

INSPECTION REPORT

NEWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chester

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 110976

Headteacher: Mark Whitehill

Lead inspector: Anna Dawson

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th June 2004

Inspection number: 257019

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:	335
School address:	Kingsway West Newton Chester Cheshire
Postcode:	CH2 2LA
Telephone number:	01244 327524
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Paul Williams
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Newton Primary School is situated on the northern edge of the city of Chester. It is larger than most primary schools with 335 pupils on roll. It draws its pupils from the surrounding area and a significant proportion come from other parts of the city. The roll has decreased within the last four years. However, within the last two years the reception year has been oversubscribed. The movement of pupils in and out of the school is below average overall. The school serves a well-established community with most pupils drawn from a wide range of backgrounds surrounding the school. There are 6.9 per cent of pupils with special educational needs which is well below the national average and lower than at the time of the last inspection. Most of these pupils have learning or social and emotional difficulties. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need. Overall, children's attainments on entry to the reception classes are broadly average. There are 8.6 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals. This is broadly average. There are approximately 2.4 per cent of pupils who are learning English as an additional language which is slightly higher than most schools. Their main languages are Bengali, Spanish and Hungarian. There were no pupils learning English as an additional language at the time of the last inspection. There are 5.9 per cent of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is low. The school has gained a School Achievement Award for 2002. It has achieved the Activemark Gold Award in 2004 and the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the second time in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11608	Anna Dawson	Lead inspector	Mathematics, art and design, geography, English as an additional language.
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector	
27591	Madeline Campbell	Team inspector	Design and technology, physical education, Foundation Stage.
32368	John Steel	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, religious education.
33236	Kevin Dodd	Team inspector	English, history, music, special educational needs.

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	10
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	13
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	21
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school with significant good features. The curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils to build on their interests and skills. The school is socially inclusive and the positive climate for learning results in all groups of pupils having very good attitudes to learning. However, there is less emphasis placed on ensuring that a small minority of average and higher attaining pupils are challenged academically as well as they should be. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is good provision for the children in the Foundation Stage¹.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and pupils who learn English as an additional language. These groups of pupils achieve well because their work is well matched to their needs and they are helped well by the teachers and teaching assistants.
- A small minority of average attaining pupils and some higher attaining pupils in Years 1 to 6 are not achieving as well as they should in English, mathematics and science because the work is not challenging enough.
- The school's procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and the use of assessment data are not rigorous enough.
- The quality of the curriculum is enriched very well by a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities.
- The school takes good care of its pupils. The pupils enjoy school and have very good attitudes to work and behave very well.
- There is a good partnership with parents and the community and a very good partnership with the local schools.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in 1998. The key issues identified in the last inspection have been resolved. The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development have improved. The partnership with parents and some aspects of the curriculum have improved. The school has improved its accommodation and learning resources. However, teaching and standards are not as good as reported previously and there has been insufficient improvement in the development of self-evaluation and assessment.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily. However, there is some variation between year groups. In the reception classes achievement overall is good. The children enter the school with broadly average attainments. Most attain, and a significant proportion exceeds, the nationally expected goals in all areas of learning except in physical development. In their physical development children's achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. Results in national tests in 2003 for pupils in Year 2 were average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics when compared with all and similar schools. Since then there has been a significant improvement in mathematics. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are now average in English, mathematics and science and children's achievement is satisfactory.

¹ The Foundation Stage in this school refers to the children in the reception classes.

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

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

The present Year 6 pupils are achieving satisfactorily in English, mathematics and science and attaining average standards. The school has kept pace with the national trend for improvement in the last four years. There are strengths in art and design and physical education, where work sampled was above average in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school because of the good provision that is made for them. There is good provision for those learning English as an additional language and they achieve well because of the specialist teaching and the help in lessons they receive. Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good**. Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning. The overall attendance is very good and the punctuality of the pupils is good. There have been no exclusions at all.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but there are some inconsistencies in how well different groups of pupils achieve. This is because the quality of the procedures and the use of assessment are unsatisfactory. The pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve well on the targets set for them and are helped well by their teachers and the teaching assistants. A small minority of average attaining and higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics and science in Years 1 to 6 do not always achieve as well as they should because their work is not consistently as well planned to challenge them. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall and enriched very well by visits to the local area and by visitors who come into school to speak to the pupils about the topics they study. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The school takes good care of the pupils. There is a good partnership with parents and the community. The school has very good links with the nearby schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The governance of the school is good. The governors have a good overall understanding of the work of the school. Statutory requirements are met. The leadership and management are successful in the clear vision for the school as a caring and happy community but have not been as vigilant in ensuring standards are as high as they could be for a small minority of average attaining and some higher attaining pupils. Subject leaders work hard but they lack knowledge and understanding of standards and pupils' attainments across the school, because the monitoring of teaching and learning is not well established. The school's systems for tracking pupils' achievements are over-reliant on paper systems and insufficient information is held centrally. This hampers school self-evaluation which is unsatisfactory. Some improvement has been made in raising standards in mathematics and writing. For a small minority of average and higher attaining pupils, there is still work to do in raising standards in English, mathematics and science. There are satisfactory strategies in place to overcome pupils' barriers to learning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents hold positive views of the school. Most pupils say they enjoy school and like their lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 to 6 for a small minority of average and higher attaining pupils.
- Improve the quality of self-evaluation, making better use of assessment and monitoring, and taking action to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Improve the procedures to track pupils' attainments and achievement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. Children in the Foundation Stage, pupils with special educational needs and pupils learning English as an additional language **achieve well**. A small minority of average and higher attaining pupils **do not achieve** as well as they could in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve well.
- A small minority of average and higher attaining pupils in Years 1 to 6 could do better in English, mathematics and science.

