

INSPECTION REPORT

OAKWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Derby

LEA area: Derby City

Unique reference number: 112766

Headteacher: Ms Nancy Elks

Lead inspector: Mr Terry Mortimer

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th June 2004

Inspection number: 257074

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	361
School address:	Holbrook Road Alvaston Derby Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE24 0DD
Telephone number:	01332 571231
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Pam Moss
Date of previous inspection:	8 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Oakwood Junior School is in Alvaston, on the south eastern outskirts of Derby, Derbyshire. The school serves its local community of council built, housing association and owner occupied homes in the suburb of Alvaston, Derbyshire. It admits pupils between the ages of seven and eleven. With 361 pupils on roll the school is larger than average in size. The number on roll has fallen over the last few years due to local demographic trends. Classes are generally organised according to age with three classes per year group. Pupils come from mainly lower than average socio-economic backgrounds and the majority are white British pupils, with less than ten per cent of pupils of Caribbean, Asian or African origin. The attainment of pupils on entry to school is generally well below average for pupils aged seven. There are fewer pupils than in most schools identified with special educational needs although the proportion of those with statements of special educational need is just above the average. Needs range from moderate learning difficulties to speech impairment. In the past year the staffing has been affected through the absence on maternity leave of several key staff members. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the expected times of admission or transfer is not as high as in most schools nationally. The school is involved in the Learning Network Community and is participating in the Investors in People scheme.

Comparison of the school with all other schools nationally	this school %	national average %
Pupils with special educational needs	13.0	17.5
Pupils with statements of special educational needs	2.5	1.6
Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	18.3	17.9
Pupils whose mother tongue is not/believed not to be English	0.5	-

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9884	Maureen Roscoe	Lay inspector	
20404	John Evans	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education Special education 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 subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	14
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	19
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS KEY STAGE 2	21
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Oakwood Junior School is an **effective** school that gives good value for money. The school provides a good standard of education in a lively, vibrant atmosphere where there are good relationships and learning is valued. Standards are below average but pupils' achievement is good because creative teaching means that pupils learn well. Teachers work hard to provide interesting and stimulating lessons and pupils respond with great enthusiasm, which has a significant effect on their achievements in lessons and over time. Standards are rising steadily. This is due to the headteacher's very effective leadership and strong commitment to high achievement which is reflected in teachers' high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Oakwood is an inclusive school that has a good ethos for learning and provides a caring environment for all its pupils.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The clarity of vision and leadership of the headteacher are very good.
- Leadership and management of the school overall are good with good systems for reviewing its performance.
- Given the pupils' very low starting point, they achieve well by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and good behaviour help them form good relationships with each other and the staff and contribute well to their personal development.
- Good teaching helps the pupils enjoy their learning
- Staff manage pupils in a consistent manner, with much care, so that there is a positive learning atmosphere.
- Effective support from the support staff, including the learning mentors, promotes a good quality of care, welfare and guidance of the pupils and a high level of self-esteem.
- The school has good links with parents the community and other schools.
- The role of the subject leaders is still in embryonic form in some subjects.
- The information that the school collects in its assessment systems is not sufficiently detailed and precise enough to identify what pupils' individual attainments needs to be.
- Standards of attainment in religious education are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection in 1998. Standards in English are better than they were, as at that time progress was unsatisfactory, and the most able pupils are now being sufficiently challenged although this still has some way to go. The quality of teaching and learning is now good, having been addressed in an innovative way through accelerated learning. All subjects are taught in a creative manner according to the pupils' ages and levels of attainment. Assessment has been developed to assist teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum. The governors make good contributions to the management and efficiency of the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Achievement is **good**. From well below average attainment on entry, pupils achieve well, although many of them do not reach nationally expected levels of attainment before leaving the school.

National test results for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 were below average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, however, the picture was more positive; pupils attained above average results in English and average results in science and mathematics. Currently, standards during the inspection in Year 6 are below average in English and mathematics and average in science. Targets set for 2003 were exceeded in English where as for mathematics targets were achieved and the school is successfully addressing weaknesses in pupils' investigative skills in mathematics and science. The trend of improvement in results generally is the same as the national trend. There is little difference in the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. Standards observed in the inspection in Year 6 in information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography, music, design and technology are satisfactory. Standards in religious education are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils' personal development is **good** overall. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall; the school places very good emphasis on the social and moral aspects. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Behaviour is good. Teachers have high expectations about what is acceptable behaviour and pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. Teachers and learning mentors manage behaviour effectively and consistently. Some pupils find it difficult to always conform, but this is dealt with effectively to cause minimum disruption to their learning. Attendance is satisfactory as is punctuality.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching is **good** overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and encourage pupils to do well. All teachers ensure that pupils understand what is expected in lessons by asking questions, and listening to their responses. However, assessment is not fully effective in helping pupils to find out how they can improve their work or for teachers to identify the next stages of pupils' learning. Subject leaders are not able to use assessment information to identify individual gaps in pupils' learning. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and is more inviting and stimulating than it was at the time of the last inspection. However, provision for religious education is unsatisfactory. The school has developed accelerated learning and successfully implemented peer coaching as a way of improving teaching and learning. As a result pupils are motivated to learn more. Pastoral care is good, and consequently many pupils have high self-esteem. The good links with parents are developing fast as the school is providing them with very good information about their children. There are good links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is very good because her very clear vision for the educational direction of the school inspires staff to improve the quality of their teaching and the pupils' learning. As a result, standards are rising at a similar rate to most schools and pupils achieve well. In light of the changes made by the headteacher, subject leaders are developing their roles as they are not yet fully involved in checking the effectiveness of their assessment. School management focuses on the most important aspects of the school that need to be improved which helps create a positive ethos for learning. The governing body receives very good information from senior staff enabling it to offer good support and challenge. Governors carry out their statutory duties soundly, although they have some minor statutory issues to address in the school documentation.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are particularly pleased with the good teaching, that the school has good communication with them and that the school is well led and managed, and they hold the school in high regard. Pupils feel safe and well supported. Pupils enjoy the work they do and think highly of their school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve provision in religious education.
- Continue the professional development of all the subject leaders especially those who are new in post so that they can continue to contribute to skills development in the curriculum change and the monitoring of teaching and learning that are planned by the school.
- Improve the use teachers and subject leaders make of assessment information to identify gaps in pupils' learning, to set them new learning goals, and to tailor the work more effectively to meet the needs of the most able pupils.

All of the above issues are identified in the school development plan.

