds provided through the EAZ are spent on alleviating some external barriers to achievement, such as poor attendance by a few pupils and low expectations of some parents. By involving parents more in the life of the school and offering them training, the school has achieved some success in improving support for their children's education, although attendance has not yet improved. Partnership in a local Sure Start scheme is also doing much to help assimilate nursery pupils into school life and improve their poor social, speech and language skills and many parents have expressed their appreciation of it.
35. Governors are very supportive of the school and carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily. The governing body receives regular and detailed reports from the headteacher and other key staff and they understand the school's strengths and weaknesses, including how its standards compare with those of other schools. However, few governors other than the Chair carry out focused visits to learn at first hand about the school's actions on its priorities. This is a developing area of the governors' work that is being addressed this year to involve them more closely in the school's monitoring and review procedures. Governors work with the senior management team to help shape its direction and are committed to providing an inclusive education. With the headteacher and deputy, they revised the school's special educational needs policy to ensure such pupils are supported effectively within class rather than taught separately as they were before, and sufficient resources and support staff provided to meet their needs. This has had a major positive impact on pupils' achievements. One weakness, however, is that the impact of the school's race equality policy, approved by governors earlier this year and now being implemented, has not yet been monitored. While plans are in place for this to occur on a regular basis, this aspect of the school's work does not yet fully meet statutory requirements.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

36. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. The Foundation Stage Unit admits children between the ages of three and four years on a part-time basis, morning or afternoon. Reception children attend full time. All children in the Foundation Stage are organised in mixed age groups and according to their abilities, but often in mixed age and ability groups for most areas of learning. These arrangements work very well for the benefit of both the nursery and reception children, because the staff plan their teaching programmes based on careful and analytical assessment information. Consequently, children's particular needs are very well met across all areas of their learning.
37. The children enter the nursery with attainment that is well below average, particularly in communication skills. The teachers and support staff recognise the importance of the development of social, language and mathematical skills as the foundation for learning. The nursery and reception children achieve well in their communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. They achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development, as a result of the consistently high quality of teaching of both nursery and reception children. In addition, the quality of the curriculum is particularly good, because it provides a wide range of challenging and imaginatively planned activities that motivate the children to learn and to enjoy their day at school. The curriculum is well matched to their needs. The innovations to accelerate learning are having a positive impact upon children's achievements. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage is pivotal in managing the provision and provides very good leadership. Children's progress is carefully monitored and recorded by the staff and information is very well used to plan next step of children's learning. All staff manage the children well and the high ratio of adults to children ensures that the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs, are fully met. The warm, welcoming atmosphere that pervades the Foundation Stage is another contributory factor. Parents are encouraged to 'stay and play' to help them learn more about their children's learning. The children are valued individually and consequently, they thrive and grow in confidence with each passing day. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good improvements.

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 enables them to develop a positive sense of themselves.
- The children attain standards expected for their age by the end of the reception year.

Commentary

38. The children understand what is expected of them and they play and co-operate well with one another. For example, in the Hawbush Fire Station, the children shared the equipment and organised putting out the fires, helping one another with hoses or taking telephone messages. They are thoughtful and caring of each other and adults in the room. The children learn quickly what is fair; teachers and support staff provide clear routines and procedures for taking turns, thereby ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in all learning activities. Consequently, the children understand what is expected of them and respond accordingly. In one session observed, the children passed the microphone to others who wished to use it to sing nursery rhymes. The children are encouraged to be independent learners from the first day of their admission. They self-register and place their name cards in the correct slot before initiating activities. Some of the younger children have only been in the Foundation

Stage for a few days, but through the warm encouragement of the staff, they grow in confidence to try new activities for themselves.

39. The teachers and staff provide a calm, productive learning atmosphere in which the children can learn. There are special areas for enhanced learning for those children who have delayed development. Here, the staff provide specific programmes of activities to accelerate learning. The impact is seen in the rapid progress these children make. The staff enable the children to grow in confidence and independence through a very successful programme in which the children plan, do and review their own learning. The teacher used an imaginative strategy of a train journey, where the children stopped at stations where resources were invitingly arranged. The children could get off at any of these stations, to plan, do and review what they wanted.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff are particularly skilled in developing children's language skills through very good teaching.
- Through Sure Start and the EAZ initiatives, parents are actively encouraged to help their children at home and to learn more about their education at school.

