

INSPECTION REPORT

MELBOURNE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Melbourne, Derby

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112593

Headteacher: Mrs Anne Pickford

Lead inspector: Mrs Barbara Crane

Dates of inspection: 12th – 15th January 2004

Inspection number: 256887

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

Crown copyright 2004

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 category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	243
School address:	Packhorse Road Melbourne Derby Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE73 1EG
Telephone number:	01332 862344
Fax number:	01332 862344
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Dr J Davies
Date of previous inspection:	16 th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This average sized school has 243 pupils on roll aged seven to eleven, with a roughly equal number of boys and girls. Very few of the pupils come from ethnic groups other than white British, but a small number of pupils are of dual ethnic heritage. All of the pupils speak English as their first language. The school serves a generally favourable area and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, five per cent, is lower than average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average, at about ten per cent of the school's population. An average number of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Most pupils transfer from the infant school that shares the school's site and their attainment is often much better than average. A number of pupils join the school at a later than usual starting point and their attainment is much more average.

The school gained a Basic Skills Quality Mark and an Investor in People Award in 2002. It also received a Healthy Schools Award in 2003. This is a pilot school for the effective use of computers and also takes part in the Sports Co-ordinator Partnership and Travel Plan initiatives.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21227	Barbara Crane	Lead inspector	English, art and design, religious education.
19426	Chris Farris	Lay inspector	
18505	David Matthews	Team inspector	Mathematics, history, geography, physical education, special educational needs.
33225	Elizabeth Greensides	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology, music.

The inspection contractor was:

peakschoolhaus Ltd

BPS Business Centre
Brake Lane
Boughton
Nottinghamshire
NG22 9HQ

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	7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in subjects	
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	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS	18
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well to reach well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave. There is good quality teaching and a high level of care for pupils by the staff. The school is well managed and there is very strong leadership by the headteacher. It gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very effective leadership by the headteacher ensures that the school has a clear sense of purpose.
- Standards are high in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils achieve very well in mathematics and apply what they have learned in other subjects.
- The good teaching means that the needs of pupils of different abilities are met.
- Pupils' personal development is very good and is enhanced by the wide range of activities outside lessons.
- The staff know pupils well and take very good care of them.
- Pupils' skills in writing and information and communication technology (ICT) are not always used effectively in other subjects.

The school has improved well since its last inspection in 1998. High standards have been maintained and the teaching has improved. All issues from the previous inspection have been resolved due to the school's work to improve the teaching of handwriting, punctuation and grammar, as well as improving pupils' presentation of work.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. The school's trend in standards has kept up with the national rate of improvement. Standards seen now in English, mathematics and science are well above average by the time the pupils leave the school, reflecting last year's results. The pupils' performance in writing last year was not as good as in reading and so the overall results for English were only average compared to similar schools. The school took effective steps to improve pupils' writing and it now matches standards in reading. Pupils do particularly well in mathematics and use their skills effectively to support learning in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs do well because of good support. More able pupils get what they need to reach the higher level in their work. Standards in art and design are well above average and pupils learn a very good range of skills. Standards in religious education and physical education are good. Standards in ICT are average but the lack of access to computers in lessons limits pupils' ability to use their skills in other subjects.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A	C
Mathematics	A	A	A	B
Science	B	A	A	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' moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is very good. Pupils behave very well; they are polite and think about others' needs, readily supporting each other when necessary. Pupils of different ages and backgrounds get on very well together, whether at work or play. They feel part

of the school's community and abide by its rules. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and show respect for the staff and each other. Attendance is excellent and pupils come to school punctually and ready to work, and make the most of what is on offer.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality education. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' high expectations of behaviour and their good encouragement are reflected in the calm atmosphere in classrooms and pupils' willingness to take on challenges. Assessment is well used by teachers to pitch work at the right level for pupils of different abilities. The basic skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics are very well taught. Pupils are keen to contribute their ideas in lessons because they know that these will be valued. Classroom assistants are very well trained and provide good support for pupils' learning. There is a good, broad curriculum that links the pupils' learning well in most subjects but pupils do not always use their skills in writing or ICT effectively in other subjects because these aspects are less well planned. There is a very good range of activities for the pupils to take part in at lunchtime or after school. The school takes very good care of pupils and promotes their understanding of healthy living very well. The school has a strong partnership with parents and the guidance it gives helps them to support their children's learning at home and school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school's **leadership and management are good.** The headteacher provides a very strong lead for improvement, firmly based on her precise analysis of teaching, learning and pupils' performance. As a result, the school has the right priorities and knows what it needs to do next and how to achieve its targets. Effective planning for improvement, for example, has resulted in better standards in writing. The staff work very well together to achieve the school's aims. Key staff provide good support for the school's work.