And, to meet statutory requirements:

The school should rectify omissions pointed out during the inspection in the prospectus and governor's annual report.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Pupils enter the school with standards of attainment which are lower than at the time of the last inspection and reflect their below average performance in the national tests taken as seven year olds, just prior to joining the school. Achievement across the school is good. Standards are satisfactory in ICT but those in religious education are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress in their learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are building effectively on their skills, knowledge and understanding through the school.
- High expectations generally and the pupils' positive attitudes to work mean that standards in English, mathematics and science are rising.
- Pupils achieve well because teaching supports them well.
- There are no differences between the achievements of different groups of pupils. Those pupils who have special educational needs achieve well because they are very quickly identified and receive specialist support.
- Standards in the 'using and applying' aspect of mathematics and 'science enquiry' are improving through the introduction of accelerated learning techniques.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.6 (24.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.0 (24.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.6 (27.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 89 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points score at the age of eleven is 27. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.

1. Pupils achieve well at this school to progress from well below average attainment on entry to below average attainment on exit. Over time, standards have risen in line with the national upward trend, which is good given that the attainment on entry has fallen over time. Evidence of what Year 6 pupils are currently attaining shows that they are likely to improve again this year.
2. The results of the 2003 national assessments for pupils in Year 6 show that standards in English and science were below average with mathematics being well below average. In comparison to those in similar schools results were above average in English and average in science and mathematics. The trend in the school results remains broadly in line with the national trend, although showing improvement in English and science. The school is successful in helping pupils with special educational needs and those with lower ability to achieve well. This is because it makes good provision for the individual needs of these pupils and provides well-focused support to meet these needs.
3. The standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 have improved over the last three years and the school trend is one of improvement although broadly in line with the national trend. Pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining standards below those expected nationally, but they are

showing improvement over time. Standards attained by the current Year 6 pupils are below national expectations in English, mathematics and religious education but in science and ICT standards are in line with national expectations.

4. The trend in improvement has been brought about by the teachers' consistency in demanding high expectations, the change in strategy for teaching and learning with imaginative teaching that interests the pupils, development in accelerated learning, and the pupils' positive response which is reflected in the attitudes to promoting better standards. Pupils are also helped to build effectively on their skills as they progress through the school.
5. Within English, standards in speaking and listening and reading are broadly in line with expectations. Standards in writing are below expectations but are improving. The school is systematically increasing the number of opportunities to use and apply different forms of writing across the whole curriculum. This is an improvement since the last inspection. At the time of the last inspection progress in English was deemed unsatisfactory. However, pupils achieve well across all aspects of English with pupils working hard and demonstrating good progress. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are being well developed in other subjects across the curriculum. Pupils are now beginning to use language well in a range of different subjects. This reflects the good opportunities and guidance that teachers provide. Most pupils gain good experience of factual and imaginative writing in support of their work in, for example, history, geography and science. Teachers provide some appropriate opportunities for pupils to use their mathematics skills in other subjects, for example graph work in Year 6 science and geography. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum to help pupils improve their skills.
6. The results of pupils in national tests in mathematics in 2003 were well below the national average for pupils in Year 6. However, when these results were compared to schools in similar situations, pupils in Year 6 attained average standards. Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection and reflect their below average performance in the national tests taken as seven year olds, just prior to joining the school. In mathematics higher attaining pupils do not achieve well. This is because the teaching is not challenging enough for them, or the work they are given is too easy. The school is working hard improving the quality of teaching and learning and there are signs that different methods that teachers employ are beginning to raise standards.
7. The results in national tests in science in 2003 were below average at Year 6. However, when compared to schools in similar circumstances standards were average. During the inspection analysis of work completed and observation of work in lessons indicated that pupils' standards are generally average. Overall, pupil achievement is good in science and, due to opportunities created to develop pupils' scientific enquiry skills systematically, they begin to show the independence expected in these skills by the end of Year 6. The consistent use of accelerated learning techniques has been of immense value to the pupils' learning, understanding and skills development, especially in relation to investigating skills. Potentially higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they could because planning does not always include sufficiently challenging work.
8. Standards in ICT are rising, and there are more opportunities for pupils to improve their use of ICT in other areas of the curriculum, although it is still underused as a tool for learning. Standards in all other subjects are generally in line with national expectations. Standards in religious education are below the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, and provision is unsatisfactory.
9. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well due to the targeted support from both the class teacher and learning mentors. This reflects the good quality of teaching and additional provision. Learning mentors and classroom assistants work very effectively with pupils having special educational needs. They build constructive relationships and increase pupils' self-esteem by means of thoughtful management, encouragement and praise. Planning closely with

class teachers, they enable pupils with special educational needs to be included fully in lessons, progress well and gain satisfaction from their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and reflected strongly in their response to the overall good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is good. Attendance is satisfactory. Rates of unauthorised absence are high.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' interest in the range of the school's activities has improved since the last inspection because very positive relationships are at the heart of this lively school.
- Behaviour has been maintained at a good level. Some pupils find it difficult to always conform, but this is dealt with effectively to cause minimum disruption to their learning.
- Pupils and their parents appreciate very effective systems that deal with instances of harassment and serve to support all those involved. This reflects the increased acceptance of the moral and social values that are very well promoted by all staff.
- Pupils' spiritual development has improved. Not enough is done, however, to help pupils reflect on important themes or music in assembly.
- Provision for cultural development is satisfactory but not enough opportunities exist for pupils to study those cultures and traditions different from their own.
- Attendance levels continue to be satisfactory. Procedures for monitoring registers are ineffective in reducing the high percentage of unauthorised absence and ensuring that all statutory requirements are fulfilled.

