

INSPECTION REPORT

MOTTRAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VOLUNTARY AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hyde

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106237

Headteacher: Mrs J Chapman

Lead inspector: Mr J Hagan

Dates of inspection: 12th – 14th January 2004

Inspection number: 256972

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:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	138
School address:	War Hill Mottram Hyde Cheshire
Postcode:	SK14 6JL
Telephone number:	01457 763368
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Brandreth
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This Church of England (Voluntary Aided) School is situated in Mottram, a rural setting in Tameside. The school is smaller than most primary schools with 138 pupils on roll. The school's intake is drawn mainly from within the parish, where the area comprises of a mixture of council and privately owned housing. Children are admitted in the September in the year they are 5 and most have experienced pre-school provision before they start. Virtually all the children are from families of white, British heritage. There is a very small proportion of children who come ethnic minorities or homes where English is an additional language (EAL), but none of these children require specific help with their English language skills. A small percentage of children have been identified as having a specific gift or talent. There are five mixed-age classes; one for children aged 4 to 6, one for children aged 6 to 7 and three for the junior-aged pupils. Children can spend two years in the same class. Although the school's intake of pupils represents the full ability range, children's overall attainment on entry to the reception class is typical for their age in all areas of learning. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentage of children with special educational needs (SEN) is below the national average. Most of these have moderate learning difficulties; no child has a statement for SEN. The school has strong links with the local church. Both the headteacher and her deputy have been appointed since the last inspection but both have worked in the school for many years. Extensive building work has just been finished and the new information and communication technology (ICT) suite is nearly ready for use. The school's performance in the national tests has been recognised for each of the last three years by an award from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for achievement.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1065	Mr J Hagan	Lead inspector	Mathematics Physical education
13723	Mrs J Overend	Lay inspector	
2810	Mrs C McBride	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language Science
32388	Mrs M McCloy	Team inspector	English Music Information and communication technology
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	3
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	6
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	11
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	13
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well and standards in English and mathematics are better than in most schools. The school is well led and managed and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Reading, writing and mathematical skills are developed really well;
- In ICT, music and physical education, pupils could achieve more;
- Teaching is good overall, although in a few lessons the pace of learning could be faster;
- Reception children get off to a flying start, but limitations in the school's accommodation holds back their achievement in physical development;
- Relationships are of a high quality; the school offers a strong ethos of care and encouragement and provides very well for pupils' spiritual and moral development;
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good;
- The school enables pupils to develop maturity, responsibility and concern for others;
- The headteacher and key staff lead their areas of responsibility very effectively.

The rate of improvement since the previous inspection has been good. The progress made by pupils with SEN is much better. The spiritual and moral development of pupils is now a strength of the school. Whilst significant improvements have been made to the accommodation, there are still problems that affect children's learning. The resources for ICT are much improved and are just starting to help accelerate children's learning. The provision for music remains weak. The governing body now meets all its legal requirements.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Because the number of children in some year groups is small, caution is needed in interpreting data as individual pupils can often represent up to 6 per cent of the total.

Inspection findings show that **pupils achieve well** over time. The results in the table present a very positive picture at age 11 and this is particularly so in mathematics where for two of the last three years, the school's results (A*) were in the top 5 per cent in the country. For three of the last four years, this has placed it in the top 5 per cent when compared with similar schools. Virtually all of the pupils in both the infant and junior classes reach average standards in English, mathematics and science and a significant proportion attain even more. Standards in reading and writing are strong throughout the school. In mathematics, pupils' mental arithmetic skills are particularly sharp. In ICT standards are average at age 11 but below at age 7. In physical education and music, there is also room for improvement. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Children in the Foundation Stage are on course to meet or exceed the goals they are expected to achieve by the end of reception in all areas of learning. They are achieving really well in their personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy, but not

as fast as they could in some aspects of the physical area of learning because of weaknesses in the provision for outdoor play.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Their attitudes to work and their behaviour are very good. Their attendance is excellent and in the highest 10 per cent of all schools.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good overall, but could be more effective in some lessons and subjects. It is strongest in the Foundation Stage and the two older junior classes, where pupils make rapid gains in their learning. The pace of learning slows in a small number of lessons because work is not matched well enough to pupils' needs or they are allowed too little time to practise skills. Teachers' skills in the teaching and assessing of children's progress in music are low and consequently, the rate of pupils' learning is too slow. The curriculum is set up well to enable pupils to develop strong literacy and numeracy skills and use these skills to support their work in other subjects. Their learning is enhanced by many interesting and exciting experiences but it does not give enough scope for pupils with exceptional gifts or talents, except in mathematics, to extend their skills to the limit.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The governance of the school is good. The governing body meets all its legal requirements. Governors have a good understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to do to further improve. They use their skills and experience really well to support and challenge the school about its work. The headteacher's leadership is very good. She has successfully created a strong team ethic, and a very positive ethos, which are underpinned by the excellent relationships that exist between the whole-school community. Key staff provide strong leadership in English, mathematics and SEN. There is scope for developing the skills of subject leaders further; when they monitor and evaluate teaching and learning, there needs to be a sharper focus on pupils' work to identify where their progress is not as fast as it might be.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold the school in high regard. They value the school's caring, friendly atmosphere. They are very happy with the way the school is led and the progress their children make. Pupils' views of the school are good. They enjoy school and the way their efforts are valued and celebrated by their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve pupils' achievement in ICT, music and physical education;
- As funds allow, provide better outdoor play provision for children in the Foundation Stage; also improve facilities in physical education for older pupils;
- Increase opportunities for pupils identified with gifts and talents to extend their learning even further.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well overall. Most children reach average standards in most subjects and a good proportion attain above average standards in English and mathematics. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's performance in the national tests for pupils aged 7 and 11 years in English and mathematics is very impressive;
- Children achieve really well in mathematics and are very confident when completing calculations mentally or on paper;
- Standards in reading are high;
- Children could achieve more in ICT, music and some aspects of physical education;
- Pupils with SEN achieve well;
- The children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well in virtually all areas of learning; they could achieve more in their physical development.