The governance of the school is good. All statutory requirements are met. The governors provide effective support for the school and understand its strengths and weaknesses well through checking on its performance.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school and feel that their children do well. The pupils enjoy school and appreciate what it does for them. They enjoy being together and are proud of their achievements and their school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things that the school needs to do now are:

- ensure that pupils use their skills in writing more effectively in other subjects;
- improve opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology in lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good** throughout the school. Standards in English, mathematics and science are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do well in English and science and particularly well in mathematics.
- Standards are well above average in art and design.
- Standards in religious education and physical education are above average.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of good support.
- Pupils' better progress in ICT is restricted because they do not use the skills they have often enough in lessons.

Commentary

1. The very good standards in English and science seen at the last inspection have been maintained and standards in mathematics have improved. The trend in the school's standards has kept up with the national trend over the past five years. The more able pupils are achieving consistently well, which is also an improvement from the last inspection. The results for tests taken by Year 6 pupils in 2003 were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science and these pupils did better than expected from the point they were at as seven year olds in mathematics and science. In English, however, pupils only did as well as expected and their attainment was average, compared to pupils in similar schools. The weaker aspect in standards was writing and pupils did very well in reading. The school has looked closely at the problems with writing and set about improving pupils' standards through individual and group target setting, as well as adaptations to teaching. This has proved successful and standards in writing in Year 6 are now very good.
2. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well in English and science because their different needs are pinpointed and catered for. Many pupils are extremely competent readers, with a high level of understanding of what they read that enables them to 'read between the lines' and infer from the text. Pupils write confidently, with imagination and a high level of accuracy in punctuation and grammar. There is a very good depth of knowledge and understanding in science that supports pupils' good achievement and high standards. Pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics because of very effective teaching. The teachers look carefully at other subjects to see where pupils can use their mathematical skills in practical situations and pupils do this very confidently. Their progress in mathematics is considerably enhanced because pupils see the relevance of their learning.
3. Standards in art and design are well above average and pupils' achievement is very good. This is because the pupils are taught a wide range of skills and learn how to use ideas as a starting point and respond creatively to produce individual work of high quality. Standards in religious education are above average; pupils achieve well and demonstrate a good ability to relate what they have learned to their own lives and have a good understanding of how different religious beliefs influence how people live. Standards in physical education are good and enhanced through the school's wide range of activities outside normal lessons. Pupils show a good level of skill in controlling their movements in gymnastics and have a well-developed sense of fair play, as well as accurate skills in games.
4. Although standards in ICT are average, pupils' achievement is only at a satisfactory level because they do not use the skills they have learned in everyday situations in other subjects.

Older pupils are often catching up on learning skills because the school has had limited resources and although these have improved, pupils do not use computers often enough to practise what they have learned.

- The school helps pupils with special educational needs to achieve well through good support that is thoughtfully tailored to suit the needs of individual pupils. As a result of this they make good progress towards the targets set for them.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.7 (29.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.3 (28.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.9 (30.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance is **excellent** and pupils are punctual.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to school that help to keep them highly motivated to learn.
- The school actively promotes the consistently very good behaviour both in classrooms and around school.
- Pupils treat each other and adults with respect.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to be involved in decision making and to take on wider responsibilities.
- Attendance is excellent.

Commentary

- Pupils approach their work enthusiastically and are confident to discuss what they have learned. Attendance at extra-curricular clubs is very good, and many have to be on a rota system due to the number of pupils wishing to attend. Pupils of all abilities have very good attitudes to learning which impact well on the standards they achieve.
- The school actively promotes the pupils’ very good behaviour, both in lessons and on the playground. The school stresses pupils’ responsibilities along with the rights of individuals, and pupils are encouraged to find their own solutions on the rare occasions when things go wrong. Playground behaviour is closely monitored, and incidents of bullying or other harassment are rare.
- Pupils successfully live up to the school motto, “Only my best is good enough for me,” and this has an impact throughout the school. They are very aware of what is expected of them and respond very positively, with a clear understanding that rules are there to help them work and play together. There have been no exclusions.
- Pupils are very polite to each other, adults and visitors. They are quick to help others. This is very apparent at times when they are moving around school at lunchtimes and at playtime when they are keen to hold open doors for other children and to smile and to say “Thank you”. Relationships between boys and girls are very good and pupils often sit or play in mixed groups.

10. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy a sense of responsibility as they take turns to be playground 'buddies' for the younger children. There are good opportunities for pupils to be involved in making decisions about the school, through the annual pupil questionnaires and the school council. Throughout the school pupils take responsibility for their own progress with personal and academic targets such as "Make sure I listen better in lessons". These targets are effectively and regularly used. Assembly music is from a different country each day, and there is discussion about the different sounds and instruments. Reading books have a good range of stories from different cultures, and teachers' planning identifies when pupils can learn about how different cultures have produced different versions of a story, for example creation stories. Pupils' interest in different cultures is stimulated through displays, such as African masks, carvings and jewellery in connection with work in geography. Pupils' understanding of how different religious beliefs guide people's way of life is well developed.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.1	School data	0.0
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.

