

INSPECTION REPORT

LAKESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Clifton Moor, York

LEA area: City of York

Unique reference number: 121467

Headteacher: Mrs R Latham

Lead inspector: Ian Knight

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd December 2003

Inspection number: 256670

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:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	324
School address:	Oakdale Road Clifton Moor York
Postcode:	YO30 4YL
Telephone number:	01904 691473
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Swan
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lakeside Primary School is a large primary school serving the Clifton Moor area of York. It serves an area of average socio-economic standing, and pupils arrive at the school with attainment that is in the average range. Most pupils are of White British background, with a small number of Caribbean, African or Asian descent. The school serves a local traveller community. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. The needs identified include moderate learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, speech or communication difficulties, and other needs related to literacy and numeracy. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than in Reception or Year 6 is low. The school was awarded the Schools Achievement Award in 2001, and the Healthy Schools Award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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22881	George Halliday	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Religious Education.
23658	Stephen Parker	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special Educational Needs; English; Geography; History.
8420	Valerie Roberts	<i>Team inspector</i>	The Foundation Stage; Art and Design; Design and Technology; Music; Physical Education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils and provides satisfactory value for money. Pupils achieve satisfactorily because of satisfactory teaching and learning based on a sound curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well. The school is committed to ensuring that all groups in the school community make the best progress that they can, and has maintained very good links with the community to support this. The headteacher and other senior staff have a clear vision for the school and lead effectively to improve the school further.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Its good commitment to ensuring that all groups in the school receive an education tailored to their needs.
- Pupils' good attitudes to school and their very good behaviour.
- The school is very caring: provision to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils is very good, within a family atmosphere.
- The school is led well.
- The most capable pupils are not consistently challenged enough.
- Children in Reception do not have enough opportunities for outdoor learning across the curriculum.

The school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection. Standards and teaching have been maintained. Most key issues have been adequately addressed. School development planning is sharper, subjects have schemes of work that set out what pupils should learn, assessment is now satisfactory, and the prospectus meets statutory requirements, but the Governors' Annual Report to Parents still omits some required areas. Good progress has been made in addressing the issue concerning information and communication technology (ICT). However, the school still has not provided enough large outdoor equipment for children in Reception, and the outdoor provision overall remains unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	B	D	D
mathematics	A	C	C	C
science	A	B	B	B

*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 in the school is satisfactory overall. Children in Reception are on course to attain the expected early learning goals, and standards in Years 1 to 6 are in line with expectations in most subjects. Standards in Year 6 exceed expectations in the creative, artistic and physical area of learning. They are below expectations in ICT. Pupils with SEN achieve well. Although the most capable pupils achieve satisfactorily, they are not consistently challenged enough in lessons.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are progressing well. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Attendance and punctuality are good. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are good in Reception and in Years 5 and 6, and satisfactory in Years 1 to 4. Teachers have a clear knowledge of the needs of young learners and use methods that encourage and engage their interest. As a result, pupils work with application and productivity. Pupils with SEN are supported effectively. However, the most capable pupils do not always have work that challenges them enough.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It provides well for pupils with SEN. However, the outdoor provision for children in Reception is unsatisfactory and is hindering their development. The school provides very well for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It maintains good links with parents and very good links with the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is led and managed well. The governing body carries out its duties satisfactorily, is supportive of the school, and has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher and other senior staff share a clear vision of excellence for the school and are working towards achieving it. They have a very good commitment to the inclusion of all groups of the community.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils show good levels of satisfaction with the school. Parents felt that pupils behaved well, although a few were concerned about bullying. They felt that staff had high expectations for their children. Pupils liked the family atmosphere in the school, although some believed that some pupils did not behave well enough. The inspection team found no evidence to support the parents' concerns about bullying nor pupils' views on behaviour.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that medium term planning shows clearly how tasks are to be varied for all in the class, and provide greater challenge for the most capable.
- Improve the outdoor provision for children in Reception.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the Governors' Annual Report to Parents includes all the required information.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils attain standards in line with national expectations throughout the school, except, in Key Stage 2, for the creative, aesthetic and physical subjects, in which standards are above expectations, and ICT, where standards are below expectations. This represents satisfactory achievement. Pupils with SEN receive good support and achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in most subjects in the school are in line with national expectations, and above expectations in the creative, aesthetic and physical areas of learning in Key Stage 2.
- The achievement of most pupils is satisfactory.
- Pupils with SEN achieve well.
- Pupils from the traveller community are included well in the school and achieve as well as other pupils.
- The most capable pupils are not always challenged enough to achieve their potential.

Commentary

1. Standards in National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2003 showed that pupils' attainment was average in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing. If the school is compared only to those with a similar intake, then standards in mathematics were below average, whilst standards in writing were well below average. The poor showing in writing, and, to a lesser extent, in mathematics, is partly because too few pupils gained the higher Level 3. In writing, the proportion gaining this level was well below average, and in mathematics it was below average. The school accepts that its focus has been to ensure that as many pupils as possible gain the expected Level 2 at the expense of some pupils who might be able to gain the higher levels. There is no secure trend of improvement in results, and, when all three subjects are taken together, the recent trend has been below that nationally. Girls have consistently outperformed boys in reading and writing in recent years; there is no significant difference in mathematics. There are no tests in the other core subject of science, but teachers' own assessments show a similar pattern: the proportion gaining the expected Level 2 was above average, whilst the proportion gaining the higher Level 3 was below average. The table below summarises the test results. The average points score used as a measure takes account of all pupils' performance. One 'point' is roughly equivalent to the progress expected in a term, with the expected Level 2 being represented by 15 points and the higher Level 3 by 21 points. For example, the table shows that, in 2003, pupils in Lakeside were almost a year behind the national average in writing.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.3 (16.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.8 (14.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.1 (15.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 show that standards were about average in mathematics, below average in English, and above average in science. This is also the case when the school is compared only to those whose pupils performed similarly in tests four years ago, in Year 2. Again, the weak performance in English is largely the result of a low proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5. The school explains that standards in writing have been weaker for some time and it is this weakness that is affecting, in particular, the proportions gaining the higher

level, and it is working to improve writing standards. In both mathematics and science, the proportion gaining the higher Level 5 is above average, supporting the school's assertion in respect of writing. Nevertheless, pupils at Lakeside made less progress in Key Stage 2 than did their peers in other schools who attained similar standards in tests in Year 2. There is no secure trend of improvement in test results overall. Although standards in science have been improving in line with the national trend, standards in both English and mathematics have fallen year-on-year since their high point in 2001. When the trend in all subjects is considered, then it is below the national trend of improvement. In the table, the expected Level 4 is represented by 27 points, whilst the higher Level 5 is represented by 33 points.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.2 (28.4)	26.8 (27)
mathematics	26.8 (27.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.3 (29.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. However, test results can tell only part of the story. They refer only to a few subjects in two year groups last summer. In addition, they can give no clues about pupils' *achievement*, that is, whether pupils are doing as well as they ought. Inspection evidence can fill some of the gaps.

