

INSPECTION REPORT

MARLPOOL JUNIOR SCHOOL

Heanor

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112561

Headteacher: Mrs Mary Hill

Lead inspector: Mr Tony Painter

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 November 2003

Inspection number: 256856

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	206
School address:	Claramount Road Heanor Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE75 7HS
Telephone number:	01773 712505
Fax number:	01773 712505
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Ian Bond
Date of previous inspection:	8 March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This school has 206 pupils and is smaller than average but has been getting consistently larger since the time of the last inspection. Almost all pupils are from white backgrounds and none are from families with English as an additional language. The area around the school is mixed but has some socio-economic disadvantages. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 17 per cent, is in line with the national average for this type of school. Pupils joining the school transfer from local infant schools and have average attainment. Seventeen pupils (8 per cent, below the national average) have identified special educational needs, primarily moderate learning needs. However, seven have statements of special educational need, which is above the national average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21512	Tony Painter	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology (ICT), Art and design, Design and technology, Music, Physical education
8943	Margaret Manning	Lay inspector	
19041	Roger Linstead	Team inspector	English, Science, Religious education, History, Geography, Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 7JX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES	16
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is effective. Improvements in teaching are helping pupils to learn well and reach above average standards. Having regard to the school's average costs, **the school provides good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good leadership from the headteacher and overall good leadership and management steer the school well
- A very good atmosphere for learning ensures pupils' very good personal development
- Good teaching leads to effective learning and ensures all pupils do well, reaching above average standards
- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour contribute strongly to their learning
- Accommodation is poor, significantly restricting pupils' learning opportunities
- Assessment is not used as well as it could be to plan pupils' work
- Co-ordinators in subjects other than English and mathematics do not have a sufficiently clear view of standards, progress and teaching throughout the school
- Attendance is below average

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection, taking effective action on all the identified issues, particularly in provision for information and communication technology. Despite substantial improvements in accommodation, the numbers of pupils have continued to increase and a further class has been formed. As a result, the school still has insufficient space.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

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

Pupils reach above average standards and achieve well through the school. Pupils enter school with overall average attainment and all make good progress. Recent improvements in the curriculum and teaching have significantly improved National Curriculum test results for 2003, well above the standards found in similar schools. This group of pupils had a greater number of higher attaining pupils and standards through the school are not as high as these results. However, pupils of all ability levels achieve well, particularly in English and mathematics, and the school's improving assessment systems show that above average standards will be maintained. Pupils apply their improving literacy and numeracy skills effectively in other subjects but standards are average overall. This is because the improvements have been less developed in these subjects.

The school makes **good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** In particular, very good relationships ensure that pupils have very good social and moral support. This leads to **very good attitudes** and **pupils behave very well.** However, despite the school's good monitoring systems, **attendance is below average.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides good quality education. Good leadership and management have established a good approach to improving the curriculum and teaching, leading to higher standards of attainment. **Teaching and learning are good**, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

Teachers plan well, drawing on good knowledge and making good use of national guidance. High behaviour expectations and good classroom organisation ensure that pupils learn at a good pace in most lessons. Although teachers effectively use assessment information to plan work for pupils with different abilities in English and mathematics, this is not as strong in other subjects. However, pupils with special educational needs have consistently good support to ensure they make good progress.

The curriculum is good. Recent developments have improved provision and a good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors enhances it further. Very good arrangements give all pupils equal opportunities and access to learning, whatever their capabilities and backgrounds. However, inadequacies in the accommodation continue to restrict the full range of opportunities. **Pupils have good support, advice and guidance** based on the information the school collects. The school involves pupils **very well** in its work. The school has **very strong** links with parents that help them to support their children's learning. **Very good** links with other schools improve provision.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good.

Leadership is good. The headteacher's very good leadership gives a very strong sense of purpose and has established high morale. New senior management and subject co-ordinator roles empower staff to contribute to development. However, the curriculum co-ordinator roles in subjects other than English and mathematics are less well developed.

Management is good. Strong appraisal and performance management systems make a very good contribution to improving provision and standards. Improved assessment raises expectations and identifies priorities for school improvement.