Commentary

40. Few children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year and standards are below average, because most start school with poor levels of language development, often communicating in single words or using body language. The children achieve well, through the very effective and well-focused activities provided by the staff. These include carefully structured play activities following first-hand experiences, such as the visit to the school of the local fire brigade. The children were encouraged to participate in exploring the fire engine and were then provided by the staff with suitable resources to make own models for role-play. For example, the children used large cardboard boxes, which formed an engine, and one of them noticed that it would not move, because 'it had no wheels on!' This immediately provided an opportunity for the teacher to discuss with the children how they may overcome these problems. This sensitive recognition of children's language needs was observed in numerous situations across all areas of learning. In addition, the staff introduce new words using strategies such as a running commentary to provide the children with new vocabulary.
41. The Sure Start and the EAZ initiatives provide further expertise and support with children's language development. The close co-ordination and co-operation between all concerned result in a progressive and well structured programme of language development. Home visits and the warm welcome that parents receive in the school provide further encouragement and practical assistance. The impact of these strategies is seen in the good progress the children make in acquiring language skills.
42. The teachers and the support staff use a simplified form of the literacy hour well to introduce the children to the letters and sounds needed to build their reading and writing skills. In one lesson observed, the teacher very effectively combined the skills of speaking and listening with those of reading words and sentences in the story, 'Six in a Bed'. The children were delighted to match single words on a word tree. The carefully planned use of ICT further consolidates their literacy.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and staff provide the children with exciting, first-hand activities to develop mathematical skills.
- The strong focus on mathematical and language development results in the children's good achievement.

Commentary

43. Teaching is very good. Consequently, the children make very good gains in their learning, although only a minority reach the standards expected by the end of their reception year. The teachers and other staff plan exciting practical activities to give children first-hand experience, helping them to understand number, shape and size. This was observed in one session where the teacher and classroom assistant enabled the children to count from zero to 10 and for the more able in the class, to 20. The adults' animated and lively approach was infectious. The children delighted to be able to count objects successfully. They regularly play with construction kits, enabling them to see different shapes, how they fit together and how to make patterns with them. Number games and songs consolidate mathematical understanding further. ICT is also used effectively to support and extend children's learning.
44. The strong focus on the development of mathematical vocabulary is paying dividends. This is achieved with fun for learning, which is exploited to the full by the staff, who enthuse the children to learn. They skilfully question the children to ensure understanding, and build on it with further explanations and challenges. When the children match teddy bears to numbers, the teacher asks them to count the toys and they soon realise that they have more or less than required. Similarly, in the home corner, when one of the new entrants offers the assistant a cup of tea, she is challenged as to how many teaspoons of sugar she has put into the cup, 'because I like my tea sweet'. Adult intervention to support children's mathematical experiences, and its frequent and regular use in all lessons, enriches the mathematical provision.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn about the world from first-hand experience.
- The teaching is very good; teachers and support staff provide stimulating and imaginatively planned activities to accelerate learning.

Commentary

45. Children reach standards close to those expected of them through the carefully planned programmes which entail learning through first-hand experience. This was evidenced in the way that the visit of the fire brigade to the school was utilised to extend children's knowledge of the world. Through role-play and manning the Hawbush Fire Station, the children were encouraged to explore, observe and solve problems. They engaged their critical thinking. For example, when one child realised that there was a fire at his house, he rushed out to the public telephone to ring 999, because 'that is the emergency number'. Others organised the fire brigade to attend to the fire when one commented that the engine had no wheels. Another child realised that the hose he was holding would reach the fire and extinguish it successfully.
46. Photographic evidence indicates that the staff plan visits to places outside the immediate school grounds, such as Hatton Country World or to Hawbush Farm. Through these activities, the children's curiosity and interests are very effectively raised. There are photographs, which show children's rapt attention and wonder at seeing farm animals. The plan, do and review programmes, together with the whole school initiatives on pupils' active learning, result in the children making very good gains in their knowledge of the world around them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff provide the children with a good range of appropriate physical challenges.
- The majority of children reach the expected Early Learning Goals.

