

INSPECTION REPORT

LOFTHOUSE GATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wakefield

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 108163

Headteacher: Mrs B Smith

Lead inspector: Mrs E Parry

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd March 2004

Inspection number: 256765

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	410
School address:	Canal Lane Lofthouse Gate Wakefield West Yorkshire
Postcode:	WF3 3HU
Telephone number:	01924 303110
Fax number:	01924 303111
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Smith
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lofthouse Gate Primary School is bigger than the average primary school with 410 pupils on roll. Almost all of the children are of white British origin. Most pupils from minority ethnic groups speak English and very few are at early stages of speaking English as a second language. This number is low compared to the national average. Seventy-three children currently attend the nursery and there are 38 children in two reception classes. Children's attainment when they start the nursery is a little above expectations and clearly above when they reach the end of reception. Two pupils have statements of special educational need for learning difficulties and a small percentage of pupils have some degree of special educational need, mainly for learning difficulties. The numbers of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average as is the percentage of pupils taking up free school meals. In 2002, the school achieved Investors in People status. The headteacher is involved in the national Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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19365	Gordon Stockley	Lay inspector	
33236	Kevin Dodd	Team inspector	Science; design and technology; religious education; special educational needs.
33225	Elizabeth Greensides	Team inspector	English; information and communication technology; music
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school that provides a **good** education and **good** value for money. Teaching in the school is good. By the age of eleven, standards are well above the national expectations in mathematics, science and art and above average in English, design and technology and dance, and this represents good achievement. The children have very good attitudes to school and relationships are very good. Pupils behave well. The leadership, management and governance of the school are good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school because of good teaching, and standards are well above average by Year 6 in mathematics, art, and science.
- The curriculum for the creative arts has benefited hugely from a special week with an arts focus so that pupils are achieving good standards in all of the creative subjects
- The school is a warm and caring environment which includes all pupils and sets the right atmosphere for the good provision for the pupils' personal development.
- Pupils achieve well in some aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum such as word processing but not well enough in others such as data handling, because this is a developing subject and the school has only recently acquired good resources.
- Pupils by Year 2 do not achieve as highly in the physical processes part of their science curriculum as they do in other parts.
- Very good links with the community contribute well to the quality of education.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and ensures that children get off to a good start.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Standards in mathematics are higher and more pupils reach the higher levels in science by Year 6. Provision for religious education and for information and communication technology is better than at the time of the previous inspection and pupils are reaching higher standards than before in these subjects although they still need more experience of data handling, spreadsheets and using computers to control objects or events. There has been an improvement also to the provision for pupils' cultural and spiritual development. The curriculum is good and co-ordinators provide good support for colleagues although they have little time to influence provision by seeing what is happening in classrooms. The budget was brought in line as was recommended but is once again tight because of changes to the funding arrangements. Minor omissions to statutory information have been dealt with.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	A	B	B
Mathematics	A*	A	A	A
Science	A	B	A	A

Key: A -in the top 5%; A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average. Similar schools compare the attainment of pupils from their results in Year 2 to their results in Year 6.*

Pupils' achievement overall is good. In Years 3 to 6, standards are well above average in mathematics, science and art. They are above average in English, design and technology, and dance. Standards are average in information and communication technology but rising because

of the new facilities. In Years 1 and 2, standards are well above average in mathematics and art, and above average in English, dance and design and technology; pupils' achievement is good. In science pupils achieve high standards in the parts that they have covered in depth but well below average in the physical processes part at level three; their achievement taken overall is satisfactory because of this. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their skills in speaking, reading, writing and numeracy in other subjects. Children in the Foundation Stage exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year in communication, language and literature and mathematical development. They also achieve well and exceed the expectations in the science and information and communication technology parts of their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Pupils have very good attitudes towards work. They enjoy learning and behave well. **Pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is above average.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good throughout the school; it is particularly good in Years 3 and 4 and in mathematics, art and dance throughout the school. Teachers plan interesting activities and often link learning from different subjects together so that information is constantly revisited and pupils absorb facts more easily. Lessons are conducted with a brisk pace and the very best practice draws on the very good relationships with pupils to introduce an element of fun. Explanations are clear, and teachers share well what they expect pupils to learn so that pupils settle down quickly and work hard. In most lessons, teachers are careful to match work to what pupils need to do; two lessons were judged unsatisfactory out of the 52 seen because the level of challenge was not well matched to the learning needs of all of the pupils. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly although sometimes opportunities are missed to point out to pupils how they might improve. Reception classes provide a good range of activities for children that builds well on what they have done in the nursery. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. There is a very good range of activities outside normal lessons which benefit a large number of pupils. Adults show good levels of care and treat pupils with respect and consideration.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. Subject co-ordinators provide good support to their colleagues in a number of ways but some have not been given enough time to see what is happening in classrooms. Governors and staff offer good support and the school is well placed to improve further.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils enjoy being at the school and think their teachers are fair. Parents think highly of the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that pupils in Years 3 to 6 cover all aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum in equal depth.
- Ensure that the physical processes part of the science curriculum is covered more often in Year 1 and 2 to allow pupils to reach the higher levels that they are capable of.
- Give co-ordinators more opportunities to see what is happening in classrooms so that they can influence practice more fully.
- Use marking more consistently to point out to pupils how they can improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good overall throughout the school. Standards by Year 2 are **well above average** in mathematics and art and **above average** in English, design and technology, dance and science. Standards are **well above average** by Year 6 in mathematics, science and art and **above average** in English, dance and design and technology.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in mathematics, art and dance throughout the school.
- Pupils also achieve well in design and technology, English and science.
- Pupils' information and communication technology skills are improving rapidly but not evenly across the strands of the subject.
- Pupils in Year 1 and 2 do not do as well they are able in the physical processes element of science.
- Children with special educational needs achieve well.

