

INSPECTION REPORT

**MORECOMBE & HEYSHAM WESTGATE PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Morecambe

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119347

Headteacher: Mr S Robinson

Lead inspector: Mrs D Bell

Dates of inspection: 13 – 16 October 2003

Inspection number: 256958

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:	490
School address:	Langridge Way Westgate Morecambe Lancs
Postcode:	LA4 4XF
Telephone number:	01524 832747
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Roach
Date of previous inspection:	10 November 1997

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Westgate Primary School, a Beacon school with 243 boys and 247 girls aged four to eleven, is much bigger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The wide range of special needs covers learning and behavioural needs, and physical disability. Initial assessments of the children when they start school show that their attainment is below that expected for their age. Pre-school provision is very variable in the area, and the school does not have a nursery. The school had a new headteacher just over three years ago, and there has been a large turnover of staff since the last inspection, mostly due to staff gaining promotion to posts in other schools. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language and only two children who are not wholly white British. The proportion of pupils changing schools has risen considerably in recent years, and is particularly high in Years 5 and 6. As a result, the school has designated a member of staff to support pupils new to the school. As well as achieving renewal of its Beacon School status and the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2003, the school also gained recognition as a training school for initial teacher training, and works closely with a local higher education institution to improve quality and capacity in initial teacher training in the area. All teaching staff are trained mentors except the newly qualified teachers. The school has also recently achieved the 'NAACE mark' for information and communication technology (ICT), and is working towards the 'Active Goldmark' for physical education. Using relevant teacher expertise, French is taught to all pupils in Year 1, and the school is currently considering ways of including French in the curriculum in later years. There are five leading literacy teachers and one leading numeracy co-ordinator on the staff.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16413	Mrs D Bell	Lead inspector	Art and design Design and technology Music Special Educational Needs
19431	Mr J Holmes	Lay inspector	
27677	Mrs D Davenport	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Physical Education
32507	Mr C Quigley	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious Education
32618	Mrs E Elvidge	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Westgate, a Beacon School, is much bigger than other primary schools. It was inspected on 13 – 17 October 2003 by an inspection team led by Mrs D Bell.

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school. Outstanding leadership and management have very successfully focused all staff on relentlessly pursuing ways of raising achievement and improving standards. Very good teaching leads to good standards and to very good achievement, behaviour and attitudes amongst the pupils. As a result, pupils and parents are highly satisfied with the school. The school provides **very good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are good overall and pupils achieve very well, although there is room for further improvement in writing.
- Teaching is very good and occasionally excellent. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to encourage pupils to work independently or in groups soon enough during lessons.
- Excellent leadership and management provide an exceptionally clear educational direction for the school, and governors contribute very well to this.
- There is a very high level of commitment to the inclusion of all pupils in all aspects of school life; relationships are very good throughout the school, and all pupils are very well cared for, guided and supported in their personal as well as academic lives.
- Very good provision in the Foundation Stage (reception) gives children a very good start to their education.
- The school offers a very rich and well planned curriculum, and there is an excellent range of very well attended extra-curricular opportunities.

The school has greatly improved since its last inspection and has fully addressed the few minor issues identified in its last report. It is highly influential beyond its own boundaries as a result of its outstanding work as a Beacon school and its involvement in initial teacher training. It is extremely self-critical, constantly looks for ways to improve further, and achieves this through the dedication and commitment of a highly effective team of staff.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	D	E	D
mathematics	B	E	D	C
science	C	D	B	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Because over 20% of pupils change schools in Years 3 to 6, similar schools are those with similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Despite starting school with attainment below that expected for their age, the majority of children in the reception class are on course to reach the goals expected nationally for the end of reception. A significant proportion is likely to exceed them. Overall, **pupils achieve very well** throughout the school. In English and music, standards are good in Year 2 and satisfactory in Year 6. Standards are good in both year groups in mathematics, science, and information and communication technology, and also in art and design, design and technology, geography and religious education. They are very good in history and in physical education. The significant turnover of pupils in Years 5 and 6 adversely affects the school's test results, and accounts for the decline in standards up to 2002. The

proportion of pupils with special educational needs was well above average last year. Nevertheless, early indications from the 2003 results are that the school did as well as all schools in English and mathematics, and better than all schools in science; and that the English and science results were well above, and the mathematics results above those of similar schools.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils have very good attitudes to school, and behave very well. Attendance is satisfactory, and the majority of pupils arrive in time to start the school day promptly. A small number of parents are not always as helpful as they might be in ensuring their children's regular and punctual attendance at school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education, including the quality of teaching, is very good. Some very good teaching was observed in all age groups, and excellent teaching was seen in Year 2 literacy, Year 3 religious education, and Year 4 science. English and mathematics are taught very well in most classes, though occasionally, introductions are too long and pupils do not get onto their group or independent work quickly enough. This affects particularly their opportunities to practise and improve their writing. Teachers very carefully plan lessons that take account of all groups of pupils, and in almost all lessons, the teaching assistants contribute greatly to the quality of learning. As a result, pupils respond enthusiastically to lessons, find them interesting and praise the way the teachers make it fun for them to learn. All of these factors, combined with a very rich curriculum that also offers an excellent range of sports and arts activities outside of the school day, contribute to the very good achievement noted throughout the school. Partnerships with parents are very good, and the school provides very good care for the pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are excellent. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, and team and subject leaders has resulted in a very effective team of people who have an exceptionally strong commitment to doing all they can to offer the best provision possible. The very strong sense of purpose felt throughout the school very effectively supports ongoing development and the continual drive towards ever higher standards and achievement. Regular and rigorous checks are made on all aspects of the school's work. Everything possible is done to enable staff to continue to improve pupils' learning. Governance is very good and contributes in great measure to school development and improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are very satisfied with the school. They greatly appreciate what it does for them, and know that all pupils are highly valued and very well supported.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

Although a very effective school, minor points for development, on which the school is already working, are:

- continue to improve writing throughout the school
- provide more opportunities for pupils to work independently and in groups, taking more responsibility for improving their own learning

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

All groups of pupils achieve **very well** throughout the school. Standards in English and music are good in Year 2 and satisfactory in Year 6. In both age groups, standards are at least good in all other subjects. In history and physical education they are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' progress is rigorously tracked. All test and assessment information is thoroughly analysed and prompt and effective action is taken to tackle identified weaknesses.
- Challenging targets are set for English and mathematics and teachers and pupils know what to do to achieve them.
- Excellent leadership and management at all levels in the school ensure that all of the school's work is very rigorously analysed in terms of its impact on pupils' achievement.
- High levels of transience in the last three years are having an adverse effect on the national test results in Year 6.
- The pupils use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills well in other subjects.

