

INSPECTION REPORT

JOHN HUNT INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

New Balderton, Newark

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122614

Headteacher: Ms June Braddow

Lead inspector: Mrs Barbara E Doughty

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 25th February 2004

Inspection number: 256565

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	200
School address:	London Road New Balderton Newark Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG24 3BN
Telephone number:	01636 682007
Fax number:	01636 682008
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs R Dalby
Date of previous inspection:	1 st June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a large infant school with 200 children on roll, including 40 children attending the Nursery class part-time. All pupils are from English-speaking families and there are very few from other races. The area the school serves is disadvantaged in socio-economic terms and the percentage of pupils taking free school meals, which is similar to the national average, is not an accurate reflection of the background of most of the pupils. Attainment on entry to the Nursery class is below that expected for three year old children. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, mostly moderate learning difficulties, is similar to that found in most other schools. However, there are six pupils, more than in most other schools, with specific needs including hearing and visual impairment, physical disabilities and autism. The school gained the Investors in People award in 2001 and the Quality Matters accreditation in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22261	Mrs Barbara E Doughty	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage curriculum Science Personal, social and health education and citizenship
14141	Mr Ernie Marshall	Lay inspector	
18703	Mrs Christine Canniff	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
27276	Mrs Carole Smith	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

peakschoolhaus Ltd

BPS Business Centre
Brake Lane
Boughton
Nr Newark
Nottinghamshire
NG22 9HQ

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school, which gives very good value for money. Pupils achieve very well to reach above average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 2. Teaching is highly effective and learning opportunities are exciting and challenging; pupils' personal qualities are developed very well. There is excellent leadership and management by the head teacher who values everyone by making them feel special and, because of this, morale is high.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good teaching means that pupils do very well from a below average starting point to reach above average standards in reading, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Standards in art and design are well above average.
- Standards in writing are well above average because the school's emphasis on pupils doing something and then talking about it gives them something meaningful to write about.
- Personal development is very good. Pupils enjoy coming to this school because learning is fun and exciting and is tailored very well to their needs. They have an excellent awareness and understanding of other cultures.
- Pupils are inspired to do well because of excellent relationships, and the way teachers present their work encourages them to take pride in what they do.
- The head teacher and subject leaders know this school very well, which means that strengths are built on, and weaknesses remedied.
- The school has wrongly diagnosed some pupils as being gifted and talented when they are not and those who do have such strengths are presented with work that is not matched to their particular abilities.

This is a more effective school than it was, and has made very good improvement since its last inspection. All of the key issues have been dealt with. Teaching is more effective and standards are higher. The increased focus on developing pupils' speaking skills has brought about well above average standards in writing, which in turn has impacted well on standards in all subjects.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The table below shows that between 2001 and 2003, standards did not keep pace with the national upward trend. However, year on year, more pupils start school with below average attainment, and in comparison with their attainment on entry, do very well. The current Years 1 and 2 pupils are working at least in line with national expectations, with an above average number of pupils already achieving levels higher than those expected for their age, so standards are on target to be above average by the time pupils transfer to junior school at the end of Year 2.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	B	C	C	B
Writing	A	C	B	A
Mathematics	A	B	C	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Achievement is **very good**. By the time the children leave the Reception class, they reach the nationally expected goals in all areas of learning and are exceptionally good talkers because of the school's emphasis on developing pupils' speaking skills. Teaching pupils to form letters and words

correctly only when they show signs of being ready to do so, means that pupils are not being pushed to write things down before they are ready. Once they start to write, they are confident and make rapid progress to reach well above average standards in writing by the end of Year 2. Their attainment in reading, mathematics, science and ICT is above the nationally expected level and in art and design it is well above it. Pupils meet the expectations of the agreed syllabus in religious education and their attainment in design and technology, geography and history is good and standards are above average. No secure judgement could be made about standards in music and physical education. Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good**. Pupils behave very well and their attitudes to learning are very good. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good**; teaching is **very effective**. It is imaginative, enthusiastic and very challenging and because of this pupils learn very well. Excellent relationships and the way teachers display pupils' work inspires pupils to take pride in what they do. Teachers motivate pupils and sustain their interest by tailoring the work to their needs. They deploy support staff well so that all pupils get the attention and help they need. Personal targets tell pupils what and how to improve and pupils with special educational needs make the same rapid progress as their classmates. The school has pupils who they have incorrectly identified as gifted and talented, and those who are actually gifted and talented are unlikely to do any better than the most able pupils in the school because the work they do is no more challenging. The curriculum is exciting and the work is interesting. Subjects are linked together well and this means that good use is made of time. Visits, visitors and the well-attended after-school clubs enrich pupils' learning opportunities very well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The head teacher is an outstanding leader and manager who inspires others to work hard. She values everyone and uses their strengths to the best advantage. Under her excellent guidance, staff are extremely reflective and analytical. Subject leaders evaluate pupils' achievements very well to decide on future developments. Governors are confident and well informed and have a very clear idea about what the school does and does not do well. They meet their statutory duties very effectively and are very supportive, whilst challenging staff and pupils to do better.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with this school. They are particularly happy with the way staff expect their children to work hard and do their best. Pupils are equally as happy. They too appreciate how staff encourage them to work hard and that teachers listen to their ideas and treat them fairly.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the identification of and provision for those pupils who are gifted and talented in particular subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is very good and because of this standards are above average by the end of Year 2. Writing standards are well above average. Pupils with special educational needs do as well as their more able classmates but the very few pupils who are gifted and talented do no better than the most able.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a very good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and do very well to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception class.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are rising and pupils achieve very well to reach above average standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, science and ICT and to meet the requirements of the agreed syllabus in religious education.
- Good speaking skills mean that writing standards are well above average because pupils learn through doing, which gives them something to write about.
- Pupils with special educational needs make the same rapid progress as their schoolmates, but those who are gifted and talented do not do as well as they could because teaching does not provide specifically for them.
- Standards in art and design are very good.

Commentary

1. The table below shows that, last year, standards were broadly similar to those reached in most other schools by the end of Year 2. However, this was a particularly low attaining group of pupils on entry to the Nursery class and the school did very well to get them to the expected level by the time they were ready to leave. The work the pupils are doing now in Years 1 and 2 show that standards are set to rise again this year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.6 (15.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.2 (14.7)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.1 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Children start in the Nursery class with standards that are below those expected at the age of three. They do very well to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception class in all areas of learning and to exceed them in personal, social and emotional development and speaking. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, most children are confident talkers. They are not short of things to talk and later write about because their learning is based on first-hand experiences. They chatter happily about what they are doing and have done, and listen to what each other has to say, taking turns sensibly and contributing well to conversations. This is because teachers encourage pupils to talk about what they are doing or have done, and give them time to organise their thoughts and help to clarify what they want to say. As a result, pupils communicate well through writing in different ways and for a range of purposes, such as stories, reports, instructions and lists.

3. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are well above average. Many children write in sentences and make effective use of their knowledge of letter sounds to spell unknown words, such as 'wido' for 'window'. Their success is due to the fact that they are not pushed to write too soon and writing is not taught in the Nursery and Reception classes before the children have the necessary skills to enable them to form letters using the correct sequence of strokes. This means that pupils become confident writers because it is a skill that they acquire, develop and perfect over time.
4. Standards are good in reading, mathematics, science and ICT. Pupils work confidently with numbers and computers and their reading is fluent and accurate. Science knowledge and understanding are long lasting because, like everything else, they are meaningfully taught. For example, from their experiments and investigations, pupils have a good understanding about how different materials are more suitable for particular purposes and that exercise and the 'right' food are necessary to keep healthy.
5. Standards are above average in design and technology, history and geography. Pupils achieve very well in art and design and standards are well above average. Pupils explore ideas and create pictures and models using different media such as clay, paint and pastels. They work in two and three dimensions and their learning is enhanced further through their work with visiting artists.
6. Throughout the school pupils of all abilities and backgrounds do as well as each other, including those with special educational needs. This is because teachers tailor the work well to meet their needs and build on their previous learning. Teachers have started to look out for and identify pupils they consider to be gifted and talented. However, they have no criteria yet to measure who these pupils are and their lists include, and comprise mainly of, those pupils who are the most able ones in each class rather than the gifted or talented. The few pupils who realistically could be considered gifted and talented, for example in singing or drama work, have the option of joining after-school clubs, such as the choir, but there is no other way they are provided for in lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well in lessons and around the school. Their spiritual, moral, and social development is very good and their awareness of their own and others' cultural traditions is excellent. Attendance is satisfactory and there have been no exclusions in the last year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to this school; they appreciate in particular the excellent relationships they have with each other and the adults, and the fairness teachers show them.
- Pupils are inspired to present their work beautifully because of the example staff set them when they display their work and give value to their success.
- The promotion of cultural traditions is outstanding.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of citizenship and their place in the school community.

Commentary

7. Pupils are keen to come to school. They are secure, self-confident and like, in particular, the way teachers expect them to work hard and the fair way in which they treat them. They behave very well in lessons and rise to the teachers' high expectations. They understand right from wrong and accept readily the need for rules in order to keep them safe and to maintain calm and order. Pupils of all ages take on additional responsibilities willingly such as taking care of younger children, joining the school council, giving out the milk, and taking messages to other classes.

8. Pupils enjoy their work because it is exciting and meaningful. They are enthusiastic and eager to learn because the work excites them and stimulates in them a desire to learn. Personal targets negotiated with the teachers give them something to aspire to, and comments teachers write in their books, praising what they have done and urging them on to improve, motivate them to do just that little bit better. The way in which teachers and other adults present pupils' work instils in them a sense of pride and makes them want to do well.
9. Relationships are excellent because they are built on trust and respect. Pupils treat others with courtesy and accept full responsibility for their actions. They know about their own cultural traditions and their appreciation of the traditions of others is outstanding because of the work they do with visitors from other countries and in reading, artwork and music.
10. The table below shows that attendance is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	0.6
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Learning opportunities are exciting, because they are based on first-hand experience and imaginatively presented; they are relevant because they are tailored to pupils' needs.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is very good and pupils learn very well. Their work is accurately assessed and the information used very effectively to adapt the work to suit the differently attaining pupils in each class.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Exciting and imaginative teaching engages pupils well and encourages learning.
- Pupils are taught within an atmosphere of high expectation because teachers use what they know about pupils' previous learning to tailor the work for them and to push for just that little bit extra.
- Very effective promotion of speaking and listening skills means that pupils organise their thoughts well and know what to write.
- Very effective lesson plans mean that teachers and pupils know what to do; lessons are well prepared, run smoothly, and make every bit of time count.
- Excellent relationships make learning fun; pupils work just that little bit harder to delight themselves and please their teachers.
- Well-trained and effective support assistants support teaching and learning very well.
- Teachers do not provide specifically for the gifted and talented pupils in their classes. Although they have identified who they are, their judgements are not accurate and most of these pupils are able rather than gifted or talented.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	14	10	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

11. The quality of teaching is very good. There is no year group that is any better than the others; the teaching in them all is of an equally high standard. As seen from the table, all of the lessons observed were at least good and many were very good. The two excellent lessons were in the Nursery and Reception classes, although there were aspects of excellent teaching in all years.
12. Nearly all of the pupils say that they find their lessons interesting and fun and it is easy to see why. Teaching is exciting and inspiring. Teachers make use of unforeseeable events to add excitement to pupils' learning, such as when one of the teachers took photographs outside her back door of a cat's paw prints in snow that had fallen unexpectedly overnight. On seeing these, the Reception class children were inspired to go outside on a real 'lion hunt', linked to the work that they had done based on a book they had been reading. Their excitement boiled over when they found some large paw prints in the snow and they imagined that they had found their lion.
13. Teachers expect pupils to use the skills they have learnt in different subjects to help them in different situations. For example, Year 1 pupils used what they had found out about body parts in physical education to help them with their science investigations about the different ways humans and animals move.
14. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly so that no time is lost. Expectations are high and teachers push pupils to do just that little bit better. They can do this because they are always clear about what pupils need to learn next. They base the work always on pupils' needs and because of this are able to tailor it to build very effectively on pupils' previous learning. Pupils say that they enjoy working hard and that if they are ever stuck teachers show them what to do to make their work better. This is mostly done verbally, but teachers' comments in books give pupils useful pointers about what they can do and what they need to practise more such as, "You need to practise writing the letters 'a' and 'u'".
15. Pupils say that teachers listen to their ideas; pupils respond with equal respect. The excellent relationships that are established because of this result in pupils working hard to please the teachers. Teachers and pupils enjoy each other's company and because of this learning is fun. There is a lot of laughing as teachers, support assistants and pupils share a joke or laugh at and with each other. But there are also serious times as staff and pupils buckle down to some hard work. This industrious atmosphere permeates the school and means that pupils are productive and achieve very well because of it.
16. Talk is valued throughout the school. Following the last inspection when the school was criticised for not promoting speaking skills well enough, staff worked on an action plan to deal with this issue. They now promote speaking well. Pupils' work is always based appropriately on learning through exploration and observation. Once they have experienced something at first hand, pupils are then asked to talk about it, initially with a partner and then with the class. For example, they were asked in mathematics lessons to explain their calculations, and in science, to explain why they thought that the most suitable paper for writing on would prove to be the greaseproof paper. This gives them practise at organising and clarifying their thoughts and impacts extremely well on their writing in all subjects.
17. Teachers and the well-trained and very effective support assistants support pupils very well in lessons. These adults help pupils of all abilities to do well. However, the arrangements for identifying and providing for the gifted and talented pupils in the school are in their infancy and

