

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LOW ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hunslet, Leeds

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 107957

Headteacher: Mrs P J Ward

Lead inspector: Mrs Bernice Magson

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Inspection number: 256786

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	118
School address:	Belinda Street Off Church Street Leeds West Yorkshire
Postcode:	LS10 2PS
Telephone number:	0113 214 1704
Fax number:	0113 271 2061
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Julie Hutchinson
Date of previous inspection:	May 2002

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Low Road is a small primary school situated in the Hunslet district of Leeds. The school serves an area of social and economic deprivation and there is considerable movement of families in and out of the area. There are 118 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 11 years of age, accommodated in five classes, including the class of Foundation Stage children. There are 10 children in the reception year and 24 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Overall, there are many more boys than girls and, a significant gender variation in some year groups. Most children enter school with attainment well below average for their age in all areas of learning. Pupils are mostly of white British origin, and a small proportion is of Asian Pakistani backgrounds or of mixed heritage. Almost all pupils speak English as their mother tongue and one pupil speaks Farsi as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. One pupil has a formal statement for their special needs. Special needs of pupils are identified as speech, communication and language difficulties, physical, behavioural, and moderate learning needs. Three pupils are in public care. There have been significant changes in management and staffing since the last inspection in 2002, including the governing body. The temporary appointment of the headteacher was made permanent at the start of this term. In 2002, the school received a national 'Achievement' award in recognition of improved standards and also gained the award of 'Investors in People'.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9843	Sarah Drake	Lay inspector	
17685	Linda Spooner	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Music
30954	Brian Ashcroft	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a sound school, where pupils achieve satisfactorily.** From a low starting point on entry to school, pupils attain below average standards by the age of 11. Teaching and learning, and leadership and management are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils have good relationships with each other, behave well and have positive attitudes to learning;
- By Year 6 standards are well below average in English, and below average in mathematics, science and religious education;
- Provision is good for children in the Foundation Stage and they achieve well;
- In the non-core subjects, pupils' knowledge and skills are not developed systematically;
- Staff know pupils well and give them good care, support and guidance, including those pupils with special educational needs;
- The headteacher, staff and governors have a strong commitment to school improvement;
- In Years 3 to 6, there is inconsistency in teachers' marking and in the presentation of pupils' work.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have improved at a greater rate than nationally by Year 2. Assessment in English, mathematics and science has improved and teachers have a good understanding of pupils' standards. Teachers plan tasks more precisely to maximise the learning of pupils of all abilities and a good range of training opportunities has improved staff expertise. Marking remains unsatisfactory. There has been only a slight improvement in levels of attendance, despite the good efforts of the school.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

**Overall, the achievement of pupils is satisfactory.** It is good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. On entry to nursery, children's attainment is much lower than expected for their age and most have poor skills of communication. By the end of the reception year, attainment is below the expected goals in most areas of learning, and well below in communication, language and literacy, and knowledge and understanding of the world. By Year 2, standards are average in mathematics and below average in reading, writing and science. Between Years 2 and 6, there is a dip in the performance of pupils in the



national tests because of high levels of family mobility. Also, care must be taken in analysing results, because of the small numbers of pupils in some year groups. By Year 6, standards are below average in mathematics and science and well below average in English. In fact, test results in English were in the bottom 5 per cent of schools nationally. Compared to pupils in similar schools, Year 2 pupils achieved well above average results in 2003 and in writing, the school's performance put it in the top 5 per cent of similar schools. In addition, when compared to similar pupils, Year 6 pupils attained above average standards in science. Pupils with special educational needs and the very small number with English as an additional language achieve well, because of good levels of support and guidance. Standards are average by Years 2 and 6 in information and communication technology (ICT), in history by Year 6, and in design and technology by Year 2. In religious education, standards are average by Year 2 and below average by Year 6.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.** Pupils are eager to learn and behave well in lessons and around the school. Attendance is below the national average and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.** All teachers have high expectations and promote good behaviour in lessons. Teachers plan activities effectively to interest and challenge pupils of all abilities, although insufficient attention is given to the development of speaking skills. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils. In Years 1 to 6 assessment is good in English, mathematics and science, and in the Foundation Stage it is very good.

Overall the curriculum is satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage. In nursery and reception, there is a good balance between teacher directed activities and exploratory play. Throughout school, there is good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils have equal opportunities in all school activities and they are encouraged to understand and appreciate racial harmony. Visits, including some which are residential, enrich the curriculum. Teachers know pupils well and are very effective in developing trusting relationships with them, so that they grow in confidence and self-esteem. The school has good links with the community and makes good use of the support of local businesses. Links with parents and other schools are satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.** The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. She is effective in developing team work among staff and governors and has gained the respect of parents. Key priorities of the school are developed effectively. The headteacher provides good leadership and management of the curriculum and teaching and learning. Staff curriculum teams provide satisfactory leadership and management. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The governing body complies with all statutory duties and has a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents and pupils are happy with the school, although there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to influence its work.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the rates of pupils' progress in English, mathematics, science and religious education, particularly in Years 3 to 6;
- Develop the curriculum in non-core subjects so that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills increase systematically;
- In Years 3 to 6, monitor pupils' work more closely to ensure a consistent approach is achieved in the presentation of pupils' work and in teachers' marking.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

The achievement of pupils is satisfactory overall. Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Overall, pupils reach below average standards by Year 6 from well below average attainment on entry. In 2003, results in core subjects did not maintain the recent trend of improvement. Throughout school, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The trend of improvement is above the national trend by Year 2;
- In Years 3 to 6 the rates of pupils' progress are insufficient;
- Most pupils have well below average skills of communication, language and literacy;
- Standards in ICT are average for all pupils and improving rapidly, because of better access to computers.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children start in the nursery with attainment well below average overall for their age and with poor skills of communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. They achieve well and make good progress in each stepping-stone of the Early Learning Goals, both in the nursery and reception. By the start of Year 1, attainment is still below average in most areas of learning and well below average in communication, language and literacy and knowledge and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.2 (14.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.9 (13.2)	15.9 (13.2)
mathematics	15.9 (15.2)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Standards in Year 2 have shown good improvement over a 5 year period in reading, writing and mathematics. In both Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well. In 2003, pupils attained well above average standards in writing and this represented a significant improvement in standards over time. Both girls and boys achieved very well in writing, and more pupils attained the higher Level 3 than nationally. However, it is difficult to make any meaningful comparison of test results because of the small size of some cohorts. There are 11 pupils in the current Year 2 cohort and although they achieve well, standards are below average overall. Significant factors are restricting the progress of

these pupils, including above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs, attendance problems of some, and high levels of mobility, with two pupils having joined the cohort only recently. Currently, standards are average in mathematics, below average in reading and writing and well below average in skills of communication. Pupils with special educational needs attain well below average standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.1 (25.0)	26.8(27.0)
mathematics	24.6 (27.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.9 (29.0)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. In 2003, in national tests, standards by Year 6 dipped in the core subjects to below average levels in science and well below average in English and mathematics. Only half of all pupils attained the standards expected nationally in English and mathematics. Additionally, test results in English were in the bottom 5 per cent of schools nationally, and no pupils attained the higher Level 5. Low attendance figures restricted the progress of 25 per cent of these pupils and there were above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs, who, although they achieved their targets, did not reach national expectations by Year 6. In the current Year 6, standards are below average overall. In English, standards are well below average and poor skills of communication and language are restricting pupils' progress in other subjects. High levels of staff absence adversely affected the learning of this cohort when in Year 4 and almost half of the cohort has had significant attendance problems throughout school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well and reach the predicted targets of their individual education plans.
4. In ICT, standards are average by Years 2 and 6. Pupils practise skills regularly and now use ICT effectively in many subjects. Standards are improving rapidly as a result. As standards are also improving nationally, this represents good achievement.
5. In religious education standards are in line with expected levels by Year 2 and below expected levels by Year 6. By Year 6, pupils have insufficient knowledge of major world faiths for their age and find it difficult to appreciate the values and beliefs of wider world communities or make informed judgements of their own.
6. Standards are average in history by Year 6, and in design and technology by Year 2. In music, and in physical education, there is some good achievement, especially when specialist help is available, for example in tennis tuition.

**Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils have good attitudes and values and behave well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' attendance and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils like school, show interest in lessons and generally concentrate well for long periods of time;
- Good behaviour management leads to good behaviour in lessons and around the school;
- Relationships are good among pupils and between adults and pupils;
- Despite considerable efforts by the school, pupils' attendance and punctuality have improved only marginally.

## Commentary

7. Pupils like being at school and they are appreciative of the opportunities and help offered to them by their teachers. Pupils in Year 6 believe that behaviour has improved in recent years and that other pupils are friendly and 'notice if you are feeling sad.' Throughout school pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, settle well at the beginning of lessons and listen well to teachers. Although many pupils find it hard to organise their thoughts coherently, they try hard to concentrate on the task in hand and generally work well with their partner or in small groups. Pupils with special educational needs generally show good attitudes towards their work. They enjoy good relationships with the adults who work with them.
8. The school has worked extensively to develop its policy on behaviour management. All adults now have the same expectations and pupils know these rules. In lessons, teachers are quick to notice signs of restlessness, or developing inattention, and they are skilled at re-motivating pupils through the use of positive behaviour techniques. Midday staff are also operating the same system of rewards and sanctions. The result is that pupils behave well in and out of lessons and the numbers of unacceptable incidents have been reduced over the past two years. No pupils have been excluded in this time.
9. The school has a very friendly and supportive atmosphere, which is brought about by the good natured relationships which exist between adults and pupils and among pupils themselves. Displays throughout the building encourage pupils to belong. 'Remember', they say, 'I am a member of Low Road Primary School. I can work with others to make it a brilliant school.' These themes are reiterated in assemblies and discussed in 'Circle Time,' providing good opportunities for pupils to think about the effect, for good or otherwise, that their actions can have on others. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong so that, for instance, pupils in a mixed aged class of Years 5 and 6 were shocked that Mary Seacole should have been discriminated against because of the colour of her skin. The school tries hard to promote racial harmony, for example encouraging pupils to 'celebrate our similarities and differences' by organising a visit to a Sikh Temple. Pupils respond well to such teaching, in one topic making masks based on the characters of Hindu gods. Pupils play together happily.
10. Although pupils like school, their attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory. During the current academic year, almost half of them have been on holiday in term time, some of them on more than one occasion. The school does not authorise holidays of more than ten days duration and works hard to encourage more regular attendance. For example, weekly and termly rewards are given for those individuals and classes with the highest percentage of attendance. The Breakfast Club has persuaded some former latecomers to arrive early in the morning. Staff visit pupils' homes if parents have not provided enough information about their child's absence. These efforts have brought about an improvement of one percentage point during the current academic year, but attendance is still well below the national average and there are a number of pupils who arrive late regularly to school. Such unsatisfactory attendance has an adverse influence on the standards pupils achieve.

## Attendance

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.6
National data	0.4

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

### Exclusions

There are no exclusions recorded in the last school year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Assessment is good overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The good links with the community enhance the curriculum, which is satisfactory overall. Links with parents and other schools are satisfactory.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is good in the core subjects in Years 1 to 6 and very good in the Foundation Stage.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 1 and 2 and in the Foundation Stage teaching is planned effectively to meet the needs of individuals, so that they are challenged successfully;
- Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and pupils respond well;
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution in lessons and give good support to the pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language;
- Assessment in some non-core subjects is inconsistent and as a result, the development of pupils' knowledge and skills is not systematic.

### Commentary

11. During the inspection, most teaching observed was good or better. In the nursery and reception teaching was consistently good, and most teaching was good in Years 1 and 2. Very good lessons were seen in religious education in Years 1 and 2, and in Years 4 and 5 in ICT and a 'Circle Time' activity. In Years 5 and 6 very good teaching of tennis was provided by a visiting sports teacher. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	17	8	0	0	0

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

12. In the Foundation Stage, the teacher has a good understanding of how young children learn. She has successfully assessed the children on entry to nursery or reception and provides each individual with opportunities to interest and challenge them. Ongoing progress is assessed very well and shared effectively with parents. There is a good balance between exploratory play and teacher directed activities in both the nursery and reception areas. Because there are good numbers of adults available to work alongside children, there are ample opportunities to develop social skills and focus on the development of children's skills of communication. The teacher manages and organises activities well and all adults are clear of their roles and work well together as a team. The teacher promotes the development of children's speaking skills at every opportunity, although teaching assistants and other helpers are less skilled at extending children's speech and often fail to model standard English, as good examples for children to learn. The teacher has high expectations of pupils and is keen to promote skills of independence. For example, in writing their own storybook, children were encouraged to think of an adventure for an animal and help only offered if they lacked imagination. Children are happy to go to the school office or undertake jobs in the classroom, because the teacher has gained their trust and sensitively supports their actions. The children are prepared well for their next stage of learning.
13. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching is good. The two teachers in the job share arrangement have good expertise and complement each other well. There is a good sharing of knowledge, which benefits the pupils. The teaching assistant provides good continuity and is very effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Well focused teaching takes place with a good emphasis on practical activities, which are appropriate for the needs of these pupils. Skilful questioning is developing pupils' skills of observation and improving their understanding of the world around them. There is a good emphasis on developing pupils' speech patterns, focusing pupils very well on learning sounds and improving skills of comprehension. Pupils are eager to learn because the teachers make learning exciting.
14. During the inspection, over half of the teaching seen in Years 3 to 6 was good. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teaching and learning are satisfactory over time. Planning is thorough and there is a good variety in the tasks set for pupils of differing abilities. However, in many lessons, teachers' expectations are insufficient and too often, poorly presented work is accepted. In some subjects, the involvement of specialist teachers enhances the teaching and pupils are enthusiastic in their learning. In other good lessons, the teaching is more successful where the teacher has good specialist knowledge and explains learning tasks clearly. For example, in an ICT lesson in a class of Year 4 and 5 clear learning objectives ensured that all pupils understood the tasks and very good use of praise motivated pupils to achieve very well. Pupils were fully engaged throughout the hour long session because learning tasks were matched well to individual needs. All teachers give good consideration to planning tasks, which challenge pupils of differing abilities and needs. They ensure that appropriate support is available for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, but encourage pupils to work both independently and collaboratively. There is good team work between teachers and teaching assistants.