Commentary

1. Results of the national tests in 2003 for Year 6 pupils were well above the average in mathematics and science for all schools and compared to similar schools. They were above average in English. Over five years the trend in standards by Year 6 is in line with that nationally. Results improved in 2003 in mathematics and science but fell in English mainly because pupils' writing was not as strong as their reading. Girls consistently outperform boys in English and mathematics although sometimes by quite small amounts, but the picture is more varied in science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.0 (29.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.3 (28.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.5 (29.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Standards in the work seen are above average by Year 6 and pupils achieve well in English, design and technology, and dance. In mathematics, science and art and design, standards are well above average and achievement is very good. Pupils do well in these subjects because of teaching that is knowledgeable, often enthusiastic and consistently good. Teachers offer much encouragement so that pupils are keen to do their best. Pupils are encouraged to read and write in other subjects such as in history and in art. Numeracy skills are well developed in science. There has been a rapid improvement in pupils' information and communication technology skills as a result of the very good provision that has recently been put in place and because of skilled leadership. Teachers have yet to gain full confidence in all the strands of the subject and so pupils' achievements are only satisfactory; they do well in some areas such as word processing but do not have as much experience in others such as data handling. Pupils achieve well and attain standards that are in line with the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and this represents a good improvement since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.5 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.1 (15.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.1 (17.4)	16.3 (16.5)

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

3. At Year 2, pupils' results in 2003 improved and were above those of similar schools in reading and writing and well above them in mathematics. Their results in science, based on teacher assessment, are average overall and their achievements in this subject are satisfactory. This is because the part of the curriculum concerned with physical processes is not covered in sufficient depth to allow pupils to reach the higher levels that they achieve in the other strands of the science curriculum. In work seen, standards were found to be above average in reading, writing and science and well above average in mathematics. In religious education and information and communication technology, standards are average. Pupils achieve well overall, particularly so in mathematics and in art.
4. Children's achievements by the end of reception are good. They are likely to exceed the expected goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development with most of them working in the first level of the National Curriculum for Year 1 pupils. They are likely to achieve the expected goals in personal, social and emotional development, creative and physical development. There was too little evidence to make an overall judgement on children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world but standards were above average in scientific knowledge and in skills in information and communication technology.
5. Throughout the school, pupils' with special educational needs achieve well in relation to the targets within their individual education plans and, where relevant, their statements because work is carefully matched to their needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school and their behaviour is **good** in lessons and around the school. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is **good** and their moral and social development is **very good**, making those aspects of their personal development **good** overall. Attendance is **above average** and punctuality is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning help them to achieve well.
- Religious education and personal, social and health education lessons make a very good contribution to pupils' social and moral development.
- The school has very high expectations for pupils' conduct and this ensures that pupils are free from racism and bullying.
- The multi-cultural diversity of this country is insufficiently celebrated.

Commentary

6. Pupils listen well in lessons and work hard. They are particularly good at working in pairs and small groups, when they share resources well and wait patiently until it is their turn. During a very good dance lesson, pupils in Year 5/6 worked very well in groups of four or six to create a dance 'sculpture'. In a very good science lesson, pupils in Year 1 walked around the school looking for objects made from different types of materials. They tackled the task with great enthusiasm, identifying their objects and quickly informing the person who had been chosen to record the findings.

7. In lessons and around the school pupils behave well. They are aware from work in personal, social and health education lessons of the importance of good rules and understand the reasons why they should behave well. Many of the lessons are designed to engage pupils' interest well, such as a literacy lesson about writing instructions that started off with the teacher giving out a game and telling the children to play, but not giving them any instructions. This immediately raised pupils' interest, as well as emphasising the importance of clear instructions. Sometimes lessons require children to sit for a long period on the carpet and they tend to get bored whilst awaiting their turn to take part. On these occasions pupils' behaviour deteriorates, but it is usually well managed by teachers.
8. Behaviour in the playground and around the school is good. Pupils are friendly and they play together in small and larger groups with a minimum of supervision necessary. Although around half of the pupils who completed a questionnaire felt that behaviour was not always good, pupils spoken to during the inspection felt that most pupils were well behaved and they had no concerns about bullying. They knew that they should tell a teacher if they were bullied and were aware of the school's response to bullying incidents. Parents are very happy with the standard of behaviour and feel that the small amount of bullying is handled well by the school. There was one fixed-term exclusion last year following a physical attack on another pupil.
9. Pupils respond well to the school's provision for personal development, an area given a high priority by the school. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting with the lead inspector explained that right from the start of their education in the nursery, children learn how to behave and they are taught respect. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. Assemblies have a strong moral content and teachers relate the stories and parables well to children's everyday life. In an assembly for the younger children during the inspection the teacher told the story of the ugly duckling and reinforced the view that it was wrong to treat someone differently just because they looked different. The teacher asked children to reflect on how *they* had changed in the time since they had started school and one child said that she had become a nicer person. Other opportunities provided by the school for pupils to develop their personal qualities include: the school council; older pupils helping children in the nursery; a wide range of clubs, including the popular chess club led by the caretaker; and the annual residential visit for pupils in Year 6.
10. Through their studies in art pupils gain an appreciation of their own and other cultures. The school has pupils from China and celebrates the Chinese New Year. Pupils learn about some of the other major religions and there have been visits by Indian and Caribbean dancers. There are a few visits to places of worship but pupils are not well aware of the features of living in a multicultural society. The curriculum provides good opportunities for spiritual development, allowing time for reflection in lessons and assemblies, and opportunities for pupils to be proud of their achievements in subjects such as dance and design and technology. Teaching styles promote self-esteem and confidence.
11. Pupils enjoy coming to school and **attendance is above the national average**. The school has good procedures to monitor pupils' absences and most parents inform the school when their child is absent. The vast majority of pupils arrive in time for the start of school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black African
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
398	1	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
5	0	0
1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching is good and contributes to the good quality of pupils' learning. The curriculum provides a range of activities that is relevant to the ages and interests of the pupils; it is well supported by a very good range of extra activities which many pupils attend. The school places a strong emphasis on supporting and guiding pupils, and the care they receive is good. Parents and pupils think highly of the school.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **good**. Good teaching was seen in all classes with particularly strong teaching in the Year 3/4 classes, and in mathematics, art and design and dance throughout the school. The quality of teaching is better than it was at the time of the last inspection and leads to **good learning** for the pupils. There are **good** procedures for assessment although some inconsistency in their use.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A combination of very good subject knowledge, good relationships and enthusiastic teaching leads to good learning for pupils.
- Teachers make learning fun in the best lessons.
- On occasion a lack of suitable challenge for all groups slows down learning.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but sometimes miss opportunities through writing suitable comments to help pupils to improve their work.