teachers have not quite got it right. They do not really know how to define 'gifted' or 'talented' and most of the pupils that they have identified are able rather than gifted or talented. This means that whilst there are only a few pupils who are truly gifted or talented, their needs are met incidentally through after-school clubs or additional responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council, that are available to all pupils and not specifically designed to meet their needs.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is very good and provides a very interesting and imaginative range of learning activities. It is greatly enhanced by a broad range of visits and visitors and a very good range of after-school clubs, which extend pupils' learning. The quality of accommodation and resources is good and they are used well in helping pupils learn.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is imaginatively planned with a very good range of exciting activities, which are tailored well to pupils' needs.
- The school organises a very good range of visits, visitors and after-school clubs to enrich pupils' learning experiences.
- The good accommodation and resources, especially for ICT, support the development of skills and learning across the curriculum.
- The planning of the provision to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils is not reliably established.

Commentary

18. The school provides a very good range of worthwhile learning experiences in all subjects. Knowledgeable subject co-ordinators monitor the curriculum effectively and this ensures all subjects are developing well. Great care is taken to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to pupils' needs. Curriculum planning is very good because teachers take good account of different ways of learning. Practical work ensures that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding have secure foundations. The commitment and vision of the staff have resulted in imaginatively planned projects and activities that awaken in pupils a real desire to learn. Subjects are very well linked within stimulating themes that generate in pupils a real interest and excitement in their work, resulting in high standards. Projects, such as that on life in Africa, make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and, in particular, their cultural development.
19. The school gives pupils a very wide range of visits and visitors, which enriches the curriculum and greatly enhances pupils' learning in all subjects. The very good opportunities for pupils to take part in practical workshops in, for example, dance, art and drama, and to work with visiting specialists bring about new insights, helping them to make sense of their world and of themselves. Teachers make good use of the local places of interest such as the town hall and the River Trent to increase pupils' understanding of the historical and environmental features of the area in which they live. Pupils can pursue their interests at a wide variety of after-school clubs that further extend the skills they acquire in lessons. These clubs are extremely popular and very well attended. They make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development as well as to their academic learning.
20. Accommodation is spacious and enhanced by vibrant displays of pupils' work. The displays create a stimulating environment for learning and are used very effectively to celebrate pupils' achievements and to support learning. The accommodation and resources support the curriculum well. The recent establishment of the computer suite and the introduction of laptops, to improve the ratio of computers to pupils, have resulted in good improvement in pupils' ICT skills and better use of ICT across the curriculum.

21. The school has made a start on developing the provision for gifted and talented pupils, but planning for raising the achievement of these pupils is not specific enough to meet their needs.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a high level of care for pupils, which ensures their welfare, health and safety. The school provides very effective support, advice and guidance to pupils based on effective monitoring of their academic and personal development. The way the school seeks to involve pupils in its work and routines is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The thorough approach to health, safety and welfare matters ensures pupils work in a safe environment.
- Very effective use of the assessment of pupils' work and personal development enables staff to plan lessons and activities that are appropriate to meet pupils' individual needs.
- Well-planned and organised induction arrangements enable children to settle into school quickly and make very good early progress.
- Through their caring attitudes, staff encourage and enable pupils to form excellent trusting relationships and this develops the willingness of pupils to seek help when they are worried.
- Pupils' opinions are sought and valued. This gives them the confidence to offer suggestions and to join in activities that improve the work of the school for the benefit of all.

Commentary

22. This is a very caring school. The staff and governing body work very well together to ensure the premises, facilities and equipment are safe and presented in an attractive way that is conducive to learning. Risk assessments cover all aspects of the school activities and visits out. First aid arrangements are good. All requirements related to fire prevention and to child protection matters are fully met. The school has effective systems in place to protect pupils' use of Internet.
23. To ensure pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, the school secures the help and expertise of a good range of specialists who give very good support to the staff and to the pupils. Individual educational plans with well planned, and achievable learning targets are produced and regularly reviewed against the progress pupils make. Assessment carried out by specialists and the continuous assessments made by the teaching staff, ensure future lesson plans are tailored to meet the needs of all pupils.
24. Children enter the Nursery class shortly after their third birthday. The nursery staff are anxious to ensure the induction is without trauma and to help the situation they organise a home visit for every prospective pupil. This visit enables staff to obtain a detailed record of each child's particular skills and requirements plus providing the opportunity for personal contact. The parents and children are then invited into the Nursery to see at first hand the facilities there. The children join in the activities and parents are given full details about what their children will do in school plus a comprehensive induction pack. When on roll, the children are very well cared for, and relationships developed ensure they can quickly gain trust in the staff and the confidence to begin to make progress. These excellent relationships between children and adults in school continue into the infant classes and result in the formation of a very good mutual trust that supports learning.
25. The school actively seeks the views of its pupils. The school council is known as the 'Decision Makers'. Meeting regularly, the group canvass the suggestions or complaints of their classmates and discuss them. Recent topics talked about include how to improve behaviour, safer play at lunchtime and organising Year 2 pupils to care for new entrants in the Reception class. The school choir won a significant cash award and the Decision Makers were entrusted with determining how the money should be spent. The pupils selected resources for music, which

were purchased with the prize money. The group has also discussed the provision of new outdoor play equipment and other improvements to the external appearance of the building. Pupils know their efforts are appreciated and are proud to be members of the group.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school is highly regarded and has developed very good links with parents and with the local community. Links with other schools and colleges are very good and very effectively used to provide additional support for learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with parents are very good and parents help to support their children's learning both at home and at school. This encourages pupils to make better progress.
- Links with the community are also very good and the school is promoted well as a resource for community use.
- Very good links with other schools and colleges provide effective help in classrooms and good opportunities for staff training and development.
- Very good transfer arrangements ensure Year 2 leavers make a confident start in the junior school.
- The school is very good at seeking parents' views and deals sympathetically and effectively with any suggestions, complaints or concerns.