Commentary

1. Most children start in reception with broadly average skills. The majority of children are likely to attain or exceed the goals that are set nationally in most areas of learning by the end of reception. In physical development most children are likely to attain these goals and their achievement is satisfactory. The children achieve well overall.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.9 (17.3)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.1 (14.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.7 (17.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Standards in the national tests in 2003 for pupils at the end of Year 2 in comparison with all and similar schools were average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. Although most pupils attained the expected national level in mathematics, very few pupils attained at the higher level. The higher attaining pupils did better in reading and writing when compared with their attainments in mathematics. In science, most pupils attain the expected levels but too few attain at the higher levels. In 2003 there was a higher than average proportion of pupils starting school after the normal school entry in reception and a number of pupils with special educational needs which adversely affected the overall results. The inspection finds that for the present Year 2, there is a good improvement in mathematics. Standards for the present Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science are broadly average. The majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily. However, a small minority of average attaining and higher attaining pupils could do better in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Most pupils attain the expected standards but too few attain at the higher level.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.1 (30.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.7 (28.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.9 (29.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The results in the national test in 2003 showed that, at the end of Year 6 pupils attained standards that were average in English, mathematics and science when compared with all schools nationally and those in similar contexts. The overall results fluctuate between the year groups because of the differing attainments of the pupils taking the tests. In 2003, there were a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. The majority of pupils between Years 2 and 6 achieved satisfactorily. This is still the case. The present pupils are attaining average standards in English, mathematics and science and pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory. However, a small minority of the average and higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in their work and could achieve higher standards. Standards in handwriting and presentation of work are below average.
4. Overall there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards were higher at the time of the last inspection but the overall attainments of the pupils on entry to the school are lower. The school has kept pace with the national trend for improvement by Year 6 within the last four years. Pupils in 2002 did better and standards were higher which is why the school won an 'Achievement Award'.
5. Where work was sampled in art and design and physical education, the work seen was above average in Years 3 to 6. Standards are higher in these subjects because of the expertise of the subject leaders, their commitment and the learning opportunities presented to the pupils. In most other subjects across the school, the work sampled indicates that pupils are meeting the expected standards across the school.
6. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls or those from minority ethnic groups. Those pupils learning English as an additional language achieve well. This is largely due to the help given to them by the experienced specialist teacher. Sensitivity is shown to the pupils' needs and the work is structured well to meet them. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well because the work is well matched to their targets. In classes, teaching assistants often give effective help to these pupils in small groups. The teachers take care to explain difficult vocabulary and share learning objectives.
7. There are no pupils identified by the school as being gifted or talented and receiving specialist provision. The school aims to include all pupils in all its work and activities. Consequently, all have equal access to the curriculum. However, a small minority of pupils could achieve better standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is **very good**; pupils are generally keen to attend school and arrive punctually. Pupils have **very good** attitudes to work and behaviour is **very good**. The pupils' personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to learn.

- The majority of pupils behave very well throughout the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Rates of attendance are well above average.

Commentary

8. Most pupils have very good attitudes, older pupils especially. This is because there are many activities for older pupils to enjoy at lunchtime and after school. Behaviour overall is very good. As well as agreed class rules, there are clear school rules, which are well understood especially by older pupils; these are kept to a minimum and well discussed with pupils. In fact, where rules are brought into play, such as a requirement for amended playground rules, pupils' views are taken into account, for example, when the playground area is extended in the summer. This is very good practice. Pupils feel involved and valued.
9. Whilst there is, as yet, no school council the school has identified this need and has indicated this will become operable after the summer break. It is because pupils show very good attitudes and are willing to take responsibility for aspects of school life, that this next step could be successfully introduced.
10. Behaviour throughout the school is generally very good. It was always at least good, and from older pupils very good. Pupils were observed in lessons, at lunch and break times. They respond well to instructions and follow guidance from adults. They enjoy very good relationships with each other; this makes them confident and friendly, as they displayed very well to visitors during inspection week. The school has high expectations for pupils' conduct and encourages them at every opportunity. This promotes very good relationships; they work in an environment free from gender related or racial issues. Pupils who have special educational needs have good attitudes and behave well in lessons. This is due to the attention paid to the development of personal qualities in their individual education plans and the proactive steps the school takes to ensure pupils with behavioural difficulties are well supported. Taking account of pupils' views has strengthened the good attitudes and behaviour seen at the last inspection. Relationships throughout the school are very strong. There have been no exclusions.
11. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Spiritual awareness was much enhanced during inspection week when, for instance, a parent with helpful friends of the school, fixed up a telescope and many pupils, parents and staff were able to view the planet Venus before school started for the day. Personal development is well monitored. The personal, social and health education programme contributes very well in this regard. Most pupils do distinguish right from wrong and have learnt very well to respect their own and other cultural traditions. The school has promoted multi-cultural understanding well. The achievement of children in the reception class is good in personal, social and emotional development.
12. Attendance at the school is very good – well above the national average. The school has very good systems in place to promote and maintain attendance. Parents are fully aware of these high expectations and respond very well. The school has consistently enjoyed high attendance and this still compares very favourably with the last inspection. Punctuality is good. A few parents still bring their children after the registration period.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **satisfactory**. The quality of the teaching and pupils' learning overall is **satisfactory**. Assessment is **unsatisfactory**. The pupils benefit from a **satisfactory** curriculum enriched considerably by visits and extra-curricular activities. The school takes **good** care of them. There is a **good** partnership with the parents and the community and the school has **very good** links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. They are good in the reception classes and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Assessment is **unsatisfactory**. Teachers' use of assessment to match work to the needs of the pupils is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in the reception classes are consistently good and consequently the children achieve well. The pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are taught well and consequently achieve well.
- The most effective teaching is where teachers plan to meet the individual needs of pupils.
- When teaching is satisfactory and on a very few occasions unsatisfactory, teachers do not use their assessments of pupils' attainments well enough to match the work to their needs. Too often expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and the work is not sufficiently challenging.

Commentary

13. The table below summarises the teaching seen during the inspection. Teaching and learning were judged as good overall in the last inspection of the school in 1998.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	4 (8%)	22 (46%)	20 (42%)	2 (4%)	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.

14. Although the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in the reception classes, the picture in Years 1 to 6 is mixed. Some good and very good teaching was observed during inspection, mainly in Years 3 to 6; however, analysis of pupils' previous work indicates that for a majority of year groups, teaching and learning are no better than satisfactory.

15. All the good or very good lessons seen during the inspection had particular characteristics that enabled pupils to learn effectively and develop their understanding of a subject or make effective gains in their knowledge. These lessons always had good pace and no time was wasted. Pupils had a good understanding of what they were doing through the sharing of lesson objectives. However, more care could be taken to share with pupils the precise steps to achieving these learning objectives. Teachers have good subject knowledge and insist on high standards of behaviour. Most pupils are enthusiastic learners who enjoy school. Relationships are very good between pupils themselves and between the staff and pupils, based upon a high degree of mutual respect. The good and very good lessons are delivered with pace and a variety of styles, to engage and motivate the pupils. The basic skills are taught well. Some teachers are especially enthusiastic and skilful in using the interactive whiteboards to enhance their teaching and the pupils' learning.
16. Where teaching and learning are satisfactory and on a few occasions unsatisfactory, teachers do not have a high enough expectation of the achievement of a small minority of average attaining and some of the more able pupils. Too often, insufficient attention is paid to the wide range of ability that is found in all classes. Although most teachers follow the recommendations of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, they do so with varying degrees of success. Teachers do not consistently set different levels of work to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. This is hampered by insufficient use of assessments of pupils' work that are readily accessible and available to the staff. The work set is too often either too easy or at times too difficult. Extension activities are not always provided for pupils who finish their work quickly. Not enough consideration is given to day-to-day assessment of individual pupils' learning to inform planning for future lessons. The majority of pupils have a limited understanding of how they can improve their work because their work is not consistently marked purposefully enough. Some pupils have targets to work towards and although they are helpful to some they are not clearly defined and understood by others. Too much reliance is placed on duplicated worksheets, especially in mathematics. This results in work not being directed to adequately meet the needs of those pupils who fall above or below the 'average' line and does not allow pupils to refine their presentation skills. Pupils are not taught handwriting and presentation skills in English and mathematics well enough. Consequently, much handwriting is not joined by Year 6, which is unsatisfactory. The standard of presentation is below average and unsatisfactory by Year 6 in English and mathematics.
17. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are good due to an effective balance of planned and well-targeted in-class support by teaching assistants and reinforcement of basic skills identified in pupils' individual education plans. Assessment procedures and systems for referral are effective in the early identification of pupils, for additional help and for monitoring their learning. The deployment of teaching assistants is usually good, although in some lessons their work could be planned more precisely and productively, for example during initial class discussions and teaching.
18. Teaching is good for pupils who are learning English as an additional language when they are withdrawn from classes for specialist teaching. The methods are tailored well to meet the needs of pupils, and the teacher is sensitive to individual needs. Explanations of learning intentions are stated clearly and the context of their learning is then successfully extended, especially when the class curriculum planning is made available. However, the class curriculum plans of the pupils are not always on hand. Very good use is made of resources, such as pictures, to check individuals' learning. The constant questioning and monitoring of pupils' work ensure that pupils are on task, and that they understand what they have to do. Consequently, they learn well. In-class support is good when additional help is provided in the classroom. Teachers are generally mindful of presenting learning intentions clearly and with visual aids when necessary. They take care to explain subject vocabulary. There are good relationships throughout the school between the staff and the pupils.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**. It is enriched by a **very good** range of visits, visiting specialist teachers and extra-curricular activities. The learning opportunities cater for the interests of pupils but do not consistently match the needs of all pupils. The school's accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for curriculum enrichment are very good because of the wide range of visits, visitors and experiences that all pupils are given and the very good opportunities for extra-curricular activities.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language is good. However, the curriculum does not consistently meet the needs of average and higher attaining pupils.
- Outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage is in need of further development so that children can make independent choices about working outside.
- The curriculum is broad and provides good opportunities for some cross-curricular work but there are limited opportunities for extended literacy and numeracy work because of the overuse of worksheets in some classes.