Commentary

1. Children make really good progress in virtually all classes and whilst the rate drops a little in the lower junior class, pupils' achievement over time shows that the school adds good value. Much of this is the result of good quality teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and the strong leadership provided by the headteacher and teachers with responsibility for these subjects. Staff have high expectations and this is a reason why the school is particularly successful in getting a greater proportion of its Year 2 pupils to the higher Level 3 and its Year 6 pupils to the higher Level 5, than other schools. Inspection findings support the picture presented by the test results for English and mathematics in Years 2 and 6, although this year at age 11, a smaller number are likely to achieve the higher Level 5 than in the previous three years.
2. Whilst there is a full spread of ability on entry to the school, overall children's attainment when they start in reception is typical of most at this age. Most of them are on course to meet the goals expected by the time they leave this class, except in the area of physical development, where there are weaknesses in the provision for outdoor play. This limits the opportunities children have to extend their skills in more challenging situations.
3. At the time of the last inspection, children with SEN were not judged to be doing as well as they are now. Children who have SEN make good progress and achieve well in relation to their individual targets. They receive good support in class and when withdrawn for individual or small group work.
4. In ICT, children could achieve more. At present, the standards at age 7 whilst close to the average, are below those expected for children of this age, as was the case at the last inspection. Whilst children's skills have improved, the demands and expectations for this subject have also accelerated. At age 11, standards are average but much of this is because of the opportunities children have to use ICT at home. The school's leadership has worked efficiently and effectively to remove barriers for learning, including staff training and computer resources. The foundations for improvement are now secure but the impact of these developments will not be fully seen for some time.

5. In swimming, pupils achieve well because of the opportunities they are given in Years 4, 5 and 6. Virtually all of the present Year 6 have met the national expectation of being able to swim 25m by the time they leave the school.
6. Two subjects where children do not achieve as well as they might are music and physical education. Teachers lack confidence to teach music and the subject has been on the back burner whilst the school pursued other priorities. In physical education, because there is a lack of suitable accommodation, teachers cannot provide older juniors with enough challenging opportunities to extend their work, particularly in gymnastics.
7. In all the other subjects, standards are as seen in most schools and pupils' achievement is sound with the exception of art and design where some of the work shows pupils to be achieving particularly well. This is because they experience a good range of work, using a variety of media and use their skills regularly to support work in other subjects.
8. The school has established a policy for identifying children who have a particular gift or talent. Whilst they successfully provide for these children in mathematics, the school recognises the need to develop the effectiveness of its provision for children who have sporting or creative talents.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (29.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.5 (30.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.4 (30.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.6 (16.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.8 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.2 (18.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance is excellent and their punctuality is very good. Children's attitudes and behaviour are very good. There have been no exclusions in the last year. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of relationships between pupils is very good;
- Attendance rates are in the top 10 per cent of the country;
- Pupils' spiritual and moral development is very actively promoted and the positive impact of this is seen in all areas of school life.

Commentary

9. Reception children settle quickly into the school's supportive and stimulating environment and adjust very well to classroom routines. Consequently, they make rapid progress,

particularly in their personal and social development and soon become independent and confident learners.

10. All pupils are keen to attend school and this is reflected in the excellent attendance rate. Pupils state that they enjoy school because they enjoy being with their friends and the teachers are nice to them and make their lessons fun.
11. There is very little lateness and lessons start promptly; any lateness is carefully monitored to prevent it becoming a problem.
12. Pupils have very good attitudes to each other and to their work. They are highly motivated and show a willingness to work hard, concentrate and listen well. They persevere with tasks even when the going gets tough. They work very well in groups and because of the very good relationships they have with each other, they can work together very productively. This is true whether they are supporting each other as writing partners in literacy, or solving long division sums in larger groups in a mathematics lesson.
13. Pupils behave very well, both in class and outside on the playground. In the 'Proud' assembly observed, they kept very quiet whilst other children's achievements and behaviour were praised. They took great pleasure in celebrating each other's successes. In the playground they are careful not to leave litter and their play is energetic but very good-natured.
14. Pupils are happy and secure at school. They say that if they need help, all staff are very approachable. Neither pupils nor parents have concerns about bullying and there have been no exclusions from school in the past 12 months.
15. Pupils' cultural development is well promoted through visits, visitors and displays. In religious education, they study and learn about other religions. There have been visits from theatre companies and children took part in the 'Chester Cathedral Pilgrim Day'. All of these experiences help to raise pupils' awareness of their historical heritage and the different beliefs of people and cultures.
16. Children work together in many different social groupings and are given appropriate responsibilities for their age, such as photocopying or looking after younger ones at lunchtime.
17. The school very actively and successfully promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development. This has helped to create the very caring ethos in the school. In assemblies and religious education lessons, children not only learn about the Christian faith and other religions, but also are encouraged to look for modern day equivalents so they can better understand the lessons and apply the teaching to their own lives. They are given plenty of time to reflect on their beliefs, values and behaviour. They are encouraged to think when faced with a difficult situation, 'What would Jesus do?'
18. The curriculum is used very effectively to support pupils' spiritual and moral development. In a literacy lesson in reception, the children had to consider how baby bear would have felt at the loss of his porridge and then write a letter to 'Goldilocks' to express their feelings. In Year 5, during a guided reading session, children were asked to consider the bravery of a character and why she behaved as she did. In a Year 1/Year 2 history lesson on the 'Fire of London', they considered what it would be like to be made homeless and then compared this to the recent Iranian earthquake. Moral issues are regularly debated, for example, when pupils in the lower junior class compared and contrasted the lives of rich and poor children during the Tudor period and in our modern society.
19. Due to this very good provision, the children are kind to each other and are very enthusiastic fundraisers. For example, the children held a 'Jeans for Iran day', to raise funds for the victims of this disaster. They support many charities, both near and far away. They collect

food at harvest time for the Salvation Army to distribute to the poor within their locality and through a governor's link with a charitable trust they have learned about, supported and communicated with an African orphanage for children who are HIV positive.