However, pupils find it difficult to understand how to improve, because teachers' marking gives only limited guidance on the next small steps of improvement and across the key stage, marking shows a wide variation in its quality. Generally, it has limited relevance to the lesson's learning objectives and does not relate to the pupils' targets of improvement.

15. The teaching of speaking and listening is unsatisfactory overall, although good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have insufficient subject knowledge about the teaching of oracy and as a result, the questioning of pupils is inadequate in extending pupils' thinking skills and accelerating their learning. In almost all lessons, the teachers allow poor pronunciation to persist and there are few examples of teachers and teaching assistants modelling standard English in their response to pupils' answers. As lessons progress, there are few checks on pupils' comprehension of the lesson content and misunderstandings regularly occur. As there is no planned focus in most lessons for the development of speaking and listening skills and without a policy, teachers lack sufficient guidance on the teaching of language and communication, an aspect of development in which many pupils have well below average standards for their age. As a result, pupils' learning is restricted and this adversely affects their progress in most subjects.

16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. All staff plan work well to ensure that these pupils have full access to the curriculum. Good support is provided by staff and specialist agencies where necessary. Booster programmes, such as additional literacy and numeracy support, ensure that less able pupils achieve well and made good progress in relation to their individual targets. There is some support given to the more able pupils but this is insufficient for their needs.
17. Assessment is good in English, mathematics and science. Data is analysed well to track pupils' progress and identify patterns and weaknesses in the strands of each of the core subjects. There is good targeting of additional support based on the evidence gained. For example, at various times during the day, younger pupils come together in groups to improve their reading skills, by learning how to recognise and blend together new sounds. The good use of assessment data is proving instrumental in improving standards in core subjects. In the non-core subjects, assessment arrangements are informal and there are no whole school procedures.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory. A satisfactory range of enrichment and out of school activities is provided. The quality and quantity of the school's accommodation and resources is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the Foundation Stage have access to a good range of exploratory and directed teaching activities;
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good;
- The accommodation and resources support the learning well.

### **Commentary**

18. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and all the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, including religious education. The curriculum is fully inclusive and ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage covers the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning and is appropriate for children of this age.
19. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved and is good. The special needs co-ordinator works closely with teachers, teaching assistants and parents so that the specific needs of the pupils are carefully assessed. Individual education plans contain targets that are closely linked to these needs and offer suitable support. This ensures that all pupils are fully included in lessons and all other aspects of the curriculum. The activities help the pupils to achieve well and experience success. The special needs co-ordinator has established close links with outside agencies to enhance the provision.
20. The curriculum is led and managed by three staff teams. This ensures that there is good consensus of approach and identification of key priorities. Developments are planned and tackled systematically. The national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are firmly embedded in the curriculum and they are beginning to impact positively on standards. The science curriculum has sufficient focus on practical and

investigative work and follows national guidelines. Provision for the delivery of ICT has improved, with better equipment and staff training. Additionally interactive boards are available in most classrooms, providing pupils with a greater range of visual and practical experiences. The school recognises that there is a need to develop skills in the non-core subjects and that the current curriculum map for non-core subjects needs extending. While this plots the subject coverage, it does not ensure that curriculum skills are taught systematically.

21. The school makes satisfactory use of visits and visitors to supplement the work done in the classrooms. Pupils visit such places as Armley Mills and Eureka. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to attend a residential trip each year. Visitors such as the 'Roman Soldier' and the author Steve Way, help to give pupils first hand experience for their learning. Particularly popular has been the 'Anklung Day' when pupils learned about Malaysian musical instruments.
22. The accommodation is good. The school tries hard to provide pupils with a bright and visual environment. Displays generally celebrate pupils' work and are attractive; although in the Foundation Stage, more stimulating displays would enhance the large classroom areas. The site manager and cleaning staff take pride in the school and ensure that the interior of the building is immaculately clean and shining. Good resources ensure that pupils have all they need to support their learning.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides pupils with good quality care, guidance and support. Pupils' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory, although there are insufficient planned opportunities.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school works very effectively to promote positive and trusting relationships with its pupils;
- Arrangements to ensure health and safety are very good.

### **Commentary**

23. Teachers know pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. They value pupils' contributions and listen carefully to what they have to say. In this supportive environment pupils visibly gain in confidence and self-esteem and the majority feel that they have someone with whom to share their concerns. During break times and at the end of sessions pupils readily approach staff and chat about successes and worries. They are confident, as are most parents, that any unkindness or anxiety will be dealt with quickly. Pupils with special educational needs have good access to well informed support, advice and guidance from teachers and support assistants. The needs of pupils in public care are well catered for, and arrangements for child protection are good overall. Teachers seek pupils' views, for instance, in 'Circle Time,' but there are no formal procedures for them to express opinions and ideas to influence the school's development.

24. Teachers have good knowledge of pupils' personal development because they know them so well, including their personal circumstances. Their needs are carefully identified and support and guidance provided. In English, mathematics and science their progress is carefully tracked and teachers provide pupils with small and achievable targets to help them improve. In 'Circle Time' topics are chosen to suit the needs of the class and provide teachers with the opportunity to provide individuals with sensitive and discrete personal support. Pupils new to the school are warmly welcomed, either in the Foundation Stage, or part way through their education and they are well supported as they settle in. One of the roles of the learning mentor is to prepare some individual pupils in readiness for their move to secondary school. They meet with the mentor in the secondary school to ensure a smooth transition.
25. The school places a high priority on promoting the health and safety of all staff and pupils. Rules are developed and explained to pupils for their safety. They remember, for example, to walk around the outside edge of the car park to reach the field. School gates are firmly closed and locked during the school day to prevent accidents. Good procedures are in place for risk assessments and they identify potential hazards in school and on educational visits. The site manager is very alert to possible problems and skilled at tackling them. Teachers regularly remind pupils about different aspects of healthy living, through lessons and displays. Pupils have access to water throughout the school day.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's partnership with parents, other schools and the wider community are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are becoming increasingly supportive and trusting of the school;
- Good use is made of opportunities to enhance the curriculum through links with the business community;
- Insufficient information is provided for parents to help them support their children's learning.

### **Commentary**

26. During the last few years the school has gone through an unsettled period, which has caused some unhappiness among parents. Staff have worked hard to rebuild parental confidence and trust and they are now much more content with the provision for their children. In the parents' meeting and through inspection questionnaires, parents have raised concerns about homework and the amounts of curriculum information they receive. During the inspection week all parents were positive about the school and find staff open, honest and approachable.
27. Parents are made welcome in school and attend events in increasing numbers. A few help on a regular basis, especially with the Breakfast Club and more are willing to accompany pupils on educational visits, although there was some opposition to the visit to a Sikh temple. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about school events, but do not provide them consistently with information about what their children will be

learning or how they can help them. Pupils' progress reports provide an outline of what has been learnt. There are details of each pupil's standards of work and with more detail in core subjects. However, reports are insufficiently personalised and contain too little specific guidance on each subject to help parents know how their children are to improve.