Commentary

19. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. The range of extra-curricular opportunities has been extended since the last inspection. In the reception classes, the curriculum provides a wide range of well-planned and structured activities which gives the children a good start to school across all the areas of learning.
20. Throughout the school, visitors into school and visits add to the richness of the curriculum. For example, the youngest pupils walk around school to observe seasonal change and local services personnel come to talk about their jobs. Older pupils visit a local forest and work with the ranger on English, geography and art activities. Roman Chester enriches the history curriculum whilst older pupils take part in a 'Pilgrim Day' at the cathedral. The arts are well represented in the curriculum. For instance, the curriculum is enriched by the visiting artist and the musicians that come into school. An artist worked with pupils to create willow structures. Visiting musicians promote pupils' awareness of the range of music such as a Gamelan orchestra and a jazz group. Out-of-school clubs have proved popular with sports skills being taught, French club, art and drama clubs and musical opportunities such as choir and tuition to play belleplates² being offered. Such activities allow all pupils access to a range of activities and help to develop positive attitudes to learning.
21. There is good provision for pupils learning English as an additional language. These pupils get good support from the specialist teacher. The cultural backgrounds of the pupils are recognised and celebrated. For instance, a visitor to school has given pupils a good awareness of traditional Islamic dress and food. Some pupils have visited Chester library to watch Indian dancing and listen to story-telling.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in their learning and, as a result, they make good progress towards their targets. The targets on pupils' individual education plans are concise and manageable so that pupils can make progress successfully in short steps. Each teacher has a record of how well each pupil is succeeding. Experienced classroom assistants help pupils well during lessons by quietly asking relevant questions and providing helpful advice to assist their understanding.
23. However, there are shortcomings for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teachers do not consistently make use of day-to-day assessment information to plan sufficiently challenging work for a small

² A belleplate is a type of hand bell

minority of average and higher attaining pupils in English, mathematics and science. When work is either too easy or on occasions too difficult then pupils do not achieve their full potential.

24. Some subjects are conducive to a cross-curricular approach, especially art, geography and design and technology. Some good work was seen in Year 6, for example, as pupils studied India. They researched religions and art and design as well as geography and their work was highly commended at a multi-cultural event in Chester. However, the overall allocation of curriculum time is not used to best effect in all classes. The school has prioritised this aspect for review and Years 3 and 4 and 5 are piloting a more flexible curriculum. Opportunities for writing and the use of numeracy in other subjects are limited. In some classes, there is an overuse of worksheets and this limits pupils' opportunity to use their numeracy and literacy skills in other subjects.
25. The accommodation has improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory overall. Some aspects limit pupils' learning. Although the school has extensive grassed areas, the hard surface playground is small. There are plans to extend this in the near future. There is no dedicated space for reception children to pursue their outdoor activities without supervision. This limits their opportunity for making independent choices of where to work. The ICT suite has no ventilation system. During warm weather an intense heat builds up in the course of the day which tends to affect pupils' concentration.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a **good** standard of care and has a **very good** regard for health and safety. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to express their views. Pupils' personal development is well understood by members of staff, but the tracking of academic achievement is less well developed and is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides high levels of care and has a very good regard for health and safety.
- Pupils' personal development is well monitored.
- Effective induction arrangements help children settle well.

Commentary

26. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well being of pupils are very good. There are an appropriate number of well-trained first aiders and minor injuries dealt with well. Incidents are well recorded. The site and equipment are regularly checked and tested and any health and safety concerns dealt with well. The daily standard of maintenance is good. Child protection procedures are well understood; the headteacher is the designated person. The school has good systems in place that support and guide pupils with special educational need. A close liaison is maintained with outside agencies, ensuring that pupils with specific needs are supported well. Attendance is monitored very well. The satisfactory support, guidance and welfare reported last time have been enhanced, due to the improved awareness of health and safety concerns. Overall there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
27. Induction arrangements are good. Close contact is maintained with parents, particularly as home reading and work is well supervised by them. Older pupils have a very good introduction to secondary education.
28. The school values and encourages pupils' views. Pupils' ideas for rules of the newly extended playground are much encouraged. Teachers and other adults in the school know the pupils well and provide good personal support, particularly through the personal, social and health education programme. The very strong relationships which exist in the school, together with the very high standard of behaviour, allow for all pupils to enjoy school life.

29. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good in classes because most have access to work suited to their ability and have appropriate access to teaching assistant support. Pupils are guided well because of their involvement in setting and reviewing targets and a very good standard of care prevails. Pupils who learn English as an additional language receive good support from the specialist teacher. The needs of the pupils are assessed early and care is taken to liaise with parents and outside agencies.
30. The school does not have a whole-school policy of tracking pupils' academic progress, although some teachers have records which build upon previous expectations and knowledge. The school does not, as yet, have sufficient information to ensure that pupils receive consistent academic support throughout the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents and the community. There are **very good** links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links with parents and the local community support learning well.
- There are very good arrangements for the transfer of pupils.