Commentary

26. The school gives all parents useful details of what is to be taught each term so that they too plan how they might help their children with their work. Meetings between teachers and parents take place each term and parents are welcomed into school to look at the work their children have done and to discuss future targets of achievement. Reading diaries are used well as home/school communicators. Sessions on how parents can help with mathematics and with reading have been arranged. Pupils' annual reports show good detail of the standards pupils have achieved and the progress they have made.
27. A good number of parents and other volunteers help in the classrooms and accompany pupils on visits. Parents with special skills such as oriental cooking and instrumental music are welcomed to give demonstrations. A parent with an interest in garden design planned, with the staff, the Nursery environmental area. The friends of the school association is both enthusiastic and active. The annual fund-raising programme is well supported by parents and the proceeds used to subsidise visits to places of educational interest as well as the purchase of additional resources.
28. The school regularly consults parents and has recently sought their views about the new behaviour code and the adequacy or otherwise of homework provision. Parents are welcomed and feel comfortable about coming into school at any time if they have complaints or concerns related to their children's education or welfare. The staff make themselves available and try to help if possible.
29. The school is a focal point within the community. A special event in the summer term is the attendance by an ever-growing number of grandparents who come into school to sit and talk with the pupils. The school hosts a number of adult education courses such as computing and play leadership and takes an active part in local community events. Local charities are supported and pupils visit local elderly persons' residences to entertain the residents. Personnel from the fire and police service visit the school to talk to pupils about personal and home safety issues. The strong link with the church provides good support for pupils' spiritual and moral development.

30. Very good links with local colleges provide the school with opportunities to secure training for classroom assistants and for the school to accommodate student teachers on work experience. The secondary school also sends pupils for work experience each year. The school is a member of the local group of schools and this provides a good facility for the head teachers to meet regularly to discuss joint issues. The special needs co-ordinators also meet as a group and useful training arranged has included assessment techniques and child protection procedures. The close co-operation within the schools group enables transfer of the Year 2 leavers to be well planned and organised. The process begins as early as Year 1 when the Year 6 junior school pupils come into the school and 'adopt' young reading partners. Year 5 pupils are paired with Year 2 pupils as 'Buddies' to give them help and advice. Year 2 pupils visit the junior school for assemblies and sample lessons and in the summer commence joint work in literacy and numeracy to ensure continuity and progress in the coming autumn term.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are all very good. Leadership of the head teacher is excellent and leadership of other key staff is very effective. The governing body meets its statutory duties very effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The inspirational leadership of the head teacher promotes the high aspirations of all members of the school community.
- Staff are very committed to the school. Very effective teamwork and extremely well-informed subject co-ordinators contribute to the rising standards and the very good curriculum.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties very well. They show a high level of commitment and support for the school.
- The school carries out rigorous self-evaluation and makes very effective use of the findings and other information to bring about improvement.
- The school is committed to inclusion and equality for all. The staff value everyone although at present they have no clear criteria for identifying gifted and talented pupils.

Commentary

31. The head teacher has a very clear vision and a strong sense of purpose that is reflected in the work of the school and the school's ambition to provide the best educational opportunities for all. She identifies the strengths found in all the people around her and uses them to the best advantage for the school and for their own personal development. Her commitment to the school, her dedication to creating effective teams, and her high aspirations for pupils' achievements motivate and inspire staff, pupils and governors.
32. The deputy head, senior management team and subject leaders support the head teacher very effectively. Teamwork is very good and subjects are very well led and managed because all subject leaders know their subjects thoroughly. Very effective monitoring and evaluating of relevant data, teachers' planning, pupils' work and teaching ensure subject leaders have all the information they need to plan future developments. Their desire to drive standards higher and to provide a broad and worthwhile curriculum is reflected in pupils' very good achievement and their enthusiasm for school.
33. The governing body has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and works closely with the head teacher to use this knowledge to help shape the vision and direction of the school. Governors keep in close touch with the school's work through visits, curriculum links, regular meetings and reports. They are well informed and therefore able to consider different options for strategic planning and finance. Governors are committed and supportive, readily challenge the senior management team when appropriate, and are prepared to make difficult decisions.

34. The very good management of the school results from the shared vision and high aspirations for the school by all the staff. All aspects of the work of the school are subject to rigorous self-evaluation and provide valuable information for future developments. A thorough range of tracking systems and monitoring of pupils' achievements enable the school to identify areas for improvement and take appropriate action. An exemplary system of monitoring by the head teacher and senior staff, clearly focused on school priorities, helps to identify school and individual needs and these are based on raising standards and improving provision for all. Very good development planning is underpinned by detailed financial planning.
35. Finances are managed very well. Over time the school had built up a 10 per cent contingency fund, half of which was used in 2003/04 to offset a falling roll and keep essential staff reduction to a minimum.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	566858
Total expenditure	571166
Expenditure per pupil	2275

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	64489
Balance carried forward to the next	60181

36. This is an inclusive school where everyone is valued. The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve as well as other pupils. However, although identified as an area for development on the school development plan, there are as yet no clear criteria for identifying gifted and talented pupils.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. The teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception classes are very good and because of this children do very well from starting in the Nursery class to the end of the Reception class. This is because in both classes, the teachers and support staff work excellently together to provide high quality education for the children. Imaginative and inspirational teaching makes being in school fun. Adults make very good use of assessment information to tailor the work for different children and to steer individuals to particular activities so that they can practise the skills they need to. However, some children have been inaccurately assessed as being gifted and talented, but their skills are no better than those of the most able children.
38. The adults' exceptional knowledge and understanding about how young children learn through observation and exploration mean that all of the children's work is based on them learning through doing. The environment in both classrooms is exceptional. There are many things for children to look at and touch that stimulate their curiosity. Classrooms are mathematically and linguistically rich and the way they are laid out captures children's interest and makes them want to explore the different areas and find out what new items the adults have put in them each day. The Nursery class's outdoor learning area is a credit to the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children feel special because of the excellent relationships they have with their teachers and nursery nurses.
- The preparation that goes into providing high quality learning opportunities for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is exceptional.
- The identification of what each child needs to learn next means that all of the learning opportunities are worthwhile and meaningful and tailored for different children.
- The excitement that is generated in both classes means that children are eager and excited learners.