20. There is an effective policy for racial equality, which the school's leadership monitor closely and reports the impact on the pupils to the governors. This is a reason why the pupils are learning to understand the importance of equality, tolerance and fairness in society.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.7	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

No pupils have been excluded during the last school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

All pupils, including those with SEN, benefit from the good quality of education the school provides. Children in the Foundation Stage are given a good start to their education. The provision for literacy and numeracy is strong. There are good links with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall, and it moves pupils' learning along at a good rate. It is strongest in the Foundation Stage and older junior classes. The assessment of children's progress is sound in English and mathematics, but could be better in some of the foundation subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic skills is very secure;
- In all classes, there are very good relationships between teachers and pupils;
- The teaching of children with SEN is good;
- In most lessons, teachers have high expectations and plan work effectively to meet the needs of most groups;
- Support staff are deployed effectively to support individuals and small groups;
- Some teachers lack the confidence to teach aspects of the music curriculum.

Commentary

21. In most lessons, teachers have high expectations. This is particularly so in the Foundation Stage and in mathematics, where it is not unusual, for example, to find higher attainers in the older junior class working at levels expected of children in high school.
22. The teachers are very skilled at helping children to learn and use the specific subject vocabulary, for example, with mathematics or science. Children use the knowledge they have gained to accurately describe such things as the properties of three-dimensional shapes. They are effectively taught a number of ways of working out answers and are encouraged to use whichever method they feel most comfortable with. This increases their confidence because they have a range of strategies to solve problems. Teachers make very good use of displays in their classroom to reinforce different strategies for working out answers and reinforce the correct technical vocabulary for the different subjects. It is not unusual to see children, when they are struggling for a word or method, look to the displays for inspiration.
23. Teachers make very good use of their support staff because they effectively deploy them to work with individuals and small groups. They are well prepared because the teachers are clear about what they want the children to achieve and brief their support assistants really well.
24. Children with SEN are supported well because the school effectively identifies the small steps they need to make to achieve their targets. Work is closely matched to their individual education plans, and when working in small groups outside the classroom their activities are lively and enjoyable. As a result, the pace of learning for these pupils is good and because they gain success, their self-esteem and confidence is raised.
25. In some lessons, the pace of learning slows because teachers keep the children sitting on the carpet listening to instructions for too long; not enough time is made available for them to practise what they have been taught. At other times, for example, in the lower junior class, work in some lessons is not matched closely enough to the wide range of abilities in the class. More able pupils then become disinterested as they are not challenged or made to think hard.
26. Assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science are sound with some positive features. Teachers have a good understanding of what pupils can do and plan work that challenges their pupils well. In other subjects, assessment is not as well developed and this makes it more difficult to plan the next stages of work to ensure that children develop and build on their skills. This is the case, for example, in ICT and music. Furthermore, some teachers are not confident enough to teach some aspects of the music curriculum and as a result children do not achieve as much as they might. The school has put in place a programme of training to support staff and give them ideas on how to improve the quality of the music lessons.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7	11	11	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.

The curriculum

The school provides a sound curriculum. There are some aspects that are particularly strong and in these areas pupils achieve really well throughout the school. This is clearly evident in the standards children reach in their spiritual and moral development and in their reading, writing and mathematical skills. The school provides a good range of extra curricular activities. There are sufficient resources except for the outdoor play provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage. Whilst good improvements have been to the accommodation, there are still weaknesses that affect children's achievement in some areas and subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and children enjoy a range of interesting experiences, but would benefit more if the school's drive to improve the creativity of the curriculum is successfully achieved;
- The school makes very good use of visits, visitors and fun/theme days;
- Accommodation problems mean that pupils do not achieve as much as they could in physical education;
- The provision for children with SEN is good;
- Music needs a higher profile to ensure children achieve more;
- The curriculum is set up really well to support children's spiritual and moral development;
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is of good quality and ensures children get a very good grounding in the development of their communication and language skills.

Commentary

27. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained a broad and varied curriculum. It covers all the necessary elements, and good links are made between subjects so that children can see, for example, how skills learned in English and mathematics will serve them well in science lessons. However, some skills are not taught in a systematic way, for example, in music and physical education, or to the depth that helps all pupils to achieve as much as they might.
28. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enhance the quality of the curriculum. Fun or theme days enable all children to participate and practise a range of skills that they might not normally expect to cover. The recent 'Circus Skills Day', for example, provided opportunities for all children to try out a range of activities and derive a great deal of fun from watching one another perform different tasks.
29. Provision for pupils with SEN has improved and is now good. Children's specific needs are carefully assessed. Each pupil has a clear individual education plan which sets out precisely the targets they need to achieve, to help them overcome the difficulties they have in accessing the curriculum. There is very good communication with the parents which ensures that they are able to contribute to their child's action plan and support them in their learning.
30. Good use is made of supportive strategies to help pupils who lag behind. For instance, the Early Literacy Strategy, which is known in school as 'Bingo Bear's best Buddies', helps children in Year 1 make good and at times, very good progress and achieve well in relation to their previous capabilities.
31. The school has an effective process for identifying children with particular gifts or talents and whilst the provision for these children in mathematics is good, it needs to be extended to the creative and sporting areas.
32. The headteacher, governors and staff have worked very hard since the last inspection to bring about significant improvements in the accommodation. The recently finished changes to the accommodation now provide a much better internal environment to support the

learning of children in the Foundation Stage. The library and ICT suite are also major developments, which now put the school in the position to offer its children a better quality of learning experience than was previously possible. Despite the best efforts of the school community, problems with the accommodation still exist and impact on the achievements of pupils in some areas of their learning. The hall is too small to enable older juniors, in particular, to access the full range of activities for physical education. This limits their achievement in gymnastics and dance and to some extent in games, if weather conditions are poor. The lack of a secure, outdoor play area prevents children in the reception class from achieving as much as they could in their physical development.

Extra-curricular activities

Since the last inspection, the school has improved its provision and it is now good. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the extra-curricular programme of sport and arts activities. It helps them to extend and improve their skills in a number of areas of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The school operates a strong ethos of care. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know the children very well;
- The school's procedures for the induction of new children into the school and at helping them to transfer to secondary education are very good;
- Pupils are given good support and guidance;
- The support for children with SEN is very good;
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.