Commentary

47. There are limitations in the school's accommodation, which result in some loss of time when the children need to change areas for physical activities. However, through the very good teaching, combined with careful planning, there are good opportunities to experience a range of appropriate physical challenges. As a result, the children develop confidence and control of the way they move and the way they handle tools and equipment. The teachers and support staff are particularly skilful in encouraging children to participate fully in the activities planned for them. A very good example was observed in one session, which was imaginatively linked to other areas of learning. When one of the younger children was unsure what to do, an assistant unobtrusively held the child's hand to encourage him 'to go shopping with her' and 'to push the trolley that is heavy with shopping.' This resulted in his full inclusion and enabled him to participate in the activity, and to learn.
48. The staff are careful to ensure that all health and safety aspects of physical activities are properly maintained. Adults insist that the children are appropriately dressed, to ensure that their activities are not restricted in any way. Carefully planned activities indoors and out provide further opportunities for the children to acquire physical skills. Children make very good use of a variety of tools for drawing, colouring and cutting and show increasing dexterity as they work with pencils, crayon, paintbrushes and scissors. They roll, squeeze and knead malleable materials and their manipulative skills are developing appropriately. The staff engage children in conversations to encourage understanding. In addition, standards in writing, colouring, cutting out, painting and sticking are improved by the attention given to this aspect of children's development. As a result, most children reach the expected learning goal.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skilful and imaginative teaching develops children's creative skills successfully.
- The majority of children reach the appropriate Early Learning Goal.

Commentary

49. The very good teaching ensures that all children are given a rich variety of opportunities to develop their creative skills. The children express their feelings through exploring media and materials, music and movement, story making and imaginative play. They enjoy exploring the variety of media and the resources available to them. The children use instruments to accompany singing or a microphone to sing known jingles to entertain others. They make a tent with assistance for creative play and to shade them from the heat of the sun. The children use computers to create pictures and delight in seeing these on display and proudly show visitors their own portraits. There are good opportunities for imaginative play and skilful intervention by adults that extends children's learning. The quantity and quality of resources also help stimulate children's imaginations.
50. The majority of children reach the learning goal as a result of the carefully planned provision and innovative curriculum. A particular strength of these arrangements is the way that the staff plan activities to ensure that the children gain maximum benefit from their learning. For example, one child

‘wrote’ a letter to the teacher, which he then delivered in the postman’s large bag. At all times, the adults engage the children in conversation; this helps the children to learn new words and to articulate their thinking. They follow requests for refreshments and serve them to other children. In music they sing with enjoyment and gusto songs such as ‘Heads and shoulders’ but sing softly when they finish the session with ‘God is good to me’. There is a spiritual dimension to all learning for these children.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The National Literacy Strategy is adapted well so pupils work at the levels they should and achieve well in reading and writing.
- Assessments are thorough and support precise target setting. Targets are closely monitored so pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do next.
- Pupils’ speaking skills are satisfactory but are less developed in the use of correct grammar and Standard English.
- Library provision is unsatisfactory and does not support learning.
- Literacy is emphasised in all subjects of the curriculum, contributing to accurate expression.

Commentary

51. The development of literacy was a key issue at the last inspection when standards were below average by Year 2 and well below by Year 6. The school has made a good improvement through development of the curriculum, training for teachers and support staff, and the revision of assessment systems. In consequence, standards are rising. Broadly average standards are being sustained in the present Year 2. Pupils in Year 6 currently reach below average standards but are poised to exceed their targets. In consequence, all pupils achieve well, especially by Year 2, because they enter the school well below average.
52. Curriculum leadership is good. Teaching and learning throughout are good; they are closely monitored to make sure all pupils have work which meets their needs. Assessments are regular and thorough and help match work precisely to pupils’ ability. Lessons are well organised so the different language skills of listening and speaking, reading and writing are regularly practised in purposeful and interesting ways. A good Year 5 lesson was typical of this approach and included class sessions on spelling and grammar before embarking on a range of independent tasks researching effective presentation of characters in stories. The teacher and classroom assistant made sure that everyone was working to the best of their ability and knew what the next steps should be through effective questioning and feedback. Pupils also took turns to word-process some of their notes, which helped develop general learning skills. The lesson ended in a session where pupils enthusiastically shared and learned from each other’s work.
53. Teachers pay close attention to the development of reading and writing and there are plentiful opportunities for discussion and speaking to a wider audience. Good relationships help give pupils confidence when they speak. There is not such close attention given to the development of the quality of spoken language itself so errors of pronunciation and grammar often go unchecked. Their adverse effects can reappear in written work, where some pupils, especially younger ones, simply write what they regularly say. In conversation, older pupils speak and listen with a good degree of confidence but do not always adapt their talk fully to the purpose because they do not concentrate and question sufficiently responsively.
54. Pupils are encouraged to read for a variety of purposes and importantly the school makes time on the curriculum for reading for pleasure. Most pupils now read regularly with interest. The stock of books throughout the school is satisfactory but the library is small, remote and so it is underused. In