Commentary

39. Children do very well in this area of learning to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception class. This is because excellent teaching ensures that the learning opportunities are tailored to children's needs. The way in which the adults make children feel valued and special means that both the Nursery and Reception class children quickly become secure and confident learners.
40. Talking to both the Nursery and Reception children is a joy because their enthusiasm for learning and their excitement about their work is infectious. A small group of Reception children, for example, wrote their names, as well as selection of numbers and words for the inspector to show her how good they were and told her excitedly about the 'lion hunt' they had been on earlier that day. They listened patiently to each other and waited their turn to speak, showing respect for their classmates. This caring side to children is promoted exceptionally well when, for example, adults teach children to use sign language in order that those children with hearing impairment are fully involved in what is going on.

41. Children are taught how to learn from each other, such as when a teacher told a Reception child, "Follow him into assembly; he will be a very good model for you – if you behave like him, that will be excellent". It worked; the one leading the other beamed with pride as his classmate copied him. Similarly children imitate the adults by presenting their work beautifully, showing pride in what they produce.
42. Detailed notes kept by the adults of what children need to learn next makes sure that when a child is working at a particular activity, such as on the computer, the intervention by an adult is purposeful. For example, the comment "Just clicks the mouse repeatedly" against a child's name reminds teachers, nursery nurses and other support workers that when this child is on the computer they need to show him or her how to use the mouse to move objects or work a particular function.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Talking partners and reminders about what makes a good speaker and listener mean that children listen to each other and show them the effectiveness of communication.
- Children are not taught to write until they have the necessary skills to do so. Adults first encourage children to talk about everything that they do. This means that when they come to develop their writing skills, they have lots of things to write about.
- Exciting role-play areas stimulate purpose for talking and cosy book areas promote children's desire to look at books and discover the treasures beneath the covers.

Commentary

43. Very good teaching, which is varied and interesting, means that children do very well in this area of learning and most of them reach the goals they are expected to by the end of the Reception class. Teachers generate enthusiasm for learning because they adapt their approach to capture the children's interest and fire their imagination. For example, a teacher wrapped a book up in gift paper, with a ribbon around that held several models in place giving children clues as to what the book was about. Even before they had seen the book the children were mesmerised and called out excitedly what they thought might be inside it.
44. Most children are confident communicators who express themselves well. This is because talk is valued and encouraged. Tasks in the role-play areas, such as "Book and buy a ticket to another country" in the class travel shop, encourage children to talk to each other and explain what they want. In lessons, whenever they ask children a question, the adults first encourage them to "Tell your partner" before they tell them and the class. This gives children time to think about what they are going to say and to 'test' it out first on someone else. Group discussions about what makes a good speaker and an effective listener, such as "Someone who looks at you when you are talking and smiles or nods their head" remind children about how to respond to others.
45. Reading and writing are taught very well. Children are not pushed into writing letters or words until they are ready to do so successfully. Lots of opportunities to 'write' by making marks on paper and then telling an adult what they have written fill them with confidence and once they start to recognise some letters, they move quickly onto writing letters and words neatly and legibly. Attractive book areas draw children into them and enthuse them to look at books. Class books, with photographs of the children and words explaining what they are doing, stimulate children's desire to learn to read.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematics is taught in a practical way so that it means more to the children and they understand it better.
- Links with other areas of learning make mathematics meaningful and children learn to use it in different ways.
- Children reflect on what they know and need to learn next and this stimulates their desire to improve.

Commentary

46. Achievement is very good; most children reach the goals they are expected to by the end of the Reception class because of very effective teaching in this area of learning. Teachers encourage children to think about what they have learnt, such as, "I can recognise numbers 1 to 6". This makes them aware of their own success, builds their self-esteem, and drives them on to learn more. Children enjoy their work because of this and the practical way in which it is taught in both the Nursery and Reception class. For example, when learning about shapes, Nursery children looked around the school grounds and had great fun as 'shape detectives' searching for different shapes, such as round dustbin lids and square tiles. When Reception class children learnt about positional language, they directed each other to "Move two steps to the left". Learning was made fun and children enjoyed working together to get to a particular marked spot. In another lesson, ICT was used well to support learning when children programmed the floor robot to move in different directions.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The wide range of work is based on learning through doing, making it exciting and meaningful.
- Children are well prepared for their National Curriculum Year 1 work; their computer skills are very good.

Commentary

47. Children do very well in this area of learning and most attain the goals they are expected to by the end of the Reception class; they exceed them in their use of technology. Teaching is very good because it builds children's learning through first-hand experience. It makes the work exciting and arouses children's curiosity. Investigative work fires children's enthusiasm, such as when Nursery children planted seeds and watched them grow. Similarly, Reception class children explored how they are different from each other by taking digital photographs of each other, cutting them up and making up 'new' faces using each other's features. Reception class children tested the different tastes of drinks and when they visited a pizza restaurant made the dough for the pizza base, built up the topping and then ate what they had made. Similarly in the Nursery class, chefs from a local Chinese restaurant came to school and brought with them lots of different foods, which children thoroughly enjoyed looking at and tasting.

48. The foundations for National Curriculum work are laid well, such as when the Reception children's geographical map-reading skills were developed by looking at the story, 'We're going on a bear hunt', and Nursery children began to build and construct, using clay to make leaf shapes.

49. Children's computer skills are very good. Nursery children are taught how to guide the cursor around the screen. Children in the Reception class can already draw exceptionally good pictures, controlling the mouse well to make people and houses, for example. They save and print their work with very little help from the adults.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of the school hall and the excellent outdoor learning area in the Nursery means that children get to move in different ways and learn to control their movements well.
- Exciting and interesting activities in the classroom mean that children's manipulative skills develop well.

Commentary

50. Excellent facilities and very good teaching mean that children do very well and most achieve the goals they are expected to by the end of the Reception. By using the wheeled push and pull toys in the Nursery outdoor learning area, Nursery and Reception children learn to manoeuvre around tight corners and small spaces; their awareness of space therefore is very good. They use the climbing equipment well to clamber over bridges and along planks, developing good balancing skills.
51. Similar very good use is made of the hall. Children change sensibly for their physical education sessions, leaving their clothes in a neat pile to put on again when they return. Teacher demonstrations and effective use of praise meant that Reception class children knew what was expected of them when they danced "like angry elephants" to music. They have a good idea about what keeps them healthy and knew that because they had exerted themselves their "hearts beat faster".
52. Small manipulative skills are developed extremely well in both classes when children cut and stick things, draw, paint, and make collages using different materials. They build using large and small construction equipment, and learn to control paintbrushes and pencils through different activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent role-play areas fire children's imagination.
- Very good teaching of observational, drawing and painting skills means children produce some very life-like pictures.