Commentary

33. Pupils are very well cared for and receive good guidance and support. Parents are very happy with the standard of care their children experience. Pupils are equally positive about the helpfulness and fairness of staff and the friendliness of other children.
34. Very good quality relationships based on mutual trust and empathy are evident throughout the school. Teachers know the children and their backgrounds very well. From induction into reception and onwards, the commitment to care and developing very positive relationships is given high priority. The innovative induction process includes opportunities for parents to share a school lunch with their child. This helps to create a family atmosphere and enables the children to settle quickly. Pupils who, for example, join the school in the junior classes talked enthusiastically of the induction process for them. They are given a special friend and made to feel very welcome. Transition to secondary school is also well considered so children suffer a minimum of anxiety and can continue to make progress as they move to their new school.
35. Children with SEN are very well supported. Teachers and support staff work together well to implement individual education plans and to ensure that groups and individuals make as much progress as the rest of the class.
36. Child protection procedures and those to ensure racial equality are well thought through and are secure and effective. The staff are vigilant and the headteacher makes sure their awareness of these important issues is kept up-to-date. Health and safety arrangements are good. The school makes good use of training to ensure legal requirements are met and to protect pupils against risk. Pupils are always well supervised and there are a generous

number of first aiders. Risk assessments are shared with staff who are given the opportunity to contribute to them to improve practice. The headteacher and staff are particularly aware of the danger caused by parked cars and traffic outside the school gates and do all they can do to raise community awareness to ensure children's safety as they arrive at or leave the premises.

37. The school has started to canvass pupils' opinions formally through written questionnaires. However, some pupils were not aware of how their views had been acted upon, as a result of the consultation.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with the parents and community. There is a very strong partnership with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very happy with the school's provision and supportive of its activities;
- The school seeks the parents' views and acts upon them;
- Parents of pupils with SEN are helped to be actively involved in their child's progress;
- Community links are well planned and impact positively on learning;
- Very strong links with local pre-schools and the high school enhance pupils' learning experiences.

Commentary

38. Parents express very positive views about the school. They are particularly happy with the standards achieved, the teaching and the leadership and management of the school, they are also pleased that their children like school. The headteacher regularly canvasses parents' opinions and has informed them of the results of questionnaire returns. Changes in practice have resulted, such as the addition of an extra parents' meeting each year to discuss their child's progress.
39. The school keeps parents well informed about events and invites them to special assemblies and other activities. Information on the topics to be covered during the term is sent home and is now ready to be posted on the school's own website. This helps parents to support their child's learning. The end of year pupil progress reports have improved since the previous inspection but are still inconsistent. The best ones clearly set out the progress made. Parents of pupils with SEN are invited to all review meetings and receive very good information so that they can help their child.
40. Valuable links with the community are used well to support children's learning. A local countryside warden's group support and enrich children's experiences. They ran the 'Circus Skills Day' and have planted shrubs with the children as well as teaching them willow weaving. Not only do children learn new skills but they also find out more about their own culture. The school sees the parish church as a significant partner, while also having a productive link with the local Evangelical church and 'Ambassadors in Sport'. The links with the churches add another dimension to the good work the school does to support children's spiritual and moral development.
41. Very close links exist with the local pre-schools, which includes the lending and borrowing of equipment, as well as sharing of training, expertise and information. The partnership with the nearest secondary school, a specialist language college, is also very helpful and well used by the school.

42. Pupils benefit from the carefully considered transfer programme which can include spending three days in the summer term at their new school. This very generous provision recognises and allays their fears about moving to a much larger school. There are also subject links and meetings between staff of the two schools, which enables information to be exchanged.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High quality relationships and a very positive ethos permeate and support the school's work really well;
- The governing body provides effective support to the school and the headteacher;
- Key staff provide strong leadership and support and guide their colleagues very effectively;
- Parents have a high level of confidence in the school's leadership;
- Whilst management is good overall, more emphasis needs to be given to evaluating pupil work outcomes;
- Performance management is used well to support individuals and the school's priorities;
- The headteacher and governors have worked extremely hard to bring about the much needed improvements to the accommodation.

Commentary

43. Relationships throughout the school are very good. There is a strong team ethic because the headteacher ensures that all staff are actively involved in the decision making process. Staff respond well to this approach and the opportunities they are given to show initiative and develop their areas of responsibility. Another very positive feature of the leadership is seen in the way that the school considers national ideas and strategies and adapts them to meet the needs of the children. The school is not complacent. Although its performance in the national tests has been recognised with achievement awards from the DfES for the last three years, the head and her staff are constantly looking at ways to add to and notch things up to make what is already good, even better. The inspection confirms that the school's evaluation of its work is accurate. The priorities it has identified are the most important issues facing the school.
44. Staff and pupils get on really well together. Whilst the school consults very effectively with the parents more could be done to seek the views of the children. Each year a questionnaire is sent to parents and careful consideration is given to the views expressed. Having canvassed the parents' views the school responded by providing them with an additional open night during the spring term to come and discuss their child's progress.
45. Key members of staff show strong leadership. The school's provision for children with SEN is particularly well led and managed. Children identified with SEN have clearly drawn up action plans which are regularly monitored and adapted to ensure that the work is at the right level for them. Parents are kept very well informed and fully involved in discussions about their child's needs and the progress they are making.
46. The governing body have remedied the statutory weakness identified in the previous inspection and now meet their legal duties. The governors have a clear understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve. They use this knowledge well to assist the headteacher in the formulation of the school improvement plan. They also make good use of their own expertise and experience to support and challenge the work and performance of the school.

47. The management of staff performance is done well. Objectives for staff help them to benefit as individuals and also support the school's progress towards its key priorities. There is one area where the school's management could be more effective: some subject leaders need to focus more closely on the outcomes of pupils' work when they observe teaching or evaluate work samples. Whilst this applies to all subjects to some degree, it is more apparent in the foundation subjects and ICT where the school's systems for assessing children's progress are also less secure.
48. The headteacher and the governing body have worked extremely hard to overcome barriers presented by the school's accommodation; they have secured the funds needed to bring about significant improvements. As a result, the indoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage is much better and the library facility and ICT suite are now completed. Children now have plenty of opportunities to use these facilities to support their learning and also the development of specific skills in ICT and looking for information. The budget carry forward figure, which is in excess of 5 per cent, is earmarked for meeting the costs of the new furniture and resources for the newly built accommodation.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	365617	Balance from previous year	35816
Total expenditure	337745	Balance carried forward to the next	63688
Expenditure per pupil	2502		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Commentary

