

INSPECTION REPORT

PELHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bexleyheath

LEA area: Bexley

Unique reference number: 101410

Headteacher: Mr John Stevens

Lead inspector: Selwyn Ward

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th November 2003

Inspection number: 257174

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:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	396
School address:	Pelham Road Bexleyheath
Postcode:	DA7 4HL
Telephone number:	0208 303 6556
Fax number:	0208 304 3065
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Reid OBE
Date of previous inspection:	27 April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Pelham is a large primary school catering for boys and girls aged 3 to 11. Children in the nursery classes attend part-time. Nine out of ten pupils are white and of British heritage. There are a very small number of pupils learning English as an additional language. Pupils come from a diverse range of backgrounds but, taken overall, their socio-economic background is average, which is reflected in the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, which is also average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above average and the number with statements of special educational need is almost three times that of average schools. In part, this is because the school includes a unit for hearing-impaired children, although additionally there are pupils with moderate learning difficulties and with autism. Taken overall, children are of below average ability when they join the school. Pelham Primary has won two Government Achievement Awards for its improved Year 6 test results in 2001 and 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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15023	Ali Haouas	Team inspector	English, Information & communication technology, History, Music, Physical education
23288	Marianne Harris	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Science, Citizenship, Design technology, Geography, Religious education
21090	David Manuel	Team inspector	Mathematics, Art, special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Pelham Primary is a **good** school that caters well for pupils with a wide range of abilities, including many with hearing-impairment. It provides **good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils of all abilities are now achieving well
- The school is well led and managed
- The good provision for hearing-impaired pupils benefits all the children in the school
- The school provides well for pupils' personal development and, as a result, pupils behave well, get on very well with one another and are keen to learn
- Pupils benefit from a good range of learning opportunities, although the amount of teaching time is below the recommended minimum and pupils would benefit from more opportunities to practise their reading
- Teachers do not make enough use of assessment information and marking does not always give pupils enough guidance on what they need to do to do better
- Pupils are given good support and are looked after well
- Attendance is unsatisfactory
- Teachers and pupils have to cope with cramped classrooms and school buildings that seem to have reached the end of their natural life

There has been **good improvement** since the last inspection. The issues identified in the last report have been tackled well, with particularly good improvements in teaching and in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Although, in recent years, pupils have not done as well as they could in Years 1 and 2, pupils are now achieving well throughout the school and improved Year 6 test results have won the school two Government Achievement Awards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Inspectors judge pupils' achievement looking at the progress they make over their time in school as well as how well they do in lessons. Pupils' overall **achievement is good**. Children join the school with a very wide range of capabilities, including many with special educational needs, including some with autism and other learning difficulties in addition to those who attend the hearing-impaired unit. Overall, pupils are of below average ability when they join the school. Children get off to a good start in their nursery and reception years. They achieve well, although a significant number will not attain all of the early learning goals that children are expected to reach by the end of their reception year. In recent years, pupils have not achieved well enough in Years 1 and 2, although they have caught up lost ground and done well in Years 3 to 6. Improvements in teaching and in the organisation of lessons, particularly in providing more opportunities for writing, have resulted in improved standards and pupils now achieving well throughout the school. Although standards in English and mathematics are currently below average in Year 2, they are improving. Standards are average in all of the other subjects inspected and above average in English by the end of Year 6.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils get on very well with one another and their behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils enjoy school and their attitudes to learning are good. Attendance fell last year and is now unsatisfactory. Although the school has satisfactory systems for monitoring attendance, more could be done to promote better attendance. Parents, too, could do more to avoid unnecessary absence.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is good. Teaching and learning are good. Because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, there are often two or three teaching assistants in classes working well alongside the teacher and this benefits all pupils. Time is well used in lessons and, as a result, pupils get a lot done. This largely counteracts the loss of teaching time due to the school day being shorter than the recommended minimum, although more time would enable pupils to benefit from more support with reading. Despite this shortcoming, the curriculum is good. It is well matched to pupils' needs and there is a good range of clubs and out-of-school activities that enrich pupils' education. A notable strength of the school is the way in which all children mix and work well together, with pupils from the hearing-impaired unit fully involved in lessons and with all children (and most of the staff) benefiting from the opportunity to learn signing.

Assessment is satisfactory. There are examples of very good marking, particularly in English, with pupils gaining from very clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work. In other cases however, work is just ticked or given a smiley face symbol by way of encouragement. Teachers and other staff know, support and care for pupils well, although information from assessment is not always used enough to plan lessons. The school has been successful in building a good and effective partnership with parents, strongly enhanced through the training sessions organised for parents in literacy, numeracy and ICT. There are satisfactory links with other schools and the wider community.