consequence, Year 2 pupils had little idea of how to locate information. Year 6 pupils had a clear idea only because they use the public library.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. The school has a concerted approach to literacy across the entire curriculum. In each subject targeted vocabulary is emphasised. This means that correct scientific language or specific religious terms, for example, are properly used and pupils may express themselves more accurately. The school's marking system takes account of spelling and grammar so issues are addressed promptly in whatever subject they arise. The use of ICT for research helps pupils read a variety of styles and word-processing supports drafting in a number of subjects. There are opportunities to write for various purposes throughout the curriculum but opportunities to write at length in the humanities are not taken as fully as they should be.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, more variable and mainly good in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils achieve well in most respects, particularly in Years 1, 2 and 6.
- The school's emphasis on problem solving contributes to pupils' improving understanding but mental mathematics sessions are not so effective in some lessons.
- Ability setting in Years 3 to 6 results in most pupils working at their own levels, but the needs of the gifted pupils are not sufficiently met.
- Teachers and support staff use assessment effectively to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.

Commentary

56. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good progress, particularly in Years 1 and 2 where standards are now broadly average. This is a direct result of the improved quality of teaching and learning, and of organisation. Standards in 2002 national tests for Year 6 were low and did not improve in 2003, although standards in the current Year 6 are substantially better and are below average. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. Teaching is monitored and supported and pupils' achievements reviewed, analysed and action taken; for example, through additional training. Much professional development, with support from the local education authority, has improved teaching and learning across all year groups. These strategies are now beginning to pay dividends, as seen in the consistently good achievements in Year 2 and those currently in Year 6. The school has set challenging targets for Year 6 for 2004 which are likely to be met as a result of the particularly effective teaching in that year. But these improvements are not yet consistent throughout the school or secure. Teaching quality is not yet consistent in Years 3 to 6 and insufficient attention is given to mental recall of number facts in some classes.
57. The emphasis on problem solving throughout the school is paying dividends in pupils' greater understanding of mathematics and in acquisition of skills. This was observed in both Year 4 ability groups, where the pupils were involved in real life problem solving. Learning was particularly effective because the pupils were asked to explain their strategies and others suggested alternative methods they had used. In this way, the pupils were enabled to articulate their thinking and to correct any misconceptions they had.
58. The mental mathematics sessions are generally effective, particularly in those lessons where the teachers make sure that appropriate links are constructed between all aspects of mathematics, as observed in Year 4 for example. Where it is less successful, teachers give insufficient attention to mental calculations of multiplication and division to enable the pupils to acquire number facts and recall them at speed in other mathematical areas.