11. Attendance is excellent. The school strongly promotes attendance and parents co-operate very well to ensure that their children attend regularly. Any unexplained absence is followed up immediately. The high level of attendance is a reflection of the pupils' enjoyment of their school life. Punctuality is very good and lessons start promptly.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
232	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
4	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality education. Teaching is good and there is a good curriculum with plenty of activities outside lessons. The school takes very good care of its pupils and has strong links with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan challenging work for all abilities.
- Pupils freely talk about their ideas because of teachers' good encouragement.
- Teaching is consistently very good in mathematics.
- Computers are used too infrequently in lessons to support pupils' learning.
- The use of worksheets restricts pupils from deciding how to write in different subjects.

Commentary

12. Teaching is good. There has been good improvement in teaching since the last inspection, when some teaching was unsatisfactory. The school has dealt with the weaknesses and all teaching is now at least satisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (6%)	12 (34%)	13 (37%)	8 (23%)	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.

13. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and how to teach them and also know how to enthuse pupils to learn. Basic skills are taught very well, so that pupils read, write, listen and speak with assurance as well as developing a wide range of mathematical skills. Pupils are keen to contribute to discussions because teachers encourage them to talk about their ideas and they know that others will listen to them. As teaching places a very good emphasis on pupils widening their vocabulary and using the correct terms, these discussions are often of high quality. This was well demonstrated in a Year 5 art and design lesson, when pupils gave their ideas about how to describe and create different qualities of texture.
14. Teachers effectively use the checks that they make on pupils' progress to plan work that is adapted to the needs of different ability groups. More able pupils are catered for well through teaching that aims high and inspires pupils' confidence to tackle challenging work. In a Year 4 English lesson, for example, more able pupils explored how they could improve the quality of a piece of writing and through the teacher's excellent demonstration of how subordinate clauses can enhance writing, most were able to include these.
15. The staff have a clear picture of which pupils need extra help and the teaching strategies which will enable them to make progress. Adults are well deployed to help the pupils with special educational needs, who benefit from patient and encouraging support with their learning. The way in which the school carefully targets extra help at pupils who need extra support means that these pupils achieve well.
16. Teaching is very effective in mathematics because teachers are very confident about the subject and they teach at a fast pace that keeps pupils alert. Pupils enjoy the challenges presented and are very keen to take part in activities. Resources are very well used to maintain pupils' interest and aid their learning. There is a strong emphasis on using mathematical skills, often in pairs or groups, to find different ways to solve problems.
17. There are times when the use of worksheets restricts pupils' choice over how to present their work in writing, for example in science in Years 3, 4 and 5. This means that pupils do not

sufficiently practise or extend their skills in adapting their style of writing to suit different purposes. A similar weakness is evident in the pupils' limited use of ICT to support their learning in other subjects because teaching does not always identify relevant opportunities for them to do so.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum with a **very good** range of activities outside normal lessons. The staffing, accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There are good links between subjects, and the curriculum in art and design is very good and supports high standards.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are very well used in other subjects but this is not always the case for pupils' writing and ICT skills.
- A very good range of activities supports pupils' learning and personal development outside normal lessons.
- The pupils' understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle is very well promoted.

Commentary

18. The school teaches all of the subjects that it should and includes work that provides effectively for personal, social and health education, including sex education and attention to alcohol and drug misuse. The curriculum is well balanced and delivered so that pupils of all abilities are included. Pupils are well prepared for the next school, with some work planned to continue into Year 7, such as in personal, social and health education. There is an adequate number of staff and a sound level of resources although there are fewer computers than the nationally recommended level for the number of pupils in the school. The accommodation is satisfactory.
19. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs and gives them what they need to meet the targets set for them. The support staff are skilled at helping pupils when they encounter difficulties but are sensitive to times when pupils need to work independently.
20. Pupils make good progress because the curriculum is planned to build on what they already know and can do. The school's current initiative to extend pupils' skills in thinking is well reflected in teachers' planning and proving successful; pupils are motivated to learn because of opportunities to air their views and try out their ideas. Good links are often made between subjects, such as art and design and history, so that pupils see that what they have learned in one subject helps their learning in other subjects. Standards in art are very good because pupils benefit from a rich and varied curriculum that allows them to learn an array of skills that they use very confidently to explore their ideas.
21. There are many times when pupils are able to use their mathematical skills very well in other subjects to enhance their learning because of the school's careful planning. In science, for example, pupils very competently interpret data to inform their thinking and make measurements using different scales. There is not such robust planning to ensure that pupils' skills in writing are used to such good effect, as worksheets sometimes limit pupils' opportunities to decide how to set down their ideas. The school has also not yet sufficiently identified when pupils can usefully put into practice the skills that they have learned in ICT.
22. Pupils' awareness of the need for a healthy lifestyle is very well promoted through several subjects, such as science and physical education, as well as through the school's planning for specific lessons on personal, social and health education. Pupils are made aware of the dangers of drugs through an interesting range of activities in which they are taught how they

might resist pressure from others. The school also encourages pupils to walk to school, eat healthily at lunchtime and take part in physical activities at lunchtime and after school.