The school buildings look as if they are close to the end of their natural life and governors have identified the need for substantial renovation or replacement. Staff and older children, in particular, have to cope with very cramped classrooms and children in the reception year have no dedicated outside area with easy access.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and leadership team have a shared commitment to improvement that has helped to build a very inclusive school where all are involved, where teaching is consistently good and where children of all abilities achieve well. Governors do a satisfactory job. They are very supportive of the school although they have a clearer appreciation of what the school does well than, with the exception of the school buildings, of the areas that could be improved.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. Parents expressed strongly favourable views on almost all aspects of the school with the exception of information on how well their children are doing. Inspectors found information to parents, including school reports, to be good. Pupils expressed particularly favourable views about teaching and how much they learnt in lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve attendance
- Ensure that all marking gives pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to do better
- Review the length of the school day and ensure that pupils have more opportunities to practice their reading

- Continue to press for replacement or renovation of the school buildings

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that reporting requirements in the governors' annual report and prospectus are fully met

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Although there has been some underachievement in the school in the past in Years 1 and 2, achievement is now **good** throughout the school, with pupils of all abilities, including the more able and those with special educational needs, achieving well. Standards are average overall and they are above average in English by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start in the nursery and reception classes
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the school
- Standards are above average in English by the end of Year 6
- Though improved in comparison with last year's test results, standards are still below average by the end of Year 2

Commentary

1. Children join the school with a very wide range of capabilities, broadened by the number of children with high levels of special educational needs. These include those joining the school's hearing-impaired unit as well as a number with high levels of special educational need for autism and other learning difficulties. The number of pupils with special educational needs, and the nature of their needs, obviously varies from year to year and this variation contributes to the fluctuations that can be seen in the school's overall test scores.
2. Children get off to a good start in the nursery and reception classes. As a result of the consistently good teaching and the very effective support that children receive, they make good, steady progress and achieve well, although a significant number, who join the school with very low attainment, do not attain all of the early learning goals that children are expected to reach by the end of their reception year. Children achieve particularly well in their social development. Their achievement in physical development is satisfactory but progress in this area of learning is inhibited through the lack of a dedicated outside play area for children in their reception year.
3. The tables below show the average points scores attained in the Year 2 and Year 6 tests in 2003 (with the 2002 scores in brackets). One point represents roughly one term's progress, so the tables show, for example, pupils in Year 2 last year were on average two terms behind in writing but by the end of Year 6 last year, children were on average a term ahead of pupils nationally in English.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003		
Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.8 (16.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.6 (13.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.2 (16.1)	16.3 (16.5)

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

4. Although the evidence from past test scores in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 suggests that there has been a degree of underachievement in Years 1 and 2, inspectors found pupils in Years 1 and 2 to be achieving well, although standards in English and mathematics remain below average overall. The recent school focus on writing has had a beneficial effect in raising standards, through, for example, daily diary writing, with teachers discussing with pupils the vocabulary and spellings that they will use before children start their individual work.
5. Standards in English are above average in Year 6, as they were in last year's tests. In mathematics and science, standards are average, which again matches the results attained by Year 6 pupils last year. This represents good achievement, with, as in Years 1 and 2, pupils of all abilities, including the more able and those with special educational needs, making good progress. In the last inspection, progress in Years 3 to 6 was judged to be unsatisfactory, so this represents very good improvement since the last inspection.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003		
Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (28.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.2 (28.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.8 (29.8)	28.6 (28.3)
<i>There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.</i>		

6. In other subjects inspected, standards in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 are average. Achievement is satisfactory in art and religious education and good in other subjects. Again, this represents good improvement since the last inspection. Improvement is very good in information and communication technology (ICT) where significant weaknesses were identified in the last inspection report but where standards are now in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6, and where pupils are achieving well.
7. Most pupils with special educational needs attain standards that are below and sometimes well below average. However, they receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants and this enables them to make good progress towards their targets. In relation to their prior attainment, they achieve just as well as other pupils. Because their particular learning needs are clearly identified and they are given good support, the few pupils learning English as an additional language also achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The provision for pupils' personal development is **good**. Pupils have good attitudes to school and to learning. Behaviour is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to school and their work are good
- Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is good
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good
- Absence rates are too high and too many children are late arriving to school

Commentary

8. The provision that the school makes for pupils' social and moral development is good. The inclusive ethos of the school ensures that all pupils understand right and wrong. They learn how to live in a community and to be tolerant towards one another, particularly when some pupils have special educational needs to cope with. Staff encourage pupils to behave responsibly and help one another, as well as helping with classroom chores. When they move into Years 5 and 6, pupils undertake a range of responsibilities to assist in the smooth running of the school.
9. One aspect of school life that is particularly noteworthy is the way that pupils from the hearing-impaired unit are integrated into the life of the school throughout the day. Pupils from the unit join classes for some lessons and seamlessly become full members of the class. Conversely, hearing pupils learn basic signing in order to communicate with their hearing-impaired friends. It was a moving occasion to see all the Years 3 to 6 pupils in an assembly singing and signing "Away in a manger".
10. The school works hard to promote good behaviour and this is successful. There have been no exclusions over the past year. All the adults set a good example to pupils in the way that they treat everyone with respect. Staff make their expectations clear and pupils understand what is expected of them. Pupils know and understand the rewards that they can earn in their classes for good work, effort and behaviour. Similarly they enjoy *Golden Time* – a short period at the end of the week where, as a reward, they choose activities for themselves. They understand that unacceptable behaviour can lead to the loss of that time. At playtimes, pupils play well together, if somewhat boisterously, and enjoy using the equipment that is provided. Lunchtimes are well organised. In the dining hall, pupils chat happily together and welcome visitors.