Commentary

1. Children start school in the reception class with levels of attainment below those expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development. Very good teaching ensures they catch up fast on the learning experiences missed through not having well-structured nursery provision in the area. The children are already well on the way to reaching the nationally expected early learning goals for the end of the reception year, in all six areas of learning.
2. In Year 2, standards are good in English, mathematics and science, and at least good in all other subjects. In Year 6, standards are satisfactory in English and music, good in mathematics and science, and at least good in all other subjects. In history and physical education, standards are very good in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve very well throughout the school in all subjects except ICT and geography, where their achievement is good, and music, where it is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
3. In 2002, the results of the Year 2 national tests for reading, writing and mathematics were above the national average and well above the results of similar schools. In the five years to 2002, the results improved faster than the national trend. Teacher assessments show that pupils reach average standards in science.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.9 (16.0)	16.0 (15.7)
writing	14.9 (14.9)	14.5 (14.3)
mathematics	17.3 (16.4)	16.6 (16.2)

There were 72 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. The average points scores for 2003 are 16.4 for reading, 14.1 for writing and 16.6 for mathematics. Early indications are that the writing and mathematics results match, and the reading results are better than those of all schools; and that the reading and mathematics results

are well above those of similar schools, while the writing results match those of similar schools. The school's records show that, despite the lower average points scores, all pupils achieved very well in Years 1 and 2 in relation to their levels of attainment when they started school.

- In Year 6, the national test results for English were well below the national average and below those of similar schools in 2002. The mathematics results were below the national average and in line with those of similar schools. In science, the results were above the national average, and well above those of similar schools.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (26.2)	27.2 (27.0)
mathematics	26.1 (25.0)	27.0 (26.6)
science	29.2 (27.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 63 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- The overall trend in the school's results is below the national trend. However, there are two main reasons for this. First, the number of pupils joining or leaving the school, although lower than other schools in the area, has increased steadily in the past three years from around 20 to 27 per cent. Mobility so far in the current Year 6 group is over 30 per cent. Second, the school's excellent inclusive practices mean that it readily accepts pupils with a wide range of special educational needs, both learning and physical, and does all it can to ensure their very good progress throughout the school. In 2002 this amounted to 28 per cent of the year group and in 2003, to 30 per cent of the year group. This is well above the national average.
- All test and assessment information is rigorously analysed and pupils' progress is very effectively tracked. The records show that virtually all pupils achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. In response to the increasing pupil movement, the school designated a member of staff to take responsibility for pupils new to the school to assess their attainment on entry, and to follow up requests for the pupils' records. The impact of this on pupils' learning is already evident in the improved test results in 2003. The average points scores for 2003 have improved in this age group to 27 in English, 27 in mathematics, and 29.7 in science. Early indications are that the English and mathematics results match, and the science results are better than the national results; and that the English and science results are well above, and the mathematics results above those of similar schools.
- The school's rigorous analysis also tracks very carefully the relative achievement of all pupils and ensures they are doing as well as they can. These include: boys, girls, the very small number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, pupils with special educational needs and pupils identified as gifted and talented. In Year 2, the girls did better than boys in the national tests in 2002. In Year 6, boys did better than girls in English, but there was very little difference in mathematics or science. The picture varies from year to year but the school keeps a close check for any trends and no significant differences were noted during the inspection. The school moves quickly to address any gaps in learning. For example, when standards in writing were found to be weaker than in reading, the school set in motion good systems to promote literacy skills more effectively in all subjects. It has tackled the issue well, and standards are rising, although there is still further work to be done. Similarly, it identified that a relative weakness in music was the lack of access pupils had to regular composing and performing activities, so it researched different schemes of work, finally deciding on one that best meets its needs. It followed this up with support for teachers from the music co-ordinator and a part-time specialist music teacher, and with in-service training for all staff from the local education authority's music adviser. The pupils' good use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects contributes very well to their overall very good achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to school and to work are very good.
- Behaviour throughout the school is very good.
- Very good opportunities are provided to develop pupils' personal qualities.
- Personal, social and emotional development for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Missed opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning

Commentary

9. Pupils' very good attitudes to school and to their work contribute very positively to the warm, harmonious and friendly ethos of the school, as well as to their personal development and to their overall progress and achievement. All pupils are very enthusiastic about their school. The excellent promotion of spiritual development permeates all aspects of school life and ensures that pupils enjoy learning, are proud of their school and the sense of belonging that it gives them. These very positive attitudes are encouraged from the moment the children enter the reception class and are promoted very well through a wide range of very well planned practical activities, both inside and outside the normal school day.
10. Very good induction procedures ensure that children in the Foundation Stage quickly settle into school life. After only five weeks in school they are behaving very well and showing very positive attitudes to school. From an early age, pupils take on responsibilities which are increased as they move through the school. However, some pupils find it difficult to use their own initiative and there are missed opportunities in lessons to allow pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. This is an area which the school is now seeking to improve
11. Overall, attendance is satisfactory and the school does all it can to promote good attendance. The majority of parents and carers ensure that pupils attend regularly and arrive in school on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

12. Pupils behave very well during lessons because they are aware of the very high expectations their teachers have of them. The teachers' praise and attractive displays of pupils' work promote pupils' confidence and self esteem and they try very hard to do well. Pupils are involved in drawing up class and school rules which, together with the school's very clear guidelines and the staff's very good role models, ensure that pupils know right from wrong. No pupil has been excluded from the school since the previous inspection.
13. Pupils work and play very well together during playtimes and lunchtimes with older pupils showing care and consideration for younger pupils as they act as "buddies". Pupils feel that school is a very happy and safe place to be, that any instances of bullying are minor and are dealt with very quickly by the staff. Pupils form very good relationships with staff and with each other. They are polite, friendly and very willing to talk to visitors. Older pupils articulate their views

and opinions very clearly. In lessons pupils respond eagerly to questions, listen attentively and learn to show good levels of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.

14. Many opportunities are provided to develop social and collaborative skills both inside and outside the normal school day. For example, participation in after school clubs, school performances, sports activities and residential experiences further help pupils to develop teamwork skills and corporate responsibility. Visits out of school and visitors to the school enhance pupils' learning and their personal and social development and help them develop a very good understanding of their own culture. Cultural diversity is promoted very well through many areas of the curriculum and pupils have a good understanding of life in today's multicultural society as, for example, they discuss racism in sport and design posters to counteract it.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **very good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **very good** overall. It is never less than satisfactory, and occasionally it is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching occurs in all age groups, and teachers organise and manage pupils and their learning very effectively. As a result, pupils want to learn and they take pride in their achievements.
- Very well planned lessons and the very good use of a wide range of teaching methods and activities result in the full inclusion of all pupils in all learning activities.
- The pupils' very good use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills is very effectively fostered throughout the curriculum, although even more could be done to improve narrative writing in geography.
- Time is usually used very well in lessons. However, sometimes introductions are too long, or activities too teacher directed, limiting the time pupils have to work independently or creatively.
- Very well briefed teaching assistants provide very good support for all groups of pupils and particularly for those with special educational needs.
- Teachers assess and mark pupils' work very well in most subjects, and use the information very effectively in planning and to set targets.