4. Children enter Reception with attainment that is about average in national terms. Following good teaching and learning, they are on track to achieve the expected Early Learning Goals in all areas – personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. The new computer suite is being used effectively so that children are making good progress in this area within knowledge and understanding of the world. Children do not have regular and routine access to outdoor learning in all the areas of learning, and this is one reason that good teaching in lessons is not translated directly into good achievement. Progress in physical development is especially hampered by the lack of space for outdoor activities like climbing, clambering, balancing and pedalling.

5. Satisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2 results in pupils making satisfactory progress and achieving satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 2 are attaining the expected standards in all aspects of English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education. Standards in the other subjects were also in line with national expectations, except in geography and history, where insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement possible. Work analysed, alongside that seen in lessons, shows that pupils with SEN or whose attainment is low are supported effectively and achieve well. However, the work provided for pupils with the potential for higher attainment is sometimes not challenging enough, and they sometimes do not achieve well enough. Whilst this picture of standards is better than that painted by test results above, it reflects the low numbers gaining Level 3 in tests. The school maintains a register of gifted and talented pupils, but they are not typically identified in planning, although some pupils are taught alongside older pupils in mathematics and writing. They achieve satisfactorily.

6. Satisfactory teaching and learning continue throughout Key Stage 2, and pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards in line with expectations in English, mathematics, science, and religious education. Standards exceed expectations in the area of creative, aesthetic and physical experience. Standards are below expectations in ICT because the school has, until recently, not been able to give pupils regular access to the subject in a suitably resourced computer suite. This has now been rectified, and pupils are making better progress, especially in Years 5 and 6. The proportion of pupils on the school's special needs register is lower than that found nationally. They are given good support in class so that they achieve well. In the 2003 national tests in English and mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 6, the number who failed to reach the expected level was fewer than was the case nationally. This reflects the good quality of care that the school takes in identifying and meeting pupils' individual needs, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The most capable pupils, and those with particular gifts or talents, achieve satisfactorily.

7. Whilst the school does not have a high turnover of pupils overall, it does include a significant proportion of pupils from the traveller community. The school has worked hard and successfully over a number of years to include these pupils and their parents in its life and work, so that a good relationship exists and many traveller pupils attend as regularly as any others. As a result, these pupils achieve as well as others in the school, although standards of attainment are typically lower than those of other groups within the school.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils’ attitudes are good and their behaviour is very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Pupils’ attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils enjoy coming to school to learn.
- There is a very strong family atmosphere in the school.
- Pupils’ awareness of other cultures is developed well in assemblies.
- Some pupils feel they could be given more responsibilities.

Commentary

8. Pupils are keen to learn and they listen carefully in lessons, showing respect for the views of others. They respond very willingly to teachers’ expectations of high standards of behaviour. During lunchtimes, they are sensible and co-operate well with supervisors. The inspection bears out parents’ and pupils’ views that behaviour is very good. There is very little bullying and none was seen during the inspection. There are effective procedures for dealing with it when it does occur. The freedom from harassment, including racism, reflects the school’s strong emphasis on promoting personal values and attitudes. Children in Reception are on line to achieve the recommended goals in their personal, social and emotional development.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
298	1	0
7	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
5	0	0
2	0	0

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

9. Parents and pupils say that pupils enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in above average attendance and good punctuality. The school does all it can to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. There is extremely little unauthorised attendance, the rate being slightly below the national average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	0.4

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

10. Pupils develop a good degree of self-knowledge and spiritual awareness. Teachers encourage pupils to talk openly about their own experiences and views and to raise questions to help them think more deeply. Daily assemblies make a good contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual awareness. A spiritual element is built into religious education lessons, but teachers do not consistently make the most of such opportunities, nor do they plan for them in other lessons.

11. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and this results in the very good behaviour. Staff provide good role models. They show respect and concern for pupils' individual needs and take their views seriously. As a result, pupils know they can turn to them when in need. Pupils know the school's few simple rules in the form of codes of conduct for the classroom, lunchtime and the playground, and they expect everyone to follow them.

12. Pupils respond very well to the school's provision for their social development. Parents strongly agree that it leads to their children's greater maturity as they get older. The school's focus is on creating a family atmosphere. Consequently, relationships in the school are very good and pupils care for one another. For example, a pupil in Year 6 was pleased that a younger pupil with severe learning needs was encouraged to join in a practice for a school production and commented, 'She loved it and smiled for the rest of the day'. Pupils agree that they are trusted to do things on their own and are given responsibilities to encourage this. For example, they vote class representatives on to the School Council to put forward their opinions. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are trained as 'peer mediators'. They look after younger pupils, or any others who need befriending, at playtimes. Some pupils act on their own initiative and help out further at playtimes. This increases pupils' feeling of security in the playground. Nevertheless, some pupils feel that responsibilities could be spread further and the school accepts that the School Council, as a relatively new venture, has further to go.

13. Pupils are more culturally aware than during the last inspection. This is because the school has made a conscious effort to raise the profile of multi-cultural education. Assemblies, religious education lessons and visits to various places of worship are the main focus for this. In an assembly, for example, pupils sang an African chant with confidence and gusto, led by a music specialist playing a resounding drumbeat. Visits to a Hindu temple give pupils good opportunities to discover and understand the differences and similarities between Hindu and Christian practices. As a result of these improvements, pupils' cultural awareness is good, though teachers do not follow up this good provision by maintaining a high priority in display in classrooms for all to see and remember.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. There is very good provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are all sound. Links with parents are good; links with the community and with other schools are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory, and good in Reception. Assessment is used satisfactorily overall and well in Reception.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching and learning are good in Reception, providing a firm basis for future progress.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, to which pupils readily respond.
- The most capable pupils are not always challenged enough in lessons.