28. There is early identification of any pupils who have special educational needs. Parents are kept well informed about the progress of their children. They are given opportunities to attend meetings and discuss their children's individual education plans with the teachers.
29. As part of the link with the Education Action Zone, the school has developed links with other schools, which have helped improve provision, particularly in teachers' professional training. Additionally teachers and other adults visit the school. A teacher from the high school visits weekly and teaches Spanish to pupils in Years 3 to 6, which pupils enjoy. A learning mentor helps to improve attendance. Year 6 pupils have played in a football tournament with local schools. However, the school's strongest links are with the business community, some of which have been brought about by through the Education Action Zone. Members of a local firm of solicitors support pupils in their reading and build up good relationships with the individuals they meet. The firm have also provided comfortable sofas for the entrance hall. Staff from a local supermarket are helping Year 6 pupils as they prepare their 'legacy' for the school, a secret wildlife garden. Other pupils in Years 4 and 5 have visited a supermarket to learn about the processes involved in making bread. Such partnerships are broadening pupils' experiences of life and helping them to understand how communities can work together very effectively.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership and management overall, and also of teaching, learning and the curriculum. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage and special educational needs is good. Curriculum teams provide satisfactory leadership and management. There is satisfactory governance of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has sustained staff morale and developed team work effectively during the recent instability in staffing and management;
- There is a good self-analysis and evaluation of data to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's performance;
- Strategic planning is used effectively to develop the school improvement plan and steer school development;
- Some systems, such as the curriculum teams, are recently introduced and not yet fully effective, limiting their impact.

### **Commentary**

30. During this school year, the headteacher has led and managed the school well, both in a temporary capacity and since her permanent appointment at the start of this term.

After a 3 year period of turbulence, she has developed a good stability in staffing and management so that recent developments can become embedded. There is good agreement of the aims and objectives of the school. The headteacher inculcates a sense of openness among staff and governors in their analysis of their current position and guides them well in identifying key priorities. There is a good sense of shared commitment to improvement and realism about what can be achieved in the short and longer-term. The acting deputy headteacher has given good support to the headteacher and staff and has been effective in managing the curriculum team responsible for developing the core subjects. During her time as deputy headteacher, there has been limited opportunity to develop her leadership role. Overall, the senior management team gives satisfactory support to the headteacher.

31. The leadership and management of the curriculum and teaching and learning by the headteacher and staff are satisfactory. Under the direction of the previous headteacher, curriculum teams were established. Their roles and responsibilities have developed during this school year and curriculum development and monitoring of pupils' progress has commenced. One of the curriculum teams has been effective in analysing data in the core subjects and tracking pupils' progress to identify trends and patterns. As a result, additional support has been targeted at individuals and groups of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, more able pupils and those with English as an additional language. Now, there is evidence of good achievement in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory achievement in Years 3 to 6. There has been satisfactory progress by the staff team responsible for developing and monitoring the curriculum in non-core subjects. A 1 year long-term plan is in place and good attention has been given to monitoring the delivery of National Curriculum programmes of study. Nevertheless, there is no monitoring of teaching beyond that of checking teachers' planning and the systematic development of knowledge and skills is not fully in place. The assessment of pupils' progress in non-core subjects is in the early stages of development and current procedures are inconsistent. The long-term curriculum plans for pupils in mixed aged classes are still evolving and the second year of the cycle is not yet agreed. Inspection findings identified a weakness in Years 3 to 6 in the teaching methods used in the delivery of religious education. The school has recognised that this needs to be addressed, but, currently, no staff training has been planned to improve performance. The headteacher has given good support to the curriculum teams and is monitoring their work successfully. She recognises that more rigorous leadership of some teams is needed.
32. The school development plan is of good quality. Following on from successful self-evaluation, the way forward is now much clearer and the plan is based firmly on perceived needs. The headteacher and governors are keen to improve the performance of the school and there is a strong focus on raising standards. Performance management, including staff training, is linked effectively to the school development plan. Although the plan successfully addresses the immediate needs of the school, the direction of the school in the longer-term has not been considered.
33. There is good leadership and management of special educational needs. The needs of these pupils are carefully considered and good efforts are made to involve parents in decision making. The support of outside agencies is sought, if necessary and their support enhances provision. Links with a member of the governing body are good, enabling the governors to understand better the needs of a large proportion of pupils

and manage their provision effectively. Good co-ordination of the Foundation Stage has enabled the school to maintain good provision during the recent major building works in this area of the school. The co-ordinator has established good relationships with parents, who trust that their children will be cared for and supported well in this first stage of their education.

34. The governors are loyal to the school and supportive of the headteacher. Since the last inspection, three quarters of the governing body are newly appointed and are still learning their roles. They have undertaken training successfully and now have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities. All statutory duties are fulfilled, for example, there is a cycle of review in place for all policies. A policy for racial harmony is agreed, in line with local authority recommendations. The headteacher is effective in seeking the views of governors about the future direction of the school, but they rely heavily on her skills in leadership and management to guide them. They now need to develop more confidence in asking searching questions in their role as critical friends of the school.
35. The financial management of the school is good. Good use is made of a bursar to ensure that monies are allocated appropriately to the priorities of the school development plan and monthly checks take place to monitor progress towards agreed outcomes. The headteacher and governors apply the principle of best value well in their spending decisions, such as in the recent refurbishment of the Foundation Stage classrooms and entrance area. There are clear financial plans for the large budget surplus, which include the appointment of a deputy headteacher and the management of class sizes during the current falling roles. Good use has been made of the links with local businesses. For instance, a firm of solicitors supports pupils weekly with their reading and another company provides the water fountain. The expertise among governors of business management is proving useful in their decision making.

### ***Financial information***

#### ***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	375,340
Total expenditure	373,520
Expenditure per pupil	2,873

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	47,000
Balance carried forward to the next	48,820

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

36. Provision for children in the nursery and reception is good and it is a strength of the school. The Foundation Stage contains children of nursery and reception age. Activities are planned flexibly to meet the needs of both groups of children. In some lessons, the children are taught separately, for example, the daily literacy and numeracy lessons for the reception children. In other lessons, both groups come together to take part in a wide range of adult focus or self-choice activities.
37. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below expectations in the majority of areas of learning and in communication skills and knowledge and understanding of the world, attainment is low. Almost 40 per cent of the children are included on the school's register for special educational needs. Teaching is good and as a result, the children achieve well in all areas of learning. The teacher, nursery nurse and learning support assistant work effectively as a team and this ensures good provision. Planning is carefully structured. It fully meets the learning needs of all children, including those who have special learning needs and higher ability children.
38. Assessment procedures are very good. The children's achievements are closely monitored and the information gathered is used effectively to set the next steps in learning. The accommodation and resources are of a good quality and are planned carefully to meet the children's learning needs. This would be further enhanced by more stimulating displays.
39. Relationships with parents are good. Annual reports are well written and provide parents with a good picture of what their children have achieved, but currently lack information about the next steps in learning. Information for parents could be further improved through re-introducing home/school reading diaries. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has a clear commitment to high quality care and high achievement for each child. She has a good overview of provision and a very positive commitment to continuing improvement.
40. Good use is made of the outdoor learning area. There has been good improvement since the time of the previous inspection and plans are in place for further improvement through a joint project with Ground Trust. The weakness in provision for reception children, identified in the previous inspection report, has been fully addressed through the setting up of a Foundation Stage unit containing both nursery and reception children.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below expectations, but the children achieve well;
- Many opportunities are provided for the children to learn about themselves and others;



- Staff are very good role models through what they say and do;
- Routines are well established so that the children know what is expected of them. This results in good relationships and behaviour;
- Staff listen carefully to what the children have to say and provide many opportunities for this; as a consequence, the children's confidence is developing;
- The balance between adult support and self-choice activities is carefully planned and the children are beginning to develop independent learning skills.