Governance is good. Many aspects of the work of the governing body have improved. Governors show good understanding of the school's key strengths and weaknesses and have a strong focus on raising standards. However, despite their hard work to improve provision, the school's inadequate accommodation restricts the teaching of the full curriculum, particularly in physical education. As a result, this aspect of the school's work does not meet statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very positive about all aspects of school life, particularly the very good relationships. They feel very comfortable approaching school should they need to discuss anything. **Pupils enjoy all aspects of school life** and their very good attitudes enhance their learning. They feel that teachers value their ideas to help to improve the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- make sharper use of assessment when planning lessons;
- extend the subject co-ordinators' roles;
- raise attendance;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- actively pursue improved accommodation.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Pupils reach above average standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science. **Their achievement through the school is good.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved and are above average
- Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well
- Standards in ICT are improved since last inspection
- Pupils with special educational needs have good support and make good progress
- Limited accommodation, particularly the lack of a proper hall, restricts standards in some aspects of physical education

Commentary

1. Although the school's National Curriculum test results over time had been average, lower results in 2002 prompted immediate and effective action. Good curriculum and teaching developments ensured pupils' rapid progress and overall results in 2003 were well above the national average. The trend of results is now above the national trend. These results compare very well with those of schools with similar socio-economic backgrounds. Analysis of individual pupils' progress from their age seven results shows that pupils made very good progress through Years 3 to 6.

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003¹

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.7 (25.6)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.3 (26.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.9 (27.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. However, the 2003 group of Year 6 pupils contained a larger than normal number of higher ability pupils and overall standards through the school are not as high as this. Nonetheless, the standards seen in the inspection are securely above average in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils of all ability levels achieve well from the overall average standards when they join the school. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls. The school's improved assessment arrangements track pupils' progress well and indicate they can maintain the improved standards.

¹ The average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by all of their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in another school as well as an average for all schools nationally. The National Curriculum level attained by each pupil, for example, in mathematics, is given a score. A Level 1 = 9 points, a Level 2 = 15 points, Level 3 = 21 points and so on. Therefore the average points score in mathematics is worked out by adding up all of the points based on the Level attained by pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. This means that a school whose average points score for mathematics in the end of Year 2 national tests is greater than 15.0 is one whose pupils are performing above that expected for their age. The average points score for Level 4, the nationally expected level for pupils at the end of Year 6 is 27.

3. Standards are above average in all aspects of English with some particularly good improvements in writing. This is due to effective training for teachers and good arrangements to teach in ability groups throughout the school. However, handwriting standards are not high enough in Years 5 and 6 because there are no handwriting lessons after Year 4.
4. Standards in all aspects of mathematics are above average by the time pupils leave the school, a good improvement from the last report. Pupils' achievement is good and they make good progress from overall average standards when they start at the school. Teachers' good use of the national guidance to enhance their lessons promotes pupils' mental arithmetic skills well.
5. Boys and girls make equally good progress in developing scientific knowledge, understanding and skills from the start of Year 3. Pupils are achieving well in lessons and are in line to reach above-average standards by the age of 11. Teachers put discussion and investigation at the centre of learning in science lessons. This challenges pupils and promotes higher standards.
6. The school's provision for ICT has improved substantially since the last inspection. As a result, pupils' standards have improved and are now average. Pupils are less secure when indicating how to use their skills in other lessons because teachers give them too few opportunities to practice and apply them.
7. Teachers make good efforts to provide pupils with as wide a range of physical education opportunities as possible. Overall standards are average and pupils have good skills in a wide range of games. However, the school's 'hall' is actually a classroom and parts of the curriculum, such as gymnastics are impossible, restricting pupils' standards in these areas.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. This is because staff give them skilled support and well-resourced activities that accurately match their learning needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school are **very good**. Their attendance is **unsatisfactory** but their punctuality is **good**. The personal development of the pupils by the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very polite and behave very well
- They are very willing to take responsibility because they know the school values what they do
- Staff set very good examples in their attitudes and establish very good relationships with pupils
- Attendance is below the national average