Commentary

14. Teaching and learning are good in Reception and in Years 5 and 6, and satisfactory elsewhere. In Reception, good understanding of the needs of such young learners is expressed in good planning and teaching that engages young minds. Positive relationships lead to very good behaviour. Good assessment procedures are used effectively to meet the needs of individuals. As a result, children make good progress in lessons and work well, with application and productivity. However, the effect of this good teaching is diluted because of the unsatisfactory outdoor provision in Reception, affecting all areas of learning.

15. In Years 1 to 4, the same very clear emphasis on good behaviour is in evidence, so that pupils are engaged well in their work. As a result, they, too, work hard and willingly, and make sound progress. However, planning does not always take into account the needs of the most capable, and they are not always challenged beyond their comfort zone.

16. In Years 5 and 6, teaching is good. Lessons have a brisk pace and tasks are well matched to the needs of individuals. A very good English lesson in Year 6 illustrates this. The focus was on powerful words and the teacher used the computer-linked display very effectively to show video clips and record ideas. The lesson was very well planned and had a clear structure so that pupils had a clear idea of what they were expected to do. They made excellent use of individual whiteboards for drafting, prior to writing in their books.

17. Pupils with SEN are fully included in all class activities. Teachers' planning reflects the targets set out in the individual education plans of these pupils. Teaching assistants play a good part in supporting them in lessons, helping them to meet their targets and praising their achievements to boost their confidence. The pupils' progress is monitored regularly and their targets are adjusted as necessary. They are withdrawn regularly for intensive instruction by the two SEN teachers. Their progress is good at these times because activities are carefully planned to meet their needs and they are taught at a brisk pace that keeps them interested and involved. Sensitive support for pupils from traveller families, linked with a clear understanding of their needs and culture, allows them to make good progress. The few pupils with English as an additional language make the same progress as their peers. However, the level of challenge for the most capable is patchy, and these pupils are not always challenged enough in lessons. Other than in English and mathematics lessons, tasks are typically not varied to suit individuals' needs. For example, in a science lesson for pupils in Year 3, the most capable had the least guidance in how to record their work, but expectations of what they might complete were not high enough. Work for the whole class was planned to be within Level 2 of the National Curriculum, the standard expected of average pupils at the end of Year 2. Whilst this challenged some in the class, it was not challenging enough for those with the potential for the highest attainment.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	2(5%)	22 (60%)	13 (35%)	0 (0%)	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.

THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, and learning is extended through a sound range of out-of-class activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school does well in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- There are not enough opportunities to develop literacy skills through other subjects.
- The outdoor accommodation and resources for pupils in Reception are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

Commentary

18. The Foundation Stage curriculum is guided by the officially recommended Early Learning Goals. Opportunities within the planned curriculum are good, but it is adversely affected by the lack of outdoor space. This affects all areas of learning, and especially knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development.

19. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is broad and balanced, with appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics. Planning for all subjects is based on national guidance, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The scheme of work for ICT has been improved and is now satisfactory. The use made of numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects is satisfactory. However, opportunities to develop pupils' reading and writing skills are not identified clearly enough in planning for other subjects, nor linked closely enough to the current literacy targets of each class. Topics are successfully planned on a two-year cycle to avoid repetition by pupils in the mixed age class. Learning is extended effectively through an interesting range of special events, visits and focus weeks, such as the Science Discovery Week. Overall, pupils are well prepared to move on to the next stages of their education. It is a good feature that projects begun in Year 6 are continued after transfer to high school.

20. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, and this makes a significant contribution to their good attitudes to learning. Topics covered through the curriculum include sex education and drugs awareness, and a range of visitors develops pupils' understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship. The school has recently been awarded a Healthy Schools award.

21. Good care is taken to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum, and there are very good features. Provision for pupils with SEN is led by two specialist teachers, one dealing with Years 1 to 3, the other with Years 4 to 6. They know in depth the pupils on the school's register and are very well placed to work closely with class teachers to develop individual education plans for these pupils, with clear targets to guide their progress. The targets are focused on each pupil's identified needs and adjusted in the light of assessments so that pupils make good progress as their needs change. Very good care has been taken to include a pupil with a statement of SEN who joins a Year 2 class for two days each week. A detailed programme has been planned for her, in consultation with the special school in which she is registered. As a result, she has very good opportunities to learn in a mainstream school. The children of travellers' families are given extra help if necessary and, during the inspection, were seen taking a full and successful part in lessons. In spite of these very good features, there is some underachievement by pupils with the potential for higher attainment. In part, this is because the medium-term plans of most subjects do not identify in what ways activities and expectations are to be adapted so that these pupils make best progress over time. As a result, they are often set the same work as other pupils. Though they do it well, they are not always fully challenged.

22. There is a satisfactory range of clubs and after-class activities. They are well attended, though there is little available for pupils before Year 3. Popular clubs include art and gardening. The school takes pride in including as many pupils as possible in termly drama productions, and many pupils learn to play a musical instrument. Teams regularly represent the school in netball and football competitions. The football team has been very successful recently and is to represent North Yorkshire in a North of England competition. Four Year 6 pupils travelled abroad last year to present the school's 'Travel Plan' at an international forum.

23. The school is appropriately staffed, with music taught in Years 3 to 6 by a specialist. Throughout the school, teaching assistants play a valuable role in helping groups of pupils, particularly those with lower attainment or who have English as an additional language.