Commentary

15. The team judgement that the quality of teaching is very good comes not only from the lessons observed during the inspection. Other evidence includes the analysis of the pupils' current work and their work from last year, the analysis of the teachers' very good records of pupils' progress, and discussions with pupils and staff. All of these clearly demonstrate that pupils make rapid progress in their learning and overall, achieve very well. Teaching is a major strength of the school and, along with pupils' learning, is rigorously checked by subject leaders and senior managers who act promptly to tackle any weaknesses. As can be seen from the table below, the quality of teaching observed during the inspection was never less than satisfactory. The very good quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. The impact of the outstanding leadership and management of the school is seen in the very effective way that all teachers work together taking very seriously their responsibility for improving pupils' learning and overall achievement.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 64 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (5%)	23 (36%)	27 (42%)	11 (17%)	0	0	0

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

16. Very good teaching occurs in all age groups, including the Foundation Stage, and excellent teaching was observed in literacy (Year 2), science (Year 4) and religious education (Year 3). English and mathematics are very well taught throughout the school. Teachers have a very good understanding of the areas that need greatest focus, such as the quality of narrative writing, and plan pupils' learning very effectively to develop this further in most other subjects. Pupils' work showed that more could still be done in geography. The quality of teaching is good in ICT, and very good in all other subjects inspected except music, where it is satisfactory. In music, the teachers are developing the confidence and expertise to implement the new scheme of work, and are currently being supported in this by the music co-ordinator.
17. The very good teaching in the Foundation Stage gives children a very good start in the reception class and quickly makes up for their low attainment on entry. Lively, engaging teaching through very well planned practical experiences provides a good balance between teacher directed and pupil initiated learning activities. Throughout the school, teachers of classes in the same year groups plan together and very effectively ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. Teachers organise and manage pupils and their learning very well. As a result, relationships are very good throughout the school, and pupils behave very well in lessons because they want to learn. The teachers' high expectations of pupils' work rate and behaviour mean that pupils work very productively most of the time and take pride in their achievements. Lively, engaging teaching and the very good use of a wide range of stimulating resources make learning 'interesting and fun', a phrase used by the pupils when they were asked for their views.
18. In most lessons, the very clear focus on practical activities, the very good use of time and the very effective use of whole class, group and individual teaching ensure the full inclusion of all pupils in all learning activities. Teachers are skilled at drawing all pupils into whole class sessions through adapting questions to suit pupils' needs. They give the pupils time to think about their answers and discuss their ideas with a partner before responding in front of the whole class. This very effectively promotes the pupils' self esteem and causes them to think carefully and consider all possible answers. Occasionally, however, introductions are too long and pupils end up with only a very limited amount of time to practise, for example, their writing in literacy lessons, or their compositions and performances in music. Much of the pupils' work in music is too teacher directed, despite the good planning for pupils to participate in practical music making. This is stifling the pupils' independent and creative skills, and their ability to practise and refine their work for themselves.
19. Very well briefed teaching assistants provide very good support for all groups of pupils and particularly for those with special educational needs. These pupils are very effectively supported in and out of the classroom. Teachers' planning takes very good account of the targets in the pupils' individual education plans. The special educational needs co-ordinator works very closely with the teachers to ensure that the pupils make the best possible progress towards their targets. More able pupils are given suitably demanding work that takes their learning forward faster and to a higher level. Teachers assess and mark pupils' work very well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. They meticulously record the pupils' progress and track it throughout the school, successfully adapting work to set targets and to close gaps in the pupils' learning. Because pupils are involved in this, they have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve. This applies also to most other subjects. However, the school has rightly identified the need to refine assessment further in the non-core subjects to ensure the systems always provide good information for teachers to use in their planning. A good range of

homework is set regularly. It consolidates and extends pupils' learning in class and contributes effectively to their very good achievement.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is very good. The school enriches its curriculum very well through an excellent range of varied and stimulating activities during and outside of the normal school day. Accommodation and resources are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is excellent.
- There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, covering a wide range of interests including sport and the arts.
- All pupils are fully involved in all the school has to offer.

Commentary

20. The breadth of curricular opportunities is very good. The school has very successfully adapted national guidelines to reflect its specific needs and those of its pupils. Very good programmes of work are in place that ensure pupils' learning is continuous throughout the school. Effective links have been created between subjects with very good emphasis placed on promoting literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Through its annual review systems the school is now considering how it might be more creative in its delivery of the curriculum, for example, through 'theme' weeks that promote learning in a specific curriculum area. Overall curricular planning very effectively takes into account the different needs and interests of all pupils.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The very good attention given to the wide range of special educational needs within the school and to the requirements of individual pupils ensures that the pupils make very good progress throughout the school. Pupils identified as being able, gifted or talented are all very well provided for with appropriately challenging work to meet their needs. All pupils have equal access to learning activities, are fully included in all aspects of school life and are very well prepared for the next stage in their education. The school's practices with regard to race equality, inclusion and equality of opportunity are exemplary.
22. The provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is excellent, and an excellent range of after school clubs is well attended by pupils of all ages. They include inter-school sporting activities, and opportunities to participate in performances both in and away from the school. In addition, pupils have opportunities to work with authors, artists, musicians and drama groups, and to learn to play a musical instrument. These activities, together with a very good range of visits and visitors, enrich the curriculum and make a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development and their overall progress and achievement.
23. The very good number of suitably qualified and experienced teaching and support staff enables the pupils to be taught in smaller groups and to receive more individual attention. This has a very positive impact on their learning. The schools' extensive and well maintained indoor and outdoor accommodation is used very effectively to promote learning. It is enhanced by very good quality displays that celebrate pupils' work and achievement in and out of school, providing a stimulating learning environment that encourages pupils to strive harder. The excellent range of good quality resources is used very effectively to enhance teaching and learning.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are **very well** cared for and very good attention is paid to their welfare, health and safety. They receive very good support and guidance in their personal and academic lives, and their thoughts and opinions are sought and valued.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good induction for all pupils at whatever age they join the school.
- Very good support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
- The recently set up school council gives pupils a formal voice in the life of the school.
- There are very good relationships between staff and pupils.
- Pupils receive high levels of support and guidance, which are firmly based on the close monitoring of their academic progress and personal development.

Commentary

24. The school provides a very safe and secure environment for the pupils. It is well maintained and cleaned to a very high standard. The school has consulted on the travel plans of children coming to school and is in the process of examining safer systems for the pupils. It offers pedestrian and cycling safety training for the pupils, assisted by parents, aimed at helping pupils to use the roads safely.
25. A number of policies and procedures ensure the pupils' health and safety in school. For example: the school has a suitable policy for the administration of prescription medicines with staff trained to ensure they are safely administered and records kept; it has an appropriate number of trained first aiders and Year 6 pupils undertake first aid training in their final term; all staff have attended obligatory training on manual handling, and some have had additional training in care and control of pupils. The school carries out all statutory checks on electrical, fire and sporting equipment. A named teacher has designated responsibility for health and safety, and ensures all statutory risk assessments are carried out. Additional risk assessments are carried out to ensure pupils' safety during day or residential visits out of school.
26. Effective child protection procedures are in place. These are monitored by the governors who also take very seriously their responsibility to monitor the achievements of pupils in public care. All staff have been trained in child protection procedures.
27. The school provides very good personal support, advice and guidance. The very good assessment systems and target setting procedures ensure that teachers offer pupils well informed advice and guidance. Pupils trust their teachers and other adults in the school. They are very happy to consult teachers and other members of staff when faced with a problem and are confident that they are listened to and helped to overcome any difficulties. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported through very good individual education and behaviour plans that are relevant to their needs, and regularly reviewed. There is a very good induction programme for reception pupils and their parents. The school recently designated a member of staff to take responsibility for the induction of older pupils new to the school, following the increase in the number of pupils who join the school between Year 3 and Year 6. Thus it has a very good handle on the pupils' attainment on entry at whatever age, from which it can then track their progress during the period they are in the school.
28. The school canvases the opinions of pupils and acts on the findings. The recently set up school council gives pupils the opportunity to express their views in a more formal way. Circle time activities, where the pupils sit in a circle with their teacher to discuss issues relevant to them, build pupils' confidence and give every class member a further opportunity to express their opinions and views.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good** links with parents and provides them with very good information about its work and their children's progress. Links with the local community are very good, and links with other schools and colleges are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school, and the school provides them with very good information through workshops, reports and newsletters to enhance parental understanding of how and what their children learn.
- The school regularly seeks the views of parents and acts on its findings.
- Through its Beacon status, the school reaches out to other schools to support them and to learn from them.
- The school has excellent links with higher education institutions that contribute in great measure to its work and to the pupils' overall learning and achievement.