Commentary

10. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning because the school sets the scene for them to do well and supports and praises them every inch of the way. They know they are valued and affectionately cared for. In return pupils are self-assured, confidently helpful to their peers and considerate to staff. Frequent and regular praise and recognition of their achievements by staff are building self-esteem and parents agree.
11. Behaviour is good overall and sometimes excellent. In a few cases pupils do not settle down to activities or make enough progress. Often this is due to pupils who find it difficult to always behave well but this is managed and dealt with well. Pupils behave well around the school. Playtimes are friendly and safe and pupils interact very well in mixed gender and heritage groups. This provides them with opportunities to come to terms with and accept values and beliefs which may differ from their own.
12. Bullying is infrequent pupils say, and their parents agree. Pupils use sensible strategies for dealing with harassment of any kind. These usually involve staff and increasingly 'buddies' or pupil mediators who all get the 'thumbs up' (a physical act which is part of the consistent procedures) for their excellent work in promoting tolerance. The minority of pupils with particularly challenging behaviour respond well to good support provided by the learning mentors. Those presenting a clear risk to safety are excluded for a short period or, in rare circumstances, permanently. This was the case for one pupil this year.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	329	8	
White – any other White background	4		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9		
Mixed – White and Asian	3		
Mixed – any other mixed background	2		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3		
Any other ethnic group	1		
No ethnic group recorded	3		

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

13. Pupils have a spirited approach to their school and all it offers. They show commitment and a sense of belonging to the school community. Provision for spiritual development promotes these attributes well. The outcome is that pupils freely discuss their feelings of remorse for past mistakes and empathise with the anxieties or the triumphs of others. Some assemblies do not set the scene well enough for inviting active participation.
14. Pupils are growing into well-rounded individuals because provision for moral and social development is now very good. Parents agree and see their children coming on in 'leaps and bounds'. Pupils are used to working collaboratively. They take on responsibility for themselves and for others because they understand the agreed codes that promote respect and 'stickability' (a school term which is placed in their hall as part of the ethos) in the face of challenge. Pupils really like being helpful and parents say that a good range of posts of responsibility and rewards encourages self-belief in many pupils. Peer mediation for example is very successful in encouraging resolution in conflict situations and raising esteem.
15. Pupils learn of European cultural interests through lessons in art and music and the range of outside visits undertaken. Opportunities for them to appreciate and learn about cultural diversity are more limited.
16. Despite good links with parents and their children's positive attitudes to learning, attendance levels are satisfactory because not enough is done to address the high levels of unauthorised absence that in real terms affected the learning of many pupils this academic year. Additionally, registration systems are not rigorous and parents do not have an accurate picture of absence statistics or how they could help to bring about improvements.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (2003)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.8
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 school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching is good and consequently learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory overall but some aspects of it require improvement. The curriculum is satisfactory, and is soundly enriched. Guidance and support for pupils are good and there are good links with parents and the local community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching. Assessment is satisfactory overall but needs now to focus on individual needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the school is good.
- The encouragement given to pupils and their consequent interest in their work is good.
- The development of accelerated learning has been a strength in the improvement of teaching and learning.
- The use of specialised teaching in literacy and numeracy has a positive effect upon learning in Year 3.
- Not enough use is made of assessment information to identify individual targets or to tailor the work for the most able pupils in mathematics.
- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and deal effectively with those pupils who are unable to conform.
- The way that some teachers mark work is very good and when this is so then pupils find it motivational.
- Pupils are not always clear on how they can improve their work.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1(2%)	9 (20%)	17 (38%)	18 (40%)	0	0	0

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

17. The school has had a difficult time in the last few years. Since the current headteacher took up post the staff has changed, including two members of the senior management team. The development of a new teaching and learning style for the whole school has been hampered with one third of teachers on maternity leave.

18. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection through the development of the new teaching and learning practices throughout the school. Not all teachers have been in post since the start of the school year, one third being on maternity leave. The teaching of those who are permanent staff showed 70 per cent of lessons were good or better and only 30 per cent satisfactory. New staff showed the benefit of the induction by producing 33 per cent good or better and 66 per cent satisfactory. Taking all of the evidence into account, including pupils' work and interviews with pupils, overall teaching is judged good with no unsatisfactory lessons seen.
19. The good use of accelerated learning was seen in a Year 5 science lesson when the pupils reported back in their preferred learning styles, and in a Year 6 science lesson where good and very good subject knowledge enabled the teacher to target the work and got the pupils to achieve well. As a consequence, teachers helped pupils learn by offering them clear explanations and challenging them with probing questions. Pupils knew, right from the start of each lesson, what they would be learning and what was expected of them. In these lessons and others in English and science teachers varied their teaching methods to pupils' learning styles. As a result, all pupils were involved, interest was maintained and pupils were keen to participate. The organisation of the Year 3 curriculum effectively combines some specialist teaching with general class teaching to enhance the development of pupils' learning; this has been of immense value to concentrate upon developing pupils' skills and improving their learning when they first enter the school at Year 3.
20. Teachers consistently encourage their pupils to do as well as they can and offer praise to motivate them. This supportive atmosphere boosts pupils' self-esteem so that they feel able to work hard, and offer ideas and suggestions without fear of ridicule or failure. As a result, teachers and pupils are enthusiastic and united in their commitment to achievement. In a Year 3 art lesson on making a design block to create a design on a bag, good relationships between the teacher and pupils allowed good levels of discussion and good assessment which supported the teaching of individual skills to complete the task. The teacher valued all contributions and all were encouraged to join in.
21. Teaching staff have consistently high expectations of behaviour though some pupils find it difficult to conform to the expectations. Usually these expectations are supported by good relationships and mutual respect flourishes. Often, teachers make lessons interesting, which helps keep pupils on task. Most pupils respond to these expectations well and behaviour is usually good. A very good example of this was in an ICT lesson where all children were developing their control instructions for a robot and were co-operating and taking turns to work out instructions. They all participated enthusiastically, and the learning objectives were reached successfully. A few pupils found difficulty responding to these expectations; when this happens then the staff deal with it positively and in line with school policy. There is not enough challenge for more able pupils in some lessons, mainly in mathematics. Where this happens teachers do not offer sufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their learning. Too often pupils are all undertaking the same tasks although extra support is provided for the less able.
22. Teachers, learning support assistants and learning mentors give good support in class to those pupils who have special educational needs. In most lessons teachers use the additional adult support well and include their roles in the lesson plan. Teaching and learning support assistants are particularly effective when they are actively involved in all parts of the lesson and make useful notes about the pupils' achievements. These notes are later shared with the teacher to help with future planning of suitable work. As a result, the pupils make good progress.
23. Teachers' marking is often very helpful for pupils. Some teachers spend a lot of time annotating work with clear acknowledgement of success but also with specific ideas for pupils about how to improve their work or what the next steps in learning will be. This not only rewards pupils' efforts in their work but also gives them clear targets for improvement. Pupils also respond to the teachers' comments. However, this is not consistent throughout the school as it still has to be reinforced by curriculum subject leaders supporting the newer members of staff.