Commentary

9. Pupils behave very well in school and there is a very calm and purposeful atmosphere all around. They play happily together at break times and when waiting for school to start in the morning. Pupils know clearly what is expected of them and are very polite and sociable towards visitors. They are happy to explain school routines and very evidently respect them, being very orderly when moving around school.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	203	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0

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

10. Through the work of the school council, pupils have learned very well how to live in the school community and to make contributions to it for the benefit of each other. They have suggested very sensible changes to aspects of school life, such as the credit system and also having water bottles at their desks. Because they are so involved, they value the privileges and respect the rules very well.
11. Teachers, by their own positive attitudes, encourage pupils to listen to and respect each other's views very well in lessons and assemblies. Even the younger pupils are developing very good confidence to debate issues and listen to different points of view. Staff openly talk about things, such as books which are personally important to them and why. This gives pupils lots of encouragement to respond and to recognise for themselves what in their own lives is special. Pupils with special educational needs nearly all have very positive attitudes to work, mainly because of the effective teaching and support they get in stimulating lessons.
12. Attendance at school is below the national average though there is very little unauthorised absence. Much absence is accounted for by medical reasons but quite a bit is for holidays during term time. This has a negative impact on some pupils' learning. The school is careful to monitor all absence and to support families with any problems. Pupils do come to school in good time.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.0	School data :	0.3
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality education. Good leadership and management have effectively improved the curriculum and teaching, leading to higher standards of attainment. Very good relationships ensure that pupils are cared for well.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good and ensures that **pupils' learning is good**. Improvements in the curriculum and teaching have raised standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' good relationships and high expectations of behaviour lead to calm and effective lessons
- Good organisation and routines ensure that little time is lost
- Teachers' planning makes good use of their good knowledge of subjects, the curriculum and national guidance
- Effective support and targeted tasks and questions ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress
- Assessment is used well in grouping pupils for English and mathematics lessons and for targeting many activities but opportunities exist to extend pupils' learning further and faster through even more secure use of assessment information

Commentary

13. Effective management has led to action to improve the curriculum and teaching strategies. This has raised the quality of teaching from that shown in the last report, although the relative strengths in English, mathematics and science remain.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	5	15	7	0	0	0

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

14. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils that are effective in promoting pupils' good attitudes to learning. Teachers use a good range of effective behaviour management strategies that ensure that pupils understand the standards of behaviour that are expected. These factors ensure that most lessons proceed with pace. As a result, pupils are keen to tackle tasks and respond well to good levels of challenge. This is leading to good progress in many lessons and is reflected in the rising standards of attainment.
15. Teachers plan lessons well and make good use of the school and national guidance. They show good understanding and knowledge of the curriculum and this enables them to give clear explanations and instructions. These ensure that pupils are clear of what they need to do and they follow the well-established routines well.
16. Questioning is often well targeted to draw out pupils' understanding and make them think hard. Usually it is well suited to the different abilities of the pupils in the class to ensure that all pupils are challenged. The quality of teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because teachers plan work carefully to meet their learning needs and expect and encourage them to succeed. As a result, the extra help and support for them is effective.

Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need make good progress towards the targets in their programmes of work. This is also because of skilful support. Arrangements to identify pupils' special educational needs are good.

17. The assessment system has been extended and teachers make greater use of information to group pupils and to plan activities. These developments are strongest in English and mathematics where the information is most secure. In other subjects, many good systems are being established although the use of information is still limited.

The curriculum

Provision is **good**, effectively meeting statutory requirements for collective worship and religious education. The National Curriculum requirements are fully met, except where poor accommodation restricts the physical education activities that teachers can offer.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have implemented new national strategies and guidance well
- There are very good arrangements to give all pupils equal opportunities and access to learning, whatever their capabilities and backgrounds
- The school increases learning opportunities well through the good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors
- Good links with the local secondary school improve pupils' learning
- Shortages of essential accommodation limit some important elements of the curriculum