Commentary

31. The school provides good information about the life and work of the school to parents, but information about pupils' standards and progress is less well developed. Parents are fully involved in reviews for pupils with special educational needs and are encouraged to help with targets at home. The school keeps parents fully informed of pupils' progress through formal reviews, letters and reports. The school provides good opportunities for parents to discuss the work done by their children. A number of parents regularly help at the school. The parents association gives generous support to the school in its programme of social and fund-raising events and the local community supports some of these events very well. Strong links have been forged with the local church. The youth pastor leads assemblies and runs a lunch club, which is very well supported and welcomed by older pupils.
32. Prior to the inspection, a few parents had specific concerns about bullying, not being kept well informed or having their views sought. During the inspection, observation and informal discussions with pupils showed that bullying was not a concern. The school values the parents' comments. It has recently consulted them regarding school uniform and the provision of a 'walking bus'. Parents may meet teachers at any mutually convenient time.
33. The school is developing its assessment procedures so that full information can be available to parents during the good opportunities provided for them to meet with teachers. There is a strong programme of visits and visitors to the school. This enhances pupils' learning opportunities.
34. A very good link has been made with the main feeder secondary school, with a well-developed induction programme. This allows pupils to settle very well.
35. The satisfactory links reported in the last report have been enhanced, because the school has developed such very strong links with the main feeder secondary school and values its partnership with parents and the community. Improvement has been good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. Leadership, including that of the headteacher, is **satisfactory**, and management is also **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The effective governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Leadership is committed to inclusion, promotion of equality and concern for the needs of individuals but is less focused on developing effective strategies and systems to promote pupils' achievement.
- The school's self-evaluation and its use of performance data require improvement to raise the standard of teaching and learning.
- There is good management of pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language.
- There are good arrangements for the professional development of staff and mentoring students during their initial teacher training.
- There is good financial management, enabling the school to achieve its priorities.

Commentary

36. The school is well governed. The governors are knowledgeable and experienced and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are committed, along with the staff and parents, to include all pupils and to raise their academic achievement. They carry out their duties conscientiously and have ensured statutory requirements are met. They have good links to individual subject leaders and have given support to staff in developing more creative ways of teaching writing. They have monitored pupils' standards in national tests and teaching and learning within the context of the school's priorities and to evaluate the progress of pupils. However, they are limited by the school's procedures and analyses of pupils' achievements. The governors are aware of the need to develop further their knowledge of the analysis of pupils' achievements. Governors challenge and debate matters of importance with the senior management and offer a good deal of support to the school.
37. Leadership is successful in its aim to promote a happy and caring environment. The headteacher ensures that the school is a welcoming place for parents, pupils, staff and the community. A good climate for learning has been established by providing an enriched curriculum with an appropriate emphasis on developing basic skills in a systematic yet enjoyable manner. This has been achieved through involvement with several national initiatives including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the promotion of a healthy lifestyle through the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark Gold Award. Staff enjoy working in the school and morale is high. The headteacher knows pupils well and is committed to extending the personal development of each pupil. Social inclusion is high on the school's agenda and within its aims and policies. Most pupils take advantage of what the school has to offer within the curriculum and from the extra-curricular activities. However, the leadership is less successful in ensuring that all pupils fulfil their academic potential. The higher attaining pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain the higher standards and the pupils with special educational needs achieve well. However, a small minority of average and higher attaining pupils could do better in English, mathematics and science.
38. The school's self-evaluation is unsatisfactory and does not accurately match the judgements in many areas of the inspection. In this respect improvement since the last inspection is not satisfactory. One of the most important areas for improvement is the analysis of pupils' achievements in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This is largely inaccurate because the procedures for assessing pupils' performance and the use of this data to set targets for improvement are underdeveloped. The assessment coordinator has worked hard on certain aspects of assessment. However, the school has no complete central system to track all the pupils' achievements. There has been insufficient improvement in the development of assessment. This limits staff, who do not always know if pupils are achieving as well as they should, and restricts the capacity of the senior management to target groups and individual pupils for focused work. Without the use of ICT, procedures to record pupils' achievements become time-consuming and difficult to manage. Therefore the school is not as effective as it should be in matching work and help where it is needed so that a small minority of pupils achieve

as well as they could. The monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped. This tends to be focused on curriculum coverage at the expense of evaluating the impact of provision on improving standards and developing skills. The subject leaders are encouraged to take a lead in developing their subjects. They are enthusiastic and have responded well to this but their effectiveness is inconsistent. Some subjects such as art and design are well led and managed. For example, the subject is promoted well because of the very good subject knowledge and the commitment of the subject leader which permeates the school. Consequently, pupils' enjoyment of art is evident in their work and the above average standards. Subject leaders in English, mathematics and science are less successful because they do not have sufficient knowledge of pupils' achievement and teaching and learning across the school to be able to devise action plans that are clearly focused on pupils' needs.

39. The management of special educational needs is good, showing that the investment in employing a learning support teacher and classroom assistants and releasing the co-ordinator has been effective. The co-ordinator is well organised and up to date in professional development. Effective procedures for the early identification of pupils who need support have been established. There is appropriate liaison with staff and external agencies. Support staff are effectively deployed and supported but their performance is not yet managed. Special educational needs is well led and managed because the special educational needs co-ordinator has been proactive and put into place effective systems for identifying and targeting pupils' difficulties to ensure pupils achieve well. The need to prepare older pupils for transition to secondary school is given appropriate attention. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to check the impact of targets set on improving standards.
40. There is good management of the pupils who learn English as an additional language. The help given varies from direct support in class to individual or small group teaching when pupils are withdrawn from lessons. The pupils benefit from constant encouragement and support of the specialist teacher and their achievement is good. Their needs are carefully assessed and work is thoughtfully planned to extend their learning. A good variety of resources and methods are used to promote learning. Pupils' cultural backgrounds are valued and their work is displayed and celebrated. This helps to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Teaching in small withdrawal groups and individual work is at its best when the teacher has the class teacher's planning and the pupils' knowledge and understanding of their lessons are extended. However, at times this planning is not always effectively communicated.
41. There are good arrangements for the professional development of teachers. Performance management of teaching staff is well established, as reflected in the school's development plan, and the school has gained an Achievement Award since the previous inspection. Professional development is closely linked both to the needs of individual teachers and to the needs of the school. This has helped them to improve their effectiveness in teaching, for example, writing and ICT. The school makes a good contribution to initial teacher training. The trainees receive good support from the school and are mentored well.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	655926
Total expenditure	637488
Expenditure per pupil	1879

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	14850
Balance carried forward to the next	33288

42. The school's finances are dealt with efficiently and the governing body has managed the consequences of falling rolls effectively. The latest financial audit showed that financial management is good and the school has responded effectively to the points raised and due

attention is paid to best value principles. This is helped by the school being successful in obtaining funding for ICT and improvements to the accommodation. Given the effectiveness of the school, and the average unit cost, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

43. Children enter school into one of two reception classes in the year in which they will become five. Most have had some pre-school experience of a playgroup or a nursery. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The children get a good start to their education. The majority of children enter reception with average attainments in all areas of learning, except for writing, where their skills are just below average. By the end of reception, all but a few are likely to attain the early learning goals that are expected for this age in all areas of learning. A significant number are on course to exceed them and work towards level 1 of the National Curriculum. The children achieve well and in writing their achievement is very good. Standards are better than at the time of the last inspection. The children learn well because they are taught well. The teachers and teaching assistants are skilled and work well together to plan the activities so that there is commonality of experience between the classes. The blend of activities that the children choose and those directed by their teachers is appropriate. The well-briefed and enthusiastic teaching assistants make a good contribution to the children's learning.
44. The curriculum is well planned and provision is good in all areas of learning except in physical development where it is satisfactory. The children have a wide range of experiences that is stimulating, interesting and of good quality. There is an appropriate balance between the indoor and outdoor curriculum. However, outdoor activities are limited by the lack of a dedicated area. This restricts continuous provision and the children's choice of an outside activity. This is recognised by the school for development. The management and leadership of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Much work has gone into developing the curriculum for this stage of learning. However, assessment arrangements need further development in order to make the system more manageable. At present staff use a complex system and although it does build up a clear picture of each child's development, it becomes increasingly unwieldy as the year progresses. There is a good partnership with parents, especially in helping their children learn to read.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

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- The children achieve well because of the good teaching and learning. The staff are good role-models.
- There are good relationships between the staff and children.