### **Commentary**

41. The children come into school confidently, accompanied by parents or carers. The well planned self-registration system is streamlined to meet the children's different abilities and ages. For example, younger or less able children learn to find the card with their first name on it, while more able children are expected to find and write both their first and second names. Many settle happily to the wide range of activities provided, although a number of nursery children still wander rather than concentrate on doing one activity. They are well behaved and have positive relationships with others and good attitudes to work. Adults provide a relaxed and welcoming feel to the start of the day or session. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants have a very good understanding of the needs and interests of young children and ensure that they feel safe and secure. The children show concern and care for each other and for the environment. For example, one nursery child was observed taking special care of a ladybird and a reception child stated that she was unable to come into the role play 'den' until she had put the greenfly back on the grass. 'Bernie's Helping Hands Tree' display celebrates the kind actions done by individual children during each week.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well below those expected in speaking, reading and writing;
- Many opportunities are planned and provided for the children to speak and listen and this helps the children to develop language for communication and thinking and to learn new vocabulary;
- Activities are carefully planned and successfully capture the children's interest;
- Children have many opportunities to develop skills in reading and writing.

### **Commentary**

42. The quality of teaching and learning are good and, overall, children are achieving well in this area of learning from a low start on entry. Listening skills are developing satisfactorily. In the nursery children enjoy listening to stories and are beginning to respond positively to the pictures and main story events. However, most have a short attention span and find it difficult to listen for longer than a few minutes. Often, they wander away in free flow activity times. In one nursery session, however, two boys were fascinated by a book about sea creatures and were engrossed for some considerable

time. By the end of the reception year, most are attentive to what others say and to what is happening in stories. The development of children's speech is slower. On entry, some pupils utter only single sounds and most speak only in phrases and when necessary. By the end of the reception, many of the children still find considerable difficulty in constructing sentences to express what they know and understand.

43. By the start of the National Curriculum in Year 1, most children are beginning to read from the early books in the school's reading scheme, although standards are below those expected for their age. They draw on what they interpret from the pictures and some recognise a few familiar words. Phonic skills are taught well throughout the nursery and reception. By the end of reception, more able children identify their names. They hear letter sounds at the start, end and in the middle of simple words.

44. Children in the nursery are beginning to use mark making and letter strings to communicate, although some are still drawing random lines and circles. They have written about their favourite books, such as, 'Giraffe's Can't Dance', and 'Jeremy Mouse was Hungry'. Children in reception write about keeping healthy with a majority beginning to use letters and some able to write simple, familiar words to record their ideas. More able children are beginning to write independently and are learning to find words from the key words classroom display board.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Although standards are below those expected, children achieve well;
- Activities are made purposeful through a wide range of focus and play activities, which help children learn;
- The quality of teaching is good because mathematical skills and language are systematically taught.

### **Commentary**

45. Children in the nursery count numbers to 5 and beyond, with some higher ability children able to exceed this. Through the wide range of language development and creative opportunities, many recognise a number of colours and some simple shapes. Children in the reception numeracy lesson were confident as they counted in 10s to 100 and in 2s to 20 with teacher support. Learning of instructional/positional language was well planned in the lesson and successfully based on learning through play with 'Toby the Tiger' hiding in the classroom and the children only able to 'have a go' if they asked a question using the correct mathematical language. During group activity time, good use was made of the computers as children worked on controlling the direction of the screen turtle.
46. Work in books shows that more able children are beginning to use their number knowledge to tackle mathematical problems, such as when recording addition. One child commented said 'If you get two lots, you get more lots!'

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well below those expected for nursery and reception children, as most children lack sufficient language skills to talk about and question what they experience;
- The children are provided with a wide range of carefully planned and stimulating activities, which build well on their previous experiences and provide opportunities for talk;

- Computer skills are taught effectively and this enables the children to become more independent as they use the mouse to work on a range of programs;
- Effective use is made of both the inside and outside environment.

## Commentary

47. Children in the nursery are provided with many opportunities to explore the world around them. Planning is based on the provision of practical activities and learning through play. Then children are curious to learn, but their observation skills are limited and they find it difficult to ask the right questions to extend their knowledge. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher carefully looks for opportunities to extend children's language and directs them well towards new discoveries. There are good links across the curriculum to reinforce new learning. In art and design, for example, children learnt some positional language, such as 'under, over, through' as they wove their designs. Themes thread their way through a good number of activities so that, technical language becomes more focused.
48. Work in books indicates that standards are well below those expected for their age by the end of reception. In recent work the children developed an early awareness of living creatures. Following a journey to 'Eureka' the children could recognise and compare the difference between a steam train and a modern diesel.
49. Computers are always available and programs are well prepared to help the children develop ICT skills or to reinforce learning.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given time to explore in well planned activities, both in the classrooms and through learning outdoors;
- Learning environments are well resourced and flexibly used;
- Skills are carefully built up and this helps the children to be confident;
- Children have below average skills when using scissors and crayons.

## Commentary

50. The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning. By the end of the reception, many children move with confidence, control and co-ordination and are in line to attain the expected goals in this aspect. Children in the nursery are developing appropriate skills in running, climbing and controlling a range of wheeled toys.
51. Fine motor skills, such as cutting out shapes and controlling pencils and crayons are not well developed. Few children will meet the expected goals in the development of skills that require finer, more precise movements.
52. In the physical education lesson seen in the reception class, children showed that they are developing a good awareness of space and safety. They travelled around the apparatus in various directions and were able to dribble a ball around floor markers with good levels of control.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are provided with good quality time to experiment, communicate, be imaginative and discover things for themselves;
- A good balance between adult involvement and independence results in children confidently building up their skills and being able to make their own choices;
- Role play opportunities encourage the children to relate well to others as they develop language, imagination and practical skills.

### Commentary

53. Standards in art and music are in line with expectations by the end of the reception year. Standards in role play are not yet in line with expectations, as a good number of the children do not have the language skills to act out a story line, whilst maintaining a sense of character and the sequence of events. However, role play is planned and provided regularly to increase children's confidence. In one lesson, a group of reception children were dinosaurs being chased by a monster, while at the same time, two nursery children drove their cars to the seaside and to the shops. As children played, they gained in collaborative skills and showed that they are developing their creative ideas well.
54. Good opportunities are provided for the children in both groups to explore paints and other media independently, as well as with adult support. As a result, the children are developing confidence in mixing paints and making models to their own designs. In one activity, the children demonstrated a determined willingness to solve the problem of how to handle sticky tape that insisted on sticking to itself!
55. Children in the nursery join in with familiar rhymes and songs. By the end of the reception, they recognise and play along to simple rhythms using percussion instruments.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Over time, standards by Year 2 have improved in reading and writing;
- In 2003, standards in writing were well above the national average by Year 2 and in the top 5 per cent of similar schools;
- Currently, throughout school, most pupils have well below average skills of communication and language;

- Assessment procedures in reading and writing are good, but not in speaking and listening;
- Teachers make insufficient use of marking to help pupils improve.