Commentary

18. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. Well-managed training and use of the national literacy and numeracy strategies have improved learning opportunities in English and mathematics and raised standards. Teachers' effective use of the latest national guidance has improved provision in most other subjects. For example, better use of the local agreed syllabus has improved the quality of religious education.
19. These developments have also improved arrangements to ensure that pupils of all capabilities and backgrounds enjoy the same opportunities to learn and progress. Better planning clearly identifies the needs of different groups of pupils in each class to match work nicely to their capabilities. For example, there is a good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The overall quality of individual education plans for these pupils is good. However, plans do not always state the time span within which pupils are to achieve their targets. Well-established arrangements to teach English and mathematics in ability groups underpin pupils' good achievements in language, literacy and numeracy.
20. A good range of extra-curricular activities responds well to the variety of pupils' interests. These include clubs, groups and teams for art, books, drama, athletics, tag rugby, football, netball, gardening and homework. Extra-curricular provision for modern foreign languages is very good, with clubs to introduce pupils to Chinese, French, Japanese and Spanish. Visitors significantly enhance pupils' learning, particularly in history and religious education. Teachers also enrich learning in humanities through well-planned use of visits to key locations. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity for a three-day residential visit to Matlock.
21. Very good links with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer significantly enhance the curriculum and prepare pupils very well for the next stage of their education.
22. However, inadequacies in the accommodation continue to restrict learning, despite some significant additions since the last inspection. Although there are now more classrooms, the

school is still bursting at the seams because of its increasing pupil numbers. In particular, the lack of a school hall has many negative effects:

- the range of activities possible in physical education is restricted;
- aspects of the daily curriculum depend on the weather;
- furniture has to be taken down and moved each day in a Year 4 class so that the room can be used for assemblies and school dinners;
- teaching time is lost each day because pupils have to change rooms;
- the school no longer has an adequate library.

Improvements since the last inspection, such as the establishment of a computer suite and the acquisition of a playing field, have not adequately resolved the school's chronic difficulties in delivering the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare health and safety are **satisfactory**. They are given **good** support, advice and guidance based on the information the school collects. The school involves pupils **very well** in its work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school takes very good notice of pupils' views through the work of school council
- Pupils are particularly well supported when they come into school and move on to secondary school

Commentary

23. The school values pupils' opinions very highly and gives them good opportunities to express their ideas. This allows pupils to be very well involved in the school's work and how it is developing. Because they know the staff will listen to their ideas, they come up with very sensible suggestions that help improve conditions for them all. The school council is trusted to have a budget to spend on playground equipment, for example, and pupils appreciate that the money has been raised by the efforts of volunteers.
24. Parents speak highly of the system of Year 6 pupils mentoring pupils who are about to come up from the infant school. This gives them support should they need it and makes them feel welcome. Teachers make good use of pupils' reports from the previous year, including those from the infant school, as they are passed on up the school with the class. This means that they have a rounded view of the pupils' achievements to hand and can monitor how they develop. Pupils write their own comments in their reports on how well they feel they have done and how they could improve. This helps them well to be more involved in their own learning. Very good support for the individual needs of pupils continues as pupils move on to secondary school. Testimony to this is the evident affection that the secondary school pupils show for the school by returning to talk to staff when they get the chance.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very strong** links with parents. Those it makes with the community are **satisfactory** and those with other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents think very highly of the school and have very good information about how well their children are doing
- The school works very well with other schools for the benefit of the pupils' support and education

Commentary

25. Parents are very positive about all aspects of school life and feel very comfortable about approaching the school should they need to discuss anything. They receive high quality information and have many good opportunities to talk to staff about the progress their children are making. Pupils' annual reports to parents contain all they need to know about what their children can do and how they can help them improve. The meaning of different levels in national tests that pupils are expected to reach is clearly explained in these reports.
26. There are very strong links with the infant and secondary schools in the local 'family'. The school has built up very good arrangements because of this that help pupils socially and in their schoolwork and teachers also work on joint projects. The partnership with the main secondary school gives pupils a wider range of opportunities than they would normally have, for example, to learn Chinese and Japanese in out of school clubs, and these then carry on in the secondary school. Higher attaining pupils are offered the challenge of attending summer schools also run by the secondary school in the year before they go. The school's good links with parents, local agencies and infant and secondary schools effectively support the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership. The leadership of other key staff in the school is good. The governance of the school has improved and is now good. However, the school does not meet all statutory requirements because it is unable to teach the full curriculum in physical education. The school has effective management systems.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's high aspirations create a very strong sense of purpose and high morale
- Very good arrangements for professional development have improved the quality of teaching, achievement, the curriculum and standards
- The school uses its assessment data well to check and improve its performance
- Subject co-ordinators in subjects other than English and mathematics do not have enough opportunities to lead their subjects through their monitoring of standards and teaching
- The governing body is efficient and effective