Commentary

45. Because there is good teaching, children achieve well. Most children enter the reception classes with average skills but by the time they reach the end of their reception year the indications are that the majority will be at expected levels and a significant number are likely to be working towards or within level 1 of the National Curriculum. Once in school, children quickly settle into the daily routines and procedures. The children are independent and sensibly make curriculum choices of their own. The need to share resources and work with one another is understood. For example, children play happily together in the 'vet's surgery', write about their pets or are absorbed constructing animal shelters. They take part willingly at tidy up time, because they know that working together makes the task of putting resources away easier. Relationships are positive. Adults set good examples for the children and interactions are positive. This helps the children to understand and follow the high expectations of behaviour set out by the staff.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff promote children's talk well; teaching and learning are good.
- Children make good progress in writing.
- Staff use creative approaches to teaching and learning.

Commentary

46. During their first year in school, staff take every opportunity to develop the children's speaking and listening skills and to promote early reading skills. All but a few children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. A significant number are working towards or within level 1 of the National Curriculum. Children's achievement is good and it is very good in writing. Good teaching is characterised by a secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and the well-organised activities that motivate them. Children develop their confidence in speaking and listening because staff engage in almost continual conversation with them. They chat, question and encourage the children to extend their vocabulary and their confidence in the spoken word. The children initiate and develop their own conversations around the class activities. For example, children discuss their pets. Children frequently practise their phonic skills which help them to write new words. Most children already know how to write some simple words or phrases which they use, for instance, when writing a page for a pop-up book on zoo animals as pets. Teachers provide a wide range of activities to encourage children to extend their writing skills. They write information notices around the classroom or letters to their pets. The development of reading skills has a high priority and is well supported by parents. Children are becoming confident about handling books and the reception classrooms are rich in notices and labels which the children read, write or copy. The average and higher attaining children are learning to read words and simple sentences. The lower attaining are learning their initial sounds.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to develop mathematical understanding
- Teaching is good, children respond well and they achieve well.
- There are some purposeful links made with mathematical development and the other areas of learning.

Commentary

47. When most children start school, their mathematical skills are average. Achievement is good and most children are expected to attain the goals that are expected by the end of the reception year. A significant proportion is expected to exceed the goals and work towards or within the National Curriculum. The quality of teaching is good and teachers make purposeful links between children's mathematical development and related activities. For example, children count the numbers of children that have pets and the extent of the range of pets within the class. The children represent their findings graphically. Higher attaining children add and subtract from numbers up to 20 and explain how they arrive at their answer. A good range of attractive resources stimulates learning, such as the use of number lines when counting. Opportunities for children to learn and say number names, sing number rhymes, use the computers and play mathematical games ensure they gain a secure understanding of the work they are covering.

Children with special educational needs receive good help from the staff. They achieve as well as others as they work towards the targets set for them. The staff build their confidence and self-esteem and consequently, the children show great pleasure in their achievements.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children benefit from a range of activities that extends their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Commentary

48. Achievement in this area of learning is good. Although teaching in this area was not directly observed, discussions were held with staff and work was scrutinised. This indicated good teaching. By the end of reception the vast majority of children are on course to attain the expected learning goals. A significant number are on course to exceed them. The teachers plan a wide range of activities which helps children learn about the world around them and helps them develop an appropriate vocabulary. For example, in their study of pets, the children learn to identify a variety of animals. They distinguish between those that are domesticated and those that are wild. They make decisions concerning the appropriateness of animals living in a house or a zoo. Such activities provide chances for children to draw on their own experiences and develop an awareness of themselves and others. The children are beginning to understand the wider community as representatives of the local services such as a police officer and nurse talk to the children about their roles. The children develop a good appreciation of our changing environment as they take seasonal walks. Computers are often used in the classroom but several children still find it difficult to successfully control the mouse. Most are developing a good awareness of cultural and religious similarities and differences as they learn about major traditions and festivals such as Diwali and festivals of light.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given a satisfactory range of opportunities to develop their skills.
- Provision for outdoor activities is limited as the school lacks a dedicated outdoor area, which limits children's choices of working outside.

Commentary

49. Most children are on course to attain standards that are usually expected of children of this age nationally by the end of their reception year. The teaching and children's achievement are satisfactory overall. During the activities observed, teaching was good. However, physical activity is hindered by the lack of a specific outdoor space. This limits children's opportunities to work outside. At present, the outdoor playground and large field are well used but there is no dedicated reception area where children can choose outdoor activities. Resources overall are satisfactory and children make good use of large wheeled toys and a variety of throwing, catching and creative resources on the playground. One class had great fun on the field, with parachute games on a windy day. Children use the hall for physical education lessons. They run, jump and skip on command and make a good attempt at dodging their partner, showing good awareness of space and control of their bodies. The children have frequent opportunities to develop their

manipulative skills. They roll and mould play dough and use scissors and tools with increasing accuracy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lively and interesting activities capture children's interest.

Commentary

50. Children's skills in their creative development are average on entry to school. Most achieve well and by the end of reception, the vast majority are likely to attain the expected goals and a good number are likely to exceed them. The quality of teaching is good. The children are confident in expressing their feelings and ideas through a range of materials and media, music and movement, story making and imaginative play. Activities are well planned and children have daily access to paints and a variety of papers, media and materials. Discussions between the children and staff are a strength of teaching. The staff are skilled in their questioning and interventions in order to deepen the children's understanding. The children are surrounded by good quality displays of their work. These displays reflect and celebrate above average painting and collage work. In music, children sing and play instruments with confidence and enthusiasm. Most make a good attempt at keeping a steady beat to songs that are well known to them. A 'vet's surgery' provides an exciting role-play area. A large carpeted area provides children with opportunities for large construction work. These activities also promote children's language and social skills. Creative development extends knowledge and understanding between the different areas of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve well but a small minority average and higher attaining pupils could do better.
- Standards in handwriting and presentation are weaker than in other areas of English by Year 6.
- Performance data is not analysed rigorously, and teaching and learning are not monitored sufficiently well to diagnose weaknesses and ensure action taken is effective.

Commentary

51. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards are currently average in Years 1 to 6. Improvements made in the last few years have begun to have a noticeable effect on pupils' achievement up to Year 4, but have had less impact on Years 5 and 6.