49. Children enter school in one intake (in September), at the start of the year in which they are 5, and almost all have had experience of nursery or playgroups before coming to school. Most have achieved the level of skill normally seen in children their age but the school admits a full range of ability. In the different areas of learning, some children are much further ahead whereas others are well behind. They get off to a good start in their school life and achieve well in most aspects.
50. Currently, there are 20 reception-age children who are taught alongside 10 Year 1 pupils by a teacher and nursery nurse. This arrangement benefits both groups of children: those in Year 1 gain extra maturity and independence from taking on responsibility and looking after younger ones; the reception children are often inspired and challenged by the example of the older ones and higher attainers are keen to keep up with the same work.
51. Staff go to great lengths in getting to know the children's achievements and needs before they start school. Children are visited in their nursery or playgroup settings and after this initial meeting, staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure that their teaching brings out the best in each child. The staff form a very effective teaching team; the quality of their teaching is consistently good and at times very good. This enables all children to achieve well and to make good, and at times, even better progress in all areas of learning, with the exception of their physical development.
52. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. The teacher with responsibility for this area has good subject knowledge and provides a strong example through her own teaching. She has the additional responsibility for literacy throughout the school and she sets out clear principles for the way in which children's early communication and literacy skills are developed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children quickly gain confidence and independence;
- There are plenty of opportunities for children to learn how to co-operate and work together.

Commentary

53. Children's achievement is good and most are on course to reach the goals expected for their age; a good proportion is in line to exceed this. They settle quickly into the reception class and enjoy their work. They get on really well together and follow the example set by the older ones, for instance, when tidying up or sharing equipment. Children who are unduly shy are encouraged very well to join in with activities; they quickly gain confidence and begin to work and play independently. The teaching team are good at helping children to develop their concentration and perseverance; activities are interesting and purposeful and hold children's attention for increasingly long periods.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are very skilled at developing children's skills in literacy and communication;
- Children achieve very well in this area of learning, particularly in their speaking and listening.

Commentary

54. A significant proportion of children are on course to exceed the expected goals; this is because the teaching enables a very good pace for the development of communication and literacy skills from the outset. The school's approach is to concentrate on children's speaking and listening skills initially. This ensures that they have a solid grounding not only in letter sounds, but also in the quality, rhythm and flow of language. Children are matched to partners and have plenty of opportunities to explore the books they read by talking to each other. During one session, the children concentrated hard and made some interesting responses when they discussed the character of 'Goldilocks'. This emphasis on oral work pays dividends as the year progresses; children take on reading and writing tasks with confidence and they are not afraid to try using new words or expressing their ideas. The reception class staff are very skilled at guiding children's reading and children benefit from high quality inputs both by the teacher and nursery nurse. Work is matched well to the children's stage of progress. In one session, for example, the nursery nurse worked with lower attainers and discussed the pictures and settings of their shared story book; the teacher meanwhile helped those with more advanced skills to read words and sentences, and to comment on the characters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children gain confidence in using number and developing their mathematical ideas;
- Good teaching ensures that children concentrate well and rise to more difficult challenges.

Commentary

55. The majority of children achieve well and they are on course to reach the outcomes expected at the end of the reception year. Younger children are well challenged, especially at the start of lessons when they work alongside the Year 1 group. The teacher carefully matches her questions to the needs of different children; higher attaining reception children are keen to attempt answers. During this part of the lesson, the teacher is good at spotting when children's concentration is flagging; she quickly changes tack and, for example, introduces a counting or action rhyme. The class return to the task with renewed energy after this short break. Children achieve well in learning about shapes and patterns and in adding and subtracting numbers; their mathematical vocabulary also increases well and higher attainers use terms, such as 'double' and 'equals' with confidence. They enjoy the work in this area of learning because much of it is practical and involves them in playing games. In some lessons the wide range of children's ability within the class means that the adults have to work with different groups in turn. When the children are working by themselves, some of the activities do not stretch them far enough and the pace of learning could be a little faster.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make particularly good progress in increasing their scientific knowledge;
- Teachers give good support to children in developing their ideas.

Commentary

56. Children experience a good range of opportunities to develop their understanding about the world around them. This results in a good pace of learning and good achievement. Adults are skilled at explaining new ideas and at using practical ways to help children build on what they already know. In helping children to understand the relationship between the past and present, for example, the teacher used a timeline. This showed when their houses were built, when the local church was built, when teachers were born and when they were born.
57. Children quickly begin to approach tasks in a systematic way, with a particular aim in mind. Adults are good at helping them to organise their ideas, for example, as they use construction apparatus, or make simple food dishes. The reception children are pushed further in their work in science because they take the lead from Year 1 children. They enjoy investigating and exploring scientific ideas, such as melting and freezing and they readily discussed what happened when they tested soup, coffee and ketchup to see if they would freeze. Children are developing confidence in using computers; their skills are in line with those usually seen at this age.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop their finer movements and dexterity well;
- Weaknesses in the school's accommodation hinder children's progress in this area of learning;
- They could achieve more in larger scale movement, such as balancing, climbing and swinging.

Commentary

58. Whilst pupils' physical development is sound overall, it is better in working with their hands and using fine control movements. In this aspect, most exceed the goals for their age as they are given plenty of practice in working with materials, such as play dough, or using pens and pencils. They show good control when using scissors or handling small pieces of equipment, such as building blocks. They could achieve more in their larger physical movements, but the school's accommodation places restrictions on outdoor play facilities. Staff ensure that they have the opportunity to take part in movement activities in the hall, but there is no regular daily opportunity for them to play outside on large apparatus, such as climbing frames.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in communicating their ideas and expressing their feelings; they achieve particularly well in drawing and painting.

Commentary

59. Children progress well in using their imagination and most are on course to reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Adults set up many opportunities for them to take part in role play; children love going into the 'Three Bears' Cottage' where they create roles for themselves, using the bears' voices and re-enacting the story of 'Goldilocks'. They also enjoy using the puppet theatre to create different stories and characters. Children learn to respond to what they see through expressing their ideas in drawing and painting. Their representations of the local church in the style of LS Lowry typify the very good progress they make in this aspect. Many drawings show a good sense of proportion and use of shading to capture the spirit of the painting. Music and songs are used throughout the day to capture children's attention or to help them to develop their understanding of rhythm and rhyme.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well above average standards in national tests in Years 2 and 6;
- There is a strong emphasis on the systematic teaching of the basic skills of reading and writing;
- Staff demonstrate good levels of subject expertise in their teaching;
- School makes good use of literacy intervention programmes to support children in achieving their potential;
- In some lessons, time is managed less effectively with more focus on teacher input than pupil activity.