24. The accommodation is good overall. The building continues to be expanded to cater for increasing pupil numbers. This has been largely successful, though the library is short of good quality books and is not well placed for its potential to be maximised. There has not been enough improvement since the last inspection in the outdoor accommodation for the Reception class. The area is small and unattractive. It lacks the equipment, such as a climbing frame or large wheeled toys, necessary to develop children's physical skills, and is not used routinely to support learning in the other areas of learning. Pupils have thoughtfully been consulted over plans to improve the grounds and playground equipment. Resources for ICT have been developed considerably since the previous inspection, providing a good basis for raising standards and innovative teaching. Resources for other subjects are satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. Advice, guidance and support are satisfactory. The arrangements for seeking and acting upon pupils' views are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good.
- Procedures for health, safety and welfare are very good.
- Induction and preparation for the next school are very good.
- Academic targeting for improvement is not used well enough.

Commentary

25. Pupils are happy in school because of the family atmosphere that prevails. Pupils feel trusted, safe and valued because of the way they are treated, and they are confident to ask for help at any time. As part of its ongoing commitment to pupils' welfare, the school has worked for and been awarded the 'Healthy Schools Award'. The standard of care is such that staff have taken special training to ensure that pupils who have particular health support needs are properly cared for. The school provides appropriate support for pupils who have SEN, those for whom English is not their first language, and traveller children. The procedures for health, safety and child protection are carried out effectively, and specialist agencies provide further relevant services to the school. First aid cover is good.

26. Induction arrangements enable pupils to settle quickly and happily into school. Older pupils are 'buddies' to younger ones and some pupils take responsibility for their peers by becoming trained mediators. Pupils are very well prepared for transfer to secondary schools through a combination of visits and curricular project work. This promotes awareness of expectations and continuity of learning into the next school.

27. The school provides good advice, guidance and support for pupils' personal development. Improvement targets are set for pupils in literacy and numeracy but are not used effectively enough to accelerate progress and are not set consistently throughout the school.

28. The school does not systematically seek the views of all pupils. The school council provides some opportunity for pupils to represent their concerns and suggestions. Pupils can raise matters for discussion in the weekly 'circle time' lessons. Some views are noted informally at other times. All views and representations are respected by the school and acted upon appropriately.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents express confidence in the school and are pleased with provision. The partnership between the school and parents is satisfactory. Links with the community and other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Parents have a good regard for the school.
- Relationships between school and parents are good.
- Parental involvement in the school is underdeveloped.
- Community involvement is very good.
- Links with other schools and colleges are very beneficial.

Commentary

29. Parents are pleased with the quality of education and care that is provided. They judge the school to be well led and managed and very approachable. They are satisfied with the academic and personal progress that their children make.

30. A minority feel, with some justification, that they are not well informed about pupils' progress. Annual school reports do not indicate clearly how pupils achieve with regard to national expectations for their age as expressed in the National Curriculum. Consultation evenings are arranged twice per year and teachers are accessible daily for updates.

31. A few parents are concerned about harassment. Inspectors judge that behaviour is very good and that the school provides a well-supervised environment. Anti-social incidents are few and are dealt with effectively.

32. Approximately one in every 10 parents who responded to the questionnaire said that the school does not seek parents' views and suggestions. Parental involvement in some aspects of the life and work of the school is underdeveloped. Newsletters are infrequent and lack substance. The governors' annual report omits information about facilities for the disabled. Curricular information is provided but little formal guidance is offered about how parents might more effectively help with learning at home.

33. Parental attendance is high at progress reviews, and support is good for performances and events out of school. Parents of pupils who have special education needs are well involved in the review process. The home-school association raises substantial funds for the school.

34. Many visits to places of interest are arranged to enhance pupils' learning. Numerous visitors to the school share their knowledge and experiences with the pupils. The Healthy Schools award has involved the participation of many representatives of public services. Local facilities such as the swimming pool and library are frequently used. Charities are supported.

35. The school has associations with an early years partnership, a national learning network, other primary schools, secondary schools, and teacher training institutions. This contributes much to the quality of education, continuity and care that is provided.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed. Leadership and management by the headteacher and other staff are good. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school works successfully to ensure that all groups are fully included in its work.
- A clear focus for improvement has been established and is supported by all staff.
- The monitoring and evaluation of the school's work still needs more rigour.

Commentary

36. A number of governors are recently appointed and lack experience. Nevertheless, the governing body is very supportive of the school and an asset to it. It supports the school's senior managers effectively and has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors are very keen to learn more and to improve their effectiveness, and have undertaken training for their roles. However, the governing body is still in the process of ensuring that it has the best possible structure, and its strategic role is underdeveloped. Whilst it supports senior managers well, it does not yet challenge them enough. There are some minor omissions from the required information in the latest Governors' Annual Report to Parents.

37. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and works hard to ensure this is realised. The vision is shared by other senior managers, who support her, and is expressed in the sound development plan for the school. In this, the school's strategic priorities are set out, and detailed action plans link closely to them. However, it is not clear that ongoing evaluation of the school's work is used to the utmost in constructing the plan. For example, in 2002, the National Curriculum test results in mathematics were disappointing to the school, but the subsequent improvement plan did not include focused tasks to go some way to remedy this. Nevertheless, staff, pupils and parents recognise and respect the headteacher's vision for the school. This includes the creation of a family atmosphere, achieved by placing younger and older year groups geographically close to each other and linking older and younger pupils. In their questionnaire responses, pupils often said that something they liked about the school was that, 'we are a family'. They also often quoted the school's motto as a strength, 'I like it that we are Tidy, Bright and Organised'. The headteacher is also clear in her intent to create effective teams throughout the school. In order to raise standards as pupils leave the school, her first priority was to create an effective unit in Years 5 and 6, and this has worked well. Although standards are still not as high as they might be, this has much to do with slower progress in the past, and the team in Years 5 and 6 are working well to redress this. Other teams in the school are also being remodelled, and improved planning, for example, is helping to further improve matters in other year groups.

38. The school as a whole shows a very good commitment to ensuring that all groups in the school receive the right academic and social diet. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. Recommended procedures are carefully followed and record keeping is systematic. Funding for pupils with SEN is spent well for their benefit. As a result, these pupils achieve well. The school serves a large traveller community. The headteacher has liaised with this community for some considerable time, painstakingly building an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect in which education is valued. One obvious and positive outcome is that the great majority of traveller pupils attend school just as regularly as any other pupil. Support in class is sensitive and enables these pupils to achieve as well as others in the school. However, planning rarely identifies different tasks for different groups. Lower attaining pupils receive support that enables them to achieve well, but the most capable sometimes have work that does not challenge them rigorously enough.