Commentary

27. The headteacher's very clear vision and very good professional relationships with all members of the school community inspire and motivate governors, staff and pupils to do their best. The school is therefore an industrious, happy and harmonious work place where pupils are achieving well. The well above average standards in English, mathematics and science in the 2003 national tests demonstrate the effectiveness of the headteacher's leadership.
28. Staff and governors make effective contributions to the development and management of the school because they know that the headteacher values and responds to their ideas and efforts. For example, continuous involvement of all members of the school community in creating and using the school improvement plan makes it an effective tool in the management and development of the school.
29. Leadership works well at all levels because of the school's very successful arrangements for professional development of all staff. Very good performance management has strengthened the impact of the leadership of key staff since the last inspection. This is the main reason why standards, the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum have all improved significantly. Good development of the subject co-ordinator roles, notably in English and mathematics, has had a very positive effect on standards. However, the school correctly

identifies the strengthening of curriculum co-ordinator roles in other subjects as an area for development. Characteristically, the headteacher has taken this on as one of her own performance management targets.

30. Arrangements for the induction of new staff are also very good. This has been particularly important in maintaining improvement during a period of continual changes in the teaching staff. For example, there have been three co-ordinators for information and communication technology in as many years. The good quality of the present teaching and support staff demonstrates the school's success in the recruitment, support and use of staff in this challenging situation.
31. The school has sharpened systems to assess its effectiveness and to determine how well different groups of pupils are doing. Good use of the new Code of Practice² has improved the assessment of and provision for pupils with special educational needs, including gifted and talented pupils. Rapid responses to a drop in standards in the 2002 national tests achieved a marked improvement in the 2003 results. Effective assessment has narrowed the gaps between the attainment of boys and girls and standards in reading and writing.
32. Most aspects of governance have also improved since the last inspection. Governors show good understanding of the school's key strengths and weaknesses and have a strong focus on raising standards. They give effective support for development and have worked hard to improve provision, particularly the accommodation. To this end, they have successfully managed to increase teaching space, create a computer suite and add a field and hard play area. However, the school fails to comply with the requirements for the full curriculum in physical education because it does not have a hall. The communication between governors, the headteacher and parents is good. The governing body is well placed to develop its role in monitoring and challenging the school's performance.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	439,429	Balance from previous year	24,912
Total expenditure	417,966	Balance carried forward to the next	46,381
Expenditure per pupil	2,028		

33. Reasons for the 11 per cent carry forward into the current financial year include:
- earmarked funds for security improvements awaiting planning permission
 - funding to secure staffing levels through expansion
 - earmarked funding to improve music tuition
34. The school manages its finances well so as to improve the quality of pupils' education. Financial administration is good. The budget effectively links specific grants and additional funding to targeted priorities, for example to meet pupils' special educational needs. Prudent buying in to local education authority support services for budgeting, catering, legal, personnel and health and safety ensures that the school applies best value principles well in using its resources. The school gives good value for money.

² The Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are above average
- Pupils achieve well because of consistently good teaching
- Teachers develop pupils' speaking and listening skills well
- Library provision is unsatisfactory
- Writing standards are improving, but handwriting is not good enough in Years 5 and 6