Commentary

12. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The good provision in all three classrooms is strengthened by effective teamwork from all of the adults who are fully engaged in teaching. Support for outdoor learning is not as effective as it should be at times when there are too many children outdoors and especially when adults in the nursery have to deal with children who have toilet accidents. Children's learning is well balanced between the activities that they can choose to do and those that involve direct teaching in groups. The children who are almost five are introduced to literacy and numeracy skills in the nursery and gradually to the National Literacy Strategy in reception so that there is a build-up of experiences and children cope well with increasingly formal teaching.

13. Teaching from Year 1 to Year 6 is good. Throughout the school, lessons are well planned and activities are interesting. Where teaching is good, challenging tasks are set for pupils of all abilities so that pupils enjoy learning. Teachers explain clearly what the lesson is about and pupils know what they are to learn. Teaching is of a high quality in mathematics with mental and oral work that is stimulating and often fun for the pupils to do. Art and dance are taught very well throughout the school. Some teaching is excellent because teachers have very good knowledge of their subject, skilfully draw on what pupils already know both in the same subject and from a range of other sources and develop pupils' learning widely. Pupils work hard in these lessons because they enjoy what they are doing and take pride in what they produce. Teachers often put a strong focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and on pupils learning by evaluating what others are doing; this is particularly strong in art and dance and helps to raise standards. Teaching is most inconsistent in information and communication technology. This is because some teachers are still catching up with the curriculum and remain insecure with aspects such as data handling and controlling events. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to use their reading, writing skills and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Pupils' work is marked regularly and often with useful comments that explain how pupils can improve but this is inconsistent and opportunities are missed to give pupils the written guidance that they can reflect on in order to improve. The very good assessment procedures are not always used effectively, resulting in unchallenging activities because the work that pupils are asked to do is too easy. This led to two lessons being judged unsatisfactory, one in science in Year 6 and one in English in Year 2.

14. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early through effective assessment procedures. They are guided well because they are involved in setting and reviewing their own targets. They are taught well in lessons when teachers use good support strategies, including appropriate questioning, praise, and encouragement to motivate and keep them on task. Where appropriate, teaching assistants support pupils well in class lessons, ensuring they can be fully involved and can participate purposefully in all activities. Pupils also receive good reinforcement of basic skills in special sessions.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection 52 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4 (8%)	13 (25%)	15 (29%)	16 (31%)	2 (4%)		

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. Two lessons were seen that were not graded because the observations were for too short a time. This affects the percentage figures which do not add up to 100%

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum that is enriched with a wide range of activities outside normal lessons. Accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good curricular opportunities are provided for all pupils.
- Participation in art and dance is very good.
- Teachers make effective links between subjects.
- There are some small shortcomings in information and communication technology in Year 3 to 6 and science in Years 1 and 2.
- There is very good support for learning outside of the school day.
- Very good links with the local high school ensure a smooth transition to secondary education.

Commentary

15. Teachers work tirelessly to make their lessons effective and interesting. Overall, they successfully use the national guidance, carefully adapting it so that pupils of different abilities move forward confidently and rapidly. Literacy and numeracy are priorities, but there is a strong emphasis on providing a wide and varied curriculum in other subjects. Art, for example, is a particular strength and pupils produce work of very good quality. Lack of information and communication technology equipment in the past has led to weaknesses in pupils' understanding of data handling, such as the use of spreadsheets. There are weaknesses in pupils' knowledge of physical processes in science in infants, because this has not been covered fully in the past. Teachers include opportunities to reinforce aspects of literacy and numeracy in other subject areas, for example in recording the results of their science investigations. The school meets statutory requirements for all subjects.
16. The curriculum is made richer by a very good range of extra activities and experiences. A very successful 'Art Week', when an artist engages pupils in painting and sculpture, gives a considerable boost to their creativity. The school welcomes and makes effective use of a number of visitors. Visits to the theatre and to Caphouse Colliery, for example, contribute positively to pupils' learning. There are very good opportunities for older pupils to take part in activities outside school hours. These are very well attended and include sport and music, as well as chess and circus skills. Careful planning for personal, social and health education helps ensure pupils' personal development, and knowledge of health and drugs misuse is successfully promoted. Very good links with the local high school, to which most pupils transfer at the age of eleven, prepare them very well for the next stage of their education.
17. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory. There is a well-equipped computer suite and spacious library. Most of the building is bright, spacious, welcoming and secure. The school is well aware that the accommodation for the oldest pupils needs up-dating and plans are in hand for this. Teachers present pupils' work attractively in good quality displays. There are good resources to teach the National Curriculum programmes of study and sufficient staff who are well qualified and suitably deployed across the school.
18. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. All schemes and policies have been reviewed. Previously the library was found to be inadequate; it is now very good. Adequate computer facilities at the time of the last inspection have improved significantly with the opening of a new computer suite.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **good** care of its pupils. It provides **good** support and guidance for pupils and involves them **well** in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good health and safety routines and very good child protection arrangements ensure that pupils are well looked after.
- There are good arrangements for settling in pupils new to the school.

Commentary

19. The school is a safe and secure place. Good attention is paid to health and safety and this means that pupils are able to work in a healthy and caring environment. Appropriate risk assessments are completed and there are procedures in place to ensure that routine checks are carried out as required. In addition there is a termly health and safety inspection of the building and grounds. Teachers pay good attention to safety in lessons, and pupils in Year 2 have designed posters about keeping safe in the park, at home, at the swimming baths, etc. There are good arrangements for dealing with accidents and minor injuries to pupils. Photographs of pupils with specific medical conditions are displayed in the medical room, together with clear instructions about appropriate emergency treatment. Teachers are aware of children who might need the toilet urgently and deal sensitively with their needs. The school has started to work towards the Healthy Schools Award and there are appropriate safeguards in place to control unacceptable use of the Internet.
20. The headteacher is the child protection co-ordinator. She is very experienced in this area of her work and ensures that parents are made aware of the school's legal responsibility to report any significant concerns. She also ensures through regular briefing sessions that all staff are aware of their obligations and what signs to look out for.
21. All pupils benefit from the very good relationships they have with their teachers and other adults working in the school. The assessment and monitoring procedures ensure that teachers know their pupils' strengths and weaknesses well and this enables them to give good support, advice and guidance. The vast majority of pupils who completed the questionnaire said that there was an adult that they would talk to if they were worried at school. Most pupils enjoy being at the school and think their teachers are fair.
22. Pupils who join the school from other schools are well supported and soon feel settled in their new situation. Two such pupils told an inspector that they had been helped to settle in easily and had quickly made new friends. One pupil had arrived from abroad and had quickly learned enough English to take a meaningful part in lessons. Both pupils had been allocated a 'buddy' to show them the school routines and to help them to feel at home.
23. Pupils from Year 2 onwards have opportunities to be involved in making some decisions about the running of their school through the school council. The pupils elect two representatives from each year group and they meet regularly under the guidance of the headteacher. The council has appointed a chairperson and a secretary who takes notes of the meetings, and members report back to their classes on discussions held by the council.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good arrangements to ensure a smooth transfer to secondary education.
- Parents would like more information about their children's attainments and more support so that they can help their children at home.
- Parents support their children's education well by raising funds, helping in school and on visits, and ensuring homework is done.