59. The quality of teaching varies but is mainly good; it is particularly effective in Year 6. Lessons here are characterised by rapid pace, high expectations of what the pupils of all abilities can achieve, clear explanations, an animated approach and enthusiastic teaching, which is infectious and delights the pupils in their success. In discussion with them, the pupils declared that this was their favourite subject. Teachers' confidence in the teaching of mathematics is reflected in their use of national guidelines and gives the pupils a carefully structured mental and written lesson. In these lessons, there is a sharper focus on number and on quick mental recall of facts. The final part of the more effective lessons is used well to summarise key learning points, check understanding and celebrate success. Occasionally, pupils learn too slowly because explanations are too long, some are unsure of what is expected and lose concentration and interest. Homework is used well to consolidate and extend learning across the school.
60. The ability setting in Years 3 to 6 is meeting most pupils' needs successfully, including those who have special needs and those who are more able in mathematics. The lower ability pupils in Year 4, for example, were able to sensibly estimate and efficiently measure a variety of lengths using centimetre and metre measures, both in class and outside. Similarly, in Year 6 the more able pupils in the upper set efficiently calculated multiplications of 8,729 by 7, or the cost of 7 cars at £9,492, for example. In this lesson, there was a sense of urgency for the pupils to learn. They made very effective learning gains, clarifying and justifying their calculations as the lesson progressed. Good use was made of ICT to consolidate learning in numeracy. However, as yet there is no specific provision for the mathematically gifted pupils in the school, although a register has recently been compiled.
61. Teachers and support staff assess pupils' work analytically and use the information to adjust plans for the next lesson. Curricular targets for their next stage in learning are prominently displayed in Year 6, for example, and used to help pupils to review their progress. Marking is regular, giving the pupils some guidelines on how they may improve their work and providing further challenges. In Year 1, for example, the teacher praised the work on addition of numbers to 12 and posed a further challenge, 'Try addition pairs to 20'. The strong focus on inclusion and on development of mathematical language throughout the year groups are additional factors in pupils' good achievements.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Numeracy skills are well developed throughout the school, through careful cross-curricular approaches to planning by teachers and support staff. The pupils calculate the different times around the world, for example, and in art Year 4 pupils found patterns in unusual places. In science, they compare the relative size of the sun and the moon and use balls to model them to a scale. Through such links, the pupils are making connections across subjects, thereby consolidating their knowledge and understanding.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in their acquisition of scientific facts and principles but the scientific enquiry skills of more able pupils are not developed sufficiently in Years 5 and 6.
- Teaching and learning are mainly good, especially in Years 1, 2 and 6.
- Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well but their use of sensors and data-loggers in scientific investigations is underdeveloped.

Commentary

63. Standards seen during the inspection by Year 6 are below average overall and are improving compared to the previous year. However, pupils' knowledge and understanding of key facts and principles are

better developed than their skills of scientific enquiry. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and especially so in Year 6 where the teaching is particularly stimulating and challenging.

64. Standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly average, sustaining the improvements of the previous year. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress as a result of consistently good and stimulating teaching and a well-balanced curriculum. Year 2 pupils investigating the surfaces which are best for running toy cars along made key decisions about how to make their tests fair as a result of skilful and carefully focused questioning from their teacher. Pupils used appropriate vocabulary to describe the forces used and the more able measured distances and recorded results in tables independently while a well briefed support assistant helped those with special educational needs to make fair comparisons, measure and record. Pupils developed their skills and knowledge well because adults encouraged them to make decisions for themselves, only intervening when necessary to maintain a good pace to the work.
65. Pupils build on their knowledge and skills in later years so that by Year 6, the great majority have a sound grasp of scientific concepts and most are able to plan simple investigations of their own, make predications and draw conclusions from evidence. However, insufficient attention is given in Years 5 and 6 to teaching higher scientific enquiry skills, for example, by encouraging pupils to repeat measures, explain anomalies in data and suggest improvements to their working methods. As a result, more able pupils are not achieving as much as they could in this aspect of science.
66. Teachers take many opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. For example, Year 5 pupils learning about the Earth, Moon and Sun examined data on their diameters and circumferences and then chose appropriately scaled representations of them from a range of balls, ranging from footballs to peas. Other Year 5 pupils explain the differences between liquids and gases in the style of newspaper reports. However, ICT is not yet used sufficiently to raise standards. While pupils sometimes research information and display data graphically using computers, the use of sensors and data-loggers to measure variables such as light, temperature and sound when investigating is at a very early stage and resources to support such methods are inadequate.
67. Teaching and learning are mainly good. Lessons are planned well and teachers use questioning effectively to help pupils recall facts, speculate and explain. Most lessons are challenging and inclusive because assessment is used well to adapt tasks to pupils' different capabilities and learning support assistants provide effective support to pupils with special educational needs. However, insufficient attention is given to those more able pupils in Years 5 and 6 by teaching them higher skills of scientific enquiry. Teachers often use a variety of approaches involving visual, auditory and first-hand experience to engage pupils fully in learning as a result of teachers' recent training. For example, pupils in Year 6 experienced what happens when forces are in balance and when not, both visually and through feeling the effects with partner pupils, while their teacher provided very clear explanations. They learned very effectively as a result.
68. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator manages the curriculum and resources satisfactorily and provides sound leadership. Pupils' work is reviewed but patterns in pupils' assessments are not yet analysed. Plans are in place to develop her role to monitor teaching, learning and patterns in pupils' achievements when the subject is a priority focus in the school's improvement plan later this term.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring basic skills but more able and talented pupils are not achieving enough.