52. National Curriculum test results show that standards in 2003 dipped. This was due to a combination of low prior attainment and higher levels of special need amongst these year groups. The Year 2 cohort was also affected by higher than national levels of mobility. However, the trend in standards achieved has kept pace with the national trend, and many pupils with special educational needs achieve well towards the targets set for them. Most higher attaining pupils attain above average standards. While average attaining pupils generally attain the expected standards, a small minority are capable of achieving at a higher level.

53. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as their peers, and the very few pupils who learn English as an additional language receive effective support, and achieve well.
54. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Some good teaching was seen in both key stages and the basic skills are taught well. In effective lessons the teacher shared clear learning outcomes with pupils so they were able to evaluate their learning. Planning builds on previous learning and is used well to match tasks to ability. The teacher's use of questions and resources supports pupils' learning well. This was exemplified in a Year 3 lesson when the teacher challenged and supported a more able group of pupils to think of words to describe the sea and their feelings towards it on seeing it for the first time. A series of prompts such as 'consider your feelings towards the sea, its size, colour movement and sound', enabled pupils to develop a good range of vocabulary through speaking and listening to one another. Words generated included 'graceful', 'thrilled', 'rough', 'peaceful', 'still' and 'calm', and this work supported them in building up interesting and engaging first hand accounts. The use of a computer to change a pre-prepared account from the third to the first person further enhanced pupils' ability to take account of the importance of grammar in their work.
55. In satisfactory and one unsatisfactory lesson, learning objectives are not shared clearly with pupils, there are limited opportunities for pupils to engage in dialogue and the pace of the lesson is too slow to promote effective learning. In such lessons work is not well matched to ability as insufficient attention is paid to adapting planning to the needs of pupils, particularly some average attaining pupils. As a result, pupils are unclear in such lessons about what they are learning and have limited opportunities to develop skills in a meaningful way. Opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills are missed in such lessons due to a lack of collaborative work and the over-use of questions by the teacher requiring only a one-word answer.
56. The development of reading is given adequate attention in lessons, but insufficient consideration is given to the development of a joined and legible written script; consequently standards in handwriting and presentation are weaker than in other areas of English by Year 6. Teachers' marking of pupils' completed work, whilst generally positive, gives insufficient guidance for them in order to improve their writing.
57. The leadership and management are satisfactory as there has been satisfactory improvement in provision since the previous inspection. The subject leader has identified writing as an area for improvement but has not yet analysed performance data rigorously or monitored teaching and learning sufficiently to ensure weaknesses are accurately diagnosed and action taken is effective.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to use language and literacy skills across the curriculum. Teachers' lesson planning ensures that pupils are introduced to a small but worthwhile range of experiences, such as writing in role in history, or writing instructions for making bridges in design and technology. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop and apply ICT skills. The drama club makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils with special educational needs are helped successfully by the teaching assistants and achieve well. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well.

- A small minority of average and higher attaining pupils could do better.
- Oral mathematics provides a good start to lessons and motivates pupils to learn.
- Basic skills are taught well.
- The subject leader is not allocated enough time to monitor teaching and learning and to check on standards across the school.
- Assessment is not used rigorously enough to accurately match work to the pupils' abilities. Work sheets are over-used and disorganised and work sampled was poorly presented.

Commentary

59. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain average standards. Standards were higher at the time of the last inspection. However, the context of the school has changed and there are more pupils with special educational needs and a greater proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language. This has an impact of overall standards that pupils attain. This is evident in the 2003 National Curriculum test results where overall standards were well below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs in Years 2 and 6 and the absence of some pupils in Year 6 adversely affected test results. In Year 2 in 2003, there was also a higher than average proportion of pupils who joined the school later than is usually expected. In Year 6, in comparison with similar schools, standards were average and the overall trend for improvement was in line with the national trend.
60. The inspection evidence indicates that pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average across the school. The entire curriculum is covered and number calculations are strongly represented but the use of ICT in lessons is underdeveloped. While pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve well, a small minority of average and higher attaining pupils could do better. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well because work is planned well for the pupils, and the additional help they receive, particularly from the teaching assistants, is generally effective. The majority of higher attaining pupils achieve satisfactorily to attain above average standards. However, work is not always challenging enough for a small minority of average and higher attaining pupils. The main weakness is that teachers do not assess pupils' learning sufficiently well to plan lessons because work is not always matched well enough to pupils' attainments. Work is sometimes too easy and occasionally too hard. The development of the assessment of pupils' work is recognised by the school as a future area for further work.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and basic skills are generally taught well. A good feature of lessons is the successful start, with brisk discussions involving the whole class. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils used their knowledge to solve simple problems involving factors of 24. Pupils enjoy mathematics and generally have very good attitudes to their work. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are set into two main teaching groups in each year. This allows some average attaining pupils and the higher attaining pupils to move forward at a slightly faster pace. It also allows some average and lower attaining pupils to learn basic skills they need. However, setting is not used to its best advantage when work in classes is not matched well to the individual and group needs of the pupils. Teachers' expectations are set too low. For example, when pupils record results, they tend to work at a slower pace. The higher attaining pupils continue to concentrate on their work independently and work satisfactorily towards the challenges presented to them. However, insufficient opportunities are presented to them to devise their own investigations. The good help that pupils with special educational needs receive from the teaching assistants keeps them focused on their tasks. Consequently they achieve well towards the targets set for them.
62. There are shortcomings in teaching where it is satisfactory or on one occasion unsatisfactory. For example, the impact of initial class discussions is lost when pupils are not challenged well enough to apply what they know to solve simple problems. The lower attaining pupils, for example, find difficulty in Year 6 in the addition of a column of two-digit numbers. Throughout school pupils are not taught to present their work neatly and in an orderly fashion. Consequently, a simple mistake through lack of care and poor presentation leads to incorrect answers. A small

minority of average attaining pupils could do better, especially in their strategies of how to tackle problems using different techniques and methods. Pupils' work is often done on worksheets which are often not finished. The worksheets are not kept in an ordered manner, nor are they consistently marked with some comment to help the pupils improve. The ends of lessons are not consistently used to recapitulate pupils' learning. This makes it difficult to assess how well the pupils learn both for the teachers and for the pupils themselves.

63. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The results of tests are closely looked at to identify weaknesses and strengths but are used insufficiently to set targets and plan work for individual and groups of pupils. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented. The subject leader has a satisfactory idea of what needs to be done to further improve mathematics. The development of assessment is a priority. The subject leader supports pupils well in Year 5 with the 'springboard' programme which is run after school. There is a good sense of teamwork, where people are willing to learn from each other. However, insufficient time has been given to check and improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school to raise standards. Improvement is satisfactory since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Mathematics is satisfactorily incorporated into the planning of most subjects. There is some good practice, particularly in geography as the pupils research their topic and read world weather tables or learn about co-ordinates. Pupils draw tables and graphs in science, sometimes using ICT to represent their data. However, computers are not used consistently in lessons in the classrooms.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils attain the expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 and their achievement is satisfactory. However, a small minority of average and higher attaining pupils could do better.
- Pupils' scientific enquiry skills are good but require further development.
- Work is insufficiently targeted upon the learning needs of individual pupils and groups, especially the more able.