23. There is plenty for pupils to do outside normal lessons and large numbers of pupils take part in sporting activities and dance and musical activities. The pupils in Year 6 benefit from short sessions of French, taught by a teacher from the local secondary school, as part of the school's transition work. Pupils enjoy this wide range of activities and their involvement does much to enrich their learning as well as their very positive attitudes to school.

Care, guidance and support

The arrangements for the care, safety and welfare of pupils are **very good**. Provision for support and guidance, based on monitoring, is **very good**. The way in which the school involves pupils through seeking their views is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff look after the pupils very well and provide them with very good support so that they grow in confidence.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
- Child protection and health and safety procedures are all securely in place.
- Children are well supported as they start school and when they prepare to move on to secondary school.

Commentary

24. The school is a warm and friendly place in which pupils are happy and secure and can enjoy their school life. All staff provide a high level of support and the very good relationships make it easy for pupils to share their troubles with the staff, knowing they will get a sympathetic hearing. Personal development of the pupils is very well promoted through the curriculum, assemblies, individual support and the high expectations that teachers have. Older pupils have a significant range of responsibilities including acting as playground 'buddies' and helping younger pupils to play constructively. All this significantly boosts their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils who are members of the school council feel that they have a real part to play in the running of the school and this enables the views of all pupils to be taken into account in school developments. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, get very good academic support from teachers through careful and well-applied monitoring procedures.
25. The well-being of pupils has a high priority. Child protection procedures are very good and staff receive regular training and briefings. Health and safety is very well managed. There is a good policy and a teacher has day-to-day responsibility for overseeing this and ensuring that the school environment remains safe. There is a safety inspection each term and risk assessment is regularly and properly carried out. Emergency procedures are all in place and fire drills are carried out twice each term, sometimes with surprises in them to ensure pupils learn what to do under unfamiliar conditions.
26. Pupils moving up from the infant school have a good foretaste prior to starting at the junior school. They will have met and been taught by the Year 3 teachers and, through social visits and activities, will know the staff and the building. This enables them to move up with confidence. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 get a good introduction to their new secondary school, with a taster day enabling them to familiarise themselves with the routines before starting full time at their new school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **very good**. Links with the community and other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views of the school and what it provides for their children.
- The school gives very good information to parents about the school and about their children's standards and progress.
- Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at school and at home.

Commentary

27. Parents are very supportive of the school and happy with the education their children get. They see the school as well led, with good teaching that encourages their children to work hard and try their best. They see their children liking school and being treated fairly by staff who help them become independent as they mature and develop. The inspection findings endorse these views.
28. The school provides a very good range of information to parents. Parents receive very useful information when their children start in the school. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements, although some say more about what has been studied than the standards achieved. A particularly strong feature is the half-termly target for each pupil and a report on the progress and effort made. There are regular newsletters that include information about the governing body's activities, and details of the curriculum and topics are sent home each term. Parents' views are sought and acted upon. This has led to parents' greater satisfaction with the way in which homework is organised. The prospectus and governors' annual report are informative and meet statutory requirements.
29. Many parents provide good support for their children's work at home. The homework diaries are well used for two-way communication and keep parents informed of what their children are learning. A good number of parents provide voluntary help on a regular basis. The Parents' Association is extremely active and runs a packed programme of events that raise significant funds that are used to provide additional facilities, equipment and resources that benefit the pupils' learning.
30. The school has a good relationship with the neighbouring infant school that is being developed further to ensure that pupils move from one school to the other with confidence and continue to make good progress as they move. Joint work on the curriculum with the secondary school helps to ensure there is a smooth transition to the next phase of education.
31. The school is active within the community. Each week, it plays host to senior citizens and the pupils serve lunch to them. This strongly promotes the pupils' social skills and is greatly appreciated by their visitors. Visits are made to local churches and the choir takes part in a church musical evening. Involvement with the town brass band has led to the formation of the school's own band. All these activities widen the pupils' horizons and help boost their confidence and self-esteem.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher's leadership is **very good** and she is well supported by key staff. The management and governance of school are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's very good checks on teaching and learning result in a clear focus for improvement.
- There is a strong and effective emphasis on including all pupils.
- The analysis of pupils' performance is precise and well used to set challenging targets.
- The staff work well as a team and their professional development effectively underpins the school's initiatives.
- The management of ICT slower at bringing about improvements to the curriculum.
- Governors give good support and they have a firm grasp of the school's finances.