Commentary

35. Standards are above average and have improved since the last inspection because of effective training which allows teachers to follow the best national guidance. Year 6 standards show good progress from entry, where they were average. The make-up of particular groups of pupils partly accounts for some of the year-by-year variations in attainment in English. For example, pupils in Year 6 last year reached well above average standards in the 2003 national tests.
36. The inspection found that pupils, including those with special educational needs in language and literacy, and slower and faster learners, are achieving well. This is because arrangements to teach English in ability groups throughout the school are effective. Boys and girls are doing equally well as a result of the school's thoughtful responses to their different interests and approaches to English.
37. Standards of speaking and listening are above average by Year 6. This is because teachers give good opportunities for pupils to talk about their experiences and raise questions as they listen and learn. Staff widen pupils' vocabulary by reading to their classes and getting pupils to discuss new work with their learning partners in many subjects. Teachers' high expectations of concentration and good behaviour in lessons are the foundation of the school's successful development of pupils' speech and listening skills.
38. Achievement in reading is good. Standards are above average in Year 6 because the school sustains pupils' interest in all types of reading. Pupils enjoy reading because teachers introduce them to interesting and high quality books and give them daily practice and encouragement. There is good extra support for pupils struggling with reading. The school encourages pupils to read with parents and carers at home and gives more help at school to those not receiving such support. Literacy lessons develop pupils' skills in interpreting text fully. However, the tiny library in a converted outside toilet is too small for whole-class work. The school has therefore had to drop an established library skills development programme. Although there are satisfactory numbers of books for home reading, many are worn and dog-eared.
39. The drive to improve writing has been successful, narrowing the gap between reading and writing. Standards have improved because of:
 - skilled teaching informed by high quality training;
 - the introduction and very good use of weekly writing lessons;
 - interesting writing tasks often closely linked to class reading;
 - high quality marking and checking involving both pupils and teachers;
 - teachers' skilful demonstrations of writing;

- the interest and excitement pupils find in story writing.
40. However, handwriting standards are not high enough in Years 5 and 6. This is mainly because there are no handwriting lessons after Year 4. As a result, almost half the Year 6 pupils do not join letters up in words and are more used to working in pencil than pen. As they have learned to write in this way, it is hard for them to get to the next stage. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs commonly shape individual letters poorly as well. The school has not made enough progress on this shortcoming which was reported at the previous inspection.
 41. Teaching was good in lessons seen in Years 3 to 5 and very good in the Year 6 groups. Importantly, the quality of teaching and learning was just as good in the lower groups as in the higher ones. Teaching is knowledgeable, interesting, well planned and well prepared throughout the school. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic learners, persevering and succeeding in tasks which they evidently enjoy.
 42. Good leadership, training and management have improved the curriculum, standards and the quality of teaching and learning well since the last inspection. The school is therefore well placed to address current areas for development.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

43. Teachers ensure that pupils use their speech, reading and writing skills well in other subjects, particularly science, religious education and history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment have risen and are above average
- Good teaching makes effective use of national guidance
- Positive leadership is helping to improve provision
- Greater use of assessment is helping to promote higher standards
- Pupils' good attitudes make a positive contribution to their learning

Commentary

44. Standards are above average by the time pupils leave the school, a good improvement from the standards in the last report. Although the school achieved well above average results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests, this group of pupils contained more high ability pupils than normal. Pupils' achievement is good and they make good progress from overall average standards when they start at the school.
45. Good teaching ensures that pupils learn well in all aspects of the subject. Teachers' very good relationships with pupils establish good working atmospheres that encourage pupils to try their best. Pupils respond well to this and work hard to improve. Their positive attitudes to lessons make a good contribution to their learning. In most lessons, teachers make good use of the assessment systems to target work to meet the needs of pupils with different levels of ability. This helps to promote good progress. In some lessons, however, this process could be sharpened to improve the match further and provide greater levels of challenge. Pupils with special educational needs have good support to ensure that they have good opportunities and learn well.

46. Good leadership has established a number of effective strategies to raise attainment, including systematic observations and evaluations of lessons. Analysis of past results and tracking of pupils' progress is successfully identifying areas for development that are helping to improve provision. Training has focused effectively on revision of the curriculum and teaching strategies. These are having a positive effect. Teachers make good use of the national guidance to enhance their lessons, for example in promoting mental arithmetic skills well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

47. Pupils use their developing skills in other subjects and mathematics is often the focus of work pupils undertake in the computer suite.