- There are good resources available in the ICT suite and in classrooms although pupils are not yet using sensors to gather data or learning enough about control technology.
- Teachers' own ICT skills vary considerably; the best are very good. However, some require training to make effective use of the available resources. Plans are in place for this.
- The use of ICT to raise standards in subjects is improving in literacy and numeracy but is insufficiently developed in some other subjects.
- The relatively new subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and provides good leadership and direction.

Commentary

69. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring the basic skills to enable them to find things out, bring together information and communicate it in variety of ways. In these areas, they attain the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 but there are few opportunities for older pupils in Years 3 to 6 to learn how to use sensors to monitor events or to control devices and this limits the breadth of their achievements. While pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make reasonable progress, some more able and talented pupils in later years could achieve more.
70. The school's ICT suite is well resourced and used regularly by all classes to teach and develop pupils' basic skills. For example, Year 2 pupils learn to use a graphics application to create images in the style of particular painters. Most can log-on to the network and use a pointer and keyboard to carry out tasks successfully. They devise sequences of instructions to control a floor robot on a prescribed route. By Year 4, many confidently combine text with graphics to create a presentation and they create pictures in the style of the painter Seurat.
71. Teaching and learning are mainly satisfactory but there are strengths in Year 6. Lessons are planned around clear objectives that focus mainly on teaching and practising new skills. Pupils enjoy their work, co-operate well as they work at tasks and enjoy good relationships with teachers and support assistants. Pupils' work is monitored in lessons and problems addressed quickly when they are unsure. However, their knowledge and skills are not yet assessed, although a framework for doing this has recently been adopted. As a result, tasks are sometimes not adapted to the range of pupils' abilities; some are not demanding enough for the more able and talented pupils, although those with special educational needs are guided well by teachers and learning support assistants.
72. In the best lessons in Year 6, class discussions are lively and a good balance is achieved between effective demonstration and suggestions from pupils about the next steps in carrying out tasks and procedures. However, teachers' competence with ICT varies considerably and, as a result, some teachers lack the skills to demonstrate new skills and techniques confidently and they seldom involve pupils in discussion. While classroom computers are now used more regularly to support learning than at the time of the last inspection, tasks provided vary in quality with some too vague to help pupils' learning. The school is aware of staff training needs in ICT and has plans in place to address them; for example, to help teachers make more effective use of recently acquired interactive whiteboards and projectors in their teaching.
73. There have been some reasonable improvements in provision since the last inspection when it was weak, but there is still some way to go. The relatively new subject co-ordinator is very skilled and knowledgeable and provides good leadership and direction. Teachers have benefited from training to improve their confidence and skills but some need more. He is aware of what needs to be done and a good action plan is in place.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. ICT is increasingly used to assist pupils with literacy and numeracy. They use databases and spreadsheets to process and display data, as when Year 6 pupils calculated and adjusted the costs of food and drink for a party to stay within a budget. However, too often tasks focus on practising basic skills and good opportunities to apply them in some subjects are missed, both in the ICT suite and in classrooms. One Year 4 class carried out an exercise to combine graphical images with text in

appropriate fonts linked to their history work on The Romans. But the end product had no clear purpose such as a presentation or poster display. Consequently, pupils could not learn to take account of their audience or consider the quality of their work in relation to its use. Pupils' skills in controlling devices such as traffic lights in design technology and in using sensors and data-loggers to gather and display data in science investigations are under-developed, especially in Years 5 and 6. Resources and training to teach these skills are not yet fully in place.

HUMANITIES

Five lessons of history and two lessons of religious education were observed, together with evaluations of samples of pupils' work, examination of teachers' plans and records, and discussions with teachers and pupils. Geography was not inspected.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of pupils reach the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 although they do not move beyond them.
- Pupils' skills of historical enquiry and research are good but their capacity to draw reasoned conclusions from evidence is underdeveloped.
- Teachers provide a good range of vivid resources to support research but the amount of work recorded is limited and therefore not available to support later revision.