Commentary

32. The headteacher's very good leadership focuses strongly on how well the school promotes pupils' good learning and achievement. She has very effectively led the school's initiative on exploring how pupils learn and this has led to improvements in teaching that better promote pupils' thinking skills and also to teachers' recognition of the preferred learning styles of different pupils. This emphasis contributes very well to pupils' abilities and achievements. For example, it develops their problem-solving skills considerably in mathematics and contributes significantly to pupils' very good achievements.
33. Good management means that the staff pull together to resolve areas of weakness. The school looks very carefully at what pupils can and cannot do and uses the information very well to improve pupils' learning, notably in mathematics and writing, and this has led to better standards in both areas. The school's analysis of pupils' performance is very detailed and so even small differences in the results of different groups of pupils are pinpointed. For example, when teachers looked at the achievements of the more able pupils, they found some minor differences between the performance of boys and girls in English and mathematics. The school has acted swiftly to remedy these slight differences by adaptations to teaching to fit pupils' differing needs, reflecting the good management of both English and mathematics.
34. The school recognises that achievement in ICT is not as good as it should be and is taking part in a project to better promote pupils' skills. Nevertheless, it has been less rigorous in keeping a watchful eye on pupils' learning in ICT and in acting quickly to make improvements to the curriculum so that pupils use their skills in other subjects. Training for teachers and new computers have started to help the school to improve pupils' learning but there is more to do.
35. All staff care for the needs of pupils. In addition to looking carefully at the differences in the performance of boys and girls and brighter pupils, the school is particularly good at including pupils with special educational needs and incorporating them fully in its life and work. The provision for these pupils is well managed and as a result they make good progress. Staff are very good role models for pupils. They show respect to each other and to pupils and they set a very good example as to how they should behave towards others. This contributes significantly to pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour.
36. Governance is good. All statutory requirements are fulfilled. The governors are well aware of the school's priorities, such as developing pupils' thinking skills and writing, and this helps them to give good support to the school's efforts to improve. They ensure that their approach to financial management helps the school to achieve fully its educational priorities. The school's development planning clearly shows how the school's finances will support its goals. In carefully planning ahead, the carry forward sum will be used to maintain staffing levels when a lower than usual number of pupils enter the school in September.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	507003
Total expenditure	500213
Expenditure per pupil	2084

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	23571
Balance carried forward to the next	30361

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

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The basic skills are very well taught.
- Pupils use their skills in reading very well to support their learning in other subjects.
- Pupils write fluently, with accurate spelling and punctuation and great imagination but they do not use their skills sufficiently in other subjects.
- They talk about their ideas using a wide vocabulary, and listen carefully to others.

Commentary

37. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards are higher and pupils' handwriting is now neat and well formed. Pupils present their work very carefully. There is now a good level of challenge for the more able pupils. Standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening are very good and pupils achieve well. The pupils' learning of basic skills, such as spelling and punctuation, is supported very well because of thorough teaching. Pupils check through their work to find mistakes and are quick to spot and improve any shortcomings.
38. Teaching and learning are good and so pupils of all abilities make good progress. Pupils' good achievement is sustained through teachers' very good knowledge of the subject and knowledge of how to engage pupils' interest through strategies such as expressive reading and challenging discussions so that pupils are enthusiastic about learning. Teachers encourage pupils to read widely, both for pleasure and to gain information. This was evident in a Year 4 lesson, when pupils read through scenarios that set out a moral dilemma and immediately grasped the challenge before them and so were able to set about discussing how they might tackle the problem. In a Year 6 lesson, very effective teaching meant that pupils quickly identified the use of sensory language through which an author had established a particular atmosphere. They then used what they had learned to create a relaxed, comforting atmosphere to open their own stories, such as "The old, comfy armchair with its bright cushion welcomed me into the room and the glowing fire warmed my cheeks." Teaching took the needs of pupils of different abilities into account and so lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in this lesson were well supported with word banks so that they could extend their ideas.
39. Teachers ensure that pupils talk about their ideas in pairs or groups and so they know what they want to write. Pupils are open to others' ideas and listen carefully so that they can learn from each other. They use a rich vocabulary that reflects the teachers' enthusiasm for language and emphasis on using precise and powerful words. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils used what they had learned from the teacher's clear guidance about constructing a successful opening to a suspense story to add description, action and dialogue to set a scene. Pupils organised the writing into paragraphs and their first drafts were accurate, with carefully chosen language and complex sentences.
40. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Weaknesses in pupils' writing have been resolved through a careful analysis of the problems in teaching and learning and suitable adaptations that have brought about rapid improvement. The action plan for the subject identifies that pupils' use of writing across the curriculum needs to improve and this is a priority in the school development plan.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

While teaching ensures that pupils use their speaking and reading skills very effectively to support learning in other subjects, the pupils do not have the same opportunities to use their very good skills in writing to the same degree. Pupils know how to adapt the style of their writing to suit different purposes and do this very competently in English lessons but teachers do not sufficiently let them practise this in real situations in other subjects. Too often, worksheets are used in subjects such as science or history that prevent the pupils from organising their own writing and using and extending their skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well because the teaching of mathematical skills and understanding is very good.
- Pupils are encouraged to try out their ideas to solve problems.
- Teachers use their checks on pupils' progress very well to improve pupils' learning.
- Teachers make sure that pupils use their skills in other subjects.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