Commentary

24. The school encourages parents to share in the education of their children and many parents are keen to help where they can. A number of parents help regularly in classes and there are always sufficient volunteers to help on visits. Teachers report that most parents are supportive at home, listening to reading and ensuring that homework is done. There is an effective Parent-Teacher Committee which meets each half-term. This committee raises valuable additional funds for the school by organising a range of events such as family discos and summer and Christmas fayres. Money raised from these events has paid for such things as sports equipment, library books and transport costs. The school is in the process of extending its support for parents by facilitating the introduction of a breakfast club and an after-school club.
25. The school keeps parents informed by regular letters about school events. The website is still being developed and does not yet contain much information that is useful to parents other than a list of term dates. The school organises open days where parents can view the school and look at their children's work. It has also organised curriculum evenings for parents in the past, but not recently. Some parents at the pre-inspection meeting would like the school to do more to help them understand how mathematics is taught in school so that they would be better able to help their children when they were struggling with homework.
26. Some teachers send out written information to parents about what their children will be learning in the weeks ahead. However, this practice is not consistently carried out throughout the school. In the Foundation Stage teachers put detailed planning sheets on display, but these do not allow parents to see at a glance what their children will be doing. Teachers send home written annual reports in the summer term. These are informative but they do not tell parents clearly how their child is doing in relation to national expectations; neither do they contain targets or 'next steps' information for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These again were areas of concern raised by some parents at the meeting.
27. Almost all pupils transfer to one partner secondary school. Pupils are very well prepared for the transfer by a range of activities and procedures designed to ensure that pupils make this important change with the minimum of difficulty. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to take part in a number of activities at the secondary school including mathematics mornings, after-school physical education club, football and netball training and musical events. Staff from the secondary school teach art, and design and technology sessions to Year 6 pupils, and all Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to spend at least one day at the high school during their final term at Lofthouse Gate. Homework expectations in Year 6 are such that pupils are well prepared for the homework demands of the first year in high school. The primary school provides all necessary information to the secondary school, including friendship groups, and the secondary school reports back on how well pupils have settled and eventually provides information about pupils' examination achievements.

28. The school is involved in a very good range of initiatives with other schools and colleges that supports pupils' education very well. This include links with a local special school in the form of pupil visits and music and dance workshops, a parent and child information and communication technology programme developed by the local further education college, and regular placements for trainee teachers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are all **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has high aspirations to continue to raise standards throughout school and has clear plans to do this.
- The staff work well as a team and are united in their vision for improvement.
- Procedures to induct new staff into school are currently insufficiently developed.
- The headteacher and other key staff have developed a lively and enriched curriculum.
- Monitoring to sustain and improve teaching and learning in different subjects of the curriculum is not rigorous enough.
- The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

Commentary

29. The headteacher leads the school through open and honest debate so that all members of staff share in the plans for development and improvement. These are clear and show high expectations for the continued raising of standards. The headteacher is a consultant head for the local authority and uses this experience within school to identify areas for improvement and to address them effectively. Targets are challenging but realistic, and all members of staff share in working towards them. Staff performance management procedures are effective, and support staff are now being offered the same opportunities as teaching staff. Teaching staff have overall targets for whole-school improvement, and individual targets for their own personal and professional development. Teaching is monitored through performance management, by team leaders in line with local education authority expectations, but there is insufficient use of other monitoring information by the headteacher to drive standards in teaching further forward.
30. The headteacher receives good support from a committed and hard-working staff, and good team management means that the staff work hard together to identify and resolve areas of weakness. There is effective delegation and responsibility of subject areas, and all staff have clearly defined roles. The co-ordinators of core subjects look very carefully at what pupils can and cannot do and this information is used well to create strategic plans for promoting higher achievement. However, there is not sufficient monitoring of the way new procedures are implemented by all staff to give cohesion throughout school. For example, the school has carefully analysed the results of assessments throughout school and keeps careful records to track the progress of individual pupils. The use of this tracking information is well used by some staff in some subjects, but this is underdeveloped and its impact reduced by inconsistent use. There has been a recent and relatively high turnover of staff. New staff, although quickly members of the school team and ethos, are not introduced to major aspects of the school's work speedily enough, and in the case of leaders of subjects this can have an impact on development. There is as yet no staff handbook for new or temporary staff, and this again leads to an inconsistency in practice.
31. The headteacher has effectively led the school's initiative on developing a lively and enriched curriculum based on the arts and this has led to improvements in teaching and

contributes well to pupils' abilities and achievements. There are good and still developing links between the different subjects. The role of individual curriculum co-ordinators has been developed well, and all are involved in writing policies and action plans and overseeing the planning and resourcing of their subject. They provide often good support to colleagues through discussion and advice, and sometimes drop-in sessions for the development of staff, for example in information and communication technology. Co-ordinators regularly look at planning and the work of pupils, but do not get sufficient time to monitor teaching and learning to ensure consistent implementation of initiatives throughout school and there is insufficient emphasis on monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in different subjects of the curriculum. As a result, very good teaching is not consistently shared with other members of staff or used to further drive up standards.

32. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are fulfilled. The governors are well aware of the school's priorities and how these have been identified and this helps them to give good support to the continued improvement of the school. They ensure that their approach to financial management helps the school to achieve its educational priorities and have worked hard to identify suitable arrangements to reduce the current budget deficit. The governing body ensures good value in its spending by a keeping a close eye on the budget. In view of the standards that pupils achieve and the good quality of education provided, the school gives good value for money.