24. The assessment procedures currently used by the school have only been put in place over the past two years. The school has gathered data on all results including optional SATs since 2003 and is able to identify group targets, but assessment is not refined enough to provide teachers with sufficient information on individual pupils' attainment, inside the groups (e.g. 3a or 2c) to help staff fully develop the future teaching plans including individual targets. The teachers working on the end of year results at present do group and whole-school target setting. This does not enable teachers to check pupils' attainment in comparison to national levels or check pupils' progress rigorously enough. The school is fully aware that this aspect of its work needs urgent improvement and is in the process of implementing a fuller assessment system for English, mathematics and science to help teachers plan work to meet the needs of all pupils.
25. The assessment manager is determined that other subject leaders will be more involved in the assessment procedures and that marking will be tackled as a priority so that the different skills in subjects are identified and tracked in the school's development of the curriculum. The school also plans to involve pupils even more in assessment and target setting and therefore to know how to improve their work. The school is rightly concerned that, at present, pupils do not have curriculum targets in which they have been involved in setting, especially as the school believes that this helps pupils to be fully involved and to take some responsibility for their own learning. The development of consistent assessment procedures has also been hindered by the staff turnover.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' individual education plans are of satisfactory quality but require closer oversight by the school special needs co-ordinator to ensure that they are all completed to a similar level of detail and precision. In particular, in some cases, the targets set for pupils need to be sharper and reflect more accurately the assessed needs of the individual pupil. Sharper, more frequent assessments need to be made, especially for pupils with higher level needs, to inform more closely the work that is to be set.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. A satisfactory range of visits and visitors extends pupils' learning. The accommodation is good and resources for learning are satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum development is innovative and imaginative, and planning to meet pupils' needs is improving.
- Opportunities for pupils to extend their learning outside the school day are good.
- The school deploys its teaching assistants well.
- There has been good improvement to the accommodation since the last inspection.
- Provision in religious education does not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

Commentary

27. The curriculum has been successfully adapted to meet the needs and circumstances of the school. The high priority placed on the development of teaching and learning styles more accurately matches the pupils' learning styles and ensures that the curriculum is relevant to pupils' needs. Teachers, for the most part, take appropriate account of different ways of learning when planning. Teachers in parallel classes plan together basing work on the national guidelines. As a result, pupils of the same age, but in different classes, get the same learning opportunities. Practical work ensures that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding have secure foundations. Teachers are beginning to take a more integrated approach to planning so that pupils use and develop their skills, such as literacy, in different subjects. The organisation of the Year 3 curriculum effectively combines some specialist teaching with general class

teaching to enhance the development of pupils' learning. The commitment and vision of the staff have resulted in some imaginatively planned projects and activities that awaken in pupils a real desire to learn. The whole school art week, which focused on a painting by Degas, provided very good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills to develop their knowledge and understanding of art as well as developing their practical art skills. This project also made a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development of their own and European society including their place in a multi-cultural society.

28. Pupils can pursue their interests at a wide variety of after-school clubs, which include many opportunities to take part in sporting activities. These clubs are popular and well attended. They contribute well to pupils' personal development as well as extend the skills they acquire in lessons. The school takes part in sporting activities with other schools and they do particularly well in football having won the county six-a-side tournament. In addition to the clubs enhancing pupils' learning, teachers make effective use of a satisfactory range of visits and visitors to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding in subjects such as religious education and geography.
29. The school has a strong team of well-trained teaching assistants and learning mentors. They have a good understanding of their role and give good support to pupils who need additional guidance and pupils with special educational needs. They work well with teachers throughout the school in supporting individual pupils as well as groups and within the class generally. This ensures that these pupils have appropriate access to the curriculum and make similar progress to their peers in their learning and personal development.
30. The school's accommodation is good. It is spacious, very clean and well cared for. Careful planning and preparation ensure that space is efficiently used. Since the last inspection the school has improved the visual environment and developed the two courtyards to create an attractive extension to the learning area, where class and group work can take place. Attractive displays in the public areas are informative as well as celebrating pupils' achievements and efforts well, inspiring them to work even harder.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are safe and well cared for and effectively involved in school developments. Pupils have good access to support and guidance; overall the monitoring of pastoral care is satisfactory. Pupils are involved in the life of the school in a variety of ways.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standard of care has improved since the previous inspection because staff are tuned into pupils' needs, which are reliably sought through surveys and by listening to the views expressed by the pupil council.
- Good arrangements for care and support contribute to the welfare of all pupils and play a major part in lifting their confidence to form good and trusting relationships with peers and adults in the school.
- Pupils' achievements are carefully recorded in some subjects and pupils are aware of what their targets are. Guidance on how they can reach them is not consistently provided.
- Staff vigilantly supervise pupils and promote pupils' health and safety. Effective routines ensure that most statutory requirements are met. Those requirements connected with registration practice and assessment and the recording of all known hazards are being addressed and are in the development plan.

Commentary

31. The level of support, care and guidance that pupils receive is good and the calm atmosphere maintained by all staff helps to support achievement. Parents are justifiably satisfied with this

aspect of the school's work. Learning mentors and other support staff address pupils' concerns and urge them to realise their aspirations. This promotes high quality personal support for all pupils, regardless of ability.

32. Pupils know they are listened to. Their views are sought formally through the medium of pupil councillors. Recent decisions introduced 'Huff and Puff' play activities, which pupils say have led to very positive playtimes.
33. Induction arrangements provide firm foundations for pupils' emotional well-being. Pupils settle easily into Year 3 routines because of the friendliness of adults and other pupils, and links previously made through the pen pal and buddy systems. These good beginnings serve to provide a springboard for learning.
34. Staff are aware of the rate of progress that individuals and groups of pupils are making in their personal development and in the academic domain through satisfactory monitoring systems. The information collated is not used effectively enough to identify the individual needs to guide pupils to understand what they actually need to do to reach their next target. This sometimes results in more able pupils not being fully challenged.
35. The governors and headteacher have put together a positive range of measures to promote pupils' health and safety. Buildings are clean and well managed and very effective practice supports child protection, first aid and fire precaution systems. Good routines support security and access but the school does not undertake and record the full range of necessary health and safety risk assessments in all curriculum areas, though it has plans in hand to do so. Additionally, registration practice is not meeting fire regulation standards and more needs to be done to halt the increase in unauthorised absence.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has forged good links with parents, partner schools and the community. Parents support the school well and receive good information about their children's progress. There are satisfactory links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive very good essential information. There is scope to provide more, so that parents know precisely how they can support the children's learning.
- Many parents are very satisfied with what the school provides and how their views are sought and acted upon.
- There are good and cordial links between the school and its partners in a local 'family' group of schools. Specific initiatives to preserve continuity in pupils' learning are at a very early stage.