SCIENCE

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above average
- The quality of teaching is good
- Pupils learn effectively through investigation
- Teachers do not use ICT enough in science lessons
- Assessment procedures are not effective enough

Commentary

48. Year 6 pupils' standards in the 2003 national tests were well above average. Pupils in the present Year 6 are achieving well in lessons and are in line to reach above-average standards by the end of the school year. Pupils make good progress in developing scientific knowledge, understanding and skills from the start of Year 3. There are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress each year because of good quality teaching.
49. The quality of teaching in lessons seen was good, with some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Teachers really interest pupils in new work and stimulate good levels of scientific discussion and thinking, for example on the differences between weight and mass. This is because their good understanding of the topics informs the activities they plan, their use of scientific questions and the language of science. Pupils therefore readily pick up scientific ideas, language and methods.
50. Teachers put investigation at the centre of learning in science lessons. For example, during the inspection, pupils were investigating gravity, friction, circuits, conductors and what forces do. This approach develops scientific discussion and, through collaboration, pupils' speaking and social skills. They enjoy this 'detective work' and tackle challenges enthusiastically.
51. However, teachers do not make enough use of ICT to help pupils to record, organise, analyse and graph the data that their experiments produce. Assessment procedures lag behind the effective systems used in English and mathematics. For example, the school does not set national test targets for Year 6 pupils. Nor do teachers have enough information to respond to the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' learning or to see how well they are progressing.
52. There are satisfactory arrangements for the leadership of the subject. Although there is no official co-ordinator, the headteacher maintains a good overview of progress. A newly qualified teacher is increasingly involved and there are good plans to transfer responsibility at the end of her first year of teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**, although this represents very good improvement since the last report.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment has risen to average standards
- Teachers plan lessons in the computer suite well with increasing confidence in the equipment
- The co-ordinator has insufficient opportunities to judge teaching and standards through the school
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good
- Pupils' application of skills to work in other subjects is weak

Commentary

53. The school has made very good progress in addressing the substantial weaknesses identified in the last report. Effective management has identified areas of weakness in teachers' skills and knowledge. These have been remedied through training and support with an increasing range of equipment, particularly in the new computer suite. This is small in size, but represents a significant step forward. Staff changes have weakened the continuity of leadership of the subject but the recently-appointed co-ordinator has an improving understanding of the subject. However, she has too few opportunities to observe lessons and get a good picture of standards and progress through the school.
54. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although there is some effective use of the computer suite to help pupils to learn well. Many lessons relate directly to pupils' work in other subjects and this improves the relevance of their learning. Teachers have developed good personal skills and confidence with equipment and use these effectively to give clear explanations. Very good relationships ensure that lessons run smoothly and encourage pupils to work hard and apply themselves to the challenges they are set. Pupils respond well and show their good attitudes as they work together well, sharing ideas and equipment sensibly.
55. Pupils develop confidence with the network and become familiar with a good range of specialist terms to describe equipment and processes. They use a good range of programs that cover most aspects of the curriculum.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

56. Pupils develop a sound range of skills through their lessons in the computer suite and much of this work is based on their learning in other subjects. However, teachers make too little use of classroom computers to give pupils additional opportunities to apply and consolidate their skills. As a result, pupils are less secure in recognising how to use and apply ICT skills to problems and work in their other lessons.

HUMANITIES

57. There were not enough lesson observations during the inspection to judge provision for geography and history. However, analysis of work and planning, and conversations with pupils suggest that standards are as expected for their ages.
58. Teachers engage and interest pupils well in new topics through active learning which they enjoy. For example, Year 6 pupils described their personal experiences of mountain environments and made graphic wanted posters for Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni. Year 4 pupils researched Vikings using pictures of artefacts and pupils in Year 3 suggested questions they wanted to research about World War 2. Well-planned visits and presentations by visitors

enliven learning. Pupils' books show that teachers make good use of history to extend pupils' reading and narrative writing skills. However, there was limited use of ICT in these subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching enables pupils to relate new learning to their daily experiences
- Arrangements for assessment and monitoring of teaching are areas for development