Financial Information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	802,135	Balance from previous year	2,811
Total expenditure	800,254	Balance carried forward to the next	4,692
Expenditure per pupil	2,238.47		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

A 39-place nursery and two reception classes comprise the Foundation Stage. At the time of the inspection, children in the nursery were taught by three nursery nurses. The pattern of standards when children first start in the nursery is a little above that expected for three year olds except in personal and social development which is average. Children's achievements by the end of reception are good. Taken overall, children are likely to exceed the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, with most of them working in the first level of the National Curriculum for Year 1 pupils. They are likely to achieve the expected goals in personal, social and emotional development, creative and physical development. There was too little evidence to make an overall judgement on children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world but standards were above average in scientific knowledge and in skills in information and communication technology. Overall, the provision in the Foundation Stage is good and teaching is good, a picture that is an improvement on the judgements of the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision encourages children to be independent.
- Staff know children well and respond well to the children's individual needs.

Commentary

33. By the end of the Reception Year, standards are in line with those expected and children's achievements are good. There are sound arrangements to help children to settle in to the nursery securely and happily; home visits are offered but rarely taken up. There is a delightfully informal start to each session where children come in with their parents and select their own activities. This develops children's confidence well and encourages them to be independent. Well-organised resources and activities enable children to learn through play. There are good arrangements to gain children's confidence in moving from nursery to reception through special literacy sessions for those who are nearly five and taking children to the spare classroom for music and the hall for movement so that the children get used to the school and to more formal activities in easy stages. Staff plan well and provide a wide range of activities where children can work on their own, with a partner, supported by an adult or in a group. This ensures that children have the opportunity to develop good working relationships with one another and with the adults who work with them. Adults work together well and move between activities to support children as needed. This ensures that there is a calm purposeful atmosphere in the classrooms. However, quite often in the nursery, staff must deal with children who are not fully toilet trained and have accidents. One person dealing with an accident reduces the ability to respond flexibly, and showed during afternoon outdoor play when children's play became too boisterous because there was not enough adult support to lead the play in the large variety of activities available outside. Adults set good examples for the children which help the children to understand how they should treat one another.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of speaking, listening, reading and writing activities is planned in informal and formal situations.
- There is good continuity of practice between nursery and reception.

Commentary

34. Teaching and learning are good. Children are likely to exceed the early learning goals and almost all will be working within the first level of the National Curriculum by the end of reception. Most of the children start at the nursery with a confidence in speaking although there are some whose speech is unclear. All adults provide good models of speech as they talk to the children through the day. Children enjoy sharing what they are doing with adults and by reception, they are very confident to talk with each other or adults as they play and to answer questions. Children who are almost five and ready to go into the reception classes are given a short formal session out of the nursery room where the teacher reads them a story and begins some work on sounds and letters. This is a useful introduction to the more formal activity they will experience in the reception class although the session seen was quite gentle and not as demanding as some of the more informal discussions observed. By reception, children are experiencing more activity in line with the National Strategy for Literacy. Children read from the labels around the classroom, for example in the café, and read story books with the teacher, and one of the oldest children is reading very confidently from books at a much higher level than is expected. Children in the nursery have an office area where they write letters and address envelopes. Writing skills are well promoted through informal methods in reception classes, for example writing customer orders in the café from the lists and labels there, as well as through more structured work such as labelling their science work. In a lesson for the oldest children, the recognition of sounds was developed well from a story and extended into putting words into alphabet order. There was good extension for the more able into looking at second letters when words start with the same first one; they coped with this well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning is well developed by all adults through play as well as through more formal activities.

Commentary

35. Teaching is good and children are likely to exceed the targets set for them in the early learning goals by the end of reception. In the nursery, children learn to count through songs and through play; one quite confidently counted 12 eggs in an egg tray as he was putting away his shopping in the home play area. In reception, children are taught through songs and play and also through whole-class sessions that prepare them well for the numeracy lessons that they will have in Year 1. In a briskly moving mathematics session, younger reception children counted securely to 20 and beyond. They particularly enjoyed counting backwards from 10 to 'blast-off'. They sorted plants in order of size, showing a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary in response to the teacher's questions. The work of older children, and their records, shows that they have developed a

competence with addition, recording their work in a traditional form. They can work out subtraction sums using small numbers. They can name shapes and have started to measure using objects as measuring tools.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

There was not enough evidence to make judgements across the whole of this area of learning. Most of the activities seen were related to science and information and communication technology. By reception, the children show above average levels of skill in controlling the 'mouse'. They confidently click onto icons, rotate images and 'drag and drop' them onto their pictures. Children in the nursery begin to learn about how plants grow and where insects live through some well-planned activities. They enjoyed digging in a tray of compost for onions and were excited by the opportunity to find various plastic mini-beasts in trays of rocks and moss. By reception, the children show a good level of knowledge about parts of plants such as flower, petal, roots and stems. In one activity, the teacher made good links with literacy skills as children were introduced to their work through a 'Big Book' and looked at how diagrams are labelled in books before making and labelling diagrams of their own.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a good range of physical activities both inside and outdoors.
- At times there are too many children outside for the numbers of staff available for supervision.

Commentary

36. Teaching is satisfactory. Children are likely to achieve the learning goals by the end of reception. The staff plan for a good learning experience in physical activity with the outside space offering experiences in many areas of learning. Adults lead play effectively and develop learning well through activities such as gardening which extend what the children are doing in the classroom. However, on occasion, too many children go out in both reception and nursery classes for the numbers of staff available to develop learning effectively. Nursery sessions outside are particularly affected when a member of staff has to deal with children who have toilet accidents. This leaves little flexibility for other staff to respond to children's choices. Children's play sometimes becomes too boisterous and when this happens, children do not get the best learning out of the provision. All classes have time in the hall when they follow a more formal whole-class activity. Nursery children respond well, following the adults' examples and showing good skill in balancing bean bags on parts of their bodies. The children try hard to throw to a partner but the skill involved is beyond the majority of them at this age.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given a good range of materials to explore and experiences to learn through play.