Commentary

65. Most pupils attain the nationally expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 and their achievement is satisfactory. However, a small minority of average and higher attaining pupils do not reach their potential. In Year 2, many of the higher attaining pupils do not attain at the higher levels. This is because the lessons are aimed principally at the average pupils in mixed classes for Years 1 and 2. The work is not planned well enough to the needs of the higher attaining pupils. Consequently, the pupils rarely attain at the higher level. By the end of Year 6, the higher attaining pupils tend to do somewhat better but a small minority of pupils are capable of attaining at a higher level.

66. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Some good lessons were observed during the inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and questioning is used effectively to develop pupils' thinking but more should be done to extend and challenge the more able pupils. All aspects of the science curriculum are taught. A good feature of the work across the school is the emphasis on scientific investigations. The pupils are consistently taught to make use of the key skills of inquiry using a range of 'planning boards' which become more sophisticated as the pupils get older. Emphasis is placed on pupils predicting the outcome of experiments, ensuring that tests are fair, using a range of methods to record findings and evaluating and explaining the outcomes. Discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6 reveal they have a satisfactory knowledge of

the subject. They clearly enjoy science investigational work and have very good attitudes to learning. For example, younger pupils know the meaning of friction and identify different forces and their effects. They describe the main differences between plants and animals. Older pupils are interested in the movement of the planets. They understand the position of the earth in relationship to the moon and sun. Consequently they give reasonable explanations for day and night, the seasons and how this affects climatic changes in various parts of the world. Some pupils were also able to explain the phenomenon of the transit of the planet Venus across the sun which occurred during the inspection. An enthusiastic parent provided the astronomical apparatus to ensure that the pupils were able to safely see the event from the school playground. Good support is provided by the teaching assistants for individuals and groups of pupils with special educational needs.

67. Where teaching and learning are satisfactory, pupils are often set the same task. The learning needs of individuals and groups are not addressed accurately enough. Often the work is not challenging enough for the higher attaining pupils. Pupils are given too few opportunities in science to write about their work. Pupils' work too frequently comprises worksheet responses and drawings at the expense of practising and refining writing skills. The presentation of work is satisfactory overall. Much of the work seen demonstrates a lack of care and the acceptance of standards that are too low. The quality of marking is inconsistent. Marking frequently consists of ticks with little written feedback to enable pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do next in order to improve. There are too few instances of the use of ICT in science. There is a minimal application of pupils' skills in producing graphs from scientific data to explain their findings or the use of sensing devices, for example to record and plot temperatures.

68. The subject is satisfactorily managed and led. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has worked hard within the limitations of the role. The monitoring of teaching and learning and the procedures and use of assessment in the subject are insufficient. The subject leader has analysed pupils' work and observed some teaching and learning. However, regular, systematic monitoring and evaluation of the subject across the school are not yet in place. There is no overall system where pupils' achievements are tracked in enough detail to identify groups' and individuals' strengths and weaknesses. This limits the subject leader in the development of an action plan for improvement and individual teachers in matching work to the needs of the pupils. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are beginning to use ICT in other subjects but computers in classrooms are underused.
- The school does not have an effective means of assessing progress in the subject so as to provide information about the levels at which pupils are working.

Commentary

69. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards throughout the school match the national expectations. There has been satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection but good improvement in learning resources. Teachers are very enthusiastic about using the two portable interactive whiteboards. Teachers and pupils are skilled at using this relatively new technology which appeals to those pupils who respond better to visual and auditory stimuli, as well as those who prefer 'learning by doing' and interacting with the images on the screen. There has been good improvement in the provision of resources since the last inspection. Consequently, the quality of pupils' work has improved. ICT is well integrated into the many engaging displays around the school; for example, pupils' work is annotated using word processed labels. Digital photography is very well used to exemplify pupils' achievements or support work in a range of

curriculum areas. The school is planning to extend provision of interactive whiteboards to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. All classes have at least one computer with a number of laptops available for use by small groups of pupils. The ICT suite is spacious and allows for effective teaching of a whole class of pupils, but the absence of ventilation and/or air conditioning is not conducive to creating a good learning climate. The use of computers in the classrooms is somewhat limited. Occasionally pupils take it in turns to visit the computer to complete an exercise, directed by the teacher, which may or may not be directly linked to the learning objective of that particular lesson. On other occasions pupils will consult a CD-ROM encyclopaedia or dictionary to obtain information. The broadband connection to the Internet could be put to greater use to access media-rich teaching and learning materials

70. Although the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, some good teaching was observed. For example, the teacher used an interactive whiteboard during one lesson very well to support a lesson in control technology. The pupils later reinforced their learning on how to control the lights on a pedestrian crossing by completing a well-designed computer-generated worksheet, which prepared them well for their next task, which challenged the pupils to write more complex routines. In another very good Year 4 lesson the teacher taught the class the instruction set for a programmable toy, using the interactive whiteboard in the computer suite. The lesson was prepared effectively and lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs were challenged well. All pupils worked hard and concentrated well and quickly transferred the skills learnt at the computer to program the 'toy'. However, the assessment of pupils' achievement and attainment is insufficient. The current procedures for assessment do not provide enough detail on individual pupils' skills and attainment. This inhibits the teachers in planning work that is accurately matched to pupils' needs.
71. The temporary subject leader has good subject knowledge and provides leadership and vision for the impact the ICT can have on teaching and learning. However, there is still work to do to raise standards. The subject is satisfactorily managed. The provision of an ICT club makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. It provides opportunities for them to practise their ICT skills and to work on other areas of the curriculum.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. ICT is used satisfactorily to support learning across the curriculum in some subjects. For example, good use is made of the digital camera to record pupils' experiences of visits to the locality. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use the Internet to look for information about different countries, that supported the work they were doing in geography. In Year 3, pupils have been tracing the travels of a family who have been on a world tour, communicating regularly, by email and exchange of digital photos, at various ports of call which have been plotted on a world map. By Year 6, pupils create multimedia presentations, for instance on their topic of India. Programs are used as part of art and design for pattern, and drawing in the style of well-known artists such as Kandinsky. However, use of ICT in the core subjects of mathematics and science is underdeveloped.

HUMANITIES

73. No judgements on provision are made in geography or history as too few lessons were observed in each subject. These subjects were sampled during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils.
74. In **geography**, there is satisfactory coverage of a curriculum which is enriched considerably by the visits to the locality. By Year 2, pupils have an appropriate understanding of the locality around them and those of further afield through their own experiences as well as the topics they study. The pupils, for example, compare similarities and differences between where they live and two villages in Mexico and Scotland. Between Years 3 and 6 investigational skills are promoted well. By Year 3, pupils build on their knowledge and understanding and use ICT well to follow and correspond with a family on their world tour as they follow the sun. The pupils are developing a

good understanding of world geography as they research climate, and plants and animals in different climate zones. In Years 4 and 5, pupils demonstrate numeracy skills well as they, for example, apply their knowledge of co-ordinates to interpret and read maps of the local area. In geography, the curriculum is planned well to link with other subjects such as religious education and art and design, as when pupils study India in Year 6. Pupils use their writing skills and ICT well in their work to research and create multi-media presentations. The older pupils benefit from a residential visit to the countryside where they practise their orienteering skills. It is clear that the pupils enjoy their topics and work hard because the lessons are made interesting. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable subject leader