Commentary

29. The questionnaire to parents and the responses at the parents' meeting indicate a high degree of parental satisfaction with the school and what it does for their children. Parents receive very good information about what is happening in school, and about their children's academic progress and personal development. Teachers contact parents immediately should there be any cause for concern. They encourage parents to work with them to overcome any learning or behavioural difficulties, and to be involved in any reviews of progress, for example, for pupils with special educational needs. The attendance at parent consultation evenings is good. The governors' annual report to parents meets all statutory requirements and the very good prospectus gives clear information on the school, its rules and its curriculum. Parents are successfully encouraged to help in school. A good number do so and some have gone on to become teaching assistants. Parents appreciate the workshops the school runs to help them understand how and what their children learn, and the majority are successfully involved in that learning at school and at home.
30. The school has appointed a member of staff to act as home school liaison officer to work with parents, pupils and the community. The initiative, which is at an early stage, and was put in place to build a better partnership with parents, is having a positive effect in a number of areas including attendance and punctuality. The school has very good links with the receiving secondary schools that help pupils make a smooth transition to the next stage of their learning. Teachers from the receiving schools teach some lessons at the school, and Year 7 pupils return to their primary school to allay the fears of new pupils. The school has very good links with other primary schools in the area that further enhance its work.
31. The school's very good links with the community have involved the community well in its life and work. Members of the community come into school regularly to hear pupils read. The school also worked with local organisations, involving them in formulating the behaviour policy, with rewards offered by the organisations. The school facilities are used by local organisation and the school has visits from the police and the local football club. The schools' own hard work and its excellent links with a local higher education college have resulted in its being designated as an 'Initial Teacher Training School'. This, and the excellent partnerships formed through its Beacon status, contributes very effectively to school life overall and to the pupils' learning and achievement in particular.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **excellent**. Governors are very effective and play a key role in shaping the direction of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an outstanding focus on pupil achievement and all activities are designed to maximise this for each and every pupil.
- There is an excellent development of leadership on all levels. Because of this, pupils achieve very well.
- Very good subject leadership is helping pupils to achieve very well.
- The excellent management ensures that issues are addressed as they emerge, while other areas are maintained to a high standard.
- The planning systems are exemplary in terms of the focus on evaluating the impact of planning on pupils' learning
- Financial planning is strategic and precise, with very good evaluation of outcomes in an annual review cycle. This ensures that the school achieves very good value for money.
- Performance management procedures are used extremely effectively to improve pupils' achievement through developing the skills and expertise of all staff.

Commentary

32. Leadership is outstanding. The headteacher's highly effective partnership with his deputy has at its very heart the aim of maximising the achievement of all pupils. This partnership, in conjunction with very effective governor involvement, has been crucial in creating excellent leadership on all levels, in which all key staff are allowed to lead. The extremely well thought out strategy has led to subject leaders gaining a very good understanding of their subject and how it can be developed to raise achievement. It has also led to more opportunities within school to lead, and to the much enhanced professional development of all staff. This has had a major positive impact on the way in which pupils are taught and how effectively they learn.
33. There are a number of highly effective teams leading key areas of the school. For example, the English team is responsible for developing the subject to ensure that language and literacy skills are developed in every curriculum area. This team is outstanding because of the very high level of expertise, which is helping pupils to achieve very well. Five leading teachers provide excellent role models for other teachers in the school and for visiting teachers from other schools.
34. The school's excellent commitment to inclusion is evident in every aspect of its work. There is an outstanding degree of concern for the individual needs of all pupils that leads, through the rigorous tracking of their progress, to the very good achievement seen throughout the school. The leadership and management of special educational needs are excellent. As with other co-ordinators, the co-ordinator is empowered to lead and manage her area, with control of the finance, and responsibility for ensuring the effective deployment of all relevant staff. Every penny of the money designated to the school for special educational needs is used very effectively to support pupils' learning. Teaching and learning are very effectively monitored and all statutory requirements are met very well.
35. The school has an exceptionally good understanding of itself through an excellent review system. Because of this, it knows exactly what its strengths and weaknesses are and has used the information very well to plan for improvement. The performance management system for all staff is very highly effective in developing staff skills and this has a hugely positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The main reason for this is that the performance management objectives are very closely and effectively linked to the school development plan priorities, and training and development follow these very well.
36. Management is excellent. In order for leadership to flourish as it does, the management of the school is precise and extremely well focused upon tackling issues as they arise, while maintaining the high standards already achieved. This requires very careful planning and the school development plan is exemplary in doing this. There is an exceptionally high degree of evaluation of the impact that planning has on pupils' achievement, both in the school development plan and in the subject action plans. This gives the school an excellent system in which it can work towards its goals, whilst keeping a close eye on the high standards it has already achieved. Governors ensure that financial planning is rigorous and precise, and that the

process is reviewed annually. This in turn ensures that the school aims are well met. A very capable bursar manages finances very well, which gives senior staff more time to devote to the achievement of the pupils.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1156738	Balance from previous year	161902
Total expenditure	1184930	Balance carried forward to the next	133710
Expenditure per pupil	2422		

37. Governance is very good. The last inspection confirmed that the school was very good, with no key issues to address, so when the headteacher left, governors had a crucial appointment to make. They had an exceptionally clear vision of what was needed: a headteacher who could build upon the strengths of the school and develop it even further. Because of this, they were able to appoint the current headteacher who has taken the school forward in an exceptional manner. Around the time of the appointment of the headteacher, nearly three quarters of the staff were promoted to posts in other schools. One of the key features governors and the headteacher were clear about was the need to avoid losing very good staff. Therefore they set up opportunities for leadership throughout the school so that high quality staff could be developed and retained. This highly successful strategy has had a significant impact on pupil achievement. Governors are becoming increasingly effective at monitoring the work of the school and this is giving them an even greater understanding of pupil achievement. The exceptional school development plan and the management of the development of leadership throughout the school make the school highly successful.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE (in this school, the reception classes)

38. The initial assessments of children as they start their reception year show that their attainment is below that expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. Few pupils have structured nursery experience, although most have access to some pre- school provision prior to entry to the school. Nevertheless, all children achieve very well, rapidly catching up on learning and experiences they missed prior to starting school. Almost all children are already well on the way to reaching the nationally expected early learning goals for end of their reception year in all six nationally agreed areas of learning. Their work is of a good standard, and a significant minority are on course to exceed the expectations.
39. Thorough planning and preparation in all areas of learning exemplify the very good teaching, and the very effective leadership and management in this age group. Enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff engage all children in learning. The curriculum is very well planned to meet the children's needs, and the staff have a very good understanding of how children of this age learn. The consistency of approach across all reception classes enables children to feel secure. It also successfully ensures that all children are equally involved in all activities, and have access to the same very good range of learning opportunities. High quality support staff are very well briefed, and the very good teamwork amongst all staff results in a smooth running system in which children quickly develop confidence and independence. The school very successfully introduces the children and their parents to school life through a series of meetings that help parents understand what and how their children will be taught. The success of this strategy was seen during the inspection when, at a very well attended reading event, the room was buzzing with very happy parents sharing in their children's learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of well thought out and well prepared resources successfully encourages children to work together and independently.
- Very good teamwork and the consistent approach of all staff contribute in great measure to the pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour.