41. Pupils achieve very well so that by the end of Year 6 standards are well above average in all aspects of the subject. Standards are better than those at the last inspection. Year 6 pupils are particularly good at developing different ways of solving mathematical problems by trying out their own ideas to see which work and which do not. Many competently give their reasons for how they reach their answers. Most lower attaining pupils accurately recall multiplication facts that help them to solve problems. Less confident pupils receive effective adult support as when multiplying a four-digit number by one digit. The last inspection found that pupils did not always present their work neatly. Pupils now take great care to present their work.
42. Teaching is very good because it places strong demands on pupils to develop their mathematical skills and understanding rapidly and to a high level. Teachers expect pupils to do well. Pupils of all abilities live up to these expectations because teachers are aware of their differing capabilities and support them well. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, the teacher very effectively adapted her plans for what pupils of different abilities would do in light of marking their work from the previous day. This adaptation enabled pupils to make very good progress in their learning about co-ordinates. Most teaching moves along at a very good pace so that many pupils maintain very good levels of interest in their mathematical learning because they are fully engaged. A significant strength in teaching is the way that teachers use a wide range of resources both to fully involve pupils and to extend their mathematical knowledge and skills significantly. Teachers are becoming increasingly skilful at using interactive whiteboards to help pupils to understand mathematical processes. They use number and picture cards effectively to promote very good learning of decimals and geometric shapes. Teachers provide pupils with small white boards that enable them to work out calculations quickly with one another and move on swiftly to the next task.
43. Teachers give pupils ample opportunities to talk with each other about their work. These chances extend pupils' understanding of mathematical methods very well because they learn to appreciate the full range of possible ways to reach an answer and to judge the usefulness of each method. Very occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to extend pupils' learning through talk, as in a Year 6 lesson when the teacher did not give pupils the chance to explain the teacher's deliberate mistake in a calculation. Teachers make very good use of what they learn from checks on pupils' performance to improve learning.

44. The leadership and management of the subject are very good and reflected in the way in which results of tests are analysed meticulously to find out how to raise the achievements of differing groups of pupils. Having identified minor differences between the attainments of more able boys and girls, quick action was taken to examine the preferred learning styles of boys and girls. The school found that some girls were less confident in their problem solving than boys and there is now a strong focus on boosting this in lessons that is proving successful. The school's current emphasis on promoting thinking skills and its consideration of how different pupils learn contribute significantly to pupils' very good abilities to use and apply their mental mathematics skills.

Mathematics across the curriculum

Teachers plan very well for pupils to use their mathematics across the range of subjects and the pupils do so confidently. Notably, mathematics is used effectively in science, when pupils handle data about measurements of temperature, capacity or forces and in art and design to develop their work on shape and patterns that rotate. In geography, it is used well, for example when pupils analyse statistics on rainfall.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good standards have been maintained because of effective teaching.
- Pupils have a very broad scientific knowledge and discuss their ideas using the correct terms.
- Pupils do not often enough design their own experiments and decide how to record their findings.

Commentary

45. Standards are well above those expected nationally and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement is good, and most are working at the higher level by the end of Year 6. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and because of good planning the school consistently meets its challenging targets. Pupils demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding across all strands of the subject. For example, Year 4 pupils quickly explain the properties of liquids and solids: "You can pour a liquid, you can mould a solid." Most can explain the actions of particles in both liquids and solids, at a level beyond expectations for this age group.
46. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils learn from each other as they discuss their observations and learning with others, in groups or in pairs. Teachers' knowledge is very good and shows in the confidence with which they discuss scientific matters. Throughout the school there is an effective emphasis on the use of scientific terms and language in the right contexts and this means that pupils talk about their ideas confidently. Pupils are able to explain scientific facts and observations using models and theories, but they are sometimes limited by overuse of worksheets that set out a format to be followed. There is insufficient opportunity for them to decide how to organise the recording of their findings. This sometimes means more able pupils do not record additional points that they have noticed during their investigations and so the teacher is not able to explore their ideas with them and further extend pupils' understanding.
47. The information gained from assessments is well used to gauge pupils' progress and plan what they need to do next. Extension activities are frequently built in to challenge those of a higher ability, and pupils with special educational needs are given reading or writing support to enable them to fully access the science content of the lesson. Most teaching reflects the school's current initiative to improve pupils' skills in thinking, and pupils are encouraged to discuss with each other what might happen and why they think this will occur. For example, in a lesson with

Year 6, pupils were given very clear guidelines for devising an experiment using different variables to prove different theories. Due to pupils deciding on their own methods, several different experiments were performed in a short time, and pupils then discussed their observations and learned from each other. As a result, investigative skills were considerably improved and scientific knowledge increased.