75. In **history**, pupils by Year 2 understand some differences between past and present and changes that take place over time. They demonstrated a sound knowledge of chronology related to the order and timing of holidays in the year. Pupils' work in Years 4 to 6 indicates there is a stronger emphasis on the acquisition of pupils' knowledge than the development of pupils' skills. For example, there are few opportunities for the development of a sense of chronology by sequencing events and using information sources to answer questions about the past. Pupils are keen to find out about the past and the subject is brought to life by the visits made to places of interest. In Year 6 pupils have effectively researched for historical information about Britain since 1930 and are knowledgeable about key events and lifestyles during this period. There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection as assessment is now incorporated into lesson plans. The curriculum is enriched through a variety of opportunities including visits, artefacts, themed lunches, use of the Internet, CD-ROMs, videos and making clothing. The co-ordinator's leadership and management are good overall but the checks that she does on teaching emphasise the curriculum is covered rather than the impact of teaching on standards and the development of skills.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The subject is well led by a knowledgeable and conscientious subject leader but the management is satisfactory as insufficient time is given for her to monitor the impact of the comprehensive planning.

Commentary

76. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 and work in pupils' books were insufficient to enable a judgement on standards to be made. Standards in Years 3 to 6 meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

77. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In a good, well-planned lesson about the meaning of pilgrimage, the pupils discussed special journeys with their teacher. The teacher skilfully posed probing questions which resulted in pupils having to make evaluative judgements about what makes a journey 'special'. The pupils expressed themselves well and without inhibition, eagerly offering their ideas to a well-managed debate by the teacher. During a discussion about the major world faiths, older pupils showed sensitivity and a good level of respect for the beliefs of others. They are aware of the main components of different world faiths and are able to give examples of religious symbols, rituals and festivals. However, pupils' written work shows that teachers do not match work to the different ability groups in their classes. Too often, pupils are expected to undertake the same level of work. On some occasions, in some classes, work is not purposefully marked.

78. The subject is well led. The subject leader has a good understanding of the subject. She has worked hard to provide a planning framework for the subject and provides teachers with their termly plans. However, strengths and weaknesses across the school are not well understood as there is little time allocated to monitoring teaching and learning. The lunchtime Christian Club contributes well to the pupils' social and spiritual development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

79. No judgements on provision are made in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education as too few lessons were observed in each subject. These subjects were sampled during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils.

80. In **art and design** pupils' observational drawing is a strength. In Years 3 to 6, pupils use line, tone and colour to good effect and the work sampled was above average. They understand the techniques of a range of well-known artists well and apply their skill imaginatively in their work. Art and design is often successfully linked to other subjects such as geography and history. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 study the Tudor period and paint portraits of Henry VIII and his wives. In Year 6, the pupils deepened their knowledge of India as they studied Indian patterns and designs. Pupils enjoy art and design. They enjoy expressing their feelings and emotions and find their work relaxing. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has very good subject knowledge and a good vision for the development of art and design across the school. However, the monitoring and assessment of pupils' work are in the early stages of development. The subject is enriched by visiting artists. Some older pupils attend an extra-curricular art club which makes a good contribution to their personal development and subject skills.

81. In **design and technology** all pupils get opportunities to design and make articles using a range of materials. Pupils carry out product surveys to inform planning and some are able to suggest possible modifications for their products as a result of making them. By Year 2, pupils begin to work on moving vehicles. They learn that a vehicle needs an axle to turn the wheels and that the body of the vehicle is called the chassis. They spend time looking at and drawing toy cars and are able to label the relevant parts. The design process is used well when Year 4 pupils make pop-up books, as an extension of their geography work. They create weather books and show the strength of the wind by the movement of a tree using a simple lever. Year 5 pupils create a range of high quality musical instruments, which is linked to science work on sound. By Year 6 pupils have undertaken work on money containers, using the skills and techniques appropriate for the oldest pupils and they have produced a variety of working bridge models which indicate high quality presentation and pride in their work. Pupils make good use of literacy and numeracy skills as they make products and record work. All pupils enjoy the subject and get great satisfaction from the assembly process. Not all staff, however, are confident in teaching some skills.

82. In **music**, pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge of vocabulary associated with the 'mood' of musical pieces played to them and they sang with an appropriate sense of the melodies shape and rhythm. There is a choir and a belleplates club as well. Visiting specialist teachers provide additional tuition for a minority of pupils in flute and violin. These activities make a considerable contribution to developing the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The subject leader has introduced assessment to identify pupils' achievement and has introduced a scheme of work based on national guidance and commercial material. She has monitored planning, developed a portfolio to check standards and checked instruments are in a good state of repair.

83. In **physical education**, the teachers focus on specific skills, such as the safe way to land from apparatus or the correct way to throw a tennis ball. Work sampled was above average. Pupils enjoy their physical activities and enter into the lessons with enthusiasm. They use the space well for warming up, as they know that this prepares them for the next stage in the lesson, and during floor work, they skip, run, and jump safely, with an awareness of those around them. Most

listen well to instructions and know what is expected of them. They are taught to move equipment safely and, when moving large pieces of apparatus, pupils are aware of the need to work co-operatively. Such teamwork contributes well to their social development. The curriculum is enriched by opportunities to play sports with other schools. A wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities is offered to all age ranges. Older pupils have opportunities to participate in residential experiences which promote physical activity. The award of the Activemark Gold Award recognises the wide range of sporting experiences that is offered to all pupils by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' moral and social development is supported very well through the programme for personal, social and health education.
- Teaching and learning are good and successfully develop pupils' personal skills.
- A healthy lifestyle is promoted.

Commentary

84. Personal, social and health education and citizenship contribute well to pupils' personal development. This results in pupils' very good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils willingly accept small tasks of responsibility around the school. Good opportunities are taken in classes and in assemblies to celebrate the contributions and successes of pupils so that they grow in self-esteem and confidence.

85. Teachers use lessons well to develop pupils' personal skills. During 'circle time'³ pupils have opportunity to express their views and listen to others. These sessions are well handled and pupils enjoy the chance to talk about things they feel are important. A parent helper, who is a professional in this field, also supports staff in developing confidence with 'circle time'. As yet, there is not a dedicated session for personal, social and health education on the timetable but this is planned to be included from September.

86. The school works hard at establishing its 'Healthy Lifestyle' approach. The curriculum promotes a healthy lifestyle as pupils study a healthy diet, the misuse of drugs and the effects of alcohol and tobacco. The school participates in the 'Healthy School' initiative. For instance, pupils' access to water bottles in class, a 'walking bus' to encourage pupils to walk safely to school and the distribution of fruit in the infant classes all contribute to this area of the curriculum.

87. Pupils take part in local and national initiatives to develop their awareness of citizenship. For example, they support local and national charities. For example, the belleplates musicians play for the local hospice. The choir sings in the cathedral. Pupils in Year 6 are developing their opinions well on global issues. For example, they understand the implications of 'fair trade' which was the theme of the harvest assembly, and reflect on conservation issues such as the protection of the rainforests.

³ 'Circle times' are class discussion periods to develop pupils' personal development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
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	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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