Commentary

36. The very high quality and presentation of information for parents have improved greatly, despite some easily rectified omissions in the prospectus and governors' annual report. Workshops are put on to explain 'brain-friendly' learning. These are well attended and have whetted parents' appetite for more. Home school diaries are proving valuable and keep parents up to date with homework expectations. All these good ideas serve to keep parents' interest in their children's learning high. This active approach means that the school is well placed to move on from explaining *what* is taught in every class to *how* parents can support their children, and in particular, by alerting the office when children are not well enough to attend that morning.
37. Parents value the very good annual reports on their children's progress. Parents praise the way they are received when visiting school and also the care their children receive. The very positive

questionnaire responses are due in part to an increasing spirit of partnership that drives consultation surveys and informs future planning effectively.

38. Community links are good because visitors and sponsorship deals contribute well to pupils' learning and personal development. Visits to local places of adventure increase pupils' self-reliance. Pupil exchanges or 'swaps' with a local primary school heighten curiosity and skills of comparison when each undertakes fact-finding tours.
39. Liaison systems are now well established with other schools and result in a shared professional development between Oakwood teachers and staff at a nearby primary school. On top of all this activity, Year 6 pupils are prepared very well by their teachers for transition into the next stage of their education in their personal, social and health education lessons or in circle time.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The governing body, though relatively new, is supportive and carries out its duties appropriately. The school is very well led by the headteacher who places a strong emphasis on achievement. Management is effective although there is room for improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the head teacher is very good.
- There is a strong and successful commitment to inclusion.
- Key staff provide good role models for staff and pupils.
- The school evaluates its performance very well and uses evaluation effectively.
- The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Key staff have managed the many recent staff changes well.
- The roles of curriculum leaders need to be more clearly defined so that they can review and improve provision.

Commentary

40. The headteacher provides knowledgeable, innovative leadership that is bringing far-reaching improvement to the quality of teaching and learning. Her clear vision and commitment to high standards are reflected in the school's positive ethos, pupils' very good attitudes to learning and steady improvement in the quality of pupils' work. Her imaginative approach to the curriculum has inspired teachers with renewed enthusiasm and is beginning to engage pupils constructively as informed partners in their own learning. As a result, teachers and pupils are now buoyant with enthusiasm and united in their commitment to achievement. The school governors are strongly supportive of the school and challenge key staff effectively. They carry out their statutory duties soundly, are well informed and pursue the principles of best value well.
41. Staff value each pupil and show this in their sensitive management of pupils and warm appreciation of pupils' contributions. As a result, pupils' self-esteem and sense of security grow and their work improves. The recently regenerated school environment illustrates the school's determination to provide for all pupils an attractive, stimulating setting for learning. In lessons, teachers, learning mentors and classroom assistants enable pupils of all abilities and those with special educational needs to progress and achieve well. However, shortcomings in the school's assessment procedures mean that the work set in a minority of lessons is not matched accurately for all pupils. This reduces the effectiveness of inclusion by slowing progress or causing some pupils to depend too much on support.
42. Teaching and non-teaching staff provide strong examples of effective team work. They combine a clear sense of purpose with good humour and unswerving commitment to

improvement. This influences pupils in their approach to their work and to each other. As a result, pupils work hard, co-operate with and support one another well and enjoy warm, constructive relationships. This benefits pupils' learning and their personal and social development and helps them to prepare effectively for the next stage in their education.

43. The school makes careful and thorough evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning and of the results of national and optional tests. The headteacher ensures that teachers are actively involved in the evaluation of teaching and learning and of the school's performance. This strengthens teachers' insight into what works well with different groups of pupils and helps to improve provision. Teachers analyse test results carefully to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. They use the resulting information well to plan for improvement. For example, teachers targeted and took action to improve the quality of pupils' writing. The results are beginning to be seen in pupils' livelier use of vocabulary and the increased range of their writing for different subjects. However, to help teachers plan for the best possible progress, the information that the school collects about pupils' individual attainments needs to be more detailed and precise.
44. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school special educational needs co-ordinator is well informed, enthusiastic and effective. The recently introduced system of learning mentors is working very well. Arrangements are carefully planned and managed to ensure the maximum benefit for pupils. The results are beginning to be seen in pupils' improved confidence, work habits and achievements.
45. Recent staff changes, including the absence on maternity leave of several key staff members, have been, inescapably, a barrier to progress. The headteacher, with the strong support of remaining key staff, has managed this situation very well. She was appointed at a time when the school had undergone several years of repeated leadership change. Since then, she has raised morale and enthusiasm and brought renewed commitment and optimism to staff and pupils. She has driven forward vigorous and innovative curriculum development that has improved markedly the quality of teaching and learning and is beginning to raise standards. With the active involvement of governors, she has formulated well-informed, practical plans for further improvement. These are supported by good financial management.
46. The recent staffing changes have made it difficult to sustain and secure effective arrangements for subject leadership and, as a result, the headteacher and several other key staff have sometimes carried too much of this responsibility themselves. The role of subject leaders now needs to be more clearly defined so that the skills and knowledge special to each subject can be more accurately tracked and carried forward, promoting improvement. In order to make this easier for the staff and to continue the development of the school's curriculum and ethos the school has planned and budgeted to have an extra teacher for the next year. This is the reason for the high carryover in the budget. All of the identified issues for improvement have already been identified in the school development plan for the coming year.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	867172
Total expenditure	843889
Expenditure per pupil	2337

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	98133
Balance carried forward to the next	121416

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average in most aspects of English but there has been significant improvement since the last inspection.
- Achievement is good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The arrangements for assessing pupils' work are satisfactory overall but need to be more detailed to be fully effective.
- Subject leadership is good though management is satisfactory.