39. The school has an ongoing target to improve the rigour of academic monitoring and evaluation. This is satisfactory and the deputy headteacher's role now includes the monitoring of achievement of all groups within the school. Data is now being interpreted. However, not all subjects have formal assessment procedures in place as yet. On the other hand, the initial forays

into the evaluation of the school's work – mainly ICT and mathematics – have produced some useful points for action in written reports back to staff members. The headteacher also teaches writing to the more able pupils in Year 2, a practice which began last year and has been checked for effectiveness by using the school's data. One strong point is the use of performance management to improve provision and standards in ICT. There has been a strong school-wide focus on this area, and this is now bearing fruit in the improved facilities and achievement.

40. Staff new to the school receive good support as they settle in. The school's strong ethos of teamwork supports new staff well. The school places a high priority on the well-being of staff as well as of pupils, and this is reflected in its continuous commitment to their welfare. This is complemented by the school's good systems for professional development of staff and its effective contribution to teacher training.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	784,983.00
Total expenditure	749,634.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,077.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	44,865.00
Balance carried forward to the next	80,002.00

41. Day-to-day financial management is slick and effective. The priorities in the school improvement plan are not fully reflected in the budget each year. However, the principles of best value are used effectively to ensure that funds are used best to benefit all in school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. The very good relationship between local pre-school providers and the school ensures that staff have good starting points for children as they arrive in school in September or January. Despite some weaknesses in writing skills, the majority of children enter school with average levels of attainment. Well organised planning and assessment ensures they are well on track to reach expected levels of attainment in all areas of learning by the end of their time in Reception. As a result of carefully linked activities, there is good progress in all areas of learning. Children from travelling families and those for whom English is an additional language make equally good progress and are fully included in all activities. Accommodation inside the school is well ordered and welcoming. However, whilst new equipment has been purchased for role-play activities, the outdoor area for Reception children remains unsatisfactory. There is little provision for most of the areas of learning to take place outdoor. Moreover, although children have access to a secure area, this is also used as a thoroughfare and is so limited in space that it is impossible to use climbing equipment or mobile toys effectively. This results in achievement that is satisfactory despite the good progress in individual lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children quickly become familiar with school routines and behave well.
- There are very good relationships between children and staff.

Commentary

43. Children come happily into school for the start of the day's activities. They confidently register their arrival by putting their name card into the correct *hot dinner* or *packed lunch* boxes and sit quietly on the carpet waiting for the morning's activities to begin. Parents and children have already been shown around the school the term before by Year 5 pupils who present, 'A day in the life of...'. Consequently, children feel socially secure, and they comfortably join pupils in Year 6 for reading practice and have 'story swaps' with Year 1 during the week.

44. After activities children sensibly help to tidy up and quickly change for lessons in the hall, carefully folding their clothes as they change. They concentrate carefully when helping to arrange the apparatus and patiently wait their turn in their groups. Staff have high expectations of good behaviour, and, as a result, children approach their work positively and operate amicably within their groups. Children feel confident that all adults in the class will support them, and they readily engage visitors in the work they are doing.

45. Teachers and their assistants respect children and listen to what they have to say and, as a result, children trust the adults around them and subsequently learn to listen to, and respect, their friends.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching includes interesting strategies to encourage progress.
- Children enter Reception with weak writing skills, and teaching is particularly focused upon improving these.
- Children make good progress in reading but their progress in writing is less advanced.
- Whilst children are grouped for individual learning needs there is scope for challenging the more capable child.

Commentary

46. Most children are confident talkers and readily talk to visitors. They quickly learn to settle quietly and listen attentively to their teacher, sharing in simple sign language when discussing their families. They ask questions, are ready to share their reading books with adults confidently, and can read simple books. Their knowledge of sounds increases well through using their imagination to 'stretch out' a word to assist their writing. In writing activities, they have good support from their teacher that directs their writing towards good presentation. Subsequently, most children want to write their name independently and copy those of their friends carefully when making cards. Their clear script in writing books shows careful attention, but they are not yet attempting to write statements or sentences independently.

47. In Reception, staff introduce the literacy hour in a gradual way so that children recognise links between reading and writing. However, the pace is sometimes slow for some children, and subsequent activities make little demand on the more capable child. The most able readers show the potential for reading more widely beyond their present book levels.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children have a variety of opportunities to practise numeracy in games and songs, as well as in lessons.
- All activities are thoroughly planned and prepare children successfully for their next stage of education.
- There is good support from the teacher, but teaching assistance is insufficiently detailed or active to be consistently effective.

Commentary

48. The good numeracy links with all Reception activities contribute to the good progress children make. Children's work in number books shows neat and careful repetition of number recognition. In lessons they learn to recognise 1p and 2p coins by touch, and have fun with a partner in sorting them out. The more capable groups can add pennies up to 15p successfully, and lower attaining children can sort 1p and 2p coins to match a written total.

49. The level of support in Reception is not high, and the support role of teaching assistants could usefully be further developed to support and guide children's learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- All activities are devised to connect with the planned topic.
- A good start has been made in ICT, and subsequently children achieve well.

Commentary

50. Teachers choose topics within children's experience that widen their understanding of the world. For example, in their topic 'All About Me', children talk about their family and draw pictures of their place in the family. They learn about distinctive families such as royal families and play out these characters around their castle in role-play. In ICT lessons, the good questioning skills of their teacher effectively refreshes their knowledge of computer skills. In a lesson seen, children selected different shapes for their drawing of a house and filled them with colour. They offered ideas to their teacher and partners on how this could be done, either with the 'brush' or 'pencil'. When using simple sign language for family names, they understand that there are people in the world who have different forms of communication. They understand the special role people have in the community, and act as paramedics in role-play. However, the limitation of the outdoor space prevents their using large equipment to explore how things can be constructed.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children show self-discipline and independence when preparing for lessons.
- Children are keen to perform well.
- Stimulating activities for children develop the finer manipulative skills for writing, drawing and painting.
- The outdoor accommodation remains unsatisfactory and limits children's opportunities to develop at a faster rate.