## Commentary

56. Standards in English are well below average by the age of 11, and below average by the age of 7. Currently, the achievement of pupils is good in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. In 2003, in the national tests, there was an improvement by Year 2, but a dip in standards by Year 6. More Year 2 pupils than nationally achieved the higher Level 3 in writing, but no Year 6 pupils achieved the higher Level 5. Significant factors often restrict the performance of Year 6 pupils, as in the last two years. Twenty-five per cent of pupils had poor attendance in 2003; also in 2003 and currently, there are above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs in their language development. Also, between Years 2 and 6, the education of above average numbers of pupils is interrupted by moving schools. Achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is similar to other pupils. Well below average speaking skills restrict the performance of most pupils in all aspects of English and also in other subjects.
57. In national tests, over time, Year 2 boys have shown a greater improvement in their standards of reading and writing than girls, although there is no consistent pattern of improvement in either key stage. In 2003, the performance of girls was better than boys both in Years 2 and 6.
58. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to improve standards in English. Strengths and weaknesses in the subject have been identified and strategies introduced to bring about improvement. For instance, there is good targeting of pupils in the teaching of phonic sounds in Years 1 and 2, enabling pupils to make good progress, because of the regular use of a structured programme. However, most strategies are not yet embedded and the impact of the better teaching is just beginning to impact on pupils' performance. Assessment procedures are good in reading and writing, and teachers and the senior management team are using the information effectively to track pupils' progress. Through the setting of improvement targets for writing, pupils have more information about how to improve. However, there are insufficient links made to these targets in the marking and overall, as a result, marking is unsatisfactory.
59. Pupils enter the nursery with poor standards of communication and language. Although satisfactory progress is made in the development of listening skills throughout school, overall, teachers give an insufficient focus on the development of skills of communication. Currently, by Year 6, listening skills are satisfactory, but speaking skills are well below average. Many Year 6 pupils have an impoverished vocabulary for their age and lack confidence when in classroom discussions, or whole school assemblies. Pupils find it difficult to express their ideas lucidly or use technical terms accurately. Significant numbers of pupils have poor skills of pronunciation and most pupils have problems with inference and comprehension. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 in a religious education lesson misinterpreted the words, 'banned', 'band' and 'earth', 'world', 'soil'. Comprehension difficulties are restricting progress in many subjects. There is no policy or guidance available to teachers for the development of speaking and listening skills and assessment systems do not include the measurement of skills of oracy. Most teachers are insufficiently skilled at asking questions which extend pupils' ability in talk and accelerate their learning through the development of thinking



skills. Only in Year 2 are teachers effective in modelling standard English in their questions and responses to pupils.

60. Standards in reading are improving, although they are still below average throughout the school. Recently, good attention has been given to purchasing reading material, with an appropriate interest and reading level for pupils of all abilities. Good use of assessment procedures in planning lessons enables teachers to match reading tasks appropriately to pupils' needs. There is good teaching of basic skills in sound work, and in learning to decipher words in a more difficult text. Pupils enjoy reading and younger pupils listen with interest to stories, which are read to them. Currently, supported by their teacher, the pupils in Year 6 are enjoying the book 'Kensuke's Kingdom' by Michael Morpurgo. If reading alone, many of them find the story content difficult to follow because of a limited understanding of some vocabulary. However, the pupils are showing a good interest in the story, partially as the book is part of a transition topic in conjunction with the local secondary schools. By Year 2, pupils have appropriate knowledge for their age about the structure of books and they can identify fiction and non-fiction material. Most Year 6 pupils can read a complex text, but many have difficulty in understanding the content. Older pupils say that they enjoy reading, but few can name favourite authors or favourite types of books.
61. By Year 2, standards in writing match national expectations for pupils of this age. However, in the 2004 tests, no Year 2 pupils attained the higher Level 3 in writing. By Year 6 standards in writing are currently well below average. Many of these older pupils are unable to organise their writing to make it interesting to the reader, their vocabulary has a narrow range and they find it difficult to write using standard English. There are good efforts made to help pupils improve writing standards, such as in developing pupils' ability to redraft their work. However, overall, teacher expectations are too low and the quality of work is not improving quickly enough. The presentation of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. Few pupils know spellings rules and mistakes are prevalent even in the spelling of key words.
62. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teaching is satisfactory overall. In the inspection, three quarters of lessons seen were of a good quality and the others were satisfactory. In the satisfactory lessons, there were insufficient support materials available for pupils to work independently of the teacher and support staff and as a result, some pupils found the tasks difficult and lose concentration. This slowed their rates of progress. All teachers plan lessons thoroughly and in some classes there is a clear structure through the week to the development of new skills. Overall, teaching assistants provide good support to pupils, including those with special educational needs and the small number with English as an additional language and in Years 1 and 2 the support is very good. With sensitive and well timed intervention, these pupils are becoming more independent. All teachers ensure that lessons have a good variety of teaching strategies so that pupils are motivated to learn and concentration levels are better sustained. Teachers explain lesson objectives clearly to pupils and revisit them regularly during the lessons, so that they are reminded of what they are expected to learn. Most pupils can describe their individual or group writing targets, which is helping them to improve, although in Years 1 and 2 there is less understanding of them, as they are not written in 'child speak.'

63. The curriculum team is providing good leadership and management in English. They monitor new initiatives rigorously and, where necessary, seek additional support from within the local authority and also work in conjunction with local schools. They are pleased with the gradual improvements in standards by Year 2, but recognise that they must remain vigilant and robust in their development of the subject, if standards are to improve throughout the school. The school has recognised that there is an urgent need to improve standards in communication and language, both verbally and in the written word, in order to improve standards in English and other subjects.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

64. The school makes some satisfactory links between English and other subjects. In ICT, for instance, pupils word process their stories and in history, pupils have researched for information improving their comprehension skills. However, in Years 3 to 6, opportunities are missed to write for a range of audiences and in different subjects.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills;
- In Years 3 to 6 there is a lack of challenge of the higher attaining pupils;
- The school provides well for those pupils with special educational needs and they receive good support;
- Teachers' expectations of presentation are too low in some classes and marking is not used effectively enough to help pupils improve.

### Commentary

65. Standards by Year 2 have shown a gradual rise over the past three years. In the national tests taken in 2003, results were below average when compared to all schools but well above average when compared to schools with a similar background. The number of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was average when compared to all schools and well above average when compared to pupils of a similar background. The test results of Year 6 pupils dipped to well below average standards in 2003. However, the class had a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs, who found mathematics difficult. The greater than average numbers of pupils with attendance problems restricted the progress of others.
66. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are now average by Year 2. From the well below average starting point on entry to school, this represents very good pupil achievement. Standards are below average in the present Year 6, although achievement is good, because there has been a significant improvement in their performance over time and they are likely to meet their individual targets in national tests.
67. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. All achieve well because work is planned at the right level for them and they receive good support from the teaching assistants. Pupils' confidence is developed well because the main teaching points are reinforced later in-group activities. Effective use is made of the national 'catch up' programmes to boost progress.
68. Recently, the numeracy strategy has been fully implemented in school and teachers have received training. Teachers now have greater confidence teaching the subject. Pupils enjoy lessons and have positive attitudes towards mathematics. The curriculum is planned well and pupils are taught in ability groups on tasks appropriate to their needs. This is having a positive impact on raising standards. The good focus on number is seen in the mental arithmetic part of every lesson. All pupils enjoy these sessions. Everyone is involved working out answers on whiteboards or using digit cards to show their calculations. Pupils gain great satisfaction in explaining methods of

calculations. For example, a pupil in a mixed class of Years 4 and 5 readily explained, when adding  $32+68$ , 'I made 68 into the nearest 10 by adding 2 and got 70, then I added three more tens to make 100'. This shows that pupils are understanding the strategies.

69. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and there is evidence of some good practice, especially in Years 1 and 2. However, there is some satisfactory teaching that could be improved, where the pace of the lesson is slower and teachers have low expectations of the more able pupils in the shared part of lessons and in individual tasks. In good lessons, there is a good emphasis on the use of mathematical vocabulary and a good range of approaches to methods of calculation. The pupils understand how to complete the tasks successfully because the teacher gives clear explanations. Learning assistants, who are well briefed, give pupils good support on specific tasks. All teachers give clear explanations about learning objectives. Pupils understand what they are to learn and revisit their tasks regularly during lessons to evaluate their progress. At the end of the lesson most teachers do not use time effectively to check understanding, reinforce learning points and introduce new facts, because too little time is allocated to this plenary activity.
70. The subject is led and managed well by the curriculum team. They have identified areas for development and progress is being made on developing problem solving activities and work in shape, space and measures. Assessment is good and test results are analysed well to identify subject strengths and weaknesses and track pupils' progress. Additional 'booster' work is provided for some pupils, as a result of the precise assessment procedures, although 'booster' activities are insufficient for higher attaining pupils.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

71. Pupils use mathematical skills satisfactorily in other subjects. They use graphs and tables to record science data. In design and technology they use their measuring skills and in history they use timelines to help them understand the chronology of events. However, ICT could be used more frequently to support learning in mathematics, as opportunities are lost for pupils to consolidate and develop their basic number skills.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below average by Years 2 and 6;
- Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well because they are provided with carefully planned activities and effective additional support in lessons;
- Higher ability pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in Years 3 to 6 and they do not achieve as well as they might;

- Regular assessments at the end of topics ensure that teachers have a clear knowledge of how pupils are progressing;
- The quality of marking and presentation of work is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6.

## Commentary

72. Standards in science are below average by Year 2. There has been an improvement on standards since 2003. The large majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily over time from a low level of attainment on entry to the school. A scrutiny of pupils' books and lessons confirm these judgements.
73. Standards are below average at Year 6 and are similar to those achieved in the latest national tests. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily, although higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 could achieve better. In fact, the proportion of pupils likely to attain above average standards is less than in most schools, because the level of challenge in planned activities is not consistently high enough for them. Pupils who have special educational needs are given good support in lessons and as a result, their achievement is good.
74. Evidence in books indicates that the work of pupils in Year 2 is very well presented. This is because the teacher has high expectations and the pupils respond very positively. Marking effectively helps pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. Work is carefully assessed and ensures that the teacher has a clear, ongoing view of how well each pupil is doing, when assessed against national standards. Pupils have good opportunities to use their mathematical skills to record their scientific work using graphs and charts. For example, they have produced very carefully presented charts of bean growth using real beans and recording the growth of the stalks pictorially against a simple mathematical scale. Comments written on the work done by pupils who have special educational needs shows that they are given good quality adult support in a range of different and helpful ways. ICT is used satisfactorily. For example, pupils have downloaded information from the Internet about different percussion instruments to help them with their work on sound.
75. The work of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is often untidy, with much work crossed out and charts carelessly drawn. As a result, by Year 6, pupils do not have sufficient skills in organising their work in a scientific way. Investigational work shows a satisfactory awareness of the importance of fair testing, retesting and drawing conclusions based on evidence. Although most work is marked, pupils are not given enough information on what they need to do next to improve.
76. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Planning ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered and that pupils have sufficient opportunities to think scientifically and work independently to solve problems. Overall, teachers' marking is unsatisfactory as it gives pupils insufficient information about how to improve. Additionally, in Years 3 to 6, some teachers have low expectations of presentation of work and this results in work that is often untidy and poorly organised.

77. The subject is led and managed effectively through a recently introduced curriculum skills team. The school acknowledges that this approach has not been in place for long enough to be able to assess its impact on standards. The current action plan has resulted in a focus on the learning needs of separate year groups and the provision of more opportunities for investigational work. The school has analysed the 2003 national test results effectively and identified areas of weakness that need to be addressed in the coming year.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and reach average standards by the ages of 7 and 11;
- Teachers are confident in using ICT;
- Resources in ICT are good and have greatly improved since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

78. Pupils' standards are improving both at the ages of 7 and 11. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to increase standards in line with those expected nationally for this subject. Pupils receive a good start in learning ICT in the Foundation Stage and these skills are built up well throughout the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well.
79. Pupils throughout the school are confident in using computers and have a good range of skills. By Year 2, pupils can operate the keyboard accurately using alphabet and command keys to use the different functions on the screen. For example, in a lesson seen in Year 2 pupils were using the backspace and delete keys to make changes to their work. They can confidently use a range of programs to communicate ideas through pictures and create pictograms to represent information graphically. In Years 3 and 4, pupils can use the tools in the 'Dazzle' program with accuracy and can improve their text by altering the font size and colour and then adding 'clip art' to illustrate it. In a very good lesson seen in a mixed class of Years 4 and 5, pupils were using a database program very well to interrogate data in a 'decision tree'. They understood the various ways in which information could be presented. Years 5 and 6 pupils are practising importing 'clip art' software designs to their work, such as in multimedia presentations.
80. Teaching is good. Teachers have undertaken a programme of training and support and this has improved their subject knowledge and given them confidence in teaching ICT. Work is planned carefully to make the best use of available resources and they link ICT well with most other subjects. Pupils are becoming more creative in their use of ICT as they gain in confidence.
81. The subject is well led and managed. The teacher responsible for ICT within the curriculum team has a good level of expertise and is having a positive influence on the work in the school. There is a good range of equipment including a large and well

equipped computer suite, interactive whiteboards in some classrooms, a range of television and audio equipment and computers in every classroom.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

82. The school has developed satisfactory links for the use of ICT across other areas of the curriculum. Computers have been used to produce pictures in art and design. Pupils use their word processing skills in English and are developing the skills of using the Internet to research information, supporting their work in history and geography. However, insufficient use is made of ICT in practising mathematical calculations in lessons.

### **HUMANITIES**

83. During the inspection no **geography** lessons were observed. There was limited evidence overall and so no judgement can be made on provision, standards or teaching and learning.

### **History**

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school makes good use of visits, visitors and artefacts to bring history alive for the pupils;
- Practical activities make lessons interesting for pupils;
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 reach average standards.

### **Commentary**

84. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 and only a limited amount of written work was available. However, indications from teachers' planning and discussions with pupils show that pupils achieve satisfactorily. By Year 6, pupils reach standards that are similar to those reached by most pupils of a similar age.
85. Pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of the topics studied. Good use is made of visitors to support pupils' learning. For example, the 'Roman Soldier' who visited the school when Years 3 and 4 pupils were studying the Romans, gave pupils the opportunity to wear Roman armour, look at his shield and hold his sword. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of chronology and can explain how things have changed over time. Visits are made to enhance the pupils' learning. For example, the recent visit to Armley Mills fired the pupils' imagination and helped them to empathise with people from the past.
86. In lessons there is a strong emphasis on discussion, providing pupils with opportunities to express their opinions and listen to the views of others. For example, in a lesson in Years 4 and 5, a pupil with special educational needs was very keen to describe a pair of Victorian clogs that the teacher was showing to the class. This raised self-esteem

and gave the pupil an opportunity to play a full part in the lesson. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject. Pupils are given some opportunities to develop their skills of research when they look at books and access information from the Internet and CD-ROMs; for example, when they were accessing information about Victorian children in preparation for the next lessons.

87. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily by the curriculum team. Resources are adequate and to widen experiences, many good quality artefacts are often borrowed from the schools' loan service.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Year 6;
- The subject is a key priority in the current school improvement plan;
- Teachers have insufficient knowledge of teaching about major world faiths;
- Resources are good and provide first hand experiences as pupils study world faiths.

### **Commentary**

88. Pupils enjoy religious education lessons and are interested in the values and beliefs of people of various faiths. Nevertheless, until recently, the subject has suffered from under-development and there has been a lack of monitoring of pupils' standards. Currently standards are average in Years 1 and 2 and below average throughout Years 3 to 6. By Year 6, pupils have insufficient knowledge of world faiths, beyond Christianity and they find it difficult to make comparisons or consider their own beliefs and ideas.
89. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1, and 2 but unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Most teachers have satisfactory knowledge of Christianity but insufficient knowledge of other world faiths. In the small amount of written work available, there is a predominance of worksheet activities with a lack of variety of tasks for pupils of different abilities and, in Years 3 to 6, insufficient depth of study for older pupils. However, in the mixed class of Years 1 and 2, the teaching is good overall and during the inspection was very good. The teacher provided a very good variety of practical activities, so that learning was more meaningful. During the present topic about Sikhism, pupils made a good educational visit to a Gurdwara. In other lessons they have looked at artefacts, recording their information in charts and digital photographs. During the lesson seen in a mixed Year 1 and 2 class, the teacher asked very pertinent questions of pupils as they studied the artefacts and the school aim that 'we are all equal' was promoted very positively. Very good attention was given to learning technical terms and there was evidence of good empathy and understanding of the faith of others developing. Pupils were disappointed when the lesson ended. However, teachers' planning shows that in other classes, this level of development is not provided and this good teaching is not mirrored throughout school.
90. The subject is being well led now by a new co-ordinator. She has good specialist knowledge and provides a good role model for others. The curriculum team are



involved in the preparation of an action plan to identify what needs to be done to develop the subject further. This will involve staff training, and the planning of a more varied and practical curriculum to make the learning meaningful for pupils.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

91. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards, teaching and learning or provision in **art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.**
92. In art and design pupils have good levels of interest. They like the immediate success of art activities and find it easier to evaluate and refine their work when visually presented. Although no lessons were seen in art and design, there is good evidence in classrooms and around the school that art is a popular subject and that pupils achieve well. The subject is taught in blocks of time and also in support of other subjects. Teachers follow national guidelines in the subject and adapt their teaching effectively to link art with other work. In Year 2, for example, pupils have drawn pineapples and kiwi fruit, as part of a topic on Healthy Eating and in Year 4 art and design and design and technology has supported work on an Egyptian topic. There has been a good input from local artists to enhance the curriculum and improve the teaching of techniques. In displays, the work of artists is intermingled with that of pupils, showing that the school places a high regard on pupils' achievements and also motivating and interesting them in the work of professionals. A tapestry of the Creation Story is displayed in the hall and used in assemblies. It is a legacy to the school from the last Year 6 cohort, and greatly admired by pupils. Leadership and management are currently satisfactory but improving. A regular assessment of standards takes place at the end of each topic. However, there is no consistent practice of assessment across the school.
93. Design and technology is taught in blocks of time, alternating with art and design and on occasions, in conjunction with other subjects. During the inspection, only one lesson was seen in a mixed class of Years 1 and 2. In other classes, there was some limited evidence in displays and folders. There is a satisfactory curriculum based on the topics suggested in national guidelines. In the lesson seen in Years 1 and 2 standards were average. They were also average in the limited scrutiny of work in Years 3 to 6. The older pupils struggled to improve further because of lack of ability in written recording. During a good design and technology project in Years 4 and 5, displays show that the teacher structured the development of knowledge and skills very successfully and made the learning meaningful for pupils. There is satisfactory leadership and management of the subject through the work of the curriculum team. They have identified that a consistent approach is needed in assessment so that the development of skills can be tracked more succinctly.
94. Satisfactory opportunities are provided in assemblies for pupils to listen to music. Most pupils are keen to join in with singing in assemblies and the standard is satisfactory. Planning covers all aspects of the subject, but it is not monitored sufficiently to ensure that knowledge, skills and understanding are taught systematically. The school makes good provision for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to learn to play the violin. Assessment of standards and progress is inconsistent, although regular tests take place. A new scheme of work has been recently purchased, but there are limited resources to

support the scheme and this is hindering pupils' progress in learning about composing music.

95. In physical education, indications are that pupils' standards are at expected levels for their age. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 attend swimming lessons regularly and additional support is provided for less confident swimmers in Years 5 and 6. Almost all pupils reach the expected standard by the age of 11. Pupils experience the full range of the physical education curriculum. The curriculum is enhanced by expert tuition in a range of sports such as athletics, football and tennis. During the inspection Year 6 pupils were seen receiving expert tennis tuition and they made good progress. Pupils co-operated well in the lesson and their control and accuracy improved greatly as they hit the ball using the forehand and backhand techniques. A curriculum team manages the subject but their work is in early stages of development. A recently appointed teacher has expertise in this subject and it is planned that she will join the team to advise teachers in its further development.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good quality PSHCE programme in place to support teaching and learning;
- Pupils are happy to take on the responsibilities provided for them;
- There are clear plans in place to introduce a school council;
- Pupils are developing a good understanding of how to relate to others.

### **Commentary**

96. The development of the provision for pupils' PSHCE is an ongoing priority for the school and makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development. The school's aims clearly reflect the priority placed on the pupils' personal development, such as:
- I can think how it feels to stand in your shoes;
  - I understand that I have personal power. I can use it to make others feel good;
  - I notice that we are the same and that we are different - to be both is OK.
97. There is a strong feeling of community throughout the school. Adults know the pupils well and they in their turn are willing to take responsibility in a number of ways. Older pupils, for example, are keen to help set up resources for assemblies and are currently involved in setting up an environmental area in the school grounds. All adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work and to others. They provide very good role models for the pupils in the way that they speak to them, and are always approachable. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to this aspect of school life.
98. As a result of the good provision, pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They know about, and appreciate the importance of rules and understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

99. The recently introduced PSHCE programme is very thorough in providing a clear framework for teaching and learning in all year groups. In addition, there is a clear programme in place that includes appropriate sex and relationships education for pupils in Year 6.
100. Weekly 'Circle Times', when pupils can discuss issues important to them, provide positive and productive opportunities to reflect on a range of issues, share problems and ideas and learn to listen to others. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about how to keep themselves healthy and safe. This aspect of their development is promoted well through subjects such as science in addition to the PSHCE programme.
101. To encourage pupils to play a more active role as members of the school, a school council is planned in the near future.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).*