

INSPECTION REPORT

MEXBOROUGH HIGHWOODS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mexborough

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106748

Headteacher: Mrs D Dunn

Lead inspector: Mr C Smith

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th February 2004

Inspection number: 256904

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	170
School address:	Highwoods Road Mexborough South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S64 9ES
Telephone number:	01709 583273
Fax number:	01709 584757
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Gleadhall
Date of previous inspection:	July 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Mexborough Highwoods is an average sized primary school catering for 170 pupils (88 boys and 82 girls) aged 4 to 11 years. The school takes children from a mixed community, but the vast majority live on the large council estate nearby. Forty-eight per cent of the children are eligible for free school meals, which is well above average. Forty-five children (27 per cent) have special educational needs, of which 5 per cent have statements. These figures are significantly higher than average. Pupils' special needs are largely related to learning difficulties and a very small number experience emotional and physical difficulties. Most children are white and English speaking. However, the school also caters for a small number of children with mixed backgrounds, and six children from Zimbabwe, four of whom speak English as an additional language. There has been a fall in pupil numbers but the Early Years Unit, recently provided within the school, is already beginning to reverse the trends. The movement of families in and out of the area is three times greater than usual. The school has achieved 'Investors in People' status and gained an achievement award for improved results. There have been extensive changes in staffing over the past fifteen months, including the posts of headteacher, deputy headteacher and four class teachers. Children enter the school with a wide range of levels of attainment but for the majority this is well below the level expected for their age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25211	Colin Smith	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Music Physical education
9952	Lillian Brock	Lay inspector	
17685	Linda Spooner	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Information and communication technology History Geography Special educational needs English as an additional language
23887	Peter Nettleship	Team inspector	English Religious education Art and design

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is fairly effective and provides sound value for money. The new headteacher's good leadership has already had a positive impact on staff, pupils and parents. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils are keen to learn, behave well and achieve steadily. Management is satisfactory and good administration ensures that the school operates efficiently.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Particularly effective teaching in reception, Year 1 and Year 4 enables children to achieve well;
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and in aspects of art and design, physical education and citizenship;
- The most and least able pupils could sometimes achieve more in some classes in English, mathematics, science and religious education if the work they were given more closely matched their learning needs.

Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. Overall, standards have risen well in English, mathematics and science in infant and junior classes, largely because of more effective teaching and the setting of targets to help pupils to improve. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is better, although attendance is still not good enough.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils achieve steadily overall. When children enter school, their attainment is mostly well below the levels expected for their age. With the new reception teacher, they get off to a flying start. Although their attainment is still lower than expected in most areas of learning (and much lower in language and their knowledge of the world) they are achieving very well and catching up. Infant pupils achieve steadily. Although standards are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2, they are equal to those in similar schools. Pupils continue to achieve steadily overall, in the junior classes. Trends had been improving significantly. However, during a period of staffing changes in 2003, results in English fell to the lowest 5 per cent nationally. Junior pupils are currently achieving well in mathematics, ICT and in aspects of other subjects, however, the most and the least able pupils do not fulfil their potential in English, science or religious education when the work they receive is not always well matched to their different learning needs. However, pupils with special educational needs benefit from good levels of adult support, which enables them to make satisfactory progress. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well supervised. They work hard and make good progress.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual and cultural development, are satisfactory overall and good in the moral and social aspects. Pupils develop good attitudes to learning, behave well and take full advantage of the many opportunities to accept responsibility and gain independence.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is sound and teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Reception children are learning rapidly in response to very effective teaching. Teaching is strong in Years 1 and 4, where the more experienced teachers use imaginative methods and set high levels of challenge to move pupils' learning on at a good rate. Other classes are taken by relatively inexperienced teachers. They manage pupils well and organise their lessons conscientiously, but are not always successful in providing work at exactly the right level for all pupils. In particular, the most and least able pupils sometimes find the tasks too easy or too difficult and their learning suffers. These aspects of teaching are improving under the watchful eye of the new headteacher.

Staff take good care of the pupils and guide them well in their personal development and targets are now being set to help them to know how they can improve. The school has forged good links with the community and neighbouring schools. A sound partnership exists with parents and the school's efforts to reach out and involve more parents are gradually paying dividends.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are sound. The headteacher has made a good start. Her vision, energy and enthusiasm are already evident in the way she has brought together new and former teachers, support staff and governors to form an effective team. Governors know the school well, are very involved in future planning and provide strong support. The headteacher recognises that subject leaders must play a more prominent role in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects before they can have a strong influence on standards. Coherent plans are in hand to achieve this.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views of the school. They appreciate the changes brought in by the headteacher, in particular the way they are welcomed into school, and the more effective handling of any incidents of bullying. Pupils like the school and enjoy the new opportunities to express their ideas.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English and develop pupils' writing skills through other subjects;
- Ensure that teachers always set work that is accurately matched to pupils' different learning needs;
- Improve pupils' skills of investigation in science;
- Improve attendance by discouraging parents from taking holidays in term time.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve steadily overall, as they did at the time of the last inspection. However, pupils in Years 1 and 4 achieve well and reception children achieve very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong teaching of reception children has a very positive influence on their achievement;
- Standards have been rising well over recent years, although the school has had to readjust its targets in the light of the increasing numbers of pupils changing schools;
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics, ICT and in aspects of other subjects, however, they could achieve more in English and in developing investigation skills in science;
- The achievement of the most and least able pupils is sometimes limited when the work provided is not precisely matched to their learning needs.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.5 (12.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.3 (10.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.9 (12.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.8 (26.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.2 (25.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.7 (28.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. Many children enter school with limited social skills and very little knowledge of letters, words and numbers or of the world around them. Very effective teaching in the reception class enables them to learn quickly and they soon begin to catch up. Their personal, mathematical and creative skills develop strongly and although the levels reached are below those expected, they have improved significantly on their low starting points. Children's spoken language, early reading and general knowledge are still at a low-level. However, lively teaching and good organisation is improving their use of language and rapidly broadening their experience. These changes are very recent and have not yet had time to influence standards higher up the school.
2. The school's results for 7 and 11-year-olds, over the last four years, have improved more quickly than the national rate. That said, standards in reading and mathematics are still well below average by the end of Year 2 and a stronger focus is needed on the more able pupils

to enable them to fulfil their potential. Significant improvements have been made in the junior classes and standards by the end of Year 6 reached the levels expected in mathematics in 2003 and were almost within reach in science. However, the high turnover of pupils has meant that the targets set have had to be lowered. They are still challenging but it is likely that, with the exception of English, this year's results will be a grade lower than those of 2003.

3. Standards in mathematics, in Year 6, are currently below average. Nevertheless, good teaching is helping pupils to achieve well in calculating and in using their skills to solve mathematical problems. Pupils are also achieving well in acquiring ICT skills, despite not using computers regularly in lessons. Pupils achieve well in aspects of art and design, gymnastics, swimming and those with a talent for music are making good progress in playing instruments. Results in English fell in 2003, largely because the many staff changes meant that Year 6 pupils were taught English by supply teachers. Staff and governors, alarmed by the fall in results, took swift action to rectify matters. An effective programme of teaching phonics (blending letter sounds to make new words) is paying dividends lower down the school. Reading is also improving because pupils are strongly encouraged to practise at home and to make greater use of the reorganised library. Weaknesses in writing have been tackled with determination. Writing tasks are now much more carefully planned. Consequently, pupils are better prepared in knowing how to sequence events and choose more ambitious vocabulary. However, this is a slow process and improvements are not helped when teachers ask pupils to fill in worksheets, rather than write their own explanations, for example, in religious education. Standards in science are below average. Pupils achieve well in acquiring knowledge and understanding, however, their skills of investigation are limited, largely because they have not been given enough opportunities, in the past, to plan and carry out fair tests.
4. Experienced teachers almost always take account of pupils' different stages of development when preparing lessons. However, the less experienced teachers find the right level of challenge for most pupils but sometimes struggle to provide for pupils at the extremes of the learning scale. When the same worksheet is provided for all pupils, the achievement of the more and less able pupils is adversely affected. This problem has been recognised and steps have already been taken to improve teachers' planning. Consequently, pupils' current work is better matched to their learning needs than it was last term. However, there is still more to do, particularly in English, science and religious education, to enable all pupils to achieve well. The tasks provided for pupils with special educational needs are not always sufficiently adapted to the targets in their education plans. However, good support from classroom assistants enables them to make satisfactory progress. A small number of pupils with English as an additional language have been welcomed into the school. The older ones, who are fluent speakers in English, are making good progress. The younger ones, mainly in the reception class, receive very good levels of support and their knowledge and understanding of English is developing well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good overall. Their moral and social development is good and they have a satisfactory grasp of spiritual and cultural issues. Most pupils arrive punctually but attendance is well below the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and most behave well;
- Attendance is unsatisfactory and has declined during the current academic year;
- Pupils have good awareness of living in a community and an acute sense of right from wrong;
- Pupils are interested in school life and willing to take on responsibilities.

Commentary

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	1.1
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.

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	144	0	0
White – other background	1	0	0
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British (Zimbabwe)	6	0	0

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

- Most pupils are eager to learn and respond well to the stimulating atmosphere in school. For example, pupils in Year 1 learnt to work as a team to send a parcel by parachute! Behaviour is very good in the reception class and the great majority of pupils behave well throughout the school. Just occasionally, when Years 5 and 6 pupils change classes, a small number of pupils act immaturely, which impinges on their own and others' learning. Discussions with older pupils confirm that there has been an improvement in behaviour, since the appointment of the new headteacher and that they now have clear guidelines to follow. They also confirm that incidents of bullying or harassment have declined because they now feel able to tell their teachers if they have a problem. Bullying is now strongly discouraged, seldom occurs and any traces of it are acted upon rapidly.
- The school strongly promotes and rewards good attendance but despite this, attendance is affected by the considerable number of holidays taken in term time. Most pupils are keen to attend and anxious not to miss lessons. There have been no exclusions in the year prior to the inspection.
- Pupils' personal development is sound overall and good provision is made for their moral and social development. In one class, a reminder that 'Winners never quit and quitters never win' appears to increase pupils' concentration and sense of responsibility. The school council is now actively involving pupils in making decisions on how to improve their school experiences. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and teachers are beginning to raise pupils' spiritual awareness through the good personal and social education programme. The school has a clear and effective policy to promote racial equality and harmony. As a result, children from asylum seeker families are welcomed in school and other pupils befriend and support them. Whilst pupils have good experiences to support their cultural development, they have limited experiences of life in today's multicultural society. Recent contacts with a school in India represent an exciting development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of the education provided, including the range of extra-curricular activities, is satisfactory overall.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and the assessment of pupils' learning are satisfactory, as they were at the time of the last inspection. However, the proportion of very good teaching has increased, particularly in the reception class.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the reception class is very good and children's learning is accelerating;
- Pupils' learning is carefully assessed but the information is not used consistently to match the work provided to pupils' different learning needs;
- There is good teaching in mathematics, ICT and aspects of other subjects but there are weaknesses in the teaching of English and investigation skills in science;
- Pupils are well managed, teachers explain new ideas effectively and use questioning well to make pupils think;
- Classroom assistants provide good support for pupils who find learning difficult.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0)	4 (11)	14 (40)	16 (46)	1 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)

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

8. The reception teacher, appointed a few weeks ago, has had a dramatic impact on children's learning. The classroom has been completely reorganised to encourage children to explore and learn for themselves. Very good teaching of the skills of reading, writing and number is reflected in children's enjoyment and success in learning. The class teacher and the well trained learning support staff form a strong team. They assess children's learning meticulously and provide purposeful and challenging activities that are very well matched to the children's different stages of development. All children, particularly those with special educational needs, are very well supported in their learning. Staff make a special effort to ensure that children with special needs are well supported and those with English as an additional language understand the meaning of words and are encouraged to express their ideas.
9. Pupils' learning is thoroughly assessed to determine how well they have progressed. Assessments are analysed carefully. Teachers are informed of any general weaknesses so they can make doubly sure that pupils are better prepared in future. Pupils' individual progress is carefully tracked and where progress falters, they receive additional and effective small group support. More recently, individual targets have been set to enable all pupils to know what they need to do to improve. This is an important development because the marking of pupils' work, although accurate, does not always convey pointers for improvement. The more experienced teachers use the information gathered from assessing learning well to determine what pupils should learn next. However, the less experienced teachers do not always take account of what pupils already know and tend to provide similar worksheets for all pupils. On these occasions, more able pupils are not sufficiently

- challenged and do not fulfil their potential. Similarly, pupils who find learning difficult are sometimes confused and their learning is held back. This is an issue to improve.
10. Teaching in mathematics is good, mainly because teachers encourage pupils to experiment with different approaches and discuss alternative strategies for solving mathematical problems. Skills in ICT are taught well, although there is scope to make greater use of computers in lessons. Pupils' weaknesses in English are well understood. Their reading is receiving a boost through stronger teaching of word building and encouragement to practise their reading at home and in school. Pupils' writing is also slower to improve. New strategies are being tried, with a strong emphasis on discussing and planning ahead before beginning any writing. This is gradually taking effect. However, the overuse of worksheets in a number of subjects does little to encourage pupils to improve their capacity to write clearly and fluently. The teaching of science is effective in enabling pupils to gain knowledge and understanding. However, the teaching of investigation skills is not systematic enough to enable them to plan and carry out their own fair tests.
 11. Teachers manage pupils well. Whole class teaching is successful. Teachers explain new ideas clearly, often by demonstrating and illustrating their teaching points. Pupils are often asked to jot down their ideas on small whiteboards. This works well because teachers can check, at a glance, whether pupils understand. The pace of the lesson is usually brisk and some teachers set time limits, which encourage pupils to work quickly. All teachers are skilful in their use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding and make them think. This is particularly noticeable during the end of lesson discussion sessions, when teachers ascertain the extent of pupils' learning.
 12. Pupils with special educational needs learn steadily. However, there are occasions when the work provided is not sufficiently adapted to their particular needs and their learning becomes hesitant. However, they benefit from good levels of support from well trained classroom assistants. This ensures that the tasks they are required to complete are thoroughly explained. Small group support also ensures that they have good opportunities to improve their speaking, reading, writing and calculation skills. This enables them to make steady progress. The small number of pupils with English as an additional language are progressing well, because teachers and classroom assistants ensure that any new words are carefully explained and support them well in their tasks.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. Curriculum improvements have been made, especially in literacy and numeracy and through a structured programme for developing pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE).

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage provision is now a strength of the school;
- Improvements to the interior of the building have created an attractive, calm environment in which pupils feel reassured;
- Good PSHE is a significant factor in pupils' growth;
- The work planned does not always meet the needs of the most and least able pupils.

Commentary

13. The provision for children in the reception class has improved significantly. Better organisation and planning ensures that children are achieving very well in all areas of learning.

14. The headteacher has been very successful in creating a peaceful, purposeful ethos that permeates the school. Visual stimuli, such as stuffed animals and colourful displays appear around every corner. Tranquil music and fountains of running water create a calming environment, which settles pupils as soon as they arrive in school. Rooms, halls and corridors have been transformed to make them more flexible and conducive to effective learning. Much has been achieved, in a short space of time, and there are many planned projects for the future to make the school even more stimulating for the pupils and more efficient for the staff.
15. This attention to detail is equally apparent in the good provision that now exists for meeting the many and varied personal needs of the pupils. Pupils are made well aware of the dangers of drug and alcohol misuse. Aspects of citizenship are developing well, allowing pupils opportunities for decision making, for example, through the school council.
16. The school has a strong commitment to inclusion that is clearly evident in the support and encouragement given to all pupils. Pupils are encouraged to participate in all activities and additional opportunities, such as French or learning to play a musical instrument, are equally open to all of them. The provision for pupils with special needs is satisfactory. Although there is scope to adapt the tasks they are given more precisely to their learning needs, skilled support from classroom assistants enables them to meet their targets. The older pupils who have English as an additional language need little *extra* provision. They often work with the more able groups and are making good progress. The younger ones, who are in need of language support, are progressing very well in the reception class. There are occasions when the same worksheet is given to all pupils, irrespective of their different learning needs. When this happens, the learning of the more able pupils is not sufficiently extended and the less able pupils become confused because the task is too difficult. The headteacher is aware of this and is already taking action to improve teachers' planning.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides good quality care, welfare and health and safety for pupils. It also gives them satisfactory access to academic support and guidance to help them through their different stages of education. The school positively seeks pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good induction procedures help children to settle quickly into school;
- Effective procedures are in place for child protection and for pupils who are in public care;
- Refugee children are well cared for and supported;
- The procedures for health and safety are good and risk assessments are conducted in line with local authority guidelines.

Commentary

17. Children in the reception class benefit from very good support and guidance and well established induction procedures. The good support continues in all classes because of the effective pastoral system. Teachers and support staff have a good knowledge of children in their care and pupils confirm they know who to turn to if they have a problem. Pupils are able to make their views known through an active school council. Pupils with English as an additional language are monitored well by the school. Data is used effectively to track pupils' achievement as they move through the school. Individual targets are now being provided to show pupils what they need to do to improve and pupils are gradually beginning to understand the process. Pupils understand the clear procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and respond positively.

18. Strategies to ensure child protection are well understood because the co-ordinator shares her expertise with staff. Clear guidelines for staff to follow ensure that children are offered maximum support. A very small number of children in public care, temporarily in school, have personal education plans and these are used well to check and support their progress. Children with special educational needs benefit from good levels of support and guidance. There is a warm welcome from all members of the school community for children and families seeking refuge in this country. Children's health and safety is paramount. Risk assessments are carried out for all activities. All members of the school community take their responsibilities for health and safety seriously and the headteacher and site manager carry out regular walkabouts in school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are good links with the community and other schools and colleges and satisfactory links with parents.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with parents have improved, but written reports do not offer enough information on how children can improve;
- The school maintains good links with the community, schools and colleges;
- Induction and transfer arrangements prepare children well for the next stage of education.

Commentary

19. The majority of parents feel comfortable in approaching staff and teachers readily contact parents with news of successes and any concerns. The headteacher has already strengthened the bridges between home and school. Parents detect improvements in many aspects of school life, particularly the way they are welcomed into school. Nine parents help in school regularly and the ICT training courses planned for parents are eagerly awaited. Questionnaires are becoming a familiar means of ascertaining parents' views on school events and their children's learning.
20. The information that parents receive is satisfactory. There is an attractive prospectus and helpful information on the code of behaviour expected policy and the homework timetable. Information on what pupils are learning has recently been sent out and there is a friendly newsletter - 'First Friday' which goes out each month. The questionnaire showed that some parents are not happy with the information they receive on their children's progress. There are good opportunities for parents to meet teachers but the written reports are not helpful in explaining what their children need to do to improve. Whilst they inform parents of what children can do in subjects, the language used is not always 'parent-friendly'.
21. The school has developed good links with the local community and other schools and colleges. In the Foundation Stage, there are close links with the Early Years Unit to ensure that entry into full-time education is a pleasant experience. Pupils are well prepared for transfer to secondary school and the new families arriving are welcomed and supported well. There has been a joint writing venture with the South Yorkshire Times newspaper and visits out of school to places like a field study centre, a farm, Eden Camp and Gainsborough Old Hall. The school is establishing links with a school in India, which is helping to widen pupils' horizons.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The new headteacher and the school governors provide good leadership. However, strengthening the role of the subject leaders is rightly a school priority.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors know the school well and provide good support;
- Good financial management ensures that resources are directed towards school priorities;
- The headteacher has a clear vision for improvement and has secured the commitment of staff;
- There is more to do to extend the role of subject leaders, particularly in checking and improving standards and teaching and learning in their subjects.

Commentary

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	539,181	Balance from previous year	-1,101
Total expenditure	552,449	Balance carried forward to the next	-13,268
Expenditure per pupil	3,249		

22. The governing body is central to all decision making and has a positive influence on the work of the school. The chair, along with other key governors, has a very good knowledge of the school. Staffing, curriculum and financial matters are dealt with efficiently and all statutory requirements are met. Governors meet regularly to discuss a range of issues in depth. As a result, they have a good understanding of the trends in school results and current standards. For example, they know exactly why English results fell in 2003 and are fully conversant with the action being taken to raise standards. Governors' good involvement in strategic planning is reflected in the prompt action taken to appoint new staff to ensure continuity of pupils' learning. Efficient monitoring and prudent management of the school's finances, by governors and the headteacher, has removed the 2002 to 2003 budget deficit, which appears in the table above.
23. The headteacher is already having a significant impact on the life of the school. She has worked extremely hard to determine the school's effectiveness by looking closely at teaching and learning. Her findings have been crystallised in a well constructed Development Plan, which sets out a clear programme of action to secure improvements. The main priority, to raise standards in English, is well underway, although the headteacher is fully aware that there is some way to go before the impact of the action will be fully visible. The headteacher leads by example and has earned the respect of parents, pupils and staff. She is very supportive of all members of staff and works hard to help them to provide the best for the pupils. For example, soon after her appointment she analysed every pupil's assessments, provided individual targets to help them to improve and additional support for those whose progress appeared to be faltering. This process revealed some of the weaknesses in the learning of the more and less able pupils. Such commitment from the top has engendered team spirit and established a climate in which everyone wants to succeed.

24. Management of the school is currently satisfactory. The school is well administrated and runs smoothly, but checking on and improving standards is not yet embedded in the role of key staff. The headteacher equates high standards with effective subject leadership and is currently striving to provide training to enable subject leaders to take control. The appointment of the new leader of the Foundation Stage is proving to be highly effective and dramatically increasing reception children's achievement. Leaders of the various subjects already provide their colleagues with helpful support and guidance. However, their role is now being extended to take responsibility for checking the quality of teaching and learning with a view to raising standards. The headteacher is right to raise the profile of lesson observations and the analysis of pupils' work. In particular, she is determined to improve teachers' planning to ensure that pupils' different learning needs are fully met. Teachers are keen to improve their leadership skills and are responding positively to the cause.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the reception class is **very good**. The recently appointed reception teacher has completely transformed the way children learn and has pulled staff together to form a strong team. However, these exciting innovations are very new and although the enhanced provision is reflected in children's rapid rates of learning, it will be some time before the good early start impacts on pupils' attainment higher up the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and levels of support enable children to achieve very well in all areas;
- Activities are very well planned and children's learning carefully assessed to ensure that the learning needs of all children, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and the more able ones, are fully met;
- The accommodation and resources are carefully planned to meet the children's learning needs, although there is no designated outdoor play area.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Commentary

25. Teaching is very good. Relationships are excellent. The teacher and support staff have a very good understanding of children's personal needs and ensure that they feel secure. Many imaginative activities are planned to help the children to learn how to relate to others. Adults are excellent role models. They listen carefully to what the children have to say and encourage them to talk about what is important to them. Clearly established routines, incorporating a good balance of adult support and self-choice activities, are at the centre of the children developing confidence and independence. A good example of this is in the 'job ladders', which the children use maturely in deciding what they are going to do during free choice activities. Individual, personal targets are posted on a board and signed by each child while on the achievers' board a range of certificates celebrate good work and positive attitudes. Despite entering school with poor social skills, children are developing rapidly and are on course to reach the levels expected by the end of the year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Commentary

26. Teaching is very good. This area of learning has been identified as a major priority because children's language and literacy skills are well below the levels expected for their age. Planning is of a very high quality. Every opportunity is taken to develop children's listening, speaking, reading and writing. For example, introducing new words through skilful questioning is at the heart of many of the activities and each child's response is discreetly assessed. As a result, children's listening skills are developing very well. Speaking, reading and writing skills are just beginning to take off, although their attainment in these areas is still well below the levels expected. During activities, adults ensure that the children have plenty of time to talk about what they know and understand. Children copy the clear and helpful language used by adults and are making significant strides in using language for thinking and

communicating with others. Only a very small number of children are able to read. The teacher has introduced a very clearly focused programme to help the children recognise the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make. Their interest and enthusiasm is driving them on to try to use simple letter sounds to build simple words for themselves. Running alongside this, children's enjoyment of stories is increasing and they are beginning to identify with the feelings of the different characters. Most of the children know that writing is used to communicate and they are trying to draw letter shapes to represent what they want to say. A small number of the more able children, with the support of an adult, use their knowledge of letters to build simple phrases, such as 'I feel heapy becZ I mad a frut sald'. Handwriting is taught regularly and systematically and as a result, their pencil control is improving and the children are beginning to form letters correctly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Commentary

27. Standards are lower than the levels expected but high quality teaching is leading to rapid learning and very good achievement. Imaginative opportunities are provided for children to practise and develop number knowledge and important mathematical language is carefully filtered into class and group activities. In mathematics sessions, the teacher ensures that children know exactly what they are going to learn. Challenging activities are provided which make the children think. In one lesson, for example, the teacher gradually decreased the difference in weight between two objects, prompting the children to reason out and explain which object was heavier and which was lighter. Skilful questioning ensures that all children are engaged in the lesson and when asked, most are able to say the next number in a sequence with little hesitation. Work in books since the start of this term indicates that they are now beginning to investigate mathematical ideas, such as testing and classifying objects to find out, for example, which will and will not roll.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Commentary

28. On entry to the school, many of the children have very little understanding of the world around them. A particular strength in teaching, lies in the carefully planned and meaningful activities where children learn to use language for describing what they know, see and understand. For example, when the children were making a real fruit salad, the teacher gave the children lots of time to talk about related experiences and to answer questions about the different fruits. Although many are unlikely to achieve the Learning Goals expected, the activities provided promote consistent high achievement. Achievement in ICT is very impressive. Most of the children are already working at the level expected, as a result of the recently introduced skills programme.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Commentary

29. Although there is no designated outside play area, the school hall is used well to promote children's physical development. For many children, the skills requiring more precise actions, such as writing, colouring, cutting and joining things are poorly developed when they join the school. Despite the very good teaching, children's physical development is still below the levels expected for their age. Many opportunities are provided for the children to develop these skills through adult focus activities, such as handwriting, cutting fruit, making box models and in the range of self-choice activities available. Good levels of adult support combined with opportunities for the children to try things out for themselves enable them to make rapid progress.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Commentary

30. Teaching is very good. Children are achieving very well but are unlikely to reach the levels expected by the end of the reception year. Role play activities are carefully planned to provide the children with opportunities to develop their imagination and to relate to the wider world, such as designing and building a park in the outside play space. In this lively and interesting activity, the children were able to make their own decisions and lots of talk ensued as the learning support assistant skilfully guided them to work together to build a castle. Many valuable opportunities are provided to develop children's drawing and making skills. In one lesson, with the skilled support of a parent, the children learnt how to mix colours. Work on display shows well finished box models of themselves and expressive and effective winter trees paintings.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening;
- Reading standards are rising and pupils are showing a greater interest in literature;
- Standards in writing are not as high as they should be;
- The assessment of pupils' learning is improving, but it is still not used enough in setting tasks. Consequently, the more and less able pupils do not fulfil their potential;
- Classroom assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

Commentary

31. Standards of speaking and listening are close to the levels expected by the time pupils reach Year 6. Most lessons begin and end with discussions that help pupils to gauge how well they are learning. Teachers make effective use of questioning to make pupils think in depth and explain their ideas. A strong feature, particularly in Year 1, is the emphasis given to paired discussions prior to undertaking written work. This clarifies pupils' ideas, extends their confidence and secures their interest.

32. Teaching of English is satisfactory and infant and junior pupils achieve steadily in reading and writing. Standards in English are well below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The fall in Year 6 results in 2003, caused by supply teachers taking the Year 6 class, reversed what had hitherto been an upward trend. Teaching in Year 6 is now more settled and standards are beginning to rise again. The teaching of reading skills had not been developed sufficiently in the past. However, three important initiatives are proving successful in raising achievement:
- infant pupils are gaining good phonic and word recognition skills, by playing games, such as 'Code-breakers', which helps them to recognise letter sounds within each word;
 - pupils in all classes now receive good opportunities to choose from a wider range of interesting books, because the library has been extended and the books are attractively displayed;
 - pupils' interests in books are being fostered through the strengthening home reading links.
33. Teaching of writing is currently strongest in Year 1, where pupils' work is lively and varied because of the rich preparatory activities that stimulate their ideas. Much of the written work produced in later years, lacks the same vitality because it is not as closely linked to the pupils' own experiences. Neither are pupils encouraged sufficiently to express their own ideas, at length, on paper. The headteacher and the newly appointed subject leader are providing good leadership and management. They are well aware that pupils' writing needs to improve and they have a well conceived action plan to bring this about. Greater expectations are being placed on pupils to plan their work in advance and to re-draft and improve upon their original ideas. Pupils' work is now regularly checked to ensure that standards are improving. Teachers are developing their assessment skills to enable them to determine the levels at which pupils are working. This is helping them to set challenging targets for individual pupils. However, assessment is still not used enough to provide tasks that cater for pupils' different learning needs in all classes and this is holding the less and the more able pupils back.
34. Pupils with special needs make satisfactory progress. The tasks they are given are not always adapted sufficiently to match their particular learning needs. Consequently, they sometimes find the reading and writing levels difficult to handle. However, they benefit considerably from the effective support they receive from classroom assistants. They are able to ask questions, discuss their work and improve their spoken and written language. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. Most of them have a very sound grasp of English, developed over a number of years. However, they express themselves much more confidently through their written work than in their verbal contributions to class discussions.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

35. Speaking and listening opportunities feature strongly in many lessons and contribute well to pupils' learning. Opportunities are now being planned for pupils to use and extend their reading skills in other subjects. However, the main weaknesses in writing arise from the lack of practice and more needs to be done to develop pupils' writing skills in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership has driven up standards well over recent years;
- Pupils achieve well because much of the teaching is good;
- The assessment of pupils' learning has improved, but the information is still not used consistently in providing for the needs of the most and least able pupils;
- Discussing different strategies for solving problems improves pupils' spoken language, but the worksheets provided, limit the opportunities pupils have to improve their writing.

Commentary

36. Standards have been rising well since the last inspection. Although still well below average by the end of Year 2, standards have moved up to below average levels by the end of Year 6. This shows good achievement from a well below average starting point, despite the constant movement of families in and out of the school. Success in mathematics is largely attributable to the good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers have been guided successfully in how to teach well. The previous subject leader exerted a strong influence and developed confidence and consistency amongst teachers. Several changes of staff over the last two years have resulted in a total reshaping of roles and responsibilities. Currently, two teachers are temporarily guiding the subject satisfactorily through a turbulent period until a permanent responsibility is established.
37. Teaching is good overall. Lessons are effectively planned and pupils know what they are expected to learn. Pupils are well managed and are able to work with care and concentration. Lessons begin with an effective mental starter. When this takes the form of a game, such as matching different decimals, fractions and percentages, learning becomes fun and effective. Teachers illustrate new ideas well. In Year 1, for example, the teacher's use of large coloured cubes, spheres and cylinders, greatly increased pupils' understanding of the relationship between two and three-dimensional shapes.
38. Whole class teaching is good. Lessons move along at a brisk pace and some teachers set time limits, which injects a sense of urgency into the work. However, when pupils settle to their individual and group tasks, the effectiveness of their learning varies. Pupils achieve best when teachers use the assessments made of their learning to plan activities that closely match their different learning needs. The experienced teachers do this consistently. The less experienced teachers are developing this skill but it is not fully in place yet. For example, there are occasions when the same worksheet is given to all pupils. Whilst the challenge is appropriate for most pupils, the learning of the more able ones is not sufficiently extended and pupils who find mathematics difficult are sometimes confused. This sometimes adversely affects the learning of pupils with special educational needs. However, in most lessons these pupils receive good levels of support from well trained classroom assistants, which enables them to make satisfactory progress overall.
39. One of the strengths of mathematics teaching is the way in which teachers develop pupils' powers of reasoning. Teachers pose challenging questions that make pupils think. They are encouraged to tackle problems in their own way and explain their ideas to the whole class. This approach builds their confidence in problem solving and develops their spoken language to good effect. However, mathematics is a less successful vehicle for improving pupils' writing skills. Worksheets are often used requiring pupils merely to fill in the missing number. This gives little opportunity for pupils to organise their own work or provide a written explanation.

Mathematics across the curriculum

40. Mathematics is used adequately in other subjects. There are good links with ICT, such as entering information into databases and spreadsheets. Mathematics is used suitably in science and design and technology to measure the results of experiments and ensure that materials are cut to size.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 4, where teaching is at its best;
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of science is better than their investigation skills;
- Well planned practical activities aid pupils' learning but the worksheets used do not always meet the needs of the more and less able pupils and their learning suffers;
- The subject leader provides a good example of how the subject should be taught, but has little influence on the teaching and learning in other classes.

Commentary

41. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Years 1 and 4. In these classes, much attention is paid to developing pupils' powers of observation and every opportunity is taken to extend their skills of reasoning. In Year 4, for example, classifying living things according to specific criteria enables pupils to become proficient in using identification keys. In both classes, pupils are encouraged to express their own ideas in writing, particularly so in Year 1, where the more able pupils are expected to record their findings independently. Both teachers consistently recognise pupils' achievements by praising their powers of observation and expression, when marking their work.
42. Pupils' learning of scientific facts and their understanding of scientific phenomena show positive development. This is largely why results in the national tests for 11-year-olds have improved at a good rate over recent years. Careful thought has gone into the organisation of the programmes of work. Consequently, pupils build effectively on earlier learning and gain a firm understanding of living things, materials and forces. Although standards in the knowledge and understanding aspects of science are below average, these elements have significantly improved from the low starting point many pupils had when they entered school. However, pupils' skills of scientific investigation do not develop at the same rate. Not all teachers are secure in their understanding of how to develop these skills and do not provide regular opportunities for pupils to predict what might happen, design fair tests to find the answer and observe the outcomes to determine the results. Pupils' written work shows that these experiences are not offered frequently enough. All of the lessons seen during the inspection week focused on scientific experiments. Teachers were trying hard to develop the idea of their testing, however, unfamiliarity with the ideas meant that pupils required a lot of adult support.
43. Pupils enjoy practical activities, such as testing the hardness of rock and discovering more about the processes of dissolving and evaporation. They work together productively and discuss their observations purposefully. When scientific investigations are introduced, pupils of all abilities are able to work at their own level and good levels of adult support ensure that those who find learning difficult, including those with special educational needs, are able to make steady progress. However, on too many occasions, the same worksheet is given to all pupils, irrespective of their different learning needs. When this happens, the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and do not make the progress of which they are capable. Similarly, the less able pupils become confused and begin to make errors. Worksheets

require only one or two word answers and this does little to improve on pupils' weaknesses in writing.

44. The subject leader teaches science well and thereby provides a good example for others. However, her limited role in monitoring and improving teaching and learning across the school is a weakness that is only just receiving attention. Until this is remedied, it is unlikely that pupils' skills of investigation will improve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' good subject expertise enables pupils to achieve well;
- Classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning;
- The resources for ICT and guidance for teachers have improved since the last inspection;
- More opportunities could be planned for pupils to use their ICT skills to support learning across a wider range of subjects.

Commentary

45. Teaching is good overall. A major strength lies in the teachers' secure subject knowledge and the skilful support provided by learning support assistants. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to build upon their skills, through a range of interesting and relevant activities, which they enjoy. This enables them to achieve well and reach the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, despite their low starting points on entering school. By Year 6, pupils show confidence in using a range of applications. For example, they are learning to use a multimedia program to combine images, text and sounds to create a presentation and they use spreadsheets and data handling programs competently to organise their work and record their findings in graphical form. They are enthusiastic when asked to talk about what they are doing and eager to demonstrate their skills.
46. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and follow them accurately. They develop satisfactory word processing skills and can change the appearance of text when presenting their work. They use graphics programs competently, for example, to create patterns, such as work in the style of the artist Kandinsky. Although most pupils work on computers confidently, less able pupils, including those with special educational needs, initially struggle when the work they are given is too difficult. However, well trained classroom assistants are on hand to ensure that the tasks are clearly explained and their learning is successful.
47. Resources have been extended since the last inspection. In addition to the computer suite, every classroom has one or two computers and the system is fully linked to the Internet. Although pupils have regular lessons in ICT, computers are often not in use in other lessons. One good example of frequent and purposeful use is the Year 6 email contact with a school in India.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

48. Subjects, such as science and art benefit from links with ICT. Pupils use the Internet and CD-ROM for research and they use graphics programs for creative work. However, not enough use is made of pupils' ICT skills in English. The school is aware of this as an area for improvement and has suitable plans in place to develop ICT across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

49. Three lessons in religious education were observed. However, as no history or geography lessons were seen, it is not possible to make a judgement on the provision in these subjects. Discussions with pupils and an examination of their work indicate that in these subjects, pupils achieve steadily, as they did at the time of the last inspection.
50. In **geography**, Year 1 pupils have good opportunities to use the local area to develop mapping skills and find out about physical features and the jobs that people do. Their work is carefully marked and this helps them to know how well they are doing and how they might improve their work. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the water cycle and through their investigation of rivers and an opportunity to study at Austerfield Field Study Centre, they know how rivers are formed and change as they travel from mountain to sea.
51. In **history**, pupils are beginning to understand how people lived in the past. For example, infant pupils know that life in Tudor times is very different to their own and junior pupils understand the importance of farming to the Ancient Egyptians. Pupils are often given worksheets to complete. They help pupils to consolidate historical facts but do little to help pupils to improve their writing.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of the teaching and learning, provided in Year 1 by the subject leader, sets a good example for the new staff in the school;
- There are limited opportunities for first-hand experiences and more could be done to match the work provided to pupils' different learning needs and to develop their writing skills.

Commentary

52. Pupils achieve steadily through the school to reach the standards expected in the 'Agreed Doncaster Syllabus', as they did at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils who have English as an additional language also make steady progress, as do those with special educational needs. A lesson seen in Year 1 had a number of strong features. The work was based on a recent visit to the nearby church. Digital photographs and text had been combined to produce a Big Book, which was used to recap information as an introduction to the theme of 'Special Places'. Pupils showed a clear understanding of why the church might be special to the people who worshipped there. This led them to consider places that were special to *them*, such as - 'My Gran's' and 'My School'. Pupils then went on to describe their feelings when they visited these places. In this way, they were learning about religion *and* about themselves. The tasks given to the pupils were very different and were well matched to their needs.
53. In comparison, the learning in other classes, although at least satisfactory, is not of the same high quality. This is largely because teaching is not always founded on such rich first-hand experiences, where pupils learn from direct contact with people of other faiths. In some lessons, pupils complete worksheets, which are not always precisely matched to their different learning needs and opportunities are sometimes missed to develop and improve their written work. However, there are examples of incisive writing, such as when a Year 5 pupil wrote very sensitively about his life, imagining that he was the son of a Sikh. Resources for the subject have been improved since the previous inspection. For example, having objects on a puja tray enriched a Year 6 lesson on Hindu shrines.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

54. The two design and technology, four music and two physical education lessons, along with discussions with pupils, provides sufficient evidence to evaluate the provision in these subjects. However, only one art and design lesson was observed. Discussions were held with pupils and their work was sampled to gain additional evidence.
55. In **art and design**, displays in classrooms and corridors help to produce an attractive environment for learning. The subject also enhances the learning in other areas, such as Hindu Aum patterns in religious education or Tudor portraits in history. Work of a high quality is seen in the Year 3 and 4 class, which is taught by the subject leader. Here the range of the art is very impressive in both two and three-dimensions, using various media. Different artists are studied and their works used effectively to stimulate the pupils' designs and techniques. The impressive art policy provides ambitious targets for both teaching and learning. When consideration was given to reducing the range of art activities, the pupils voted in favour of maintaining the wide breadth now available.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve better in designing than in making;
- Adequate subject leadership has not yet been established;
- Good levels of adult support improve pupils' learning;
- Evaluating their finished work helps pupils to improve their writing skills.