48. The management and leadership of the subject are good. The new co-ordinator has quickly become aware that pupils need more freedom to organise their own investigations and is leading this initiative in her own teaching by enabling pupils to devise and design their own experiments with different variables. She is effectively disseminating this practice throughout school and has planned a series of training sessions with other teachers.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The direct teaching of skills in ICT is good.
- There is a lack of relevant opportunities to use skills to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

49. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 are average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. For example, Year 6 pupils have created multi-media presentations based on their work in history on the Tudors. When they are taught new skills in a spreadsheet program, they quickly understand concepts and applications because of good teaching. Pupils use ICT competently to present their writing, with some imaginative use of layout, fonts and images.
50. The direct teaching of skills is good. For example, in a Year 5 lesson on databases, which focused on the presentation of graphs and changing font and style, the pupils succeeded because the teacher's introduction using the computer whiteboard was very clear. More able pupils were given the opportunity to extend their learning further by exploring different types of graphs and deciding which were most appropriate in different situations.
51. All staff have had training to enhance their teaching, the school is taking part in a national project to improve the use of ICT to support pupils' learning across the curriculum and resources have very recently been improved. Half of the classrooms are now equipped with whiteboards on which computer programs can be projected and which teachers use with enthusiasm and increasing confidence. At the last inspection there was only one computer in each classroom. The school now has a computer suite, but the number of computers is still below that needed for pupils to have access that ensures they can use the skills they have learned in other subjects.
52. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator for ICT, supported by senior management, has a good vision for the future development of ICT, linked to the realistic appraisal of current skills and confidence of staff. They know what needs to be improved and there is a detailed development plan that aims to ensure that ICT should become a teaching tool to contribute to children's learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

53. Pupils do not sufficiently use the skills they have to support learning in other subjects. Teachers' planning does not sufficiently identify the relevant times for pupils to put what they have learned into practice. For example, Year 5 pupils have been taught how to create databases but the opportunity to use this in a religious education lesson in the same week was

missed because the teacher presented the graphs to the pupils that represented the findings of their school-wide survey.

HUMANITIES

54. There were no history lessons during the inspection and only two lessons were seen in geography. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards, teaching or provision in these subjects.
55. Teachers throughout the school realise the importance of using resources well to help pupils to develop their historical understanding. They use timelines effectively so that, for example, Year 3 plot events in Ancient Greece such as the first Olympic Games and the death of Cleopatra. There are good links with other subjects, such as design and technology, when Year 3 pupils make pottery in the Ancient Greek style or Year 6 pupils make models of Tudor houses.
56. Teachers sometimes use creative and imaginative ways to develop pupils' geographical understanding effectively. For example in a Year 6 lesson the teacher invented an effective way of helping pupils to understand contours. The practical task to represent two different gradients of card along a horizontal paper by marking two centimetre intervals was a clever and successful way to help them to understand contour lines on maps. The teacher very effectively used maps and pictures on the interactive whiteboard to enhance pupils' understanding.
57. The school teaches pupils about locations with characteristics that contrast with those of Melbourne. However, it does not always choose locations for pupils to visit in order to gain first-hand knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils find out about how Betws-y-Coed contrasts with Melbourne. While much effective learning takes place in school involving, for instance comparisons of population changes, pupils do not have the chance to learn at first hand about the Welsh town despite passing through it on a coach on the way to a residential visit.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good understanding of how different religious beliefs guide people's lives.
- They think deeply about how their own and others' ideas and what influences them.
- There are few visits to places of worship other than local churches.

Commentary

58. Pupils achieve well and standards are above average by the time they leave. The position from the last inspection has been maintained.
59. Teaching and learning are good. The work in religious education is challenging and probes pupils' thinking very effectively. Lessons are well planned to enable pupils to consider difficult questions and reflect on their own and others' beliefs. This was seen in a Year 5 lesson, when pupils looked at the data they had collected from their whole-school survey on pupils' ideas about God. The pupils recognised that the range of responses widened as pupils became older and worked in groups to think about why this might happen. Through their discussions, pupils quickly realised that influences such as books, attending church, school and watching television might be significant factors and that this broadening of experience probably led to older pupils having more ideas.
60. The Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of the way in which religious beliefs can guide the ways in which people live their lives. A group of pupils, for example, explained that religion

provides 'a path for people to follow' and talked in depth about Buddhist and Sikh practices. Pupils know how Christianity spread across the world and explain how it changed into its different forms. Good links with local churches mean that pupils learn at first hand about Christianity but they do not benefit from visits to other religions' places of worship.

61. Leadership and management are good and result in a strong emphasis on developing pupils' ability to draw conclusions from what they learn and apply their knowledge to extend their thinking.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. No lessons were observed in **music** and there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards and teaching and learning. Singing in assembly is of high quality. Pupils heard singing in assembly during the inspection week did so with enthusiasm and skill, and broke naturally into two-part singing, with a descant, without reminders. There are good opportunities for extra-curricular enrichment. Pupils are encouraged to widen their musical experiences in a variety of ways. There is a recorder group for the younger pupils, and older ones can be part of the school band. A commercial scheme of work is effectively to enable non-specialists to teach more confidently. Music lessons are supplemented by listening to music in assemblies, tapes, performances and assembly singing.
63. No lessons were observed in **design and technology**, and there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards and teaching and learning. Pupils' past work shows that they evaluate commercial artefacts, take them apart to see how they are made, make draft designs of their own, and complete a finished product. Evaluation is built in throughout the process, and the quality of finished articles is high and very individual. For example, pupils in Year 4 have produced a full array of very different, adventurous designs and hats, which were made with skill and imagination. Picture frames by Year 5 pupils incorporate due care and attention to joining the various parts in appropriate ways and are very well finished. Pupils have also given some thought as to how they can improve them.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it.
- Pupils' work is of a very good standard because they acquire a wide range of skills and the confidence to use these imaginatively.
- They use a very good vocabulary when discussing their work.