Commentary

47. Pupils' attainment in reading and writing are below average, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Relatively few pupils reach the higher levels in the different aspects of English. Pupils' speaking and listening are now in line with the national average. This is an improvement. Improvement is also seen in some aspects of writing. Most pupils now use their writing confidently in different subjects, for example to record a science investigation or write about their work in geography or history. The range of pupils' writing has also improved so that many Year 6 pupils are comfortable expressing their ideas in, for example, note form, narrative or verse. The vocabulary pupils use is becoming more extensive, interesting and varied. This reflects teachers' concerted action to improve the quality of pupils' writing. However, many pupils still make unnecessary spelling mistakes and this lowers standards. The improvement in pupils' speaking and listening results from the many interesting, relevant and well-planned opportunities that teachers provide for pupils to discuss and exchange ideas. It brings with it valuable benefits for pupils' personal and social development, in particular their confidence and their capacity to relate constructively to others.
48. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' progress in the different aspects of English was unsatisfactory. As a result of the school's energetic, carefully planned action, linked to effective leadership and management, achievement is now good. The work of learning mentors and classroom assistants is a strength in provision, enabling pupils with special educational needs to be included effectively and to share in the good achievement. As a result of the well-informed, thoughtful emphasis teachers now give to the process of learning, pupils have also improved in their understanding of how to learn. Many are now beginning to be involved constructively in the management of their own learning. This improves progress and raises pupils' self-esteem.
49. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan well, set suitably high expectations and communicate them clearly so that pupils know what they are to do and can settle to work quickly and confidently. Lessons are purposeful and effective. Relationships are very good because teachers and other staff manage pupils with consideration, set strong examples of effective teamwork and value pupils' views and contributions. Lessons are often stimulating and lively, engaging pupils well. As a result of the good teaching, the high quality of relationships and the school's warm, encouraging ethos, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. The school's attention to the different ways in which pupils learn helps teachers plan their lessons for maximum effect and involve pupils successfully in thinking about how they can learn best. This brings new energy and stimulus to many lessons and, at its best, unites teachers and pupils as partners in learning.

50. Teachers make satisfactory use of assessments and test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and use this information to set targets for groups of pupils. However, the targets set do not draw on detailed enough information about what each pupil can and cannot do. As a result, teachers cannot plan with the accuracy needed to promote the best possible progress for each pupil. The work set in lessons is usually varied soundly to match pupils' abilities but needs to draw on sharper detail if it is to target pupils' changing needs accurately.
51. The subject leader is absent on maternity leave. Before her absence, she initiated a strong, well-planned drive for improvement that has successfully raised standards. The headteacher's very effective leadership and staff's enthusiastic support have enabled much of this initial impetus to be sustained. The results are seen in continued improvement in the quality and range of pupils' speaking, listening and writing, though significant improvements in reading have not yet been achieved. Understandably, the absence of the subject leader has meant that some procedures, such as those for assessment, are not yet fully in place.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Though actual standards in reading and writing are below average, pupils are now beginning to use language and literacy well in a range of different subjects. This reflects the good opportunities and guidance that teachers provide. Most pupils gain good experience of factual and imaginative writing in support of their work in, for example, history, geography and science. They move easily between note-taking and carefully presented writing and are becoming gradually more versatile in choosing between different ways of expressing and presenting their work. Pupils listen effectively and are building the confidence and vocabulary needed to discuss feelings and challenging ideas.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and pupils respond well to their teachers.
- Information about pupils' achievement is not used well enough to inform planning that meets the needs of all pupils.
- The subject leader has drawn up a good plan of action to improve provision in the subject.

Commentary

53. Although standards are below average by the end of Year 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection and reflect pupils' below average performance in the national tests taken as seven year olds, just prior to joining the school. Nevertheless, most pupils make satisfactory progress during their time at the school. The school is working hard improving the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum. As yet, mathematics has not been a focus of the school improvement plan but there are signs that different methods that teachers employ are beginning to raise standards. More pupils than before are working at the expected level for pupils' age. However, a significant proportion of pupils are slow to recall number facts, and use a limited range of methods. More able pupils are quicker at spotting patterns and identifying the most appropriate calculation needed to solve a problem.
54. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils' achievement over time is satisfactory as improvements have yet to take effect and the subject to be properly targeted, which it will be in

the coming year. Achievement in lessons is good because of the recent improvements that the school has implemented in its teaching. Teachers involve pupils in working examples to develop pupils' understanding of the purpose of the lesson. Teachers plan work that builds on what pupils have previously been taught. They take into account the needs of different groups of pupils, but do not make full use of the information they have gained from assessing pupils' work to plan lessons that help all pupils to progress at the same rate, which has an effect upon the most able. However, pupils' achievement in the lessons and the scrutiny of work seen was mostly good because they are given good support. Pupils appreciate the support and help they receive from the teachers and learning support staff in lessons. They respond well to their advice and demonstrate good attitudes to learning by working hard and trying to do their best most of the time. In the better sessions teachers' questions provided many opportunities for pupils to explain their methods of calculation. This helped them to develop their thinking skills and improved their understanding. As a result these pupils are becoming more confident and adept at carrying out calculations. In some lessons, however, teachers do not do enough to involve all pupils and only take answers from volunteers. In some lessons teachers use a more imaginative approach to make the work enjoyable and relevant to pupils. For example, in Year 5 lesson every pupil tried hard to solve all the problems during the mental mathematics session because the task was presented in the form of a team game.

55. Assessment procedures that have been developed are satisfactory. Results of annual tests and other assessments are analysed to identify the level at which pupils are achieving. This information is used to group pupils and to set numerical targets at the beginning of the year. However, teachers lack good quality information about pupils' achievement, because they do not identify specific strengths and weaknesses in pupils' knowledge by finding out what errors pupils make in test papers. Consequently pupils often work at the same activities regardless of their ability, because not all lessons are modified well enough to make sure that pupils reach the standards they could be expected to achieve. Also, the quality of teachers' marking is variable across the school. Comments do not usually refer to the aim of the lesson or provide sufficient guidance to show pupils what they need to do to improve.
56. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of the mathematics curriculum. A clear effective plan for improvement has been drawn up to raise standards. Monitoring of pupils' progress and the use of information from assessment of pupils has already been identified as a high priority in her action plan. As yet, the co-ordinator has not had sufficient opportunities to check the quality of teaching or implement plans for improvement. However, mathematics is a key focus of the school improvement plan for the coming year.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Teachers provide some appropriate opportunities for pupils to use their mathematics skills in other subjects, for example graph work in Year 6 science and geography. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum to help pupils improve their skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement in the development of pupils' investigative skills since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Achievement is good.
- Pupils enjoy science and it makes positive contributions to their personal development.
- There is good planning and subject leadership.

- Assessment does not always give pupils a clear idea about exactly what they have to do in order to improve.