Commentary

53. The teaching and learning are very good and because of this children do very well to attain the goals they are expected to by the end of the Reception class. Excellent role-play areas in both classes give children the opportunity to use their imagination and create their own imaginary play world, for example when the Reception class children 'flew' in the class 'aeroplane', stewardesses served meals as the passengers relaxed, talked, and looked at books, and the pilot concentrated on where he was going. Similarly in the Nursery class, children love going into the 'jungle' to play with the toy animals in there, or simply ponder on what they can see around

them. Outside, the Nursery play area is full of exciting and interesting 'hidey holes' where children's imagination can, and does, run wild, such as when they went on an animal hunt and found models the adults had hidden among the bushes and plants.

54. Teachers encourage children to look at things and to draw or paint what they see. Consequently, their artwork is of an exceptional quality. For example, Nursery children's pastel pictures of pineapples and other fruits show excellent form and are extremely life-like. Similarly, Reception class children's excellent paintings of themselves showed very good form and proportion, with eyes, nose and mouth all correctly positioned.
55. Music making is fun in both classes. Children are building a repertoire of familiar songs and enjoy playing the musical instruments, which are always out for children to look at, touch, and play.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good teaching with high expectations of all pupils leads to very good achievement and good standards of attainment.
- Frequent opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas effectively develop their speaking and listening skills and contribute to the high standards in writing.
- High standards of presentation of pupils' work in books and on displays provide a very good example for pupils.
- Well-planned use of reading, writing, speaking and listening in all areas of the curriculum contributes to pupils' successes and enjoyment in learning.
- Leadership and management are very good because the co-ordinator knows the subject well and provides clear direction for improvement.
- Some of the pupils identified as gifted in English are not and those that actually are do not do well enough because their work is no different from that of the most able pupils.

Commentary

56. The consistently high quality teaching with lively and imaginative presentations of learning stimulates pupils' interest and promotes their enjoyment of English. For example, in a Year 2 class following listening to and discussing the story, 'The leopard's drum', the teacher dressed up as the leopard and pupils questioned her seriously. Lessons are well planned and thoroughly prepared so that activities are exciting and tasks meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers have high expectations of pupils so they work hard and attain high standards. For example, pupils in Year 2 read confidently and expressively, using punctuation to create the mood of the story. Probing questioning consistently challenges pupils' thinking and the excellent relationships ensure pupils respond very positively to teachers' comments. However, there are a few pupils who are gifted in English, but their work is no different from the work set for the most able pupils. There are also some pupils who teachers have identified as being gifted but they are not. This is because the school does not have clear criteria against which to measure who these pupils are.
57. The standards of speaking and listening are above average, a good improvement since the last inspection. Teachers recognised the need to develop this area of learning and have worked hard to bring about this improvement. Pupils achieve very well because teachers plan opportunities for pupils to talk in a range of circumstances in all their lessons. For example, pupils in Year 1 discussed the characters in 'Anancy and Mr Dry-bone' before writing sentences describing

them. The opportunities to discuss their ideas help to extend their vocabulary and contribute to the very high standards in writing, a further improvement since the last inspection.

58. Teachers show how highly they value pupils' work through the high standard of presentation of displays and in books. Pupils contribute to class books and wall displays and see the results of their efforts presented in a very professional manner. They enjoy reading and sharing books they have made and this encourages them to take further pride in their work. Handwriting is often clearly formed and legible, with Year 2 pupils beginning to join letters accurately.
59. Pupils achieve very well and enjoy English lessons because teachers plan activities to enable pupils to use their skills rather than just practise them. They use words, such as 'exhausted' and 'scurried', and phrases such as 'glistening white' and 'trembled with fear', to write their version of the story of 'Katie Morag'. Year 2 pupils investigated facts about Africa when learning library skills. Pupils are eager to learn and this contributes to their very good achievement.
60. Leadership and management of English are very good. The subject co-ordinator knows her subject well and has created a very good team, all aiming for the same high standards. She identifies areas for development through a wide range of monitoring and analytical strategies and helps to bring about improvements by planning and implementing the necessary action. Her thoroughness and ambition to drive standards even higher are reflected in the overall very good improvement since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. Opportunities for pupils to extend their use and understanding of language and literacy across the curriculum contribute to the high achievement of all pupils. Teachers plan to include all aspects of language and literacy in other subjects. This enables pupils to experience a wide range of texts and writing opportunities to investigate things, places and people and to record their learning in a variety of ways. Standards in writing are high because teachers encourage pupils to talk about what they are going to write and enable them to use a wide range of writing for different purposes. Learning to describe the characteristics of Nelson Mandela, for example, extends their understanding of people and develops their vocabulary. Pupils use word banks to label parts of the body for science and to design posters to illustrate holiday resorts. They formulate questions to ask visitors and use books and the Internet to investigate places and people.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good progress throughout the school and by the end of Year 2 standards are above average.
- The quality of teaching is very good so pupils are keen to learn and achieve very well.
- Leadership is very good and the subject very effectively managed.
- The school does not have clear procedures for assessing 'gifted' pupils and consequently some have been assessed as being gifted who are not. Those who have been correctly identified do not do well enough because their work is no different from the work of the most able pupils.

Commentary

62. Standards of work seen are above average overall because the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Pupils' achievement is very good as many come into school with below average mathematical knowledge. More pupils are now working at and achieving the higher level because teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to extend their skills and think for

themselves. Pupils have good counting skills and are good at calculating mentally because teachers give them good opportunities to explore different strategies and explain their thinking so that they become more adept. Pupils with special educational needs and those identified as lower attaining pupils also achieve well, because work is set at an appropriate level of challenge and they are very sensitively supported in lessons. The higher standards compared with the last inspection are a direct result of the better quality of teaching and improvements to assessing pupils' progress. However, there are some pupils who teachers have incorrectly identified as being gifted in mathematics. Those who have been identified correctly do no different work from the most able.

63. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers set a brisk pace, which is sustained throughout the lesson because pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They work hard and concentrate well. Pupils make very good progress because teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. Teachers' planning is very good and they use a good variety of methods with an emphasis on practical tasks to clarify their explanations. Teachers create enjoyable and relevant practical scenarios to develop pupils' understanding. These are very effective and challenge pupils to put their skills into practice in different contexts, including real-life problem solving. This develops pupils' thinking skills and understanding well because teachers ask probing questions and encourage pupils to explain their methods and ideas.
64. Pupils' progress is tracked very carefully through each year so that teachers know when and in which aspects of mathematics pupils are making the expected progress, do better, or lag behind. This enables them to take prompt action as necessary and to set targets for individual pupils to help them move on. Work in lessons and in pupils' books shows that the work effectively builds on what pupils already know and challenges different groups of pupils to move on at an appropriate pace.
65. Leadership and management are very good and have been crucial in the raising of standards. The subject co-ordinator monitors both teaching and learning very well through regular lesson observations, scrutiny of planning and monitoring of pupils' work. These and the rigorous analysis of statutory tests and termly assessments give the school a very good understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses and ensure that prompt action is taken to raise standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Very good use is made of mathematics across the curriculum. There are good examples of pupils using mathematical skills in science and ICT, for example to record and present numerical information on graphs. Good use is made of ICT to extend pupils' knowledge of movement and angles and to develop their understanding of repeated patterns, which they then apply to their artwork.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are taught in an atmosphere of high expectation and because of this, achieve very well to reach above average standards by the end of Year 2.
- Exciting learning opportunities based on investigative work make work pleasurable and meaningful and pupils' learning long-lasting.
- Pupils use well the skills learnt in other subjects such as ICT to support their work in science, and those learnt in science to support work in other subjects.
- Very effective leadership and management inspire staff to improve their provision and have brought about very good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

67. Pupils reach above average standards in science because of very good teaching. Teachers expect pupils to do just that little bit better than could reasonably be expected. Pupils rise to the challenge because they find the work exciting and interesting. For example, Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of how to make a break in an electrical circuit to stop a bulb lighting up or a buzzer working. They used this information well, along with what they had learnt about the fitness of different materials for particular purposes, to create working models of lighthouses and miniature playhouses in design and technology. This gives purpose to their learning and makes their hard work worthwhile. Equally as effectively, pupils use ICT skills to support work in science. For example, they record the results of their investigations on computer, using data-handling programs in order to create charts and graphs to help them interpret their findings.
68. Pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding are based on investigative work, making it interesting and easier for them to remember because they have found things out for themselves. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils were shown different papers and asked how to test which one David Livingstone would have used to write about an unusual animal he had spotted in the jungle. The air was electrifying as the teacher produced the explorer's backpack and pulled out the different things including binoculars, pencils, pens and different papers, such as the tissue for blowing his nose on, the greaseproof paper for wrapping his lunch in, and the plastic bag for preserving specimens. Pupils enthusiastically suggested which one would be most suitable for writing on and then confirmed or disproved their theories by testing them out.
69. The quality of teaching has improved and standards are better than they were at the time of the last inspection because very effective leadership and management inspire teachers to think about the ways in which they teach science. The subject leader's enthusiasm for the subject is infectious. Her very detailed analyses of pupils' attainment and progress through talking with pupils, analysing their test results and watching them work in lessons mean that she has a very clear idea about what is and is not working. This enables her to keep a check on how well the school provides for learning in science and to know what changes are needed in order to raise standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The newly improved resources have brought about higher standards, which are above those expected nationally.
- Leadership of the subject is very good and staff are very well supported.
- An effective programme of skills teaching is in place and computer skills are used to advantage to boost progress in other subjects.

Commentary

70. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. This is because the development of the ICT resources and curriculum has been planned with care. The new computer suite accommodates whole classes comfortably and there is a large table space centrally where pupils can work at the laptop computers. The recently introduced computer-linked projector provides a very good aid to learning and enables teachers to demonstrate skills and involve pupils directly in using the technology. Follow-up practice for pupils is then immediate, unlike at the time of the last inspection when pupils often had to wait to practise, use and consolidate the skills they had been taught. This has a positive impact on pupils' progress and work, and together with improvements in teaching and the curriculum enables pupils to achieve very well and reach standards that are above national expectations for their age.

71. Pupils greatly enjoy using the new equipment and work hard. They develop a good knowledge of the programs and very good control of the mouse and touch pad. They are confident in their use of ICT so that when encountering problems they will often successfully search for a solution independently without asking an adult for help.
72. The leadership and management of ICT are very good and the subject co-ordinator has taken positive and effective action to improve provision and raise standards. The school's very good use of in-service training and the very good support and guidance provided by the co-ordinator have developed teachers' knowledge well. Teaching is very good because of this and teachers have the skills and confidence they need to teach the subject successfully. Thorough evaluation of the provision, by checking pupils' work, monitoring teachers' planning and observing their lessons, ensures that the subject leader has a very good overview of what is happening throughout the school. She maintains useful portfolios of pupils' work, which, with access to pupils' individual files, enables her to assess achievement and progress across the school and know where her support is most needed.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. Teachers plan very effectively to teach an appropriate range of skills, which link well to pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, there are some very good examples of ICT in use in art and design, especially using graphics programs to investigate African patterns and to produce imaginative and colourful pictures. Pupils develop good word-processing skills, which enable them to produce attractively presented and illustrated poems. They make good use of the computer for research in history and geography and to record scientific data on a variety of graphs and charts.

HUMANITIES

74. No complete history or geography lessons were seen, but inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work. Evidence from this, the school's documentation and discussion with pupils show that standards and achievement are good.
75. In **geography**, a wide range of activities, artefacts, posters and visitors introduces pupils to countries in different parts of the world. Pupils have a good understanding of maps and eagerly identify places on them. They have a good awareness of geographical language so they can use it to describe places or features. Good cross-curricular links enable pupils to learn about all aspects of an environment and the people and animals living there, such as the whole-school study of Africa. In lessons they complete charts comparing localities and write letters to people on the imaginary island of Struay.
76. In **history**, lively presentations of lessons, interesting visits and the good use of historical artefacts enable pupils to achieve very well and attain standards above expectations. Pupils in Year 2 show a secure understanding of famous people from the past, such as Florence Nightingale and Grace Darling, and begin to explain what they did and why they are important to us. They show an increasing understanding of chronology and use timelines to show a sequence of events in the Queen's reign, for example. Teachers use every opportunity to develop language and literacy through history by planning activities such as discussions about the characteristics of Nelson Mandela, writing a booklet about Florence Nightingale or finding information from library books or the Internet.