Commentary

51. Children are securely on track to achieve the early learning goals in this area. They carefully avoid each other when running around the hall to warm up for their lesson. Quick to stop on the signal, they balance on different parts of their body with good control. They think carefully about the movement they will make on the apparatus, and they enjoy demonstrating their movement for other children in the class. Their control of finer movements in class is shown well in their handling of pencils and brushes. They cut confidently with scissors and neatly use pasta to make a coloured border around picture frames. The good organisation of groups and resources allows children to obtain good results in their work. Whilst children are eager give of their best in indoor lessons, they are unable to play a similar part outdoors. The outdoor area is secure and provides space for some role-play, but there is not enough space for climbing equipment or the use of three wheeled vehicles.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

52. Specific lessons focusing on creative development were not observed, but the linked activities and planning show children to be developing creative skills at expected levels for their age and to be achieving satisfactorily. Teachers include a wide range of interesting creative activities in which children can work with colour, texture, shape and music. Songs and rhymes are specifically chosen to match the learning points in planned activities. The classroom is also well organised for sand, water and role-play to take place. The children's pictures show the use of a wide range of materials and, when making a picture frame, children were able to decorate their coloured frames with a wide selection of decorative shapes and paper. The new resources for dressing up are used with enthusiasm. Children readily become paramedics and 'treat' the wounded from their medical kit.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards of handwriting and presentation are good.
- Pupils do not proof-read their written work carefully enough.
- Interest in reading is high through the school.
- Pupils with low attainment and special needs in language achieve well.

Commentary

53. Standards in the present Year 2 and Year 6 are average in speaking, reading and writing. Pupils in all classes listen well, and listening standards are above expectations through the school. They have good attitudes to the subject and make sound progress overall.

54. Boys and girls alike willingly join in class discussions. They are confident because teachers and teaching assistants give strong encouragement and wait patiently if they struggle to express their ideas. In the best lessons, teachers also help them to develop ideas by talking with a partner or making notes before whole-class discussions. Nevertheless, pupils generally would benefit from more regular opportunities to take the lead in speaking at length to the class, notably in the final review (the 'plenary') at the end of lessons. Some do not speak clearly enough and need more specific coaching. The school has no assessment procedure to monitor pupils' progress in speaking and listening.

55. Reading books are carefully graded so that pupils make secure progress in small steps. As a result, fewer than average fail to reach the expected level in national tests in reading at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Year 2 know how to sound out words they do not recognise on sight, and are confident in explaining the meaning of what they have read. Pupils with low attainment or special needs make good progress because extra help is well organised and clearly focused on their needs. By Year 6, pupils with average attainment read books at the level of difficulty expected for their age. However, two higher attaining pupils who were interviewed were also reading books at this level, which indicates that they were underachieving. Voluntary reading choices need to be more closely monitored for type and difficulty to ensure that all pupils are fully challenged. Other pupils interviewed showed less experience of non-fiction reading than is generally found for their age. This reflects the weakness in the library, which is small for this size of school and has many books which are out of date. Class collections have enough modern fiction to boost pupils' interest, but many reading scheme books for younger pupils are worn and need replacing.

56. Results in the national tests in writing have varied widely in recent years, both in Year 2 and Year 6, and the school has identified writing as a focus for development. Pupils in Year 2 write stories and accounts for different purposes, and standards of spelling and punctuation are sound overall. However, results in the Year 2 tests in 2003 were below the national average, and current evidence shows that pupils do not write at length often enough in Years 1 and 2 to develop confident skills and pace. The tasks set do not always expect enough writing from those with the potential for higher attainment. Handwriting develops well through the school because of a consistent policy. Work is generally well presented, and some pieces in Years 3 to 6 are of a very good standard when planned, improved and corrected for display. A consistent focus on creative writing, through poetry and stories, results in many good examples of rich vocabulary, appealing images and dramatic dialogue. By Year 6, factual accounts are well organised, using paragraphs and complex sentence structures. In the 2003 national tests for Year 6, the proportion who reached the expected level or beyond in writing was above the national average, but the proportion reaching the higher level was well below average and much lower than the school predicted. Examples of work from that year group suggests that pupils expected to reach the higher level failed to do so under test conditions because of the high frequency of basic errors in their spelling, punctuation and sentence structures. No use of a dictionary or thesaurus was seen during the inspection. Pupils learn spellings for homework, but they are not trained rigorously enough to check their work for accuracy, and teachers' expectations are too low in this respect across the school.

57. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the sample of lessons seen, one lesson was very good, three were good and the remainder were satisfactory. The National Literacy Strategy is closely followed. Instruction is generally well focused on language features, drawn from interesting texts. In the very good lesson, computer projection was used with great skill to intensify the focus on descriptive language and to stimulate pupils' ideas through a video clip. In other effective lessons, energetic instruction, a brisk pace, clear focus and high expectations prompted active responses from all pupils. Teachers and assistants give good guidance to individuals and groups as they work. However, there is a widespread tendency for teachers to give fulsome praise without then coaching the individual to improved performance in speaking or writing. This is very evident in marking, which loses its impact because teachers show strong appreciation of pupils' ideas but do not consistently identify grammatical errors or set further work so that pupils can correct their specific weaknesses.

58. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The new co-ordinator shows a strong commitment to raising standards, and her role is now supported by two colleagues who teach other year groups. Nevertheless, her role in monitoring teaching and learning is underdeveloped.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. Opportunities to develop pupils' reading and writing skills through other subjects are not planned systematically enough. There is some good practice, such as the geography project in Year 5, where pupils develop a report on a river of their choice, using a wide range of references. However, reports in other subjects, particularly science, are too brief, and not enough is expected of pupils with the potential for higher attainment to explain their ideas in depth and detail.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 have fallen since the last inspection and are now average.
- Teaching is satisfactory, with a significant proportion that is good, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Leadership is good.
- Teachers do not mark pupils' work well enough or make good enough use of computers in lessons.
- Some teachers concentrate too much on number work.
- In some classes mental mathematics sessions are not brisk enough.

Commentary

60. Pupils have a secure understanding of mathematics and achieve satisfactorily because, on the whole, teachers have a firm grasp of the National Numeracy Strategy and follow it closely. However, a few teachers do not consistently get the balance right, and concentrate too much on number work. As a result, pupils in those classes have a firm grasp of this element but get fewer opportunities to develop their understanding of other aspects of mathematics. For example, a general weakness is pupils' ability to solve word problems. Daily mental mathematics sessions give pupils a satisfactory ability to think in mathematical terms and this helps them to calculate with reasonable speed. In most classes, the pace of these sessions is brisk enough and the challenge good. However, in others, teachers do not challenge pupils to think and respond quickly, nor give all pupils the opportunity to participate fully.

61. Teaching and learning in all lessons seen were at least satisfactory and were good in Years 5 and 6. The strongest features were teachers' insistence on very high standards of discipline and pupils' response with good attitudes to their learning. Together, these make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Lessons are interesting and teachers encourage and help pupils well. Most teachers match work to pupils' needs so that they learn step by step. In the best lessons seen, pupils were very enthusiastic about their learning because the work was pitched at exactly the right level for their different attainment levels. As a result, the pace of these lessons was fast and all pupils learnt quickly. This is not a consistent feature, however. In two lessons, teachers set work that was too hard for some pupils, with the result that they did not achieve as well as they should.

62. The benefits of recent developments are beginning to work through. In Years 3 to 6, pupils learn in groups which are formed according to their attainment. Teachers aim at the same learning objectives for each year group, but pitch them at pupils' differing levels of understanding. For example, in Year 6 the objective was to learn informal and formal methods of subtraction; this was done in thousands for higher achievers, but by 'counting on' within a hundred for pupils who had SEN. Consequently, all pupils were given the opportunity to learn well. The implementation of the 'Springboard' project gives good extra support for borderline pupils in Years 3 to 5 and makes a positive contribution to increasing the number of pupils who attain the expected levels. The school provides well for pupils who have SEN. Teaching assistants support them well in class and the special needs teacher withdraws pupils in Years 3 to 6 once a week. Teaching seen in one such lesson was good, confirming that they achieve well.

63. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. Teaching and learning are monitored well and test results are analysed to help teachers plan work to match pupils' needs. As a result, the downward trend of standards is being halted and, in particular, an increasing proportion of pupils attain higher levels. However, further work remains to be done for standards to rise, because:

- * not all teachers consistently match work well enough for the needs of all pupils;
- * few teachers mark pupils' work in a way that shows them how to improve;
- * teachers do not use computers well enough to help pupils learn in mathematical lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. The use of mathematics is not systematically planned to a suitable extent to help pupils learn in other subjects. Nevertheless, examples are found in some subjects. For example, mathematical skills are used in science, when data is presented in the form of graphs and bar charts, and in design and technology, when pupils design and make houses.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good, and is based on a good understanding of science: achievement is good.
- Tasks set are not always varied to suit the needs of all in the class.
- The co-ordinator leads well, with a good understanding of the areas that need to be developed further.
- There have been few opportunities for pupils to write about their science so far this year.

Commentary

65. Standards in science are rising in the school in line with the national trend. At the time of inspection, standards were in line with expectations throughout the school. Because of the way the school prefers to organise its timetable, with very clear emphases on focus areas, there was relatively little completed work to analyse. In the work available, tasks were generally not varied to suit the needs of different individuals and there was little extended writing in response to tasks. For example, the results of experiments were completed in tables, but pupils have not routinely written about their predictions, how they designed and carried out their experiments, or what their results show. Work from the previous year shows that opportunities have been taken in the past for pupils to write in this way.

66. Nevertheless, in the lessons seen, teaching was good and pupils had the opportunity to organise for themselves how they might record their findings. Pupils with SEN are well supported to make good progress. Lessons are well organised, with clear objectives for learning and planning which ensure that all are included. Teachers have a clear understanding of the curriculum and this enables them to challenge pupils effectively. This good teaching and learning means that pupils are currently achieving well in science. However, formal assessment systems are not securely in place across the school.

67. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject. She leads well by her example. She has a clear vision for the subject and has identified weaknesses in provision that have then been addressed. For example, there is evidence that long term planning was not effective enough in the past, leading to some pupils missing areas or covering them twice. The scheme of work has been reworked to eliminate this problem. Plans are advanced for the co-ordinator to visit lessons and analyse pupils' work more closely in the current academic year, to provide more information to direct the development of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Provision in this area has improved significantly.
- Leadership of the subject is effective.
- Tasks are not always varied to meet the needs of individual pupils.

Commentary

68. Information and communication technology (ICT) has been a major focus for the school and provision has improved rapidly over the last year or so. Performance management is being used as an effective tool in the school to ensure that all staff receive training and advice to improve matters further. The recently completed suite of computers is well organised for use in lessons and as a tool to support learning in other lessons, although this aspect is not yet routinely in use.

69. Pupils in Year 2 are attaining standards in line with expectations, and their achievement is satisfactory. In lessons seen, they were able to use a painting program effectively to produce pictures based on their work on the Great Fire of London. They competently used the tools available to produce, for example, flame effects by using the 'spray can'. Pupils in Year 6, however, are attaining standards below expectations. They were seen using a spreadsheet in a limited way to organise data with a view to learning about the use of formulae. Pupils have made limited progress in the past, but that progress is now accelerating as they gain in confidence using the computers in the suite. This improved progress and learning indicates that they currently are also achieving satisfactorily, when their past attainment is taken into account.

70. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers are still learning how best to exploit the suite, and this has led to lessons that have sometimes lacked pace. For example, in the Year 2 lesson in which pupils made pictures about the Great Fire of London, many had produced good quality pictures quickly and had no challenging extension work to complete. There is not yet a large screen computer set up in the suite, so pupils have to sit around a standard monitor as the teacher demonstrates the techniques they are to learn and practise, and this also affects the pace. However, the Year 6 classrooms, adjacent to the suite, are fitted with whiteboards and data projectors so that these pupils have a much better picture of what it is they are to attempt, and this is having a positive effect on their progress. Medium-term planning does not include tasks that are varied for the needs of different groups, and this shortcoming is translated into lessons in which all pupils attempt the same task. Pupils with SEN are not disadvantaged by this because they have some support in lessons, but those with the potential for high attainment are not consistently challenged throughout lessons.