Commentary

75. There has been good improvement since the last inspection when standards met expected levels for Year 2 but were below them by Year 6. The 'hands-on' approach to study, which the school has introduced, has been particularly beneficial to research in history. There are strengths in the opportunities for first-hand experiences and investigations both inside and outside the classroom. Comparison, for example, of Ancient Roman and Celtic ways of life was made more vivid when Year 4 pupils wore reproduction costume and handled artefacts. Their discussion 'in character' helped them appreciate more readily the implications of life in the past.
76. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and lead to satisfactory achievement because pupils are learning how to research and locate information for themselves. They are less competent in the higher skills of using that information to explain why people acted as they did and in drawing conclusions from the evidence. This is because teachers do not always encourage them to evaluate enough. Assessment systems are less developed than those in the core subjects and so those more able to acquire higher skills are not being extended as much as they could be.
77. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The curriculum has been adapted well to include a strong focus on the history of the local area as well as further afield. A good range of resources includes artefacts, video recordings, visits to museums, and the use of ICT to bring history alive and engage pupils. The focus of the improvement plan is appropriate but there is currently no monitoring of teaching undertaken by the co-ordinator, although provision has been made for this when the subject becomes a school priority. Displays show that pupils have covered the curriculum in adequate breadth but the amount recorded in pupils' own exercise and assessment books is relatively small, and offers only limited support to their revision and future study.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reach the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and achieve well especially in learning from religion.
- By the end of Year 6 pupils' standards are below the expectations of both strands of the syllabus, namely learning *about* and learning *from* religion and their achievement is satisfactory.
- Much constructive discussion takes place in lessons but there is limited recording, particularly of older pupils' work to help them consolidate and later revise what they have done.
- The scheme of work provides good guidance in teaching to the agreed syllabus but does not make use of its system of assessment to give a clear indication of how well pupils are learning.

Commentary

78. At the last inspection standards were below expected levels. There has been satisfactory improvement; pupils now reach the expectations of the syllabus by the end of Year 2. Their topic books show that, by Year 6, pupils recognise some religious symbols and retell religious stories in simple terms to demonstrate understanding. They identify some religious beliefs and are starting to link teachings and practices. Although they do not yet describe how a religion may make an impact on a person's life, they are able to express their own feelings and their developing sense of personal values enables them to offer sensible and constructive ways of dealing, for example, with jealousy and other emotions experienced in relationships.
79. A conversation with pupils of all abilities in Year 6 revealed that they had clearly discussed many aspects of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism over their time in school but that even the higher attaining pupils tended to confuse elements of one faith with another. Pupils' recall was uncertain and their own views on more profound matters were not well developed because they had made few records during lessons and so could not call on these for support.
80. Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory. In lessons observed, discussions and role-plays feature strongly in teaching and learning and such an approach makes pupils think hard and reflect on important issues. However, the impact of lessons is not complemented by effective recording to help consolidate their work and some pupils struggle to recall what they have been learning. There is no evidence of pupils using ICT to help their learning in the subject.
81. Curricular leadership is satisfactory. The school's scheme of work ensures that the content of the syllabus may be taught in a meaningful way. There is close support from a local church which contributes to the study of Christianity but links with other places of worship have not been developed to support similarly the study of other faiths. Monitoring of teaching and learning has not yet taken place but is planned for when the subject becomes a priority focus in the current school's development plan. Within lessons, teachers are aware of the broad outcomes expected by the agreed syllabus and pupils themselves already contribute to assessment of their own progress towards these. However, the more detailed system of levels in the agreed syllabus is not yet used to assess pupils' achievements and guide the demand of the work in lessons.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

82. Physical education and music were inspected in full, and are reported below. No lessons were observed in art and design or design and technology, but some judgements were made about art on the basis of scrutiny of displays around the school and discussions held with the subject co-ordinator, teachers and pupils. Standards in art and design are above those expected nationally at Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve very well. Cross-curricular links enable the pupils to appreciate arts from other cultures and traditions. Since the previous inspection, the school has made very good improvements in the subject. There are some very effective examples of art work on display, where some pupils show particular flair. Some pictures created using a graphics application by Year 4, based on Seurat, for example, capture the pointillism style effectively. The educational visits provide further stimulus to link learning, as exemplified in Year 2. Here, following their visit to the Red House Cone Glass Museum, the pupils

painted plates and decorated them with ribbons, as the Victorians did. Pupils learn about other cultures, such as Aztec or African, where they depict the art of that era and culture, using different media. Pop-art lies alongside the work of Picasso, where the pupils in Years 5 and 6 capture the styles of both, but expressing these within their own inimitable interpretations.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of singing is good.
- The creative aspects of music support learning across other subjects.
- Music forms a vital role in pupils' aesthetic development at Hawbush School.