Commentary

37. Teaching is good and children are likely to achieve the expected standards in all areas of creative development. Classrooms provide children with a good range of activities which they can choose from so that they are able to explore and experiment, for example using different seeds and pulses to create flower pictures or moulding play-dough or clay. Children use paint and different crayons confidently to produce observational drawings of good quality, such as those of fruit or bowls of daffodils. Nursery children showed good self-control in a music lesson where they responded to symbols to play instruments or be quiet. Imaginative play is encouraged in all classrooms and the café in a reception class was thoughtfully resourced with menus and prices that encouraged children to write orders of what their customers wanted to eat. When adults work alongside children they encourage them to talk and use a wider range of words. Praise is used constantly to support and encourage children.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are good.
- Teaching and learning are good overall, particularly in Years 3 and 4 but on occasion there are low expectations, and a lack of challenge and extension for higher achieving pupils.
- Achievement in writing remains below that of reading.
- Planning makes good use of the content of other subjects in the application of skills.
- Very good assessment and tracking procedures implemented by the co-ordinator are well used to analyse development needs but are inconsistently used by some members of staff to respond to individual needs.

Commentary

38. Standards in English overall are above national expectations. Standards in reading are high, and pupils achieve well in national tests at Years 2 and 6. However, performance in writing remains behind that of reading; this is a similar picture to that of the last inspection, and progress since then has been satisfactory. More able pupils write with good accuracy of spelling and punctuation, but opportunities for extended writing, especially for older pupils, are limited. Pupils are taught how to write for different purposes – for example persuasive or descriptive writing – but they are not given sufficient opportunity to revise and practise these skills on different occasions to develop their skills further.
39. Pupils achieve well overall because of good teaching. Some teaching is very good. For example, pupils in a Year 3 class developed their knowledge of instructional writing through lively and enthusiastic teaching which was rigorous in ensuring understanding for all groups of pupils. The teacher had high expectations. As a result, pupils were able to talk

about imperative verbs and apply this to their own writing. Pupils in Year 4 lesson benefited from very effective and accurate teaching of techniques and explanation. Consequently, they responded enthusiastically. They could recognise rhyming couplets and patterns in different types of verse, and could use these in their own rhymes and poems. There are, however, some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching of English throughout school. Marking by individual teachers in pupils' books does not always adhere to the marking policy. It often praises effort or corrects work but is not precise enough to enable pupils to improve through constructive comments. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn through talking and questioning each other. For example, in one Year 6 class, the teacher made use of the 'hotseat' to add interest and enthusiasm. Pupils took the role of Jason from the Greek myths and were questioned about their feelings and decisions whilst in this role, and others took notes. This not only developed their historical understanding, but also stimulated good quality writing which was fluent and empathetic.

40. Leadership and management of English are good, and the subject co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the curriculum and its further development. He keeps up to date with current national initiatives and works hard to improve and sustain standards throughout school. The analysis of pupils' performance is used effectively to set challenging targets for pupils in Years 2 and 6. There are good assessment procedures for all pupils which are used to analyse the needs of individuals, but do not analyse in sufficient detail the progress of groups of pupils – for example boys and girls, or pupils of different ages. The co-ordinator does not have enough time provided to monitor provision and support colleagues. As a result, tracking data is not always used effectively by all members of staff, and this leads to lower expectations and lack of challenge for children with a higher ability, especially in writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

Pupils' language and literacy skills are good and show when they are given chance to discuss or to write in other subjects. Opportunities to use writing in science, for example to prepare or write up experiments, are good. Pupils evaluate their work in art and design in writing which has a good sense of style and purpose. In most English lessons observed, teachers made good use of the content of other subjects to apply and practise the skills of English. This is especially effective when English is combined with history, and adds meaning and emphasis to lessons; it is a good and developing feature of history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the time pupils leave the school they attain standards that are well above average.
- Teaching is very good overall although the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent.
- Pupils have very good attitudes towards their work and behave very well.

Commentary

41. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average. In Year 2 pupils are now achieving standards that are also well above average. Standards have improved steadily since the time of the last inspection when they were above average at Year 2 and 6. A strength in attainment is the very good number skills shown by the pupils. Throughout the school, most pupils are confident about carrying out mental calculations. Older pupils clearly explain how they arrived at their answers, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. Precise mathematical vocabulary is used very well by the pupils to describe their work. For example, Year 2 pupils used words such as 'multiple' and 'digit' without a

second thought. Presentation of work is of a good standard, enabling teachers to see quickly how pupils arrived at their answers.

42. The quality of teaching is very good overall and ranges from satisfactory to excellent. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was found to be good. Teachers are very secure in their knowledge of mathematics which means they make clear teaching points and answer pupils' questions accurately. There is a shared focus on what is to be learnt during the lesson so that pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers plan and organise their lessons very well and use different strategies such as mathematical games and puzzles to capture pupils' interest.

Example of outstanding practice

This is an example of the way that teachers use different strategies to develop pupils' skill and knowledge

In an excellent Year 3 lesson, pupils practised their skills of problems involving addition and doubling in a 'Mini Addition Olympics'. There was a buzz of excitement at the prospect and pupils worked hard and with determination to solve the challenges.

43. Skilful questioning consolidates and extends learning, for example, in a Year 6 lesson, when the teacher led pupils to understand the properties of a range of numbers. Work is carefully planned for the range of abilities within the classes. Just occasionally activities for the pupils are too easy for them and they do not achieve as well as they should. Teachers manage pupils very well. They expect pupils to concentrate in lessons and this has a positive effect on the quality and quantity of work produced.
44. There are effective assessment procedures in place to help pupils to achieve as well as they can. Targets are set for pupils which they are keen to achieve. Assessment and the resulting provision for the pupils identified as having special education needs are good overall, and pupils achieve well for their ability. Currently assessment procedures are not sufficiently refined to identify the small steps in progress taken, for example, by lower attaining pupils. Marking is inconsistent across classes. At its best, pupils know what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve. The newly appointed co-ordinator is very well qualified to lead the subject. Plans have been drawn up by him already to continue the monitoring of teaching and learning in mathematics to ensure that the well above average standards are maintained.

Mathematics across the curriculum

45. Pupils' mathematical skills are developed sufficiently well to enable them to make good progress in other areas of the curriculum, such as science when they measure accurately and record their results using graphs and charts. Teachers plan work that enables pupils to practise their skills in different situations so that pupils see what they have learned in mathematics has many practical applications.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained in national tests are well above national averages, achievement is good by the end of Year 6 and standards attained in national tests have improved since the previous inspection.
- Clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils enable learning to be focused.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge helps them to explain scientific concepts well.
- Lack of regular opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of a variety of physical processes in Year 2 prevents more able pupils from making greater progress.