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	358	0	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	4	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0
Any other ethnic group	7	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

11. No examples of bullying or racism were seen during the inspection. Pupils and parents mentioned that there have been incidents of bullying from time to time, and when any such difficulty does occur, it is dealt with immediately by staff. Boys and girls of all ages mix well together and pupils new to the school are assigned a special friend whilst they become familiar with the school, making sure that they are not lonely or left out.

12. Pupils' attendance was below average in the last academic year and has deteriorated since the previous year, when it was in line with the national average. It is clear from the school's attendance and attainment records that pupils who do not attend school regularly do not achieve as well as others. The procedures for promoting attendance are satisfactory. They have ensured that the level of unauthorised absence has decreased significantly, but more could be done to promote attendance through linking it to the school's rewards system. There are a number of families who do not appreciate the importance of regular attendance. Too many keep their children out of school for trivial or avoidable reasons. With the assistance of the education welfare officer from the local education authority the school is working to address these issues.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)					
Authorised absence			Unauthorised absence		
School data	6.9		School data :	0.3	
National data	5.4		National data:	0.5	
<i>The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.</i>					

13. Punctuality is unsatisfactory. The late arrival of pupils at school disrupts the start of the day and pupils' learning, not only for the pupils that are late but also the rest of the class. So far, in the present term, on average eleven pupils have arrived late for school every day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are good, as is the curriculum. There are good arrangements for the care and welfare of the pupils, and the school has been successful in developing an effective partnership with parents to support pupils' education. Marking and assessment are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned and pupils know what they are expected to learn
- Time is well used and pupils get a lot done in lessons
- Pupils benefit from a lot of support because of the number of adults in most classes
- Work is usually well matched to pupils' needs, although in some lessons more able pupils could be set more challenging work
- Some marking is very good, giving pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work, but other marking does little more than acknowledge pupils' work

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 58 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	11 (19%)	30 (52%)	16 (28%)	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. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

14. The quality of teaching is significantly better than that seen in the last inspection, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Pupils benefit from a remarkably consistent standard of good teaching throughout the school. This matches the strongly favourable views of teaching expressed by both parents and pupils in the questionnaires they completed before the inspection.
15. Teachers make good use of national guidance in planning their lessons, usually with clear introductions that spell out for pupils not merely what activities they are going to be undertaking but what it is they are expected to learn from the lesson. For younger pupils, teachers are careful to phrase the learning objectives in language that the children can understand. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson, the teacher's planned objective for pupils to learn "*that light reflects from some objects and that shiny objects are not light sources*" was paraphrased to the pupils as "*Can shiny objects show up in the dark?*"
16. Activities are well chosen, and are suitably varied by teachers to maintain pupils' interest and involvement and, as a result, pupils concentrate well on their work. In some lessons, though, pupils are expected to sit too long on the carpet listening to the teacher's introduction. Most lessons end with a whole-class discussion on what has been learnt that helps to reinforce the main points from the lesson. Particularly for younger pupils, this gives an important boost to children's self-esteem as they are able to take some pride in what they have achieved in the lesson.
17. Teachers maintain a brisk pace of work in lessons and pupils get a lot done. This was evident not just from the lessons seen during the inspection but also from pupils' past work, where it was clear that a good amount had been covered across the full range of curriculum subjects. This is in spite of the fact that, with breaks, the length of the school day is shorter than the recommended minimum.

Example of outstanding practice
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An outstanding literacy lesson in Year 1 on the use of speech bubbles and the recognition of capital letters resulted in pupils making particularly good progress because of the demonstration of skills

<p>Good attention was given to enabling pupils to grasp unfamiliar vocabulary by getting them to use it in a sentence and identify which word in the sentence had to be a capital letter. Further consolidation was provided by getting pupils to match lower and upper case letters on a felt board and by distributing a combination of these to different pupils and getting individuals to find a partner with the corresponding letter. The shared text was creatively used to enable pupils to identify the speech of the main character in a story by encouraging expressive reading and demonstrating the use of speech bubbles. This part of the lesson was effectively used to match work to different abilities and encouraging pupils to work collaboratively. Both the teacher and the assistant worked with the less able groups, where good access to the activity was facilitated through the scribing of pupils' ideas. Throