

INSPECTION REPORT

MOORHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Milnrow, Rochdale

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105788

Headteacher: Miss J. Sheridan

Lead inspector: Geof Timms

Dates of inspection: 9 – 12 February 2004

Inspection number: 256950

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 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	373
School address:	Crossley Street Milnrow Rochdale Lancashire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr K Swift
Date of previous inspection:	1 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Moorhouse Primary School has 319 full time pupils with a further 25 who attend part time in the nursery class. The school is situated in the village of Milnrow, where it serves a local housing estate. The school is built in a largely open plan style, although part of it is a Victorian building. Although there is a range of ability, the attainment of most pupils when they enter the school is well below that expected for their ages; this is especially true for their social, communication and mathematical skills. There are 87 pupils on the register of special educational need and this is above average. Four of these pupils have statements of special need entitling them to extra support. This is broadly average when compared with schools nationally. The main needs relate to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, learning, speech and communication difficulties. The vast majority of the pupils are of white British descent; the most common non-British background is Chinese. Only one pupil at present is at an early stage of acquiring English. The proportion of the parents who claim their entitlement to free school meals is above average. The governing body has experienced significant difficulties in recruiting staff. The number of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than normal is above average.

In 2001 the school was awarded a Healthy Schools award in recognition of the work done to encourage healthy eating and awareness of health issues among the pupils. The school is taking part in the National College for School Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21038	Geof Timms	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Science Physical education English as an additional language
19343	Marion Howel	Lay inspector	
14459	Gwyn Owen	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology
32604	Susan Manning	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music
32475	Nick Butt	Team inspector	Religious education Geography History Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is not effective in providing its pupils with an adequate education. This is the result of a lack of clear and consistent leadership and management owing to significant staff changes and turbulence. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall and pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. There are strengths in the school. The headteacher and governors have a good understanding of the areas needing improvement. The Foundation Stage provision is very good. The teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, and there is some good teaching throughout the school. The school provides poor value for money.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are very low in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The current standards in information and communication technology and religious education are below those expected.
- There is a significant amount of underachievement; pupils with special educational needs do not achieve the levels of which they are capable.
- The leadership of the school is unsatisfactory due to the recent staffing problems and lack of a settled senior management team.
- The quality of the teaching is unsatisfactory overall; this is due to poor behaviour management, a lack of challenge in activities provided, unclear lesson objectives and weaknesses in some teachers' subject knowledge and understanding.
- Provision, including teaching, in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Standards in art and design are above those expected for the ages of the pupils.
- The management of behaviour is poor in too many lessons and this has a negative impact on the learning of all pupils.
- The headteacher and governing body are aware of the weaknesses and the headteacher has good plans to address them; she makes good use of a range of support from the local authority.

The level of improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. The school has failed to address all of the key issues successfully. Standards in the core subjects have fallen, although the good standards in art and design have been maintained. The quality of teaching has worsened and the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is not as good as it was. The provision for the nursery and reception classes has improved a great deal and this is now very good.

In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspections Act 1996 I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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' achievement is unsatisfactory. When children enter the nursery, the majority have a level of knowledge and understanding that is well below that expected. This is especially true for their personal, social and emotional development, their communication and language skills and their mathematical development. They make very good progress through the nursery and reception

classes, although a significant number are still failing to achieve the early learning goals by the time they begin Year 1. In most of the mixed age Year 1 and 2 classes, achievement is well below that expected, owing to the quality of the teaching. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well below those expected. The 2003 national tests at the end of Year 6 indicate significant underachievement, especially when the results are compared with the same pupils' prior attainment when they were in Year 2. This is the result of the staffing turbulence and lack of consistent leadership in the curriculum. In English and science, the results put the school in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. The inspection evidence shows that standards are below average among the present Year 6 in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education. Standards are above average in art and design. Girls achieve poorly compared to the boys. Those pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress; those with special educational needs do not achieve the levels they are capable of owing to the lack of clear leadership and effective management.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are satisfactory. The school has worked hard to improve attendance and this is beginning to have a positive impact, although it is still below average. Pupils' attitudes are largely satisfactory but their behaviour is unsatisfactory, especially where the teaching is weak.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is unsatisfactory. The quality of the teaching is unsatisfactory overall, although there is some very good teaching in the school. The best lessons are characterised by clear learning objectives, well-managed and resourced activities, and a bright and productive learning environment. There is good and very good teaching in all year groups. However, in too many lessons the teaching is unsatisfactory or poor. Pupils' behaviour is poorly managed and too many are not engaged in learning. The objectives of the lessons are unclear and pupils are unsure about what is expected of them. The marking of their work and assessment of their progress do not inform the future planning sufficiently. The teaching assistants are not always deployed efficiently, although when they work with children they are effective, especially with the less able and the youngest children. The curriculum provided for pupils is satisfactory overall. The school offers a satisfactory level of care and welfare, with some good support offered to individual pupils. The links with parents are satisfactory, as are the links with the local community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory overall. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory but her ability to bring about improvement has been hampered by the significant staffing issues, absences and turbulence. The governance of the school is unsatisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school but do not hold the school sufficiently to account. The school is compliant with statutory requirements. Where monitoring and evaluation have taken place, they have not been sufficiently rigorous to bring about improvements to teaching and learning. The subject leadership has been affected by the staffing problems and this is largely ineffective at present.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Only a very small proportion of the parents returned the questionnaires and attended a meeting with the inspection team. Those who did are largely positive about the work of the school. They feel the teaching is good and expectations are high, and that the school is well led and managed. Arrangements for starting school were very effective and the inspection findings support this view. The pupils spoken to are positive about the school and happy to be there.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise achievement, and thus standards, in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
- Raise the quality of all of the teaching to that of the best.
- Improve the leadership and management.
- Improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Continue the work started to improve attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of the pupils of Years 1 to 6 is unsatisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, the achievement is good and has improved since the last inspection. Standards in English, mathematics, science, religious education and information and communication technology (ICT) have declined since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and make good progress prior to starting in Year 1.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national average in the tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003.
- Standards in English and science were very low in 2003 in the Year 6 national tests; in mathematics, standards were well below average.
- Inspection evidence shows that current standards have fallen since the last inspection; the pupils' levels of attainment on entry are also lower than they were.
- The school is aware of the need to raise standards and that achievement is too low.

Commentary

1. The standards attained by the pupils are too low and have been so since the last inspection. In the national tests in English, mathematics and science, standards have fallen steadily. There is significant underachievement and pupils are not doing as well as they can. The trend over time is one of falling standards that are below the national trend and this is the case at the end of both key stages. The school has set appropriate targets for improvement but these have been affected by staff absences, and a lack of clear tracking of pupils and of systems to ensure that the targets are translated into learning objectives in classrooms.
2. When children enter the nursery class, many have levels of attainment that are well below those expected for their ages. They make very good progress but many are still below average when they enter the reception class. Again, the very good provision results in good progress being made and children achieve well. The two Foundation Stage classes work and plan very closely together, and activities are sufficiently challenging to ensure progress is good. By the end of the reception year, the majority of the children are still not fully achieving the expected early learning goals although they have made good progress. In particular, there are weaknesses in their communication, language and literacy, and their mathematical skills. In the recent past there have also been weaknesses in their personal, social and emotional development, but the present arrangements are ensuring that this is much more effective.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.8 (14.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.9 (13.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.2 (16.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 53 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 show that the pupils are almost two terms behind other pupils nationally. In mathematics, the standards are over two terms behind other pupils nationally. When compared with schools that take pupils from similar backgrounds, standards in 2003 were broadly average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics. Very few pupils reached the higher levels in all three subjects and this reflects a significant level of underachievement. Over time, the trend in the test results is below that found nationally and the gap between the national picture and the school's results is widening, although it is inconsistent from year to year. For example, results in 2002 were better, especially in mathematics.
4. Analysis of the progress made from their attainment on entry to the tests in Year 2 shows that in reading the less able made good progress but almost 20 per cent of the pupils underachieved. In writing, over 20 per cent underachieved and these were largely the average ability pupils. In mathematics, there was little underachievement evident and pupils did better than they did in reading and writing. The teachers' own assessment of the pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2003 matches that shown in the test results. In science, standards were below average overall, and well below average for the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels.
5. The current picture is that the inconsistent and often unsatisfactory teaching experienced is not helping pupils achieve as well as they are able and standards are still too low. This is true in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Where the teaching is much better, pupils' achievement improves and they begin to reach the levels of which they are capable. Standards in subjects such as science, history and geography are adversely affected by the pupils' poor literacy and numeracy skills.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.8 (24.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.7 (25.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	25.3 (25.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 49 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

6. Standards in English and science in the 2003 tests at the end of Year 6 put the school in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. Standards in mathematics were well below average. This picture was repeated when their results were compared with those of schools where the pupils had scored similarly in the Year 2 tests in 1999. This shows that the progress made compared to their prior attainment was very low, and in the lowest five per cent nationally in English and science, and well below average in mathematics.
7. Far too few pupils achieve the higher levels and this represents some significant underachievement. This is true of all three subjects. In particular, the girls underachieved in 2003 and were well over a year behind girls nationally. Over time, both boys and girls are behind others nationally by over two terms. This group of pupils had a particularly disrupted education with many staff changes and temporary teachers and this is clearly reflected in their results. In addition, the level of mobility in the school is above that normally found nationally. Even so, the results have been falling steadily for four years and have fallen from the levels found during the last inspection to the present well below average picture. The trend in results is below that found nationally and the gap between the school's results and the national picture is widening and at a much faster rate than is found in the Year 2 results. Value-added measures point to a level in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally.

8. The current picture is of standards that are still below those expected and with little sign of sustained improvement owing to the inconsistent quality of the teaching and the disrupted leadership and management. Standards in ICT are below those expected and pupils' skills are underdeveloped. Standards in art and design are above those expected by the end of Year 6, and pupils have opportunities to use a wide range of media and materials. Standards in religious education are below those expected and the more able pupils underachieve.
9. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory overall because provision is highly inconsistent and not well managed. Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve well because planning takes account of their differing abilities and lessons are well taught. The four pupils in the school with specific funding for their needs make satisfactory progress, sensitively supported by their named assistants. The achievement of many other pupils is unsatisfactory or even poor because teachers do not take sufficient account of their requirements in planning or teaching lessons.
10. The few pupils with English as an additional language do not achieve well in Years 1 and 2 but their achievement is satisfactory as they move through Years 3 to 6 and is good in the nursery and reception classes. There are no significant differences in achievement between boys and girls by the end of Year 2 or by the end of Year 6. Where the girls have underachieved in some cohorts, the evidence is that this is partly because of the unsettled staffing in the school resulting in the girls being quieter and less forthcoming during lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The attitudes and behaviour of the children are very good in the Foundation Stage. Attitudes are satisfactory in the other classes. The pupils' behaviour is unsatisfactory throughout the rest of the school. The attendance rates at the school are below average although improving. The pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery and reception classes show interest and enthusiasm.
- Pupils' behaviour is poor in some classes.
- The pupils enjoy their involvement in out-of-school activities.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good.
- Attendance figures are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

11. Children in the nursery and reception classes have very good attitudes to their work. They take an active part in their lessons and are interested and involved in what is happening around them. They know and understand their class rules. They co-operate well together and there are very good relationships. By the end of the reception year they are on line to achieve most of the early learning goals for their personal, emotional and social development.
12. In other classes, the pupils' attitudes are closely tied to the quality of the teaching, and where it is unsatisfactory, pupils show little interest in their work, or pride in what they can do. However, when the teaching is good and very good, pupils are interested, work with confidence and enjoyment and make good progress. They show they can work well together, sharing and collaborating on tasks provided. The inspection found no significant evidence for any difference in personal development or attitudes between any different groups in the school, although there is evidence that some girls have been more affected by the staffing disruptions and have underachieved because of this. Pupils are able to work in an environment free from oppressive behaviour, sexism and racism.

13. The behaviour of children with special educational needs is inconsistent and depends on the quality of the provision for them. Where appropriate support is in place pupils behave well and find lessons interesting. In many lessons, pupils are easily bored because work is not well matched to their abilities, and they become frustrated. Their behaviour can then deteriorate to the extent that they need to be excluded from the classroom.
14. The school is aware of the need to improve pupils' personal development. The staff work hard to provide a range of opportunities through staff-run clubs or ones run by outside organisations. This is correctly seen as important for the pupils' social and personal development. There is good support for the out-of-school clubs provided for the pupils. They enjoy the mix of activities available and in some cases, as with the cookery club, they are over-subscribed and there is a rota in operation.
15. The behaviour of the majority of the pupils is unsatisfactory. During lessons that hold their attention, they show good interest and involvement and are keen to learn. They work well together in small groups and offer help and support to their fellow pupils. However, in a significant number of lessons where the teaching is less than satisfactory, the behaviour of the pupils is adversely affected. They lack concentration and there is less enthusiasm for their work. This results in time being wasted during the lesson and less opportunities for the pupils to learn.
16. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and that for their social and moral development is satisfactory. Assemblies strongly support the development of pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness through the retelling of stories from the Bible and other sacred texts. Art lessons encourage pupils to explore their feelings and to represent these with colour and a range of different media. Pupils learn about their own cultural heritage through studies in history and geography, and by taking part in educational visits to museums, art galleries and the ballet.
17. Pupils' multi-cultural awareness is developed well through their studies of music, dance and art from different cultures. Visitors to the school enrich these learning experiences. Pupils throughout the school are well prepared for life in a multi-cultural society. Pupils are taught right from wrong and in some classes have been encouraged to contribute to the formation of class rules. However, inconsistencies in the way school rules are applied means that moral development is only satisfactory overall. In some classes, pupils have good opportunities to work in groups and learn to take turns, share and help one another. However, unsatisfactory teaching and poor behaviour management restrict pupils' social development in too many classes.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	2.0
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.

18. Attendance is unsatisfactory. The rates are well below the national average, with much higher than average rates of unauthorised absences. In order to improve the figures, the school has very recently introduced a first-day-call system. The early indications are that this is proving to be very effective in improving the attendance figures. The school uses the education welfare officer effectively and they work closely together. The majority of the pupils arrive at school on time and there is little disruption to the start of the first lesson.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
276	6	1

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced but lacks sufficient depth and there is too much unsatisfactory or poor teaching. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall and this means pupils do not learn as well as they should. However, there is some good teaching throughout the school. Assessment is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the nursery and reception classes is very good.
- There is too high a proportion of unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school and not enough good teaching.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory and is not used to plan work at an appropriate level for most pupils.
- The planning is inadequate and too often learning objectives are unclear.

Commentary

19. The quality of teaching has significantly worsened since the last inspection. The proportion of unsatisfactory and poor teaching is much higher than is normally found nationally. The proportion of good or better teaching is well below average. Most of the good or better lessons were observed in the nursery and reception classes, in one mixed age Year 1 and 2 class, and among the teachers in Years 3 to 6. However, there is considerable inconsistency, with good and weak teaching in most year groups. The quality of the teaching was not related to any particular subjects but to the skills, knowledge and understanding, and often experience, of the teachers.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6 (11%)	26 (47%)	11 (20%)	8 (15%)	4 (7%)	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.

20. The excessive turbulence in staffing and leadership over recent years has contributed to the decline in teaching quality. The headteacher and senior staff have monitored teachers' work, and recent work with the local authority on developing monitoring skills has been carried out.

However, this has yet to have an obvious impact on the quality of teaching. Newly qualified teachers are supported appropriately and receive the time due in training and other professional development. The system for performance management is organised appropriately but the changes to staffing and extended absences of senior staff have made its effective use in improving quality impossible.

21. Where the teaching is good, the teachers have very good relationships with the pupils. This creates a calm, purposeful ethos in those rooms and this encourages all pupils to take a full part in lessons and to develop good learning habits. In the nursery and reception classes, the teaching is very well planned. Very good quality nursery nurses and other support staff assist the teachers well. The teaching offers a very effective mix of pupil and teacher-led activity and this supports their progress towards achieving the early learning goals and prepares them well for the next stage of their learning. A very effective learning environment has been created, giving children full access to a wide range of activities and resources. The teaching in reception has improved since the last inspection.
22. The weak teaching is characterised by poor behaviour management that results in classrooms being too noisy, too many pupils not on task and a lack of sufficiently challenging teaching. Too often learning objectives are not clear enough about what the teacher is expecting the pupils to learn by the end of the lesson. In a small number of lessons, teachers do not organise the activities effectively. Pupils can spend too long sitting listening to the teacher, and the movement around the class is unsettled and noisy, leading to the pace of the lesson being lost as the teacher tries to get pupils to be quiet. Teachers do not make their expectations clear enough to pupils. The teaching assistants offer a satisfactory level of support to pupils when they are effectively deployed. However, on too many occasions they are not employed as efficiently as they could be and too little of their time is spent working with pupils.
23. Assessment is unsatisfactory and does not result in tasks being sufficiently matched to the pupils' prior attainment and capability, especially in the mixed age classes. The school has developed a useful individual tracking system for test results but this is yet to be used effectively in setting individual or group targets. The marking of pupils' work does not give them enough of an idea about what they have done well or about what they need to do to improve.
24. Overall, teachers' subject knowledge and expertise are satisfactory, although there are weaknesses, especially in Years 1 and 2. Where this is strong, as in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils are appropriately challenged by the teachers' good questioning skills. Where it is less secure, lessons have less pace and teachers provide activities that lack inspiration or the ability to catch and hold pupils' attention and interest. For example, the observation of some plants in Years 1 and 2 was used ineffectively enough to explain about the differences between living and non-living things and opportunities to make important teaching points were missed.
25. Pupils with special educational needs receive unsatisfactory teaching overall. Provision is very inconsistent and not being monitored. In the nursery and reception classes children's needs are identified early because good systems are in place. This is not sustained as pupils move through the school. The number of pupils with special educational needs has increased substantially since the last inspection. They all have targets but these are not given sufficient emphasis when teachers come to plan work, or when they assess pupils' progress. Support staff are given little guidance about how to support pupils. They often have to use their own initiative, especially when the task set is inappropriate for the needs of the pupils. In the worst cases, no regard is given to pupils' targets, and they quickly become disaffected, despite the best efforts of support staff. At present, the pupils with English as an additional language are being taught well and make good progress, especially in the Foundation Stage, but in future this remains dependent on the quality of teaching they receive.

How well does the curriculum meet pupils' needs?

Overall, the provision is satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets fully with statutory requirements. It is satisfactorily enriched through after-school and other activities. The accommodation and resources are good for the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in the rest of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is very well planned and very effective.
- Facilities for the teaching of ICT have been extended and improved.
- The accommodation has improved since the previous inspection.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.
- Not enough is done to develop links between subjects.
- The most able pupils are not always provided with work that is sufficiently challenging in English and mathematics.

Commentary

26. The curriculum for all pupils is broad and sufficient time is now allocated to each subject. The timetable is, however, still fragmented and some lessons are unsuccessful because the time allocated is too short. In the nursery and reception classes, the curriculum is very well planned by the staff and provides the children with an appropriately interesting range of activities designed to extend their learning through play and through appropriate teacher-led tasks. Suitable emphasis is placed on English and mathematics and the curriculum for these two subjects is based securely on the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The more effective teachers use these with confidence, but in the unsatisfactory lessons, knowledge of the programmes is less secure. Long-term plans have been developed to ensure that the curriculum is adequately covered, and planning for subjects, other than English and mathematics, is based on national guidance. This is sometimes adapted to suit the needs of individual pupils, but links between subjects are not highlighted and opportunities to extend learning in English and mathematics through other areas are often missed. There are useful policies in place for most subject areas but they are not always fully implemented.
27. The provision for higher attaining pupils throughout the school is unsatisfactory and the curriculum provided for them does not always offer sufficient challenge to really extend their knowledge and understanding. The introduction of setting is having a positive impact on standards in Years 3 to 6 but is less effective earlier in the school where classes are of mixed ages and where pupils are too often given work that is too easy and does not stretch their abilities.
28. The pupils with English as an additional language are well provided for and in most classes they achieve well because of this provision. Pupils with special educational needs receive very mixed provision. The four pupils who receive extra support are appropriately included and encouraged by the assistants. For others, in the best cases they are given good opportunities to access the curriculum, for example in the computer suite, where work is set at a suitable level for them. In many cases pupils' needs are not taken into account in planning and lessons do not engage them sufficiently. They become easily bored and frustrated. For these pupils, school is an alienating experience, and exacerbates their difficulties. A lack of leadership means these weaknesses are not being identified or dealt with. Teachers react to the poor behaviour that is a consequence of the provision rather than addressing its underlying causes. Despite more than one in five pupils being on the register of special educational need there is no specific teaching of pupils by a suitably qualified teacher. Support assistants are expected to do much of this work. A thriving art club does seek to include pupils with special educational needs. Their self-esteem is raised through taking part in such an enriching experience.
29. The pupils are unsatisfactorily prepared for the next stage in their education due to the low standards achieved. However, the school offers opportunities for pupils to visit the receiving

secondary school each summer term. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. A range of after-school and lunchtime activities is offered. These include football, gymnastics and netball as well as art and cookery clubs. Pupils also participate regularly in educational activities outside the school day and these are celebrated on the Achievement Board situated in the main corridor. They include weekend visits to an outdoor pursuit centre, local museums and educational visits to see the National Ballet and multi-cultural dance groups.

30. Resources are adequate in most areas and there is an appropriate match of teaching and support staff to the needs of the curriculum. Facilities for the teaching of ICT have been extended, and the leaking roof, identified in the previous report, has been fully repaired. The main building has recently been redecorated and it now provides an attractive learning environment. The accommodation and resources for the Foundation Stage have been much improved since the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. Pupils are able to develop a trusting relationship with their teachers. There are good induction arrangements for new pupils. Pupils receive satisfactory support, advice and guidance overall, but this is very good in the Foundation Stage. The school takes account of pupils' views through the school council.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils know they can trust the headteacher and their teachers, and readily turn to them for help.
- The induction arrangements for pupils entering the school are good and enable the pupils to settle happily into their new surroundings.
- There are no arrangements for the monitoring of vehicles entering the school site.

Commentary

31. The school provides a secure and happy environment for its pupils. The pupils know they can always talk to the headteacher and that their concerns will be taken seriously. They like their teachers and know they can turn to them for help. The teachers know their pupils and their families well, and are aware of individual circumstances. The school deals sensitively with any problems the pupils may be having at home. The school is at present working with the behaviour management team and the midday supervisors in an effort to improve the lunchtime play arrangements. This is intended to ensure that the same rules and standards are used consistently and fairly throughout the school day.
32. The school has good procedures in place for when children start at the school. Their parents are given good opportunities to visit the school, and are provided with relevant and helpful information. This enables them and their children to look forward to the first day. As a result, the children settle quickly and happily into the school routines, and soon learn how they are expected to behave. The support provided for pupils, based on the monitoring of their academic and personal progress, is satisfactory overall and good where the teaching is strongest.
33. There is an active school council and this is an effective way for pupils to make their views known. The regular meetings are productive, with decisions made and acted upon. Wherever possible the pupils' suggestions are acted upon. The council is currently involved in seeking ideas for the improvement of the playground and the provision of more play equipment. The activities of the council are displayed in the dining hall and this helps all pupils to feel involved.
34. There are appropriate procedures in place for child protection matters and these work effectively. The school has a suitable health and safety policy, and all necessary records are kept. The current arrangements for the monitoring of vehicles coming onto the school site are

not sufficiently secure. No risk assessment has been carried out and this means confusion may arise as to when and where vehicles may come into the grounds of the school, especially when delivering to the kitchen.

35. Support for pupils with special educational needs is inconsistent. The four pupils with separate funding receive appropriate help from their named assistants. For other pupils it depends entirely upon the ability and experience of their class teacher, and the extent to which special educational needs is considered important. There is little direction from the headteacher or co-ordinators. Whilst some pupils are well supported, the needs of others are neglected. Support is unsatisfactory overall. Support assistants work patiently and hard, but often have insufficient guidance as to how they should be helping. Some are not included in discussion about planning and meeting children's needs, so they are not always aware of their purpose.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links with parents, other schools and the community are **satisfactory**. Parents are supportive of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides parents with good information.
- There are effective links with other primary schools in the area.
- The involvement of parents in their child's education is limited, and a significant number fail to ensure their children attend regularly.

Commentary

36. There was strong support for the school from the small number of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting, and returned questionnaires. They were particularly pleased with the induction arrangements and the way their children were helped to settle into school life. They also said that the school provides good activities for the children after school, with something happening every evening.
37. The parents are supplied with good information about the way their children are taught. In the Foundation Stage, parents receive information each week about what their children will be learning. Other parents receive a letter each term telling them of the topics to be covered in the coming weeks. There are notice boards at a number of locations within the school, and the teachers and headteacher are available every day to talk to parents. The school provides parents with good opportunities to be involved in their children's education. Parents have their views sought and acted upon satisfactorily and any complaints and concerns are dealt with appropriately.
38. The school is part of a cluster group of local primary schools and this helps the schools to share good practice, and to arrange group-training activities. There are also good links developing with local nurseries and these links are adding to the already good induction arrangements in the school. The links with the secondary schools are not as well developed, but this is not due to any lack of effort on the part of the school. There are good links with the tenants' association from the nearby estate, and there is currently a joint application in hand to develop sporting facilities at the school that would be of great benefit to the school and the residents.
39. The involvement of parents in their children's learning is limited. The poor attendance of a significant number of pupils reflects their parents' lack of support for school and education. Parents are invited to help in school but at present few do so. There are a number of parents

who, despite the best efforts of the school, do not attend the regular parents' meetings or come in to discuss their children's work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection, the leadership and management of the school have been disrupted by significant turbulence among the senior staff caused by changes to the headteacher, deputy headteacher as well as by lengthy absences among senior staff. The present headteacher has a clear idea of the weaknesses but has had insufficient time with a settled staff to address many of these. While governance has been supportive during difficult times, it is unsatisfactory overall due to a lack of challenge in the way governors have held the school to account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very low and falling due to weaknesses in the leadership and management in the school.
- The headteacher is aware of the main priorities needed to improve the school when the staffing is more stable.
- The governors need to monitor the work of the school much more closely.
- The role of subject leaders is underdeveloped although a start has been made to improve this, especially in English and mathematics.
- The finances are well controlled and monitored.

Commentary

40. Since the last inspection, the quality of leadership and management in the school have declined. This is due to the difficulties in recruiting and retaining senior staff and the long-term illnesses and absences of staff, especially those with responsibilities. The current headteacher and the governing body are aware of this and of the need to stabilise the staffing throughout the school so that the weaknesses in standards can be addressed. Although the headteacher was appointed three years ago, she has yet to have a significant period with a stable senior management that would enable any improvement in the recognised weaknesses. She is effective at recognising the areas needing improvement, such as weaknesses in standards and in the quality of teaching. Where she has been able, she has worked to bring about the necessary improvement. In particular, she has been proactive in addressing teaching issues, mentoring and working with newly qualified and less experienced teachers. Good self-evaluation, with the support of the local authority, has resulted in an honest appraisal of the school's weaknesses. However, there is no evidence of this having any impact as yet. The present position has led to a situation where the school is failing to give its pupils an adequate education.
41. The staffing issues have had a negative impact on the ethos of the school, with too few teachers taking on responsibility for what happens outside the classroom. The lack of an effective and proactive senior management team structure has meant that too much has fallen to the headteacher and there needs to be a greater focus on whole-school responsibility for issues such as behaviour management and overall leadership. The teaching assistants, although often of good quality, are not always deployed effectively or well managed, lessening the impact they could have on the teaching and management of the pupils on a day-to-day basis.
42. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good and this has resulted in the good improvements made since the last inspection. The nursery class has moved into the main school. Together with the reception teacher, the co-ordinator has developed a very efficient and effective system for planning a range of activities, with an appropriate balance between teacher and pupil-led tasks. The accommodation has been greatly improved and assessment

procedures are very effective. The support staff are well managed and this enables them to have a very positive impact on the children's learning.

43. When staffing has permitted, the school has developed a system for monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning. However, significant weaknesses remain and the monitoring has had little impact on the quality of the provision. The subject leadership is inconsistent but, although supportive of staff, it rarely shows a good understanding of what needs to be addressed if standards are to be improved. A number of the subject leaders are new to the role. The school has been proactive in addressing their needs by providing training in lesson observations and to develop their consultancy role. In some subjects such as science, religious education and special educational needs they do not have sufficient understanding of what is needed to raise standards to a more appropriate level.
44. The school has developed a system for tracking pupils' test results and is at an early stage of analysing this and addressing any patterns shown. Teachers do not use this information very effectively to help them set group or individual targets on a regular basis. The school targets for the test results at the end of Years 2 and 6 have been set in the past with insufficient knowledge and understanding of pupils' present or likely attainment. The targets set in 2003 were too challenging and were not met. Those set for this year also appear too challenging given the pupils' current standards. There is a small proportion of pupils with English as an additional language in the school. They are satisfactorily provided for and the teachers are aware of their needs and their achievement is analysed through the tracking system.
45. The needs of children with special educational needs are not well managed. Time is made available on an ad hoc basis, mainly for review meetings. It is very difficult for the co-ordinators to keep up to date with the necessary administration in a school with almost 90 pupils on the register of special educational need. It has proved impossible for them to monitor the work of teachers or assess the quality of the support. This means serious flaws have not been picked up, and some pupils' needs are not being addressed. Some teachers lack knowledge and understanding about providing work that is appropriate for such pupils. The present leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The improvement of the provision for special needs is a priority in the school improvement plan, but so far no progress has been made because the necessary resources and expertise have not been forthcoming.
46. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. All statutory duties are met, including that for ensuring race equality. It provides a good level of support but has failed to challenge the school sufficiently over the poor results. Governors are aware of the difficulties created by the staffing problems. However, there is no strategic, longer-term view of the future that would support staff in their improvement work. Governors monitor the work of the school satisfactorily but this has had little impact and they do not revisit areas sufficiently to see what improvements have been made.
47. The issues surrounding senior staff have affected the school development planning. The headteacher has drawn up appropriate plans for short-term improvements and these show a good level of awareness of the weaknesses and priorities the school faces. However, the lack of a whole-school, long-term strategic view hinders the ability of the school to develop a cohesive ethos and agreed objectives for its future development.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	792 226	Balance from previous year	53 740
Total expenditure	748 086	Balance carried forward to the next	44 140
Expenditure per pupil	1 928		

48. The governing body recognised that it needed more support in preparing, monitoring and evaluating the budget. It has appointed a finance officer who is now responsible for these aspects and for controlling much of the ordering in the school. This she does efficiently and the school takes good account of the principles of best value. The governing body now has a clearer picture of the budget and is able to monitor it more closely during the year. The spending per pupil is low but given the standards presently achieved the school gives poor value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is very good. This has improved a great deal since the last inspection. The teaching is very good, the curriculum is very well planned and the Foundation Stage is very effectively led and managed by the co-ordinator. Children's progress is closely monitored and the staff are able to provide for them on an individual basis. Good records are kept of assessments, both of individuals and of groups. The teachers make very good use of digital photographs of activities that they then annotate, and these provide an excellent record of the children's experiences and achievements. The resources are very good, well-organised and managed and the children are prepared very effectively for the next stage in their education. The nursery and reception children work closely together for much of the time but have specific tasks and teacher-led sessions when appropriate. This helps their achievement, especially in their personal, social and emotional development. The accommodation is very good and provides a very effective and imaginative learning environment.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The skills of co-operation and collaboration are given a high profile when activities are devised.
- Children are taught important values, often through play or through stories.

Commentary

49. The quality of the teaching is very good and the majority of the children will achieve most of the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. When they enter the nursery, their skills in this area of learning are low and children do not easily share or take turns. Children in both classes enter the school confidently and are comfortable and secure in the class environment. The staff put a high emphasis on developing their skills in this area as they appreciate how important it is for the children to quickly pick up vital learning skills. The use of very good role-play opportunities enables children to learn to co-operate and collaborate. For example, the garage play area encourages a range of discussion over roles and the use of different resources.
50. Stories are used well to draw children's attention to characters' qualities, as happened with the story of a 'generous' giant. They come to understand right and wrong. The staff create routines that children quickly come to understand and appreciate. When moving between rooms for example, they know to be quiet so as not to disturb other classes. The staff focus on reinforcing positive behaviours through, for example, the 'sunshine' tree where names are placed for doing good things. All children are given responsibility for, for example, when they have their snack and clearing up afterwards.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Books and stories have a high profile throughout the two classes.
- Children's speech is underdeveloped and immature.
- Writing is taught well, with teachers building the skills carefully and assessing progress closely.

Commentary

51. The quality of the teaching is very good and children achieve well given their low attainment on entry to the school. Even so, few are likely to fully achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The speech overheard when children are playing, or when reading to an adult, varies, but is often very immature, difficult to understand and with a structure that is at a very basic level. The staff focus correctly on this, making talking and listening a major focus for many of their activities. They use a lot of repetition and model good language use through all activities. In the reception class, children know a lot about how books work. They can discuss the 'blurb' and know about the title and author. The teachers read with great expression and this captures the interest of both nursery and reception children.
52. Reception children can recognise rhyming words from work they have covered earlier. In a guided writing session, pupils learn to write sentences based around the characters in the text they have read. The teacher supports this work with a good list of key words. Computers are used to provide children with sound versions of their reading books and these provide further opportunities for word recognition. In the nursery class, there are many opportunities for children to develop their emergent writing skills. The more able can write their names by January, and are able to copy the teacher's writing accurately. Reception children are beginning to write recognisable letters but few other than the most able are able to confidently write their names or other familiar words yet.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to learn mathematical vocabulary.
- The staff provide a wide range of activities to develop children's mathematical skills through play.

Commentary

53. The teaching is very good and children achieve well, although many will not fully reach the expected early learning goals. Very good displays emphasise the use of numbers in the real world. For example, a very effective number line is created out of birthday cards as part of a birthday party role-play area. Good links are made with literacy in the nursery as children learn mathematical vocabulary while playing a game from their literacy text. They are at the early stages of using positional language such as 'in front of', 'underneath' and 'behind'. The teachers question children well to get them to use the vocabulary rather than just point. Very good opportunities are also used to develop the language of colour and shape. They cut out numbers to 9 and order them correctly. With the support of an adult they can recognise some simple coins. Children have helped create a displayed graph showing their favourite toys. Reception children are able to count accurately to and back from 10.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Role-play is used very effectively to develop this area of learning.
- Many very good opportunities are provided for children to explore and use a range of materials and tools.

Commentary

54. The quality of teaching is very good and the children achieve well in both nursery and reception classes. By the end of the reception year, the majority will have achieved most of the expected early learning goals. The staff provide a wide range of experiences, from growing plants to a strange coloured mixture that is both liquid and solid, and which children have good opportunities to explore. Cultural features are explored well. The recent Chinese New Year was celebrated by a range of work and some good displays. This celebration has supported the home culture of a pupil who has English as an additional language. In the outdoor area, children are beginning to appreciate the needs of other living things and have made bird feeders which they observe from a hide created nearby. A middle attaining child in the nursery can use magnets to separate and sort magnetic and non-magnetic objects. Higher attaining reception children extend this knowledge and realise that magnetic objects are metal. They have made iced lollies and are able to explain why they begin to melt. Nursery children were taught through a very good teacher demonstration about toys and how forces are used to make them move, during which good links were made to historical toys children had already seen and explored.
55. The adults use role-play very effectively to extend children's knowledge and understanding about the world. In one area, they can act out roles as garage mechanics or drivers. In another, they prepare food in a kitchen. In the reception class, early historical skills have been developed using a basic timeline to show the toys used by babies, older children and adults. The children in both classes have good opportunities to use ICT, through computers and programmable robots. They confidently learn to use the mouse and to click on words or icons. Pupils with special educational needs have access to a special mouse/console that supports their level of skill.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of the outdoor area for planned and supervised activities.
- Good teaching of dance and gymnastics enhances the children's physical development.

Commentary

56. The children achieve good levels of physical development and the majority will achieve or exceed the expected early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The quality of the teaching is very good and very good use is made of support staff in supervising the outdoor area and in supporting lessons in the hall in gymnastics or dance. The outdoor area is used effectively in providing good opportunities for pupils to use wheeled toys and large play equipment. There is a good 'wild walk' that is still being developed but is already encouraging children to observe bird life. A covered play area enables the use of sand and water in poor weather. In the hall, nursery children learn to respond to music well and to create very good movements to represent toys such as floppy clowns. Reception children look at a range of toys and try movements that represent different ones, such as spinning tops. They warm up for lessons and know that their heart is beating faster. Children have good opportunities to use appropriately sized apparatus and they develop confident movement and balancing skills. A few able children demonstrate exceptional skipping skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many activities are provided to enable children to develop their creative skills.
- Good links are made between other areas of learning and art.

Commentary

57. The teachers make creativity a high profile in both classes. The quality of the teaching is very good and the resources are very effective in enabling children to experience a wide range of media and materials. Children achieve well and most will achieve the majority of the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. Songs have a high profile in both classes. For example, reception children sing a 'going home' song when preparing for the end of the day and this has clearly become an important part of their routine. They have good access to a range of musical instruments. Children are encouraged to use their imaginations through a range of role-play and small world activities. These are also important in helping develop their speaking and listening skills. Children use paint well, creating some effective self-portraits and good links are made between art and other subject areas. For example, children created a good number line by making rockets that are then numbered and displayed in order.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Overall, the provision for English is **unsatisfactory**. There is, however, significant variation between age groups and between classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are below the expected levels throughout the school
- Lessons for younger pupils often failed to challenge and extend the more able
- Insufficient work is produced when pupils are working independently
- There are few planned opportunities for speaking and listening
- The quality of day-to-day marking is inconsistent and the procedures for assessing, tracking and target setting are weak
- The role of the subject leader is underdeveloped

Commentary

58. Standards in English are below those expected nationally. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory and standards have fallen since the last inspection. The tests in 2003, at age seven, show that standards reached are below the average. The tests for eleven-year-olds show standards to be well below those achieved nationally. Inspection evidence supports the view that current standards throughout the school are below average. Progress in relation to their prior learning is also unsatisfactory as is the progress of pupils who have special educational needs. There is insufficient use of visual resources and ICT to help them. Pupils with English as an additional language make acceptable rates of progress. More able pupils make sound progress in the latter stages of the school, but it is not enough to enable sufficient numbers to achieve the highest levels in the national tests. Standards in speaking and listening are below those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and there are few planned opportunities for pupils to discuss and debate. In the effective lessons, the pupils showed that they could listen attentively to each other and to the teacher and, in discussions with inspectors, they were willing to summarise stories. Many did, however, find it difficult to

express their thoughts clearly and to structure what they were saying because of their limited vocabulary. Contributions were brief and often consisted of one word answers. There is an agreed whole school approach to handwriting, but it is not implemented consistently, resulting in varying styles and poor presentation in many classes.

59. By the age of seven, the majority have made a sound start on learning to read but too many remain at the lower end of the attainment range and very few have developed a real love of books. Pupils spoken to did not know any authors and only the more able pupils could talk about the books they were currently reading. Most have limited strategies to help them read unknown words. By the age of eleven, a few pupils read books that are more challenging with fluency but the majority are still more comfortable with simpler texts. These pupils make frequent errors and do not self-correct. They interpret what they have read at a superficial level and they have not extended their strategies to help read new and unfamiliar words.
60. Standards in writing are also below the expected levels nationally. By the age of seven, the more able pupils write legibly but punctuation is used inconsistently. The average and below average pupils often do not use full stops and capital letters and they do not produce enough work when they are set independent tasks. This is due, in part, to the lack of a sense of urgency when they are asked to write, and in part to the over-use of photocopied sheets requiring a limited response from pupils. By the age of eleven, the pupils are beginning to write for different purposes but there are few examples of extended writing and the quantity produced is limited. They are beginning to gain a better understanding of the technical aspects of literacy but few show real pleasure and excitement in their writing.
61. The quality of teaching observed was mostly good with the teaching of the older pupils being consistently good or very good. This reflects the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. There is, however, evidence of long-term variable practice in the teaching of literacy which is adversely affecting the progress being made across the school. This was particularly evident in the teaching of six and seven-year-olds. Effective features of good and very good teaching included careful planning and preparation, and a concern to ensure that the targets of the lessons were shared and understood by the pupils. In these lessons, a brisk pace was maintained and teachers delivered the content in an interesting and stimulating way and pupils responded well. They asked effective questions that extended pupils' thinking and rewarded them with praise and encouragement so that they developed confidence in their own learning. For example, in a very good Year 4/5 lesson the teacher's warm relationships and good questioning helped pupils to a better understanding of sonnets. In an unsatisfactory lesson, the pupils were not fully involved and behaviour was not well managed. Less effective features of lessons judged to be satisfactory overall, included inconsistent pace and providing activities that did not extend and challenge the more able pupils. In some instances independent work was poorly directed and the activities prepared did not cater sufficiently well for different abilities within the class.
62. Day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is consistent and supportive and in the best examples indicates clearly what pupils should do to improve. This was well illustrated in the books of one Year 3 class, but this good practice was not seen generally. A weakness throughout the school is that teachers assess progress against how well the pupils have responded to the lesson rather than against what they know of their current levels of achievement. A wider range of end of year tests has recently been introduced but a more rigorous tracking system is required to ensure that secure targets are set for different groups within the school. Currently there is no whole-school approach to the process, with some pupils being very aware of what they need to be working on in order to improve, while others know that they have a target but are unable to say what it is.

63. Overall, the quality of leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The recent absences of senior staff, and the significant turnover of teachers, have had a negative impact on progress. The current co-ordinator has been in post for a short period and has yet to develop a strategic vision for literacy. She is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and is beginning to take a more proactive role in the development of the subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

64. The issue of seeking to improve literacy through other areas of the curriculum has not yet been addressed in a structured way. Pupils do have a grasp of some basic vocabulary related to other subjects, for example, simple words associated with ICT, history and art, but weak reading and writing skills are having a detrimental affect on progress in subjects across the school. There is further scope for increasing consistency in this area by ensuring that planning for all aspects clearly identifies opportunities for extending literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do not achieve high enough standards.
- There is not enough good quality teaching.
- Assessment procedures are not used effectively enough in every class to plan for tasks which meet the needs of all pupils.
- Tracking procedures are beginning to provide information on the achievement of individual pupils.

Commentary

65. Standards are below average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and a significant number of pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Too few pupils attain the higher levels in the national tests. This was identified as an area needing development in the last inspection and has still to be addressed. There has been a steady decline in standards over the past three years and as a result, pupils are not performing as well as they were at the last inspection. This is partly due to increased pupil mobility and a large number of changes in staff, particularly in Years 3 to 6. In some classes, pupils with special educational needs do not make the progress they should due to ineffective use of teaching assistants. Often they are set tasks that are inappropriately matched to their needs. Boys and girls are currently making similar progress and pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar progress to all other pupils. The introduction of setting for mathematics across the school is not yet having a positive impact on standards.
66. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall, as 40 per cent of the mathematics lessons seen were unsatisfactory or poor. There were no very good lessons observed. This has a direct impact on pupils' learning. Where teaching is good, explanations are clear and succinct, teachers question effectively and so pupils find it possible to acquire new knowledge and understand what they are doing. In these lessons, expectations are high and as a result pupils apply themselves to their work and achievement is good. In unsatisfactory and poor lessons teaching lacks pace and challenge. In these lessons, teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve and as a result many pupils do not make the progress they should. A significant minority of pupils have poor attitudes towards their learning and teachers spend too much time managing misbehaviour. This interrupts learning for those pupils who wish to try hard and leads to underachievement.

67. Teachers' planning takes account of the national guidance, but rather too much emphasis is given to pupils' acquisition of number skills. As a result, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding about shape and measures and they do not have enough opportunity to collect information and represent it as graphs, tables and charts. Additional number skills lessons are planned within the timetable to encourage pupils to use and apply what they know about mathematics to practical situations. However, in some classes, particularly in Years 1 and 2, these lessons are not planned carefully enough and do not build on pupils' prior learning or extend their skills.
68. Assessment procedures are developing, but not enough use is made of assessment information to inform teachers about what they need to plan next to move pupils' learning on. Marking in some classes does not provide pupils with guidance as to how they can improve their work. The tracking of individual pupils' progress through the school is a recent initiative and provides basic information based on teacher assessments. It has not yet impacted on practice.
69. The co-ordinator manages the subject satisfactorily. There is an action plan which identifies appropriate ways for the school to move forward. It correctly targets raising standards through raising teacher expectations of what pupils can do. The local authority has supported the co-ordinator by monitoring teaching but this has not been sufficiently rigorous in helping teachers to upgrade their skills. Resources are adequate to teach the curriculum and are kept within the classroom, where they are accessible to pupils. There are too few displays of pupils' mathematical work around the school and this does not create a stimulating mathematical environment for pupils or help them to take pride in their work.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. The use of mathematics in other subjects has not been developed well enough to help pupils improve their skills. Pupils have too few opportunities to use computer programs to help them develop their knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measure, and there is little evidence of the use of numeracy skills in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory** and pupils do not make sufficient progress or achieve as well as they can.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very low and there is significant underachievement.
- The quality of the teaching is unsatisfactory overall, but there is some very good teaching in some classes.
- The subject leadership is unsatisfactory and is not resulting in improved standards.
- Assessment and the marking of work are poor.

Commentary

71. The standards in the most recent national tests for eleven-year-olds were very low and in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. When the results of the 2003 Year 6 tests are compared with those of school taking pupils from similar backgrounds, results are still well below average, and, given the pupils' attainment when they were seven-year-olds, the results are very low. Standards have fallen significantly and continuously since the last inspection. Both boys and girls have underachieved over the past three years. In 2003 the girls' results put them well over a year and a term behind girls nationally. The evidence points to this being an exceptionally poor result due to the significant staffing disruption those girls had suffered. Even so, the school has been unable to do a great deal to improve matters due to the lack of leadership in the subject.

72. The standard of the current work throughout the school is unsatisfactory overall and pupils' achievement is below average. In Year 6, pupils experiment with cress to explore the idea of germination. During this work, they learn to use a key and to create a glossary of terms, linking the learning to their literacy work. The higher and middle attaining pupils are broadly working at an expected level but the less able are working a level below that expected for their ages. Fewer pupils are likely to reach the higher levels than is the case nationally. Throughout the school the presentation of much of the work is poor. However, in practical work, such as a good lesson observed on solutions, pupils take a full part in the lesson and work with interest and care, making satisfactory progress. In most Year 1 and 2 classes standards are low and too much poor work is accepted by teachers. There is little evidence of the work being matched to different pupils' prior attainment and this means it is often too difficult for the less able and those with special educational needs, and insufficiently challenging for the more able pupils.
73. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. This is largely due to the lack of subject knowledge and expertise among some staff, and their poor behaviour management skills, especially when teaching a more practical lesson. Half of the lessons observed were unsatisfactory or poor. However, there is good and very good teaching in Years 1, 3 and 6. Where the teaching was good or very good it was due to the well-planned and resourced activities, the sufficiently challenging tasks and the teachers' subject expertise and class management. In a very good Year 3 lesson, the teacher had gone to a tremendous amount of trouble to create a set of resources for testing the strength of springs and this work captured the pupils' imaginations well. Her clear explanation and modelling of the task led to a very productive session resulting in very good learning and the majority of the pupils achieving well.
74. Marking is inconsistent and does not always make clear to pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. In particular, on too many occasions, important words are spelt incorrectly and this is not picked up. This shows teachers' expectations are too low. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to devise and record their own investigations, although the teachers do reinforce the idea of a fair test. There is no whole-school consistent system for assessing and recording progress and pupils' learning.
75. The use of individual or group targets is underdeveloped, although they are stuck in some pupils' books in Year 6 as a reminder of the work to be covered. There is no consistent use of this as a method of keeping pupils aware of what they need to learn. The subject co-ordinator has only recently taken on the role, which has been disrupted and altered due to the staff turbulence the school has experienced. There has been little in the way of monitoring or evaluating the teaching and learning and the co-ordinator has not had opportunities to act as a consultant for the other less experienced staff. Although an interim action plan has been drafted, there is little awareness evident of what needs to be done to raise standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**. This represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below expectations
- The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory
- Resources and general provision have been improved significantly since the last inspection
- Staffing instability has disrupted the development of the subject and has had a negative effect on standards
- Although there are isolated examples of the use of ICT to support work in other subjects, this is not a consistent feature throughout the school

Commentary

76. By the ages of seven and 11, standards are below those expected nationally and pupils at all levels of attainment achieve below their capabilities. Pupils in one Year 1 and 2 class had good recall of previous work. They could control the movements of a robot on screen using direction arrows, and higher attaining pupils could write a 'program' to show what they had done. Pupils in the other Year 1 and 2 classes, however, are less confident and are unable to double click and drag screen items. Keyboard skills are weak and most are unsure of how to save and undo actions. Pupils in Year 6 can enter data and know how to use 'less than' and 'greater than' to interrogate spreadsheets. The knowledge and understanding of the older pupils is improving but is currently slightly below the standard expected. They are beginning to use the Internet for getting information.
77. Overall, the quality of the teaching is satisfactory, but the teaching observed ranged from good to unsatisfactory and is inconsistent. The most effective lessons were well planned and prepared and teachers had confident subject knowledge. Learning objectives were shared with the pupils and the delivery was lively and interesting, contributing to the good progress made. Classroom assistants had a significant input and pupils with special educational needs made similar progress to that of their peers. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher's knowledge was not secure and the tasks selected for pupils did not stretch and challenge their abilities. This had a negative effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour, resulting in little learning taking place.
78. Resources have improved significantly since the previous inspection. The provision of a central computer suite now allows teachers to provide whole-class teaching and to create time for pupils to learn new skills. During the inspection, however, computers frequently malfunctioned and teachers spent too much time at the beginning of lessons attempting to resolve technical problems. This often resulted in pupils losing interest and becoming disruptive.
79. Recent staffing difficulties have had a negative impact on the leadership and management of the subject, which are currently unsatisfactory. The new co-ordinator is inexperienced and has only had responsibility for a short period of time. Consequently, her impact on the development of the subject has been minimal. A new policy statement has been prepared and parents have been consulted regarding the arrangements for Internet access. The quality of planning is inconsistent and procedures for monitoring and assessing pupil progress are weak.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. There are some examples of ICT being used to enhance learning in other subjects but generally these are limited and opportunities are not identified in most lessons notes.