Commentary

46. The standards seen in science were above average in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. Standards observed in Year 3 are well above average and higher than indicated in national test results at the end of Year 2 where teacher assessments under-estimate children's abilities. In mixed classes of Year 5 and 6 pupils, standards seen in lessons were average but work in books was above average. These standards are lower than teacher assessments as work is not matched to the ability of all pupils. Achievement is good overall. In Years 1 and 2 achievement is satisfactory overall although higher attaining pupils make less progress in their understanding of physical processes as they have insufficient opportunities to develop a wide and thorough knowledge of this area in Year 2. In Years 3 to 6 achievement is good. Achievement in Year 3 is very good because the teacher uses assessment well to adapt work to the needs of the children. There is a good emphasis on the use of subject links and appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop scientific skills of enquiry. In Years 5 and 6 pupils need opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of life processes and major organs of the human body and plants and more opportunities to make practical suggestions on how to make improvements in their work.
47. Teaching and learning are good overall. In a Year 1 lesson observed, the teacher's very good use of teaching methods and questioning ensures pupils are prepared and enthused at the prospect of 'becoming detectives' in order to identify materials around school. Clear instructions, effective support and attention to safety ensure children work diligently and make good progress in identifying a range of materials and their properties. A lesson for pupils in a mixed Year 5 and 6 class was unsatisfactory; pupils made little progress as assessment was not used to match work to pupils' needs and it was undemanding.
48. In an excellent Year 3 lesson the teacher uses his strong subject knowledge well to adapt the learning objective to the needs of the pupils. His use of humour and practical demonstrations ensures pupils are enthused and absorbed in their learning and are effectively supported, enabling them to plan and predict a fair test to see which materials form a shadow.
49. Leadership is good and management of the subject is satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been good in terms of results in national tests. The co-ordinator has identified strengths and weaknesses and made useful suggestions as to how these issues can be developed. For example, the measures that the co-ordinator has described to address weaknesses in what pupils achieved in Years 1 and 2 seem to be a good solution but their effectiveness cannot be judged until after the pupils have completed this element of their work. Assessment is used well to track individual pupils' progress and to identify how well pupils achieve in particular year groups and classes. Action needs to be taken to address the wide variation seen by inspectors in the quality of teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good leadership for the subject, which identifies priorities and drives forward improvement.
- There is effective teaching of word-processing and graphics skills but not enough is done in other aspects of information and communication technology, in some cases due to lack of confidence and subject knowledge by teachers.
- Resources are not always used effectively to support teaching in the classroom.

Commentary

50. There has been satisfactory improvement in information and communication technology provision since the previous inspection. Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 are in line with expectations overall and their achievement is satisfactory. This is because there is unevenness of emphasis between the different strands of the information and communication technology curriculum, and not enough opportunities for pupils to develop skills to the same degree in all areas. Since the completion of the new information and communication technology suite and the much improved resources now provided, standards are rising. Younger pupils are developing good skills in using the mouse to click and drag, and by Year 2 they can enhance text by changing font, colour and size. By Year 6 pupils use word processing and graphics in combination to produce a good range of presentation, including using pictures from the Internet and creating their own graphics for celebration cards.
51. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has made a considerable impact on the quality of provision since her appointment, and further development plans are detailed and comprehensive, linked to a realistic appraisal of the current skills and confidence of staff. She provides 'drop -in' sessions for professional development to support and extend the knowledge and competence of other teachers, but these are not always taken up appropriately. The co-ordinator has compiled an assessment portfolio for information and communication technology which stores samples of pupils' work and which is matched to National Curriculum levels.
52. The direct teaching of skills in word processing and graphics is effective and pupils of all ages develop their skills and competence to present their writing with imaginative layouts, fonts and images; older pupils can access the Internet to give a greater variety of interest to their work. The lack of confidence of some staff to teach across the full breadth of information and communication technology, however, is leading to a significant imbalance in provision, and pupils' individual portfolios have little work in other areas such as data handling, multi-media presentations, and control. The co-ordinator is aware of these gaps in provision, and development plans identify a variety of strategies to improve.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

53. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning in art and design; for example, pupils' drawings of plants are scanned and become the basis for repeat patterns. However, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to use the skills they have gained in information and communication technology lessons to support learning in other subjects, such as handling data in mathematics or science.

HUMANITIES

It was not possible to see any lessons in **geography** during the inspection. Only two lessons in **history** were observed. Therefore no secure judgment can be made on provision in these subjects. Observations of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicate that standards are broadly typical of those expected by the ages of seven and eleven.

In infant classes, pupils' work in **history** show that pupils begin to link cause and effect, for example in their studies of the Great Fire of London. Their understanding of chronology develops well when they compare 'old' and 'new' toys. The teaching in the Year 2 lesson was good, a strong feature being the good use of resources. A good choice of video and a replica of the lamp used by Florence Nightingale captured pupils' interest and pupils gained good insight into the life of this famous person. In Year 6 pupils have a good grasp of everyday life in Ancient Greece and are able to discuss the strengths of different kinds of evidence. In the good Year 6 lesson, pertinent questioning helped pupils to begin to understand the difference between fact and theory. They applied this well to finding out the reasons as to why the Olympic Games were held. Information and communication technology is used well by pupils to research information. A sound system of assessment is used to track pupils' progress in both history and geography.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement since the previous inspection due to the good leadership and management of the co-ordinator and standards are now in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus.
- Teaching and learning are good overall.
- The co-ordinator has not had opportunity to monitor planning and lessons to ensure visits, visitors and artefacts are used effectively.

Commentary

54. Standards are average overall in relation to the agreed syllabus and achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. This is an improvement on that reported in the previous inspection where provision was found to be unsatisfactory.
55. The main focus is on learning about Christian teaching as set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Additionally, pupils learn about Islam, Judaism and Hinduism, which are compared and contrasted with Christianity and differences explained and valued. The two lessons seen and evidence from work scrutiny and pupils' interviews indicate that the teaching is good. In the Year 1 lesson, pupils studied the similarities in the external appearance of churches and learnt to recognise some Christian symbols and artefacts associated with these buildings. The teacher's good use of pictures of churches together with effective prompts reminding the children of the significance of some of the artefacts and symbols from a previous visit ensure pupils' learning is deepened effectively. In the Year 4 lesson pupils are helped to empathise with the feelings of others through a retelling of the Last Supper. The lesson was extended well through a debate on the morality of buying friendship but made limited use of resources. Pupils need greater first-hand experiences to develop a deeper understanding through the use of visits, visitors and artefacts.
56. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has addressed the issues raised in the previous inspection effectively by reviewing the scheme of work to ensure staff subject knowledge is secure and developing resources and an assessment system to enable pupils' progress to be tracked. A useful action plan has been developed

which rightly recognises the need for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching throughout the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visiting experts have made an excellent contribution to children's knowledge and skill.
- Very good teaching leads to children producing work of a high standard.