Commentary

40. **Very good** teaching ensures that this area of learning pervades the work of the reception year and contributes to the excellent ethos felt throughout the school. Children quickly become confident and independent when using all learning areas. They willingly participate in a wide range of activities showing good levels of concentration, and also know to sit quietly and listen attentively when required. When working on specific tasks, they display very good attitudes to their work, and show high levels of perseverance. The very good focus on language development means that all children rapidly develop a satisfactory range of social vocabulary. They readily discuss the things they like and dislike, and what makes them or their teachers happy or unhappy. Thus they successfully begin to explore their feelings and the effect their actions have on others. The very effective use of story-telling results in the children having a good understanding of the different roles of the range of people who help them and make up the community of the school. The outdoor area is used effectively to promote children's language development and their self-esteem, giving them the opportunity to contribute to activities, and sometimes to lead them. In one instance, a teaching assistant quickly adapted an activity to involve some reluctant participants, thereby ensuring the full inclusion of all children.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress because enthusiastic and knowledgeable teachers engage all of them in learning.
- Work is very well matched to the different abilities of the children thus ensuring that all achieve as well as they can.

Commentary

41. Teaching is very good in this area of learning. The staff very effectively promote language skills in all activities. After only a few weeks in school, all of the children have made very good progress. They have a satisfactory knowledge of some letter sounds, and have made great gains in writing some of the letters in the alphabet. Most pupils also relate these accurately to the initial sounds in words, as they did in a fun activity where they picked out the teacher's mistakes as she deliberately mispronounced words. The intense concentration of the faces of pupils as they tried to work out the correct word, and the look of delight on their faces when they succeeded, was an indication of how well they were encouraged to, and used, their prior learning. The staff are skilled at asking the right questions to make the children think hard, for example, about what might happen next in a story, or what letter sounds they recognise as they read. More able children are successfully challenged to read whole words, while less able children are equally challenged to recognise the initial letters of familiar words in a range of different contexts. The children readily shared books with their parents as they celebrated 'Winnie the Pooh's' birthday, and showed great enjoyment and enthusiasm, reflecting the staff's commitment to foster pleasure in reading. Early indications are that almost all children are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of practical opportunities very successfully ensures the children's very good progress.
- Work is very well matched to the abilities of pupils.
- Teachers are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic, and make learning fun for the children.

Commentary

42. Again, teaching is very good. Children are making very good progress. Almost all are well on the way to meeting, and a significant minority to exceeding, the expectations in this area of learning. They are beginning to recognise and name accurately the common regular shapes such as circle, triangle and square. They use the correct mathematical terms such as 'corner' and 'side' when describing the shapes, and have a good understanding of which shapes have straight or curved lines. More able children accurately state the number of sides, for example, on a rectangle, and recognise the difference between a rectangle and a square, describing the differences in the lengths of the sides. The majority of children recite in the correct order, the numbers from zero to at least ten and back again, and successfully recognise and order written numbers to ten. They are also developing a satisfactory understanding of subtraction, as was

observed during water play when they correctly counted five little speckled frogs and then counted down from five.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress and acquire an appropriate range of scientific vocabulary that prepares them very well for their work in Year 1.
- The children show high levels of curiosity and a readiness to explore, investigate and persevere in their learning.

Commentary

43. Very good teaching ensures that children begin to develop correct scientific vocabulary through exploring, for example, materials and change as they describe the sight, touch and smell of a jelly cube and what happens when hot water is poured on it. In one lesson, the staff's very good questioning successfully drew from the children what they already knew, and used this well to take their learning forward. The children use appropriate language to describe size, and have a satisfactory understanding of plant growth, explaining, for example, that potatoes grow in soil. Displays and photographs of the children working show they are provided with a very good range of opportunities to work with construction toys and materials, to learn about the past, and about their local environment. Religious education is taught well through Bible stories and discussions that help the children to gain a greater understanding of themselves, their feelings, and how they relate to others. The outdoor area is used well to promote this area of learning. All children are well on the way to meeting, and many to exceeding, the expectations for this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Physical education activities are very well planned and lead to very good progress.
- Time is very well used in this area of learning.

Commentary

44. Very good teaching ensures that in physical education activities, very clear instructions and good demonstrations take the children very successfully through a range of activities that build into a carefully constructed sequence of movements. The children move confidently and with good imagination, showing a well-developed awareness of their own space and that of others. The outdoor environment is used well to teach pupils about road safety rules and the role of the lollipop man, driver and pedestrians. More use could be made of the outdoor area, which is only used for part of the week. Pupils share equipment sensibly, taking turns and handling tools, writing equipment and other resources respectfully and with good levels of control. The majority of children are already well on the way to exceeding the expectation for this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning areas are well resourced with a clear learning focus for each aspect of creative development
- A very good range of activities promotes very effective learning and includes good opportunities for children to work independently

Commentary

45. Very good teaching ensures that good opportunities are provided for pupils to engage in imaginative play. For example, as they re-enact the story of 'Mrs Wishy Washy', they accurately recite extracts from the story in their play, and relate their activities to previous learning experiences. They are beginning to draw on their experiences in mathematics and literacy to create shapes in play dough. In music pupils listen attentively and model the actions of the teacher when responding to sound. However, they do not have the confidence to respond independently to music from a different tradition, although the staff quickly adapt activities to ensure all are fully involved. The children know and sing well a good range of number songs and rhymes thus reinforcing their numeracy work. They are beginning to recognise a beat in music, and clap and move in time to it. Teachers' planning indicates that art and design activities are also well planned, although it was not possible to observe any during the inspection. All children make very good progress and are already well on the way to meeting the expectation for this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1 (Years 1 and 2) and KEY STAGE 2 (Years 3 to 6)

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good and this is helping pupils to achieve very well
- In the best lessons, time is given for pupils to talk to one another to develop their ideas
- Reading is rigorously tracked throughout the school. This leads to high standards and a love of reading.
- Pupils sometimes have to sit and listen to the teacher for too long. This limits the amount of time to practise writing, an identified weaker area of English.
- The leadership of the subject is excellent. All leaders have fully embraced the need to develop literacy skills across the curriculum and work very effectively to develop this. Because of this, pupils are achieving at least well in all other subjects.
- Narrative writing is a relative weakness. The school is aware of this and is addressing the issue well, but there is further work to be done.