Commentary

60. Standards in national tests in English are well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents good improvement since the time of the previous inspection when the attainment of the majority of pupils was judged to be above the national average. Contributing to this picture is the fact that an increasing number of pupils are attaining the higher Levels 3 and 5 in the national tests at age 7 and 11 respectively.
61. Reading and writing skills are well taught within a stimulating learning environment where emphasis is placed on the use of literacy across the curriculum. Classroom displays are used well to reinforce the use of effective vocabulary, punctuation or spelling, and to support pupils in structuring their writing for different purposes. Good use is made of a wide range of carefully chosen texts in whole class and guided group reading and teachers are good role models for reading.

62. The school has placed a further emphasis on developing children's writing skills, and extra-extended writing lessons are now regularly taught to achieve this. As a result, pupils progress well, showing good knowledge of the elements of story writing, characterisation and the importance of using interesting vocabulary to engage the reader. This is well supported by teachers' marking, which often gives specific points for further improvement and relates to the targets set for groups of children. Within literacy lessons, teachers plan a wide range of tasks directed at writing for a variety of purposes. Attention is paid to developing good skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation. By the time they are in the upper junior classes, handwriting is usually joined and fluent, although there are inconsistencies across the school in the quality of presentation.
63. Pupils have good listening skills. They are able to listen well in a range of contexts. Their spoken communication skills are satisfactory by Year 6. Younger children speak clearly with an increasing vocabulary and participate well during class discussions and all children read aloud well from their books. Older pupils offer appropriate questions and responses in class discussion, but are not sufficiently articulate and fluent to achieve higher levels in speaking. They find it more difficult to speak independently to adults with sufficient confidence and clarity to express their ideas and opinions clearly. Teachers make good use of 'talking partners' and 'writing partners' within literacy lessons when focusing on reading comprehension and writing skills.
64. Leadership and management are good. Good staff teamwork and the good guidance given by the recently appointed subject co-ordinator pays dividends. All staff have good knowledge of the subject, and the co-ordinator understands what needs to be done to improve further. She is presently leading staff in the development of a more detailed system of writing assessments to make what is already good, even better. Subject monitoring at present focuses on checking teachers' planning and that the plans have been put into practice. The school would benefit from a more rigorous approach to evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in lessons, and the resulting outcomes in pupils' work; this is necessary to enable them to identify more clearly any dips in the rate of progress between classes or year groups.
65. Whilst the quality of teaching is good, children's achievement varies within lessons and classes. Satisfactory lessons are often characterised by some less effective management of time, such as an over-emphasis on listening to their teacher rather than pupil activity. This slows the pace of learning and children are not as well motivated or interested. In the lessons which are good or better, teachers use short 'brain gym' activities to keep children energised and motivated, and there is a good balance between teacher-directed and independent tasks. In the better lessons, the work is particularly well matched to the pupils' ability, so that all are challenged and achieve well. Even in satisfactory lessons, a strong feature is the use of differentiated tasks for ability groups and effective intervention strategies to support the less able pupils. The school makes good use of national materials and additional staffing funds directed at 'boosting' the literacy skills of groups of children in all the infant and junior classes.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. Good opportunities are provided for pupils in all year groups to develop their reading and writing skills in other subjects. Teachers encourage children to see the value of writing as a purposeful activity to communicate ideas, thoughts and imagination. For instance, in the mixed-age Year 5 and 6 class, the focus on science fiction texts prompted links with science; guided reading fiction was connected to history through its Victorian characters. Geography research prompted information writing on mountain ranges. Satisfactory use is made of ICT in the word processing and presentation of pupils' work to add interest through the use of clip art and imported text and photographs. More planned opportunities could be provided for developing speaking and listening skills across the curriculum, for example, through increased use of drama and role play within subjects or topics.

Spanish

67. A member of staff from the local high school teaches Spanish to Year 6. The children benefit from the expertise of the specialist teaching they receive. They thoroughly enjoy this weekly 30-minute lesson. They make good progress in learning basic words and phrases. They are well motivated because the activities are interesting and effective use is made of resources, such as audio cassettes to support their learning. This opportunity not only helps them acquire some basic language skills but also supports and helps them to prepare for their transfer to secondary and enhances the quality of the curriculum they experience in their primary school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's performance in the national tests at age 7 and 11 is impressive;
- Pupils' mental arithmetic and problem solving skills are strong;
- The teacher with responsibility for the subject shows strong leadership skills;
- Better use could be made of ICT to support children's learning in mathematics;
- The classroom learning environment is used well to promote and support children's learning;
- Whilst good progress is made over time, the rate of progress made by children in the lower juniors is not as fast as it is in other classes;
- Children develop a very secure understanding of the correct mathematical technical language.

Commentary

68. The school's performance in the national tests at age 7 and 11 is very impressive. The results show standards to be consistently well above average at age 7 when compared with all schools and those with pupils from a similar background. In three of the last four years the school's results at age 11 have been in the top 5 per cent when compared with all schools and those with pupils from a similar background. Inspection findings are similar to those indicated in the national tests. The majority of pupils currently in Year 2 are in line to achieve the national average and a good proportion to achieve the higher Level 3. In Year 6, most pupils are on course to achieve the national average and about one third are likely to achieve the higher Level 5. The school adds really good value over time, although the rate of progress does vary slightly; it is not as fast in the lower junior class as it is in other classes where the teaching is of a consistently good rather than satisfactory standard.
69. The curriculum is broad and covers all the aspects of the subject in sufficient depth to enable all pupils to achieve well across all areas of mathematics. The strengths identified in the previous report have been maintained.
70. The school's strategy for supporting higher attainers works successfully. In the mixed-age classes, pupils are set in ability groups irrespective of their age and teachers are encouraged to take children beyond the expectations for their age group. So, for example, in the Year 5 and 6 mixed-age class, it is not unusual to see children working at objectives that would be normally expected of them in their first year in high school. This work is particularly challenging and motivates pupils really well because they have to use and apply their previous knowledge in more difficult and complex situations.
71. The teacher with responsibility for leading the subject is having a very positive impact on the standards children attain and the progress they make over time. Her teaching is of a consistently good standard and this ensures that the older junior children are very well

challenged during their lessons. Work is well matched to the different ability groups and those capable of going further are provided with the opportunities to do so. She provides her colleagues with good support and guidance. For instance, she gives them ideas on how best to teach a particular topic. The teachers find this support invaluable because it gives them the confidence to teach aspects of mathematics that they might otherwise find to be very demanding. One teacher explained how this advice had enabled her to effectively teach and support children's learning and understanding of ratios.