Commentary

57. Teaching is very good and pupils' standards are well above average throughout the school. In the lessons seen, teachers showed a secure command of the subject and provided well-balanced lessons where pupils' observational and evaluative skills were developed as well as their practical work.

Example of outstanding practice

This is an example of the way that teachers develop pupils' skill and knowledge during lessons

In an excellent lesson in Year 1 on drawing flowers and plants, pupils were reminded of previous work they had covered and looked at examples of art from other pupils and from famous artists. They recalled artists such as Van Gogh and Andy Goldsworthy and were able to say what they liked about a picture and why. Pupils showed very good observational skills, for example showing reflected light on a shiny vase by putting in patches of white colour. These were very well used by the teacher who got pupils to pause in their work, look at good examples and discuss briefly why these were developing so well. A result is that pupils learnt from each other and their work improved as the lesson went on.

58. The curriculum for art and design is excellent. Pupils work in a very wide range of media and teachers encourage them to evaluate their work in writing as well as through comments. The subject gives opportunity for those with exceptional talent to shine. Work in cartoon style, for example, showed a Year 6 pupil with a talent for representing comic images with minimum lines. A final work was of exceptionally high quality, including analysis of cartoon techniques such as "puffs of smoke on speed line—shows someone has moved fast along a specific route". Visiting artists who led and supported pupils during the Arts Week have made a major impact, especially in the three-dimensional aspect of art and design. There are many examples of high quality work using metal and foil where fairly simple skills have been combined into visually exciting finished pieces.
59. Leadership and management are very good. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator leads by example and the subject has reaped the benefit that the school has placed on the creative arts through the Arts Week in the pupils' enthusiasm, and work which is of a consistently high quality.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement in standards since the previous inspection which are now above average
- Teaching and learning are very good overall due to the effective use made of specialist teaching.

Commentary

60. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 but work was analysed and pupils were interviewed. In Years 3 to 6 three lessons were seen and work was analysed. The subject was discussed with the co-ordinator and schemes of work were examined. Standards were found to be above average overall. They are above average by the end of Year 2 and 6. Achievement is good overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6.
61. Teaching and learning are very good overall. They are good in Years 1 to 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Effective use is made of specialist teaching to enhance pupils' knowledge of the subject. For instance, they design and make a variety of sculptures and useful artefacts using a range of materials. This helps them to develop their skills and appreciate the need to evaluate their products. Hence wire, rolled paper and other sculptures made show good attention to detail and finish. In an excellent lesson in Year 3, the teacher used resources and questioning well to enthuse children to analyse the appearance, smell, flavour and texture of a variety of sandwiches, encouraging them to try foods they had not tasted before or which did not appeal to them. This gave them confidence to attempt unfamiliar foods and many discovered new tastes as a result of this experience and gained a greater understanding of the effect of different combinations of ingredients on the appeal of sandwiches. The numerous links to other subjects that were forged enabled pupils to practise skills such as using tally charts and graphs to identify sandwich preferences. Excellent attitudes and behaviour were cultivated through the teacher's use of humour to forge strong relationships that were characterised by pupils' eagerness to be involved in the lesson and to respond to the teacher's challenging questions. In a satisfactory lesson seen the teacher did not intervene effectively to ensure all pupils were actively engaged in making 'pop up' cards. Consequently a significant number of pupils did not make best use of time and the quality of their products was adversely affected.
62. Leadership and management of the subject are good because the co-ordinator has supported colleagues well through involvement with Artsmark and the introduction of a scheme of work based on national guidance that has ensured improvements in the curriculum and led to good improvement in standards since the previous inspection. A useful action plan has been developed but the co-ordinator has not yet been able to monitor lessons due to budgetary restrictions.

Physical education

Four lessons of dance and one of games were observed during the inspection. No gymnastics or swimming were seen. Therefore, no judgements are made on provision and standards overall. No comparisons can be made with the previous inspection when gymnastics was the focus of observations. However, planning indicates that these other areas of physical education are covered well. Teachers' records show that the majority of pupils are able to swim the required 25 metres by the time they leave the school.

Pupils throughout the school are achieving well in dance, where they exceed expectations at the age of seven and eleven. They learn well in the lessons seen because teaching in dance is very

good, greatly enhanced by good subject knowledge. Pupils by Year 6 acquire very good balance and control, making full use of the available space when travelling, keeping accurate time to the music and interpreting movements to music with imagination and versatility. In Year 2, pupils used movement imaginatively in one lesson as they responded to music, building the houses of 'The Three Little Pigs' studied in the literacy hour. They changed levels and direction of movement as well as speed. The very good teaching encouraged pupils to enjoy their lesson and to perform as well as they could.

Pupils benefit from clubs after school and tournaments in netball and football. Older pupils from the local secondary school provide coaching for rugby and netball. During a session observed they made very good teaching points, enabling pupils to improve and refine their skills. Local clubs also provide good support for the physical education programme.

Pupils' personal development is promoted well through activities. They work well in groups and teams. They abide by the rules. In Year 6 pupils worked out the rules for games they had devised themselves. They are well aware of the need to perform safely in their dance lessons.

Music

No lessons were observed in music, and there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards and teaching. Pupils sing with enthusiasm in assemblies and older pupils have further opportunity to develop their singing skills in the school choir. This after-school enrichment opportunity is called 'Sing Your Lungs Out' or 'SYLO' and is enjoyed by both boys and girls. They sing a variety of songs from different cultures, and are able to sing in three or four parts without accompaniment. Older pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder. Visiting peripatetic teachers come to the school each week to teach a variety of instruments and the school orchestra produced a CD of their work for sale to parents. The school has a good resource in the form of a well-equipped music room which is timetabled for lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**. There is a good climate for learning and an expectation that all pupils can and will do well. Pupils are confident to join in lessons and answer questions because adults treat all of their answers with respect. The strong focus that the school has given to all of the creative arts gives pupils scope for expressing their creativity in many different forms and results in examples of work of high quality that pupils can take pride in.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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