Religious education

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality teaching and learning lead to good achievement and satisfactory standards of attainment.
- Imaginative use of resources brings the subject alive.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the important events, people and stories relating to Christianity.
- Pupils have good opportunities to experience important festivals from other faiths through assemblies and special days in school, although their knowledge of the beliefs and practices of other world faiths is limited.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

77. The overall good teaching, an improvement since the last inspection, with carefully planned and exciting lessons, ensures pupils' achievement is good. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils, which encourage them to feel secure about making suggestions and expressing their feelings.
78. Teachers use a range of interesting activities to promote pupils' enthusiasm and motivate learning. They use resources imaginatively to extend pupils' understanding. For example, Year 1 pupils understood the story of Moses better through seeing the teacher act out the story using a baby doll and a rush cradle. Year 2 pupils asked pertinent questions when their teacher dressed up as Ruth, a friend of Joseph. These activities enabled pupils to gain a better understanding of events and people's reactions and provoked thoughtful comments and suggestions.
79. Pupils show a secure knowledge of the life of Jesus Christ and stories that he told. They show respect for other people's beliefs, such as their very good behaviour when visiting a church or when celebrating the Chinese New Year with Chinese pupils. They retell stories from the Old Testament through writing and drama. They express their feeling and ideas well because teachers provide good opportunities for discussion.
80. The school values the ethnicity of all its pupils and encourages them to share their religious beliefs and practices. They hold special days when all pupils celebrate festivals from other faiths and learn what they eat or how they celebrate. However, pupils have little understanding of other faiths because of the limited time, suggested by the locally agreed syllabus, spent learning about them.
81. Leadership and management of the subject are very good because the co-ordinator has a secure knowledge of her subject and the standards pupils attain. She welcomes the introduction of the new locally agreed syllabus and has already planned the required staff training and written a new policy and subject guidelines in preparation.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

82. In **art and design**, the high standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained and standards are above expectations throughout the school. Pupils achieve very well and display a very good range of skills and techniques using a variety of materials. Teachers place strong emphasis on the development of pupils' observational skills as well as close attention to skills and techniques. This is reflected in pupils' work and their observational drawings, which illustrate their careful attention to detail with very effective use of tone, line and texture. For example, this is clear in their drawing of objects such as a loofah or gourd. Pupils enjoy the various activities

and are willing to work hard. They pay careful attention to teachers' guidance and these positive attitudes contribute to their good progress. Opportunities to evaluate and discuss their work help them recognise good quality work and what they might improve. Teachers plan a very interesting range of activities, which links well to whole-school themes. They provide good opportunities for three-dimensional and large-scale collaborative work. Pupils' experiences are broadened very effectively by opportunities to work with professional artists. They explore an exciting range of artwork and skills, including the art of other cultures such as the art of different African countries. They have good opportunities to explore the use of ICT. These activities give them new insights into the way in which colour, patterns and a wide range of materials can be used. They carefully apply the knowledge and skills to their own work such as weaving with unconventional looms. Teachers value pupils' work and throughout the school the visual environment is enhanced by vibrant displays of their art and creativity. However, work is not tailored well enough for the few pupils who are particularly talented artists and these pupils consequently do no better than the most able pupils.

83. Rigorous evaluation of the **design and technology** curriculum and the resulting changes are having a positive impact on the work of the school. The co-ordinator has successfully raised the profile of the subject and a change to the way in which the time is allocated has resulted in more work being done. The strong focus on the development of skills and making tasks relevant to pupils' everyday life is leading to improving standards. Pupils' achievement with the work on mechanisms is good and the standard is above those expected for pupils across the school. For example, Year 2 pupils' models, such as a growing sunflower, show how winding mechanisms work. These are carefully constructed and finished attractively. In a successful Year 1 lesson pupils made good progress in creating a simple sliding and lever mechanism. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management and has successfully increased opportunities for large-scale work; pupils greatly enjoyed making shelters from natural materials on a visit to Perlethorpe Environmental Centre.
84. One lesson was seen in **music** and none in **physical education**, so reliable judgements on provision, standards and achievements cannot be made. Teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to develop their skills across the expected range of musical activities and pupils can extend their skills by joining the choir and recorder club. The choir clearly enjoy the choice of repertoire and work hard to produce singing that is above the expected standard of pupils in Year 2. This is confirmed by their recent success in winning the Newark Schools Choir Competition. Pupils regularly take part in musical performances and have exciting opportunities to see and work with professional performers. They had recently taken part in a workshop on African drumming. These rich experiences enhance the curriculum and contribute significantly to pupils' personal development. The school plans well for the development of pupils' physical skills and the curriculum covers all key areas, including good opportunities for pupils to learn to swim in Year 2. Pupils enjoy opportunities to practise and extend their skills in after-school clubs and to take part in the school Sports Fun Day. However, as in the other subjects, work is not tailored well enough for the few pupils who are particularly talented at music or physical education and although these pupils can, along with their schoolmates, join the after-school clubs, they do no better than the most able pupils.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

85. Only short sessions were seen in personal, social and health education and citizenship, but from what was seen, along with evidence from other sources, pupils do very well to develop a secure understanding of their own personal worth and awareness of their place within the school community.
86. Pupils get on extremely well together because of the example set them by the adults in the school. They listen to each other well and respond respectfully to each other's suggestions and comments. This is because teachers and support workers show them, through their relationships with each other, how to live with and care about others. For example, teachers, nursery nurses and support workers share a joke together or discuss things in front of the

pupils, giving pupils a model on which to base their own relationships with others. All of the pupils enjoy learning sign language so that they can communicate with those pupils in school who have hearing impairment.

87. During the daily circle time sessions, pupils have opportunities to talk about and share their thoughts and feelings, and explore relationships. For example, in a Year 2 session, the teacher encouraged pupils to “look beyond the cover”, and not to judge people by the way they look. After reading and talking about the characters in a traditional African story that the teacher had read to them, pupils concluded sensitively, “If people are different don’t laugh at them” and “It’s not what they look like, but what they can do”. From this and the follow-up session the next day, pupils’ praise for the qualities of others and their individual talents and skills started to emerge.
88. Such opportunities for reflecting on the actions and success of others, and for self-reflection, are frequent. Teachers encourage pupils to think about what they do well and what they need to improve, and pupils’ aspirations for themselves are high because of this. Teachers encourage them, through challenging targets, to aim for and achieve that little bit more – hence the high standards.
89. Pupils are proud of their work on the school council and work hard to influence and bring about changes to school routines and procedures. Their new code of behaviour is built on fairness and pupils of all ages appreciate the need for rules to ensure order and calm, thus developing a good understanding of citizenship.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the head teacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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