Commentary

46. The very good progress seen in reception continues throughout Years 1 and 2 so that by the end of Year 2, standards are good in reading and satisfactory in writing. This represents very good achievement from when the pupils started school. Standards are satisfactory in Year 6, although when tracking the results of the national tests, they appear to have declined in recent years. They are improving again, however, despite increasing levels of pupil movement in and out of the school, and the larger than average number of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' progress is rigorously checked and the information demonstrates clearly that pupils of all levels of ability achieve very well in Years 3 to 6. Standards in writing are weaker than in reading. The school is tackling this issue well, although there is still further work to be done.
47. The quality of teaching is consistently very good. One of the strengths of the subject is that progress in reading is rigorously tracked so that pupils achieve very well and a real love of reading is promoted. In the best lessons, teachers are well organised and use their classroom support staff very well to support pupils. The very good relationships between the staff and pupils, and the careful mix of support and high challenge keep pupils working at a very good pace, with high degrees of concentration and perseverance. 'Talk time' is used very effectively in a high proportion of English lessons, giving pupils the opportunity to use their thinking skills to discuss their ideas before answering questions. This results in pupils sharing their ideas with good levels of confidence, and expressing themselves articulately. There are, however, some lessons in which pupils spend too long listening to the teacher. This slows their progress and gives them less time to develop their writing, which is an area the school needs to improve. Very good lessons, on the other hand, have a good balance of activity and direct teaching. In one excellent lesson, the feeling of challenge, excitement and a real love of learning were clearly present from the moment pupils first enter the room. This was because of the excellent organisation and charismatic nature of the teacher created a sense of high challenge, whilst supporting pupils very well. As a result, pupils took a full and active part in the lesson and made rapid progress in their learning. Homework is set regularly. It is used well to reinforce and consolidate the learning that takes place in class.
48. The leadership and management of the subject are excellent. This stems from a highly developed understanding of the main issue for the school, which is to improve language and literacy skills. Leaders know exactly how well pupils achieve and are working very hard to

improve standards through very good action plans. They manage the subject exceptionally well, making very good use of their non-contact time to check teaching and learning at regular intervals, and to assess whether the action plans are working. They quickly adapt them if they are not. The progress of all pupils is rigorously assessed, recorded and tracked. The information is used very well to set challenging targets, to provide additional support for less able pupils, and to stretch more able pupils. In this way, all pupils' needs are met very well. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported through the clear, measurable targets in their individual education plans, which are used very well by all teachers in their planning. The five leading literacy teachers that the school has are having a very positive impact on pupils' achievement. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Standards have steadily improved in Years 1 and 2.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Teachers develop pupils' language and literacy skills at every opportunity and this is helping the pupils to achieve well in all curriculum areas. However, even more could be done to promote narrative writing across the curriculum, for example, in geography. Pupils use their literacy skills well in most subjects, and very well in, for example, art and design and design and technology, where they label their designs, using techniques such as bullet points through to expressing their ideas and feelings about art and artists in short narrative text. They make notes and write reports in science, and make good use of their ICT skills to present their work in different ways using, for example, word processing and simple desk top publishing techniques.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good and pupils achieve very well.
- Leadership and management of the subject are excellent.
- Very good assessment and tracking systems in place.
- Very good quality resources and classroom displays.
- Teaching is very good overall.
- Well planned range of practical activities.

Commentary

50. Standards are good in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement through out the school is very good. The setting of pupils by ability in Year 6 is having a positive impact on standards achieved by all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good support they receive.
51. Teaching is very good overall, with a high priority given to the teaching of basic number skills. Teachers' have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and the nationally recommended strategy. They use this very well to plan a wide range of stimulating practical activities that meet the needs of all pupils. Younger pupils respond very well to these activities. The range of games and real life situations they explore impacts positively on their learning and make it interesting and fun. However, in some instances pupils are not given enough opportunities to record their work independently. Older pupils particularly enjoy the stimulating mental calculations at the beginning of lessons, which sharpen their mental skills effectively. The teachers' very clear explanations as they work through examples with the whole class build successfully on what pupils already know and understand. Very effective questioning skills, as seen in a Year 6 lesson on percentages, challenge pupils' thinking well as they explain different strategies for solving problems. Little time is lost as pupils move between whole class, group and individual activities. This results in good pace and productivity in learning. Very well briefed

teaching assistants are used very effectively in all lessons to support pupils' learning. Pupils show very good attitudes to their work. They say this is because their teachers help them to do well and make lessons interesting and fun. Relationships are very good and the very good use of praise and encouragement has a positive impact on pupils' learning. A good range and amount of homework is set to reinforce and extend learning.

52. Leadership and management are excellent. The co-ordinators rigorously analyse all test and assessment results and have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and of pupils' achievement. From this they have constructed an effective action plan, which focuses on addressing the weaknesses through, for example, target setting and staff training. Teaching and learning are rigorously evaluated. The progress and learning of all pupils is checked and recorded very well and the information is used very effectively in planning. Through marking, discussions with the pupils and very good overall assessments, teachers very successfully ensure that the pupils know what they need to do to improve. The excellent resources and informative classroom displays are used very effectively to support learning. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Pupils use and consolidate their mathematical skills well in other subjects. For example, they read temperature charts and measure angles in science, construct time lines in history and learn about compass points in geography. Information and communication technology is used very well to support pupils' learning in mathematics. For example, younger pupils consolidate their learning about money and shapes, whilst older pupils confidently input data to produce spreadsheets and graphs. The interactive whiteboard is a very effective teaching aid, which motivates pupils very well.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good and pupils achieve very well.
- Leadership and management are excellent.
- Teaching is very good overall.
- Pupils' very good attitudes enable them to learn well.
- A very good range of practical activities to develop pupils' investigative skills.
- The very good quality resources make a positive contribution to teaching and learning.

Commentary

54. Standards are good in Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching is very good, as is all pupils' achievement throughout the school. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

55. All teachers use their very good subject knowledge to plan a range of challenging practical activities that develop pupils' knowledge and understanding well. As a result pupils have a good scientific knowledge, use appropriate technical language and develop good skills of making predictions and carrying out a fair test. Teachers use questioning very effectively to help pupils use what they already know and to extend their thinking skills. In all lessons teachers prepare and organise materials and group pupils well to promote good learning. They explain clearly what they expect pupils to do and to find out. The stimulating activities and brisk pace foster a sense of curiosity in the pupils that results in very good levels of concentration, very good behaviour and productive learning. Older pupils take responsibility for their own learning as, for example, they organise an investigation to separate salt, rice, and sand. However, investigations for younger pupils are sometimes directed too much by

the teacher. Pupils work very well collaboratively, discussing ideas and considering the opinions of others. They show real joy and excitement at the outcomes of their investigations and at their “discoveries” of the world around them. This contributes very well to their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in science, and make very good progress in their learning. Teachers assess pupils’ work thoroughly and constructively. Pupils’ learning is rigorously checked and accurately recorded at the end of each unit of work and the information is used very effectively in planning.

56. Pupils apply their literacy skills well as they record their findings in a range of interesting ways, for example, labelled diagrams, making notes and writing scientific reports. Numeracy skills are used well to read temperature charts and measure angles, while ICT is used effectively to research scientific information and to record, interpret and present data in the form of graphs and charts. Pupils take an obvious pride in the presentation of their work, which is all very neatly done.
57. Leadership and management of the subject are excellent. The co-ordinators have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and of pupils’ achievement. Using information gained from analysing test results and checking pupils’ work, a very effective action plan has been devised to promote a whole school focus on scientific enquiry in order to raise standards and improve achievement further. The very good resources, effective use of the school and local environment and very good links with other institutions are used very effectively to promote learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are good.
- The direct teaching of ICT skills is good and ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects, although occasional technical difficulties in the ICT suite sometimes hinders learning
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not always given enough independence to use and develop their ICT skills for themselves.