HUMANITIES

81. Neither **history** nor **geography** were a focus for the inspection, so there are no judgements on standards, teaching or provision in these subjects. In history, a whole-school creative arts project commemorating 100 years of flight led to some good cross-curricular links with science, geography and ICT. There are good links with art in some of the work on Greek masks the Year 6 pupils have been doing. Work in books appears to be pitched towards the average pupils so that higher attaining pupils are not being sufficiently challenged and special needs pupils are struggling to keep up.

82. In geography, an attractive display about Africa greets visitors to the junior school with interesting artefacts, books and photographs. Chalk drawings by Year 5 pupils of the African jungle are displayed for the reception children and show good use of tone and colour. Year 2 pupils have undertaken a traffic survey and recorded their results in bar graph form, linking with work in numeracy.

Religious education

Provision in religious education (RE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is below that expected and higher attaining pupils underachieve.
- The co-ordinator lacks the time and opportunity to develop the subject.
- Teaching is sometimes good,

Commentary

83. Standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2, but below by the end of Year 6. This is because planning is left very much to individual teachers. Teachers look elsewhere for guidance, with mixed results. Pupils' progress is not being assessed at the end of units of work. Tasks are not always well matched to pupils' abilities. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, are insufficiently challenged. Much of the work is done orally, with little recording.
84. In two good lessons observed, teachers had high expectations of pupils and asked searching questions. Tasks were interesting and caught pupils' imaginations. For example, Year 6 pupils were asked in groups to consider examples of writing from the Bible, and to decide what type it was, whether poetry or narrative. This prompted lively discussion. The teacher expected pupils to justify their choices clearly. These pupils' understanding of the Bible developed well.
85. The co-ordinator has other demanding responsibilities and the subject has not been considered a priority for some time. Her effectiveness has been curtailed through lack of time and the pressing needs of other subject areas. There has been little development, and provision is weaker than at the time of the last inspection. In particular, little use is made of visits and visitors, despite interesting opportunities locally.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

86. Standards attained in **design and technology** are now similar to those seen nationally. This represents a similar position to that seen in the previous inspection. The pupils are provided with regular opportunities to plan and make. During the inspection only one design and technology lesson was observed. Judgements are, therefore, based on a scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils. By age seven, the pupils generate their own ideas and can plan what they are going to do next. They can select appropriate tools and can join, and combine materials in a range of ways. By the age of eleven, the pupils can produce appropriate designs and they can measure, cut and join successfully. There were good examples of finished clay models and pupils in Years 4 and 5 had produced work on pivots and cams. The provision of opportunities for pupils to evaluate and improve their work were less frequent and they and the older pupils showed limited understanding of what is required to ensure designs are successful.
87. Three lessons of **music** were seen during the inspection. Not enough evidence is available to make an overall judgement about provision in the subject or about pupils' achievement. A discussion was also held with the co-ordinator and documentation was studied. Standards could not be judged for pupils in Year 6, but they are average in Year 2. In the lessons seen,

the quality of teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to good. In one lesson observed, the teacher had good musical understanding and worked effectively with the pupils using a range of percussion instruments to investigate pitch, rhythm and steady beat in music. The pupils were given the opportunity to perform individually and in a group, and could follow simple musical notation accurately. All pupils achieved well in this lesson due to the good teaching. By Year 5, pupils are beginning to refine their performance and use dynamics and expression to create musical effects with their voices. In assemblies, pupils have the opportunity to sing together and most join in enthusiastically and sing in tune. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are given the opportunity to learn to play the flute, clarinet and guitar through peripatetic music tuition. There is also an after-school recorder club. The curriculum is enriched through visiting musicians and opportunities for groups of pupils to visit a professional orchestra and the ballet. Pupils listen to music from other countries during assembly and this helps to develop their multi-cultural awareness. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor standards or the quality of teaching in the subject, but has identified the need to give staff more support and training on the new scheme of work.

88. It was only possible to observe three **physical education** lessons during the inspection so it is not possible to make a secure judgement on overall provision or pupils' achievement. The school has the benefit of two halls, although the junior hall is small when a full class of older pupils is in there. In Years 1 and 2, pupils work on the floor and then the apparatus to create a range of bridge shapes. A lack of firm class management means that the lesson is too noisy and too many pupils are off-task for any productive learning to be taking place. In a good lesson in Year 4, children work on rolls on the floor. The teacher makes very effective use of peer tutoring so that pupils observe and help each other in pairs commenting on what they do well and what they could try to improve. Good use of outside expertise in Years 5 and 6 helps develop tennis skills to a level appropriate for the ages of the pupils. The school also runs a range of after-school sports clubs and teams. A bid for a multi-use sports surface made jointly with the local residents' association is intended to enhance the facilities greatly if it goes ahead.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good** in Years 3 to 6. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils use a very good range of materials and produce work which is consistently good and often of high quality
- Pupils achieve well, they try hard and work with enthusiasm
- The co-ordinator does not yet monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subject

Commentary

89. Scrutiny of displays around the school and work seen during lessons in Years 4, 5 and 6 indicates that standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school has maintained the high standards recorded at the last inspection.
90. Pupils use a wide range of materials and make very good progress in improving their painting, drawing and modelling skills. There are very good examples of two and three dimensional work on display around the school. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed ranged from good to very good, and is good overall. In these lessons there was a good balance between direct teaching and practising of techniques that provided very good opportunities for pupils to use their skills imaginatively and creatively in their independent work. As a result, pupils achieved well. Visiting artists extend pupils' learning very well and help them to improve

the quality of their work. The after-school art club is well attended and helps to further develop pupils' skills, whilst providing good opportunities for pupils to work together on large scale art projects such as the "Our School" frieze in the infant department hall.

91. Pupils are actively encouraged to use source materials to research information about their artwork. For example, in Year 6 pupils had used books and the Internet to research information about hats, which they were then using to create their own designs. In all the lessons observed pupils worked hard and could talk with enthusiasm about what they were doing and give reasons why they had selected the colours and materials they were using. For example, in a very good Year 5 lesson, one boy explained that he had chosen wood shavings, hessian and dark colours for his collage to represent the poor living conditions experienced by people in the South African townships. Pupils explore art from different cultures and this is helping to develop good multi-cultural awareness.
92. The art co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and provides good support and encouragement to staff. She ensures that there are sufficient, high quality resources to teach a wide range of art techniques. However, she does not yet monitor teaching and learning in the subject to identify areas for improvement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

93. There are effective policies in place to promote an understanding of alcohol and drug misuse as well as promoting the value of positive relationships. The school does promote equality of access for all pupils and there is a general commitment to the principle that everyone is valued equally. This is well illustrated by the involvement of teachers from the behavioural management team, who are currently providing in school support for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This is having a positive impact and enabling these pupils to access the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	6
How inclusive the school is	5
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	7
Value for money provided by the school	6
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	5
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	5
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	5
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
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	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	5
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	5

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