Commentary

59. Standards of work seen in pupils' books and lessons meet the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. Conversations with pupils show they are achieving satisfactory knowledge and understanding as they learn both about and from religions. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory - an improvement since the last inspection when there was some unsatisfactory teaching.
60. In lessons and assemblies, pupils give personal examples of books and occasions in their lives that are special to them. One pupil pointed out that it was natural to share happiness on birthdays as, 'There might be no one to show presents to or to say thank you to'. In a whole school assembly, pupils reflected quietly and sincerely on how it was important to do and say good things. However, the use of assemblies to introduce the topic for each week's religious education lessons leads to some repetition of teaching, which reduces the effectiveness of learning.
61. Good leadership and management have responded well to issues in the previous inspection. Teachers no longer rely on undemanding worksheets. There are now good opportunities for creative and imaginative responses in new learning. For example, pupils write poems, prayers and blessings, and use illustration and discussion to explore and record their thoughts and feelings. This makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, now make satisfactory progress. The co-ordinator has correctly identified the need to improve assessment and to monitor lessons so as to measure more precisely pupils' progress through the topics of the locally agreed syllabus.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. In all these subjects, unsatisfactory accommodation has a negative impact on provision. For example, the school lacks storage space for partially completed art and design work, limiting the scope of projects. The need to use a classroom as a 'hall' means that classes have to move around and the school lacks a suitable performance space. Co-ordinators have revised the curriculum for their subjects, making some use of national guidance and given informal support to other staff. However, progress in developing their roles has been restricted by staff changes. Monitoring of lessons and standards in these subjects, for example, has been limited but is included in the school improvement plan.
63. Although no lessons were observed in art and design, design and technology or music, discussions with pupils and subject co-ordinators indicate that pupils reach average standards in these subjects.
64. In **art**, pupils develop an understanding of the styles of some famous artists, such as Van Gogh. Analysis of pupils' past work shows that much of this links effectively to pupils' learning

in other subjects. However, pupils' opportunities to express themselves creatively are more limited.

65. In **design and technology**, pupils draw designs, create artefacts and evaluate their work. They talk with enthusiasm about a range of projects, including making shoes, bridges and using electric lights in models.
66. Pupils learn forms of musical notation that they use when composing simple pieces and they sing with enjoyment. They develop understanding of **music** from different parts of the world and have particularly fond memories of their attempts at Mongolian throat singing.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reach average standards overall, although many have good games skills
- Inadequate accommodation restricts the range of activities that teachers can provide

Commentary

67. The school's accommodation remains limited. Although it has acquired a small field and hard surface area since the last inspection, increased pupil numbers have meant that all rooms are now needed for classes. As a result, one class must leave its classroom to act as a 'hall' for activities, such as physical education lessons, school assemblies and dining room. This very limited accommodation means the school is unable to offer any consistent provision in some aspects of the subject, such as gymnastics. Teachers compensate, to a degree, by offering what opportunities they can organise. They make particularly good provision, for example, for pupils to learn a wide range of games skills. Good extra-curricular clubs and activities enrich the provision. As a result, pupils reach satisfactory standards overall.
68. Teaching is satisfactory overall and teachers plan their lessons carefully to make good use of the available time and resources. Their very good relationships and effective instructions encourage pupils to try hard and they enjoy their lessons. Teachers often give good instruction and pupils have good opportunities to practice and develop skills. However, many lessons have to take place outside and teachers do not always do enough to keep all pupils active the whole time.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

Provision in PSHCE is **good**.

69. Teachers' very good relationships with pupils are the foundation of effective provision. For example in a very good Year 3 lesson, skilful teaching encouraged pupils to explore their responsibilities as pet owners. Pupils receive appropriate sex education for their ages and develop increasing awareness of the dangers of drugs and alcohol mainly through the English, science and humanities curriculum. Pupils gain a good understanding of healthy eating and lifestyles as a result. Although the school provides separate PSHE lessons only in Year 3 classes, teachers' skilful leadership of discussion in lessons in many subjects guides pupils' thoughtful exploration of personal, social and health issues. The influence and involvement of the school council and pupils' mature responses to the wide range of responsibilities they take up in the school community demonstrate the practical effectiveness of PSHCE.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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