Commentary

58. Standards are good in Year 2 and Year 6 and throughout the school, pupils of all levels of ability achieve well. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The subject is very well led and managed, and the quality of teaching is good. The recent accreditation of the ‘NAACE’ mark is indicative of the good quality of provision for ICT. The effective use of a well resourced ICT suite, and the well thought out plans for the development of the subject have had a very positive effect on the pupils’ learning and progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use well to plan relevant and often exciting work for the pupils. They have high expectations of pupils in terms of their work rate and behaviour. As a result, pupils learn well due to the good pace of the lessons, which are well matched to their abilities. Previous learning is evident in the pupils’ confident use of computers. For example, pupils in Year 1 explained how they used the on screen tools to create a picture using shapes and colours, while pupils in Year 4 explained how to interrogate a database and how to produce charts and graphs. Teachers make every effort to overcome technical difficulties that occasionally occur in the ICT suite during lessons. Curricular planning shows that all areas of this subject are covered at least adequately. The very good use of whiteboards in the ICT suite and in some classrooms, and of wireless laptop computers further enhances and consolidates pupils’ learning in ICT when away from the suite.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. Opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum are clearly identified in medium term planning. This results in pupils using their ICT skills well to support and consolidate learning in other subjects, particularly so in English, mathematics, science, history and art and design. However, ICT is not yet used well enough in music. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is enhanced well through the use of computers, for example, to reinforce letter sounds and blends.

HUMANITIES

In humanities, work was sampled in history, with only one history lesson observed. In geography, four lessons were observed, three in Years 1 and 2, and one in Year 3.

History

60. The evidence from pupils' work, from displays around the school, from discussions with pupils and teachers, and from the scrutiny of planning, it is clear that overall provision is very good. Standards in history have been maintained at a high level since the last inspection. All classrooms have time lines, and pupils have a very good sense of chronology. There is a very strong emphasis on the use of literacy skills in this subject, developed through newspaper reports, stories, and the use of the references books and ICT as historical sources.

Geography

Because only one lesson was observed, a judgement about teaching is not possible in in the Year 3 to 6 age group. However, the evidence from pupils' work, from discussions with them and their teachers, and from the analysis of teachers' planning, shows that overall provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good and pupils achieve well.
- Throughout the school, geographical vocabulary is developed well but opportunities are sometimes missed to learn key words and symbols, and to develop narrative writing in this subject.

Commentary

61. Standards are good and pupils of all levels of ability achieve well. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. The subject is very well led and managed. Taken all together, this represents good improvement since the last inspection.
62. The brisk starts to lessons in Years 1 and 2 build effectively on pupils' prior learning and focus their minds on the objectives for the day. The teachers' effective questioning challenges the pupils' thinking well. By giving the pupils a limited amount of time to discuss their ideas and share their knowledge and understanding, teachers successfully foster collaborative learning. This in turn gives the pupils the confidence to make sensible responses which the teachers then use very effectively to extend their learning. The good use of artefacts such as postcards and posters to list the features of the area that would encourage visitors challenges the pupils' thinking and makes them take a much closer look at their local environment. Pupils' work shows that, throughout the school, opportunities are sometimes missed to develop literacy skills by, for example, using key words, symbols and, where relevant, writing frames to record learning in geography.

Religious education

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good and pupils achieve very well.
- There is a very strong emphasis on spiritual development through this subject.
- Literacy skills are used very effectively, and this helps pupils to achieve very well.
- Because of sensitive teaching, pupils develop a good understanding and respect for the beliefs of others, including those from different religious faiths.

Commentary

63. Standards are good in Years 2 and 6 and throughout the school pupils achieve very well. Pupils develop rapidly from a low starting point in reception, and articulate their thoughts, feelings and ideas very well by the time they reach Year 6. They have good confidence in their own beliefs and show good respect for the beliefs of others.
64. Teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. Pupils develop a very strong sense of spirituality as they reflect on their feelings and on what is important to them through, for example, creating their own special books, or engaging in role play that deepens their understanding of the strength of people's feelings when Jesus performed miracles. The very good use of ICT took Year 6 pupils on a virtual tour of a Hindu temple and encouraged them very effectively to use their prior learning to show where different religious artefacts are placed in the temple.

The awe and wonder was a joy to behold as the teacher turned water into 'wine' to help Year 3 pupils understand the effect that Jesus' miracles had on the people of the time.

Following a discussion that built very effectively on pupils' prior knowledge of the miracles of Jesus, the teacher explored with the pupils how people might have felt after witnessing a miracle. Having previously arranged the tables to resemble a wedding feast layout, she moved into role as Jesus, selecting some pupils to sit near her as her 'apostles', and the others to be guests at the 'wedding'. In role as Mary, one pupil pointed out to 'Jesus' that the wine had run out. Using a jug of water, and another jug with concealed food colouring, the teacher turned the water into 'wine' in front of the pupils. The gasps of incredulity showed that the pupils had witnessed an event that was beyond their belief but could not be denied. Coming out of role, the teacher then invited each pupil to articulate their thoughts, giving them time to talk to each other prior to talking to the whole class. The teacher's patient probing extended their comments and very successfully enabled the pupils to show the depth of their thought. They then suggested a range of eye-catching newspaper headlines to report the miracle, showing a good understanding of how to use emotive language to attract a reader.

65. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. Subject leaders have a high level of expertise which they use very well to plan the further development of the subject, and to check the quality of teaching and learning at regular intervals. They have a good understanding of pupils' achievement and of standards in the subject. There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection. Standards have risen and there has been good maintenance of the

areas of strength, most notably the subject's excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

In design and technology, work was sampled as only one lesson was observed.

Art and design

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good and pupils achieve very well.
- Very good teaching with a major strength in the teaching of good observational skills.
- Very rich art curriculum with wide ranging experiences for the pupils
- ICT is used well to promote research, drawing and colour work
- Very good leadership and management, which rightly focuses on establishing improved assessment procedures

Commentary

66. Standards are good in Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils throughout the school achieve very well. The very good leadership of the two co-ordinators is characterised by a clarity of thought that has resulted in a very rich curriculum for the pupils, and a very good understanding of their achievement. As a result, pupils are highly motivated. They find art and design lessons very interesting and enjoyable, and become increasingly better at using a wide range of skills and techniques in their work. A well thought out action plan rightly focuses on improving the teachers' confidence in assessing pupils' work and recording their progress. The very good teaching throughout the school focuses exceptionally well on developing observational skills from an early age. This is achieved through high quality questioning that results in, for the pupils, very perceptive colour matching to pupils' different skin tones in Year 2, and a very good understanding of the techniques of a local artist in Year 5.