72. Throughout the school, a strong emphasis is given to the teaching of mental arithmetic skills and as a result, children not only have very good instant recall of their times tables, they are also able to work out answers quickly in their heads. They are confident when handling numbers both large and small and because the teaching is good they develop a very secure understanding of place value. By the time they are in the upper junior Year 5/6 class, they can identify the value of a digit in numbers to three decimal places.
73. Teachers are good at helping children to see that there is a wide range of strategies that can be used to calculate answers, for example, when multiplying or dividing numbers. This helps them to understand that there is more than one way to tackle a problem. They are confident to select different strategies and are good at explaining the processes they have used to solve a problem.
74. The classroom wall displays are used really well to support children's learning in this subject. Rules and guidance for problem solving are prominently displayed and children, if they become stuck, will refer immediately to this information. This enables them to get on with their learning rather than having to wait for the teacher to see them.
75. Children's understanding of the correct mathematical language is constantly reinforced during lessons. They were taught to use the precise technical language, for example, in the middle junior class when they were describing the properties of three-dimensional shapes. This emphasis enables children to interpret and solve problems effectively, because they understand exactly what the question requires them to do.
76. Whilst the teaching is good overall, there are a few lessons where children's progress is a little slower and they do not achieve as much as they could. In the upper infant class, all children were following the similar theme of ordering numbers from smallest to largest. However, it would have been better if the objective had been more specific and outlined what was expected of the different groups of pupils. This would have enabled the teaching to be more sharply focused and pupil outcomes assessed even more accurately.
77. Whilst ICT is used to support and consolidate children's learning the school recognises that this is an area which needs to be developed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

78. Overall, good use is made of opportunities for children to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. It is particularly strong in their science work. Data handling, for example, is regularly used to support work in this subject and children are encouraged to gather information and construct graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's performance is better than most schools;
- Pupils achieve well in developing scientific knowledge;
- All pupils, but especially higher attainers, could achieve even more in experimental and investigative work.

Commentary

79. The school's performance, at both key stages, shows a pleasing picture since the last inspection. In most years, test results for 11-year-olds have been much higher than those seen nationally or in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Teacher assessments of pupil's aged 7 reveal a similarly successful track record. Inspection findings match all of these indicators and show that the vast majority of pupils aged 7 and 11 meets the average for their age and a significant proportion of them exceed the average.
80. Pupils achieve well throughout the school; at both key stages the greatest strength of their work is in their knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and principles. Teaching is good and ensures that pupils build up a good range of scientific vocabulary. In lessons, teachers insist that pupils use correct terms, whilst displays are used well to reinforce key words.
81. In the infant classes, pupils progress well in being able to offer explanations of what they find out, for example, about the way in which diet and conditions affect living things or how darkness occurs. In the junior classes, pupils build well on this and begin to make reasonable predictions based on what they already know. When testing insulation, for example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 predicted that very cold water would rise in temperature in a warm room.
82. Pupils' achievements in experimental and investigative science are not quite as strong as the rest of their work. Whilst infant pupils discuss simple patterns in recorded measurements from their tests, higher attainers, especially, are not as far ahead in recognising and explaining how tests are fair ones. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils show at least average and for some, better than average skills in obtaining and considering evidence as part of their investigations. They are less secure in planning experimental work and in identifying key factors that are relevant to their test.
83. The subject is well led and managed. A continual analysis of the school's performance by the teacher responsible gives a good overview of standards throughout the school; this guards against any complacency based on such good test results. There is, however, scope for even further improvement; a sharper scrutiny of pupils' work outcomes would indicate any relative strengths and weaknesses in the different areas their work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average at age 7, although broadly average at age 11;
- Aspects of the ICT curriculum are not sufficiently provided for, for example, the use of sensors and data-logging equipment;
- Children could achieve much more in ICT across the school;
- There has been a significant improvement in accommodation and resources for the teaching of ICT;
- The skills and confidence of staff are much improved through the extensive training programme.

Commentary

84. The recently refurbished ICT suite was not in use, because the school was waiting for a safety check to be completed and for the safety certificate to be issued, to give them the official seal of approval to use this very good facility. Only one lesson was seen, however, inspectors looked at samples of children's work and observed pupils using computers and talked with the school's leadership.
85. At the time of the last inspection, progress in ICT was hampered by the lack of sufficient resources. Standards by Year 2 (age 7) were found to be below national standards. This is still the case, because expectations in the subject requirements have increased with developments in technology and until recently the school has not had sufficient resources to support teaching and learning. Despite the significant recent improvements in the school's resource provision, the full impact has not yet been realised. Most Year 2 pupils are able to control the mouse sufficiently to 'click and drag' objects on the computer screen when using a range of applications. However, they are not yet able to save and retrieve their work or edit text by highlighting and changing font size or colour.
86. Standards in ICT by Year 6 (age 11) were judged by the last inspection to be satisfactory and this is still the case. Many of the junior pupils already have a good starting point through their experience of computers at home. This has enabled them to work independently on developing skills in desktop publishing and presentation software. The school has not yet been able to build upon this advantage, although future plans will enable this. The new computer suite is soon to become operational, and the network also includes at least two desktop machines in each classroom. This should enable ICT skills to be more systematically developed by direct teaching to the whole class, with ongoing application of skills across subjects during group or individual work.
87. The newly appointed co-ordinator is using her expertise to lead and support staff well. What she has achieved in a relatively short period of time demonstrates good leadership and management. All staff have completed training in ICT and feel confident in their ability to move forward with the school's action plans for this subject. The subject leader has also completed the design of the school's web site, which is due to be operational in the near future and this will provide parents with a range of very valuable information, for example, about the topics their children are studying.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