71. The clear focus on ICT has meant that the co-ordinator has already carried out lesson visits and produced rigorous and effective reports for staff, including points for action. She leads knowledgeably and understands what needs to be done to improve further. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, so that pupils' attainment on units of work is recorded, but there is no consistent system of shorter-term assessment across the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. The school accepts that the use of class-based computers is an area for further development, as its focus has been on improving pupils' access to computing and the learning of the skills of ICT. Nevertheless, there are examples of computers being used to support learning. In the lessons observed in the computer suite, for example, the context for the computer skills included literacy, history and art. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils used a website to practise their skills in computation.

HUMANITIES

73. Provision in geography and history was sampled but not enough evidence was available to make secure judgements on the quality of teaching or standards at the end of Year 2 or Year 6. Standards observed in geography and history are in line with expectations, although there was only limited completed work for analysis. The work that was examined shows that there is little difference in standards reached by pupils of differing capabilities, which indicates that the most capable are not consistently challenged enough. Both subjects make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- There are good links with local churches.
- Assessment systems are not used well enough to set work which matches pupils' needs.
- The school has plenty of resources to help teachers make lessons interesting.

Commentary

74. Standards are in line with expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is a similar picture to that seen in the last inspection.

75. The main focus is on learning about the Christian tradition as set out in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils also learn about other faiths such as Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. A strong feature of teaching is the value placed on other faiths. Similarities and differences are examined and explained, such as the different festivals of light. The school seeks out places of worship for pupils to visit so that they can compare features, festivals and ceremonies of different faiths. Christian clergy take assemblies and talk to pupils in the classroom. An annual visit to York Minster is designed to promote spiritual awareness as well as knowledge of the Christian tradition. The school celebrates Christian festivals in school, such as harvest and Christmas. Visits to places of worship such as a Hindu temple help pupils to learn about and value other faiths.

76. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, and sometimes good. Very little evidence of pupils' work was seen in Years 1 and 2 because lessons are mainly oral. Good teaching in a lesson in Year 6 brought an element of spirituality into pupils' experiences when the teacher lit a candle within a Christmas nativity crib and gave pupils the opportunity to reflect on its significance in an atmosphere of quiet reverence. Pupils were inspired to think of searching questions they would like to ask Mary and Joseph, such as 'Why did you choose each other?' In another lesson, however, this was handled in a perfunctory way, with the effect that little spiritual value was added to pupils' learning. Although the school has a good stock of resources, in one lesson it was the teacher's neglect to provide stimulating resources that contributed to its dullness. There were no resources such as an Advent calendar or an Advent ring to give a focus and interest to the lesson.

77. The subject is led enthusiastically by the headteacher. However, weaknesses in teaching and learning have been missed. In particular, the most capable pupils do not get a level of challenge that extends them and this puts a limit on how well they achieve. Teachers do not make good enough use of the subject to promote pupils' literacy skills. Few teachers take the opportunity to promote the subject in displays in classrooms and around the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. The subjects in this area of the curriculum make a significant contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of pupils. As art and design, design and technology, and music were not a focus in the inspection, judgements on provision have not been made. However, presentation of work seen in these subjects indicates that pupils' achievement is good overall. Attainment for younger pupils is at expected levels, but for older pupils standards are above those expected. Much of the success of pupils' work is a result of good planning and expectations, which link with other subjects within topic work. The levels of presentation, markedly of those pupils in Year 6, are particularly good. This picture is similar to that of the last inspection with the exception of assessment. This remains somewhat informal overall.

79. Music lessons were observed in Years 5 and 6 and singing was heard in assemblies. A talented music specialist visits the school weekly. The results observed, particularly in assembly, were impressive. As the African sounds and rhythms echoed across the hall, the zest with which pupils sang and the enthusiasm of the teacher were moving as well joyful. In the lessons, pupils were rapidly engaged by the expertise of the teacher and the pace was lively. Pupils have a growing appreciation of how to make music and a growing confidence in performance. They have a great respect for the talent of the teacher and feel that they know more about the meaning of music, particularly that of other cultures and countries, than they did before. Several pupils play recorders and there is instrumental teaching available. The head teacher values the essence of spontaneity in music making and therefore formal planning and recording is seen to be essentially flexible. The school is justly proud of its musical production, in which the majority of pupils take part.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The attitudes of pupils are very good and pupils reach above average standards in Year 6.
- Teachers manage pupils well, and follow through in a structured and supportive way.
- The more athletic pupils could be stretched more.
- The quality of praise from teachers occasionally devalues pupils' potential for improvement.

Commentary

80. The majority of pupils are fit and healthy and keen to perform well. For example, pupils in Year 2 transferred their weight carefully along apparatus. Their achievement is good overall. Teachers marshal pupils well when apparatus is to be used, and pupils are very well behaved. Planning does not take into account the variation of pupils' skills, and more athletic pupils do not always have the scope to improve on their performance. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate the performance of their peers and give them opportunities to consider their own efforts, but occasionally teachers tend to praise too highly, which muffles the gains that can be made from an objective evaluation. Nevertheless, pupils' progress is good overall and the subject is enriched through sports clubs for such as athletics and country dancing. Pupils benefit from coaching in football and netball, supported by parents. The school has recently celebrated the winning of the North Yorkshire championship in six-a-side football and is preparing to take part in the North of England championships.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Personal, social and health education has a high profile in the curriculum and through the life of the school.
- Pupils become mature and responsible.
- Staff provide good role models for being responsible and caring citizens.

Commentary

81. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. Aspects are taught in separate lessons or within other subjects, notably science and religious education. Provision is guided by a scheme of work and commercial materials that give teachers clear guidance in planning appropriate activities. Coverage includes drugs awareness, and parents are properly consulted on the programme for sex education. Visitors contributing to citizenship awareness include representatives of the clergy, police and fire brigade. Pupils consider issues of concern in weekly class discussions called 'Circle Time'.

82. Staff create good opportunities for pupils to take initiatives in the wider life of the school. The daily involvement of pupils in collecting materials for recycling is a significant feature in encouraging responsible behaviour. Older pupils act as 'peer mediators' to help others resolve disputes. Pupils learn about the democratic process when they vote for school council members through whom they can make their views known. Such opportunities make a good contribution to pupils' personal development and their attitudes towards school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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