Commentary

58. Inspection evidence suggests that although standards may not be as low this year, they will still be below average. Analysis of work completed and observation of work in lessons indicates that by the end of Year 6, standards are generally average with a small proportion on course to reach the higher level in forthcoming national tests. Recent national test results (2003) show consistently lower standards achieved. Standards do sometimes fluctuate according to the makeup of different year groups.
59. Standards of teaching and learning are good overall and pupils achieve well. Through the school, teachers demonstrate very strong subject knowledge and use this effectively to provide good challenges for pupils of all abilities. They are able to explain scientific principles in a way that all pupils can understand, and pay particular attention to developing pupils' scientific vocabulary.
60. A feature of the school's work in science is the emphasis placed on developing pupils' investigative skills. Because teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding and because they are confident, they relish providing investigations for pupils to undertake. Teachers also employ the techniques of accelerated learning well and all pupils are able to understand concepts and develop their scientific knowledge. Consequently, the great majority of pupils not only understand the principles of prediction, repeat testing and what constitutes a 'fair test', but they can explain how to go about setting up fair tests, relating theory to practice very well.
61. Very good well-planned teamwork between class teachers and teaching assistants creates good learning opportunities for different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers make effective use of a wide range of resources to make lessons exciting. This leads to a positive atmosphere and a buzz of excitement as pupils make discoveries and relate their findings in their own particular style, for example, visual, auditory or kinaesthetic. Teachers draw pupils' attention to the purpose of the lesson and this helps them understand how they are improving. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is supportive and there are examples of good practice, although it is not always consistent. Teachers rightly praise pupils for their efforts, but sometimes it is not made clear enough exactly what pupils have to do in order to improve. More could be done to involve pupils in setting their own individual targets for improvement, based upon good analysis of work.
62. The subject is well led and managed. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has a very clear view of strengths and areas for development. She has helped take the school forward in the accelerated learning development for investigative work. This has had a positive effect upon the teaching and learning in the school, in bringing the enjoyment and enthusiasm of the teachers and pupils together. The school has devised its own planning framework, based on national guidelines, and is currently working at developing further opportunities for science to support, and be supported by, other subjects. A very good example of this was noted during the inspection, where skills learned in science and design and technology were very well used together to tackle a project. Resources to support learning have been much enhanced, and the co-ordinator is keen to extend the range of ICT software in order to underpin learning in science.
63. The way that teachers co-operate, share and support, and utilise each other's skills in the teaching of science very much reflects the importance the whole school places on teamwork. A particular feature of science is the attention given to accelerated learning to build up pupils' speaking skills to enable them to report confidently and clearly to the whole class, using scientific language and in their own learning style that is visual, auditory or kinaesthetic.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy using ICT and take pride in the work they produce.
- ICT is underused as a tool for teaching and individualised learning.
- The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic.
- There has been good recent improvement in resources and staff expertise.
- The computer suite is well equipped and enables pupils to work individually and in pairs.
- Assessment of pupils' learning in ICT is not established in detail.

Commentary

64. By the end of Year 6, pupils' achievement is good as they systematically build on what they have learned in earlier years. Standards are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. All pupils are able to save and retrieve their work, and change fonts to alter its appearance. Pupils show very good skills in using word processing and desktop publishing programs, and the Internet for research or email. They are also quite secure in control and modelling aspects of the subject.
65. Teaching is good overall. All teachers are using the high quality ICT resources well. They are successfully developing their competence and confidence through good support and training. Some teachers already have very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach it very well. The technician support assistant makes a very positive contribution to the pupils' learning and the teachers' confidence. Pupils throughout the school are excited and inspired by the ICT lessons and this helps them to work hard and achieve well.
66. The subject leader leads and manages the subject well and provides good support to ensure teachers' knowledge, understanding and confidence and has a clear vision for developing provision in the subject. In a short time she has encouraged and overseen the training for all staff. From a low base of expertise and confidence, most teachers are now reasonably confident and enthusiastic about teaching ICT.
67. All pupils show enthusiasm for using ICT and take great pride in the quality of the work they record and print. Behaviour in the computer suite is very good and the area is safe and secure as pupils respect the equipment. Much good work has been completed by the subject leader to ensure that provision is more even and consistent. The school has maintained good standards since the last inspection and has shown good improvement in curriculum development and resources. Many improvements have been made, not least the building of an ICT suite. The co-ordinator is establishing identification of skills needed to assess the different topics. This will complement the school systems in assessment and the developing use of ICT to systematically support other subjects. As yet monitoring of teaching and learning is limited. Therefore the school does not have a clear or secure picture of pupils' standards and achievement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. There is limited use of ICT to support the curriculum in many subjects, such as literacy, numeracy and science; although for example, considerable use is made of the digital camera to highlight aspects of school life, and regular use is made of the Internet for research. Computers situated in classrooms, as opposed to those located in the suite, are not used often enough during ordinary lessons. This is not impeding the development of skills as the pupils now use the computer suite regularly but it does mean that the pupils still do not use the computer as a tool like a pen or pencil.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 6 do not meet the expectations of the agreed syllabus; achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Effective use of resources and visits helps bring the subject alive for pupils.
- There is currently no member of staff with responsibility to manage the subject due to the staff changes.

Commentary

69. Little teaching of religious education was seen during the inspection. However, from the written evidence available and discussions with Year 6 pupils it is evident that pupils are not achieving as well as they could. Standards have fallen since the last inspection. Pupils demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of different religious traditions, but confuse their special characteristics and are often unable to relate them to the appropriate religion. There is little evidence of pupils writing at length. They are not encouraged enough to put their thoughts onto paper and the amount of work seen is less than that normally found for pupils of a similar age. This results not only in missed opportunities to develop their literacy skills but also in missed chances to develop further their knowledge and understanding.
70. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in the three lessons seen. It is not possible from this limited evidence to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Lessons had a clear focus and in Years 3 and 4 built well on work covered in the previous lesson. Pupils in Year 4 greatly enjoyed the quiz, which gave them a chance to recall what they had learned from their visit to the Hindu temple. This visit made a significant contribution to pupils' learning and to their personal development. In two lessons, teachers made effective use of artefacts to stimulate discussion and promote learning.
71. There is currently no co-ordinator to lead the development of religious education. Although teachers' planning makes sure that pupils explore a range of spiritual and religious ideas, the lack of assessment procedures means that it is difficult for them to ensure that there is coherent development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. The inconsistency in pupils' work reflects the school's recent staffing difficulties. There is too little time for key staff to check the quality of work throughout the school, or to begin to implement improvements. However, the senior management team has identified the need to update the curriculum in line with the most recent locally agreed syllabus.
72. Not enough evidence was collected in **history** and **geography** to enable overall judgements to be made about the quality of provision.
73. Only one history lesson was seen and so no judgement can be made about the quality of teaching. Discussions with pupils and review of pupils' recent work show that standards in history are broadly in line with the expected levels, as was the case at the previous inspection. Pupils show satisfactory factual knowledge and understanding of some features of British history. They identify key differences between life now and in some former times such as the post-war period and the Sixties. In doing so, they show a suitable grasp of chronology and of some ways in which people's lives have been changed as the result of events and technological changes. Pupils' work shows satisfactory detail and depth but the range of work covered is relatively small. Pupils gain some useful experience of historical research using book sources and the Internet but their grasp of the nature and limitation of historical evidence

is insecure. In conversation, pupils are enthusiastic and polite and support each other well, showing very good attitudes to learning. There are no assessment procedures and, as a result, teachers cannot plan for the best progress. Though the subject leader is suitably informed, he has too little scope for impact, for example through the monitoring of teaching and planning for improvement.