88. The school has overcome the barriers to learning and is now able to begin to extend its use of ICT across the curriculum. Until recently, teachers had very few resources to use and did as well as could be expected, given the circumstances they faced. At present, satisfactory

use is made of ICT to support work in other subjects. Younger pupils use 'paint and draw' programmes and access interactive maths games to support and consolidate their numeracy work. Most children are able to access the Internet, record and display data in a variety of forms, and log on to their area of the network. In English, children word process pieces of their work for display, and the older pupils are able to use editing tools effectively. In the lesson observed in the middle junior class, children were using a branching database to classify and locate objects whilst only being able to respond with Yes/No answers. This task linked with their work in mathematics. Samples of work by Key Stage 2 pupils included newspaper reports and history or geography topics using 'Publisher', with imported text and pictures. Labelled plant diagrams in science and PowerPoint presentations on a geography theme were also seen. The children are not yet provided with opportunities to use digital photography or sensors and data logging equipment.

89. One classroom is currently fitted with an interactive whiteboard, which is used on a daily basis as a teaching and learning resource, and the school plans to extend provision of these in the future.

HUMANITIES

90. In humanities work was sampled with no lessons observed in **geography** and only two seen in **history**. It is not possible, therefore, to make an overall judgement on provision. Based on discussions with pupils and an analysis of their work, standards in history and geography are typical of those seen in most schools at ages 7 and 11. Pupils' achievement in both subjects is satisfactory.
91. In geography, pupils enjoy studying their own town and its surroundings. They compare their life in Mottram to village life in Africa and India, looking at both physical features and life styles. Some older pupils have opportunities to use their ICT skills in making presentations on mountains to share with other classes. Long-term planning shows that the subject is covered in sufficient depth and that pupils have a reasonable range of experiences.
92. In history, the two lessons observed support the view that sound and at times, good teaching enables pupils to develop skills well. In chronology, for example, they are able to sequence and place events in history in the correct time order. Work is often presented in an interesting fashion and tasks, such as writing as a rich or poor child in Tudor times in the lower junior class, help further historical understanding. Good use is made of the surrounding area to support the study of local history. Art is used well to support history topics and children are given plenty of opportunities to record their learning in history through a variety of ways. In writing, for example, they use stories, reports, lists, comparisons and letters. Children are able to recall and discuss previous learning and have a good knowledge of important events and famous people from the past.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

93. These subjects were sampled, and not examined in detail. Children's work was analysed and discussions took place with staff and pupils. Teachers' plans were scrutinised in all these subjects. In **physical education**, only two lessons were seen: a dance and swimming session, with the latter taken by specialist coaches. No lessons were seen in **art and design, design and technology** or **music**, due to timetabling arrangements. It is, therefore, not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in these subjects.
94. Whilst there is insufficient evidence to judge standards in music by Years 2 and 6, it is clear that the school's evaluation of this subject is accurate. The subject has had a low profile since the last inspection when it was noted that teachers' lacked confidence to teach music. Because the subject has been on the back burner whilst other priorities have been pursued there has been little improvement since the last inspection and weaknesses still exist. As a result, children do not achieve as much as they could. Resources have been improved

recently to support the teaching and learning of musical skills. The issue of staff expertise and confidence in the teaching of the subject is now being addressed through the appointment of a teacher with good subject knowledge and a training programme for all staff provided by the LEA advisory service. The guidance and support now available to staff should help to improve and develop the use of the resources and a more consistent approach to the planning of music lessons. The subject leader has established a clear plan of action that is closely linked to the school's commitment and drive to enhance the creativity of the curriculum and place more emphasis on the development of and assessment of skills in music. Children have the opportunity to have tuition from specialist staff in playing instruments, such as violin, guitar and clarinet. A group of junior pupils are taught to play the recorder in a lunchtime club taken by the subject leader. These opportunities are having a positive impact on the children who participate.

95. Based on the scrutiny of pupils' work and displays around school, standards in art and design are better than seen in most schools. Pupils make good progress and achieve well over time. They study a variety of artists and learn how to produce good quality attractive pictures in the styles of, for example, LS Lowry and Nel Whatmore. Young children mix colours well and can predict how mixing primary colours will produce shades of different colours. Large Biblical collages in the school hall provide evidence of large collaborative artwork. Children in the infants and juniors are taught well and, as a result, they learn how to produce detailed and accurate observational drawings and painting. Teachers enable pupils to experience and experiment with a wide range of media. Art is used well to enhance other subjects. In history, for example, pupils create watercolour paintings of Henry VIII's wives. Children enjoy art and design and are proud of the work they produce in this subject. Teachers boost their confidence by displaying it very effectively in and around the school.
96. In design and technology, standards are typical of those seen in most schools and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils of all ages have had the opportunity to design and make a variety of items, such as moon buggies, torches, clay models, pop-up books for younger pupils and moccasins. After a residential visit, older junior pupils produced model rafts and canoes. The ceramic tiles made by each pupil and effectively displayed are particularly striking and have given pupils pride in their achievement. A quilted tapestry designed and made by former pupils is another lasting sign of pupils' enjoyment of this subject and the skills they learn. Older pupils have a clear understanding of the design process. They are able to describe how they think of what they want to make, sketch, plan, draw a scale diagram, make a prototype, test and improve until the final product is satisfactory and meets the initial specification. Pupils, when explaining this process, show a good understanding and use of the correct terminology.
97. In physical education children achieve well in swimming but do not do as well in other aspects such as gymnastics because of problems with the accommodation. The lower junior class dance lesson seen was satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The way in which the school builds on children's existing skills could be more effective;
- Children understand the importance of being good citizens.

Commentary

98. The school involves parents appropriately in its provision for sex education and informs them of their rights. The school makes good use of experts from the community to teach the children about health and aspects of safety. Staff have received drugs education training, which helps them to teach children about drugs as part of the science curriculum. The school works very hard and successfully to enable the children to build very good relationships and to be very responsive to the needs of others in the school and the wider community. This adds greatly to the very caring ethos of the school. The school has identified the need to continue to develop the provision of PSHCE to achieve a more systematic approach, allowing the children to build appropriately on skills learned in different year groups. The school is successful in helping children to understand the importance of being good citizens.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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