Commentary

83. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards in music at both Year 2 and 6 since the previous inspection. The quality of singing is good and is used effectively in lessons and in assemblies. During the inspection, the pupils sang expressively a range of hymns, controlling their voices, starting promptly after an introduction and finishing crisply on time. Their teacher conveys clear expectations, such as standing up to sing, and encourages pupils to reflect on how the performance can be improved. Pupils readily adopted a performing mode, singing as if in a choir.
84. The school is linking teaching approaches for accelerated learning to music development. An example was observed in a good lesson in Year 2, where the teacher successfully enabled the pupils to compose and perform and to listen and appraise their work. In addition, the carefully planned cross-curricular links to humanities and to physical education enhanced pupils' learning.
85. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good teaching. Teachers plan carefully and provide many opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of music. This was seen in a Year 4 class, where the pupils conjured images and appreciated how composers such as Wagner and Tchaikovsky evoked different moods for them. The teacher emphasised that the images would be different for each of the pupils. Pupils offered interpretations such as 'two giants attacking each other; one Spanish and one English' for Wagner's Valkyries and 'a beautiful summer morning' for The Dance of The Sugar Plum Fairy. Their teacher successfully extended the pupils' learning by providing an opportunity for them to 'talk to each other musically', using a variety of instruments.
86. There are good links with other areas of the curriculum that develop pupils' aesthetic awareness. Year 5 and 6 pupils imaginatively created musical effects to a space poem. They produced moods such as vastness, distance, amazement, danger and hopefulness. They practised hard to improve the effects and contrasting sounds. The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as evidenced in these examples.
87. Overall, the leadership and management of music are satisfactory. There has been some discontinuity in leadership because of staff changes in recent times and the headteacher took over the role, ensuring that all pupils had access to the full music curriculum. From this term, a music specialist has been employed part-time to share leadership and development of the subject.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is presently underdeveloped because of interruptions in leadership and management. The newly appointed co-ordinator has produced effective plans for the development of the subject.
- The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory but teachers' lack of subject knowledge sometimes slows pupils' learning.

Commentary

88. Physical education is underdeveloped, due mainly to a gap in the role of leadership and management of the subject until recently. The subject now features on the school development plan for this term. Nonetheless, the curriculum meets the legal requirements, including swimming and dance.
89. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are involved in lessons and standards achieved are broadly average as they were at the time of the last inspection. In the lessons observed, the pupils showed appropriate and developing control of movements. Year 2 pupils worked diligently to improve their sequences of dance. They made good learning gains and improved their performance through practice. The teacher provided good opportunities for the pupils to evaluate their work, adding further improvements. In Year 5, the pupils explored ways of travelling at three different levels, using the available space reasonably well. Pupils used their bodies in controlled movements, satisfactorily presenting sequences of balance and rotations.
90. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory; some is good but some unsatisfactory teaching was also observed. In one effective lesson, the teacher planned stimulating activities enabling pupils to create dance sequences imaginatively. The link with religious education, for example, inspired the pupils to express Joseph's struggles to escape. They used movements effectively and combined them with sounds to create images. Teachers stress important health and safety aspects and undertake risk assessment with their pupils, to ensure that exercise is conducted in a safe environment. Pupils know that they must warm up before taking exercise and cool down at the end. They are appropriately dressed for physical exercise, with adults providing good role models. Where pupils' learning was unsatisfactory, teachers' lack of subject knowledge, challenge and pace were the main factors contributing to pupils' slow progress.
91. The newly appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear vision for the subject's development. Towards this end, she has written an effective policy, based on local education authority guidelines, developed a weekly planning sheet and provided helpful guidelines for each teacher to help them to assess pupils' skills and make useful links with other subjects.

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	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
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	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).