74. No geography lessons were seen during the inspection and thus no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching and learning. Scrutiny of pupils' recent work and discussions with pupils suggest that standards are broadly in line with the expected levels but there is some weakness in coverage. Pupils make detailed investigations of mountains and rivers and the geological processes associated with them. In doing so, they make accurate diagrams and use subject terminology concisely. They conduct some local studies, including surveys of traffic and local businesses, sometimes presenting their findings in charts which they interpret satisfactorily. Pupils gain some experience of asking and answering geographical questions and of map-work. Average pupils show some understanding of the different climates to be found in the world and their impact on people's lives but cannot discuss them in suitable detail. Pupils have a satisfactory grasp of environmental issues such as those relating to pollution and can explain them at an appropriate level. In conversation, pupils showed very good attitudes to learning. There are no assessment procedures and this means that teachers lack the information they require to plan work that challenges pupils at the right level. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic but has too little opportunity to monitor provision and drive the subject forward.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. It was not possible to observe many lessons; only two art and design and two music lessons were seen. No lessons were observed in design and technology. Evidence in art and design and design and technology was gathered from pupils' finished work around the school, as well as the lessons. There is not enough evidence to make a firm judgement about the standards achieved and the quality of provision in any of the subjects.
76. The school's planning and timetables, and the work available, indicate that **art and design** is given a high profile. The art co-ordinator provides a strong lead for all the staff, supporting with planning and giving advice on skills and techniques. Throughout the school there are displays celebrating the work done during the school's art week. These examples show that pupils' drawing and painting skills are developing well. Some work, such as the Year 6 drawings of the *Beach Scene* by Degas, exceeds expectations for pupils of this age. Not only did the art week provide good opportunities for pupils to use a variety of art skills and work with an interesting range of media, but it also contributed well to the development of their literacy skills. Pupils were able to develop their research skills, using different resources, including ICT, to find out about the life and work of Degas. Throughout the school pupils study and learn from the work of well-known artists and the styles associated with different periods in history. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen was very good. Teachers planned interesting activities, which built very well on previous learning. In both lessons teachers introduced and encouraged pupils to use technical vocabulary to enable them to talk about their work. Pupils enjoy the various activities and are willing to work hard. They pay careful attention to teachers' guidance and these positive attitudes contribute to their good achievement. Opportunities to evaluate and discuss their work help them to recognise good quality work and how they might improve what they have done.
77. Planning for **design and technology** is based on the national guidance. In Year 5 pupils have designed and made a range of bird feeders. Their efforts are celebrated by an attractive display in the shared area. These show that teaching places strong emphasis on skills and techniques and pupils' work demonstrates good knowledge of the design process as well as the skills of making. Pupils' designs are labelled clearly, and include useful views from different aspects. Their ongoing evaluation of their products results in articles that are finished to a good standard because pupils carry out improvements. Pupils develop their literacy skills well as they

complete their design sheets and detailed written evaluations. The subject co-coordinator is strongly committed to the development of the subject, but the subject is not a school priority at present. She has been unable to carry out the monitoring role and further development is restricted.

78. In **music**, teachers' plans show that pupils have suitable opportunities to develop their skills across the expected range of musical activities. Pupils can extend their skills by joining an after-school club or learning a musical instrument. At the present time few pupils have taken up the opportunity to learn the flute, clarinet or a brass instrument. Pupils throughout the school regularly take part in musical performances, both in school and in local community events, including performing at assemblies. They have some interesting opportunities to see and work with musicians through events organised by the local authority music service. Teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory. The lessons had a clear focus and involved pupils in learning through practical music making activities, which they greatly enjoyed. However, teachers' insecure subject knowledge restricts the progress pupils are able to make, as does the limited range of good quality percussion instruments available in lessons. There is currently no co-ordinator to lead the development of the music curriculum.
79. Only one **physical education** lesson was seen during the inspection and, therefore, no judgements can be made about the quality of teaching and learning. The provision for physical education allows the minimum of time each week which may not allow for pupils to reap the benefits of vigorous activity and build progress in the required elements of the curriculum. Good use is made of the skills of visiting coaches. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities including individual and team sports and these are well attended. However, whilst these help to offset for certain pupils the lack of dedicated curriculum time, they do not secure for all pupils satisfactory coverage or equality of opportunity. There are no assessment procedures and, as a result, pupils' progress in the different aspects of physical education is not tracked effectively and planned for. The subject leader is soundly informed about overall strengths and weaknesses in the subject but has limited scope for action.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

80. Provision in personal, social and health education is **satisfactory**. Pupils' personal, social and health education is embedded in all aspects of the school's work. A strength of the provision is the commitment to developing pupils' personal skills through the residential visit, which takes place in Year 6. This provides opportunities for pupils to take part in new activities away from home and helps them to mature and gain confidence. A commitment to involving pupils in the performing arts gives pupils of all abilities opportunities to succeed and raises their self-esteem well. Pupils do well to develop a secure understanding of their own personal worth and awareness of their place within the school community. They are taught to take on responsibilities and participate in school activities. For example, pupils take on jobs such as lunchtime monitors, helping with the smooth running of the dining hall. During regular sessions pupils are encouraged to talk about and share their thoughts and feelings, and explore relationships. Through talking about their own feelings, they learn to handle them in a positive way. This helps pupils to form good relationships with others and they willingly offer solutions to help other pupils solve their problems. The high-profile buddy club supports pupils very well as do the playground mediators.
81. Regular personal, social and health education lessons are timetabled in each class and the three sessions seen were good overall. There is no up-to-date scheme of work to ensure coherence in what is covered. However, staff provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to explore issues that concern them. For example, in Year 6 pupils were thinking about how to cope with the differences they would find at their new schools when they move on later in the year. The school does as much as it can to prepare pupils for this big step in their lives, but links with the secondary school are not as strong as they might be, although the junior school has tried to extend the current arrangements.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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