Commentary

56. Standards are broadly at the levels expected in infant and junior classes, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve steadily in planning ahead. Teachers are resourceful in stimulating pupils' ideas. They bring in items for pupils to examine and disassemble, such as battery powered torches. This helps pupils to understand how they work and how they are constructed, which increases their awareness of practicality and originality in design. Various planning sheets are used to good effect. For example, in Year 5, pupils are asked to sketch and label their designs and list the tools and materials needed before starting work. They are also encouraged to look at the suitability of different materials, for example, from which to make a container for money. At this stage, pupils are well prepared for the task ahead. However, pupils' finished work does not always reach the standard inherent in the design. For example, some of the musical instruments made by Year 5 pupils do not have a regular, well finished appearance. Some of the pupils express disappointment in their work largely because they experience difficulties in cutting straight edges and joining surfaces together neatly. Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall, more needs to be done to teach and then practise the specific cutting and joining skills required before pupils begin work on their models.
57. The subject leader is new to the school and is not yet in a position to guide and support others. Consequently, the standard of work overall, depends on individual teacher's confidence. In Year 1, for example, the process of practising new skills before using them is well underway. For instance, pupils practise punching holes in card before inserting paper fasteners to make a moving picture. In Year 1 particularly, the good number of assistants and adult helpers ensures that pupils work safely and have good opportunities to discuss and improve their ideas. Pupils are encouraged to write about their work and how they think it could be improved. This is helping to overcome some of the weaknesses in pupils' writing.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in singing and playing instruments and have a good sense of rhythm;
- Whole class teaching enables pupils to learn some elements of music successfully, however, they do not have enough opportunities to develop their own ideas.

Commentary

58. A strong tradition of instrumental music has been established. A significant number of pupils achieve well in learning to play guitar, trumpet, violin, cello and double bass. Good instrumental tuition ensures that pupils learn to read music and to play their instrument correctly. Practise at home enables them to gain in competence. Pupils respond well to the lively teaching methods, such as round robin games, and enjoy playing together.
59. The teaching of music for all children is satisfactory and standards are at the levels expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' singing continues to be good because they are taught to adopt the correct singing posture and listen carefully to the melody. Pupils also develop a good appreciation of rhythm. The visiting music teacher has introduced a successful strategy to help pupils to detect the rhythm in different pieces of music. They clap various combinations of the syllables in words, such as fly, spider and caterpillar to compose different musical patterns. Pupils are also learning to listen more carefully to pieces of music and, with a little prompting; they identify correctly the different instruments used. As yet, pupils are unable to name any famous composers. However, the new headteacher ensures that music is played throughout the school to create a calming atmosphere. During school assemblies, composers and their works are discussed and this is helping to broaden pupils' cultural experiences.
60. Music lessons are provided as 30 minutes slots on the timetable. Whole class teaching is predominant and helps pupils to improve their singing and rhythm work. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to discuss their ideas, compose small group arrangements or decide what notation to use to help them to perform them correctly. Similarly, ICT plays little part in the learning of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 3 and 4, achieve very well in gymnastics and reach high standards;
- Pupils achieve well in swimming and benefit from extra-curricular opportunities to participate in sporting activities;
- Younger pupils occasionally become restless when the pace of the lesson is too slow.

Commentary

61. Skilful and challenging teaching in the Year 3 and 4 class enables pupils to develop very good knowledge of how to devise, practise and perform elaborate gymnastic sequences. The teacher's expertise is very evident in the way pupils consider the speed, direction and control of their movements. This enables them to work with individuality, originality and flair. The teacher maintains a constant focus on quality. She frequently asks pupils to demonstrate their skills and asks others to observe and comment constructively on what

they see. Regular practice in sharing opinions has led pupils to develop sensitivity towards others and offer meaningful comments, respectfully. The teacher is well equipped to coach pupils in the various techniques of movement. For example, she emphasises the need for body tension and when pupils apply this, their balances and movements become flowing and elegant. Pupils derive pleasure and satisfaction, knowing that they are working to a high level.

62. Year 5 pupils benefit from regular swimming lessons throughout the year. Records show that virtually all pupils become competent swimmers and achieve 50 metre distance awards, which is higher than the national standard. Many pupils go on to achieving greater distances and gain water survival awards. More pupils are taking advantage of opportunities to participate in extra-curricular sports, such as football and basketball and those with particular skills are able to develop their talents.
63. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and pupils achieve steadily to reach standards expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. Teaching is not all as effective as it is in Years 3 and 4. Overall, pupils are well managed and lessons are safely organised, although the pace of teaching is occasionally too slow. This happens when the teacher asks individual or pairs of pupils to practise their skills in turn. Other pupils have to watch and wait, which causes restlessness. That said lessons invariably focus on developing, practising and improving skills. Although the subject leader has little opportunity to observe lessons in other classes, her knowledge and enthusiasm have a positive influence on other teachers.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A clear policy, incorporating specific activities and planned links with other subjects, successfully promotes pupils' achievement;
- Good teaching ensures that pupils have many opportunities to make informed decisions about healthy lifestyles and environmental issues;
- Pupils experience democracy at work through the school council.

Commentary

64. Good planning ensures that pupils achieve well in their understanding of the importance of PSHCE. The headteacher and staff have identified how important issues that have a bearing on their lives can be brought to life through other subjects. In physical education, for example, pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of exercise and safety and opportunities to engage in collective problem solving in mathematics, ensures that pupils learn to work together harmoniously.
65. Teaching was good in the two PSHCE lessons seen. A good example of teamwork was promoted in Year 1, when pupils were asked to lift and lower a large parachute to move a parcel in the direction of a particular child. The task could only be achieved when they all worked together and this illustrated, very clearly, the principles of group co-operation. In another good lesson, Year 3 and 4 pupils discovered the importance of body language. In this activity, pupils had to devise a simple playground story, which they could only mime to a partner. The task proved great fun, but the underlying principle of how facial expression affects communications with others, became crystal clear. Such activities cover a wide range of topical issues, not least the dangers of substance abuse and damage to the environment.
66. The school council is gathering strength as pupils become more influential in what happens in their school. Citizenship is strongly promoted. Pupils gain a good understanding of voting

for a representative and, more importantly, how responsibility for others must be taken seriously.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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