Commentary

64. Teaching and learning are very good and standards are high. This is the same as at the last inspection. Pupils achieve very well in art because of the skilled teaching and the rich range of opportunities provided for them to put what they have learned into practice. Pupils of all ages are taught to look carefully and appreciate what it is that characterises forms, objects or images. Year 4 pupils, for example, had drawn masks and carvings from Africa and could explain exactly what appealed to them in choosing particular artefacts and how they had tried to capture this in their drawings.
65. Teaching is confident and imaginative and often inspires pupils to create individual and sensitive work. This was well demonstrated in a Year 4 lesson when pupils were exploring qualities of pattern, texture and line. The teacher's introduction to the lesson enabled pupils to reflect on what they had learned the previous week, when they had looked at these

characteristics in natural forms. The teacher also prompted pupils to think about what they had learned about Ancient Greek and Chinese art and the way in which natural forms and patterns were used to enhance artefacts. In the high quality discussion that ensued, pupils used terms such as abstract, diagonal, overlapping, order and texture to explain their ideas. Pupils' understanding was further extended by the teacher's excellent explanation of how shapes could be translated and rotated to create a rhythmic pattern and they responded enthusiastically when instructed to explore their ideas freely as they worked. In another lesson, with Year 5, pupils were brimming with ideas about how they could recreate the texture of natural objects through using papers of different qualities combined with pastels. One pupil represented the ridged texture of a shell by finely pleating and creasing thin paper and laying this at right angles to thick corrugated card, working on both with oil pastels to enhance the texture. Pupils in this lesson talked in detail about the work of William Morris and had produced detailed drawings from his motifs that showed close attention to colour and line.

66. The subject is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has a very good level of expertise and ensures that art and design has a high profile in the school's curriculum and supports pupils' spiritual development very well.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and enjoy lessons.
- Teaching is good, particularly at helping pupils to judge their performance.
- Opportunities for pupils outside normal lessons enrich the subject significantly.

Commentary

67. Standards are good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Of the four lessons seen during the inspection the best achievements were in Year 5 gymnastics, linked to very good teaching. Here the teacher had excellent subject knowledge and taught the pupils correct terms including 'torso', 'dynamic' and 'transfer of weight'. Because teaching built carefully on what pupils had achieved previously, they learned to maintain balances with poise and control and to develop a sequence of inventive positions involving rotation. The teacher both challenged pupils to do well and supported them effectively and this resulted in excellent attitudes to their work. Pupils in Year 3 have good control of small games equipment such as balls and quoits. Here the higher ability pupils have significantly good games skills because they throw and receive such items with speed and accuracy, often over long distances. Throughout the school pupils have very positive attitudes to physical education and they are very mature. For example, Year 5 boys and girls are equally unself-conscious when miming a tennis match.
68. A frequent strength in teaching is the ample opportunities that teachers give to pupils to watch others and to talk about their work in an analytical way. This results in pupils throughout the school having particularly good skills at saying what they think is good about their own performance and that of others. Similarly they are good at suggesting what they or others could do to improve their movements. "She could stretch her head further back" was one Year 6 pupil's idea about how a position could be improved. These findings also reflect those of the previous inspection. Teachers usually explain clearly to pupils what they want them to do. On the rare occasions when explanations are not clear enough, pupils' progress slows for a time, as in a Year 6 lesson when pupils were not clear that they needed to use their partner as 'apparatus' in their gymnastics.
69. The subject is well led and managed so that pupils have a broad range of experiences. For example, many pupils take part in football sessions at lunchtime when they practise and develop their skills effectively. The vibrant after-school dance club builds pupils' dance skills

very well by enabling them to plan, practise and perform routines together with very good support from the teacher.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for this area is **very good**.

70. Only one lesson was seen in this area, but the school's approach to developing pupils' understanding of the importance of living in a community and pupils taking responsibility for their own actions and helping others permeates all lessons. Teaching and learning are very good. There is a comprehensive scheme of work that underpins pupils' learning so that links can be made successfully to other subjects, as well as specific lessons in which issues are explored. In an English lesson, for example, the teacher responded sensitively to pupils' ideas about why hope had been trapped in Pandora's box and this led to a discussion about different moral viewpoints. In the lesson seen, Year 4 pupils explored situations in which they might be placed under pressure to do something that they knew was wrong. Pupils used what they had learned the previous week about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Through lively role-play activities and discussions, they found ways of resolving the problems posed by the teacher. Good teaching meant that pupils thought carefully about their options and when they shared their solutions to dilemmas they showed a good understanding of how they might cope with pressure.

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	2
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	1
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
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).