67. There has been good improvement in art and design since the previous inspection. High standards have been maintained, and the curriculum has been broadened considerably through links to other subjects, opportunities to work alongside living artists, to learn about famous artists in the past, about art from different parts of the world and, unusually for a primary school, to experience activities such as large scale screen printing. Excellent use is made of sketchbooks in Years 5 and 6 to practise skills and techniques, and to record colour mixing. In them, the pupils also use their literacy skills exceptionally well to record relevant information about other artists, to annotate and evaluate their work, and to express their feelings, ideas and opinions. Provision in art and design contributes in very great measure to the pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The good use of ICT successfully promotes pupils' knowledge and understanding in art and design.

Design and technology

68. Samples of pupils' work, photographic evidence from last year, discussions with pupils and the analysis of teachers' planning and records show that overall provision is **very good**. The high standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained and pupils continue to achieve very well. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well, producing clearly labelled diagrams that show a good understanding of how to select the most appropriate tools and materials to make their chosen artefacts. Their written evaluations show good consideration of the strengths

and weaknesses in their work and they make sensible suggestions as to how they might improve it. The subject is very well led and managed by two experienced co-ordinators who ensure that there is a good focus on the design process, within a well-balanced design and technology curriculum.

Music

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new scheme of work is presenting pupils with a good range of practical opportunities to compose and perform, although teaching is sometimes too directed and hinders creativity.
- The curriculum is well planned, but although the school has purchased appropriate software, ICT is not yet used well enough in this subject.
- A good range of musical activities outside of the normal school day enriches and enhances pupils' musical experiences (for example: choir, recorders, guitars and a samba group).
- The strategy of allowing time for specialist teachers to work alongside class teachers as they implement the new scheme of work is improving teachers' confidence and expertise.

Commentary

69. Standards, achievement and the quality of teaching are **satisfactory** overall, although good teaching was observed in Year 2. Singing is tuneful and enthusiastic during assembly, but throughout the school, it is less confident in class lessons. Great care is taken to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all musical activities, and good opportunities are presented to the least and most able pupils, including those who play musical instruments, to develop and use their skills and expertise. A good range of musical activities outside of the normal school day enriches and enhances the pupils' musical experiences. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The curriculum has been successfully evaluated and changed to meet current requirements, and all pupils have full access to all aspects of a good musical education.
70. Pupils in Year 2 achieve well and reach good standards in music. They control a range of percussion instruments very well as they combine the telling of a story or the reading of a poem with the sounds of the instruments. Highly motivated by effective teaching that takes them step by step through their learning, the pupils enjoy music, concentrate well and become increasingly confident performers who follow directions well. The good support that class teachers receive from a part time music specialist contributes well to the pupils' good progress in this age group. Standards are satisfactory in Year 6, as is the overall quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6. Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils in Year 5 have a particularly good sense of rhythm, developed through an exploration of African drumming and dancing, while pupils in Year 6 have a very good understanding of mood and feeling as expressed in blues music. Overall, however, pupils' creative skills are sometimes hindered in this age group by too much direction from the teachers. This means that pupils are not often enough given the freedom or time to rehearse and improve their performances and compositions for themselves. However, teachers always give pupils the opportunity to evaluate their own and each other's performances and to suggest how to improve them. As the new scheme of work is becoming established, older pupils are catching up fast on practical experiences they missed out on when they were younger. Therefore, while overall achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, pupils are making good progress lesson by lesson.

71. The subject is well led and managed. The recently introduced scheme of work has broadened the curriculum and resulted in a different way of working for teachers and pupils. To support the implementation of the new scheme, the music co-ordinator is released from his own class to work alongside teachers in Years 3 to 6. The good combination of exemplar lessons, team teaching and unobtrusive support is improving teachers' confidence, and their subject knowledge and expertise. The school has purchased appropriate software for music but ICT is not yet being used to support musical learning.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very good and pupils achieve very well.
- Excellent leadership and management are very effectively focused on further improvement.
- The excellent range of very well taught activities results in high standards and very good achievement for the pupils.
- Pupils of all levels of ability participate wholeheartedly in physical education activities because they are very well supported in their learning.
- Teacher expertise is very good and contributes in very great measure to the good standards observed.

Commentary

72. Standards are very good in Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils of all levels of ability achieve very well throughout the school. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, and the leadership and management of the subject are excellent. The high standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained and built upon very well and the school is now aiming to achieve the 'Activemark' gold award.

73. Teachers, assisted by the expert co-ordinators, use their very good subject knowledge and personal expertise to plan and prepare sequences of progressively demanding activities across all areas of physical education. The activities very effectively engage pupils' interest, foster their enthusiasm and promote very good levels of concentration. As a result, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good, they try hard at all times and exert considerable physical and creative effort as they work. Very good emphasis is placed on warm up activities. The teachers' very good demonstrations and clear instructions motivate pupils very well and they work hard during these practical sessions, showing good control and spatial awareness. In all lessons seen pupils made very good progress as they observed, discussed and evaluated each other's performances. The teachers' very effective questioning focused pupils' thinking well so that they accurately identified good features, and then incorporated these into their own performances. Very good attention is paid to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs, including those with a physical disability are well supported in lessons, with appropriate equipment to enable them to make the best possible progress. Thus all pupils are fully included in all activities on offer. Activities are organised so that pupils work in pairs, groups and team situations, fostering a very good understanding of rules and sense of fair play.

74. Pupils willingly take on responsibility from an early age, organising equipment and apparatus with very good awareness of safety issues. By Year 6, pupils have attained the expected standards in swimming. An excellent range of out of school sporting clubs and the very good provision for outdoor and adventurous pursuits, such as canoeing, sailing, and orienteering on residential visits, very effectively enhance pupils' physical skills and promote personal and social development. Links are well established with other local schools and organisations and pupils are very proud to represent their school in community sporting events and competitions. The

excellent accommodation and resources for indoors and outdoors work cater very well for all aspects of physical education.

75. The co-ordinators have a very good understanding of pupils' progress and achievement, and of the areas in which improvement is needed. The very good action plan is clearly focused on this, as they work to develop links with the local high school, which is a specialist sports' college. The subject is monitored very well and assessment is used effectively to check and record pupils' learning and to inform planning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (PSHCE)

Provision in PSHCE is **excellent**. It permeates the school's work and contributes in very great measure to the pupils' overall achievement. As a result, pupils are becoming mature, caring and responsible young people.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships between teachers and pupils give pupils the confidence to share their ideas and opinions.
- Pupils gain a feeling of self worth as they share their thoughts in an atmosphere of trust in which they know their contributions are valued.
- The topics covered prepare the pupils very well to take their place within the community.

Commentary

76. The provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is excellent. The very well planned programme provides for the continuous development of pupils' awareness of citizenship, healthy and safe lifestyles, personal growth and relationships. Many opportunities are provided both in and outside the normal school day to develop this area of learning. During PSHCE lessons, very good teaching fosters in the pupils a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, for example, a balanced diet, healthy teeth, water, cleanliness, exercise, the avoidance of smoking and the dangers of drug abuse. As they drew up questionnaires to find out how healthy the class was, they showed mature responses as they discussed the dangers of passive smoking. Feelings of self worth are promoted well as pupils share what they think their teacher would remember about them, and act out a happy memory, which they are then encouraged to recall if ever they feel down. The excellent range of after school clubs, which are well attended by pupils of all ages, also contribute in great measure to PSHCE, as pupils take turns, work alongside visitors to the school and participate in a wide range of activities away from school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	1
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1
The leadership and management of the school	1
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	1
The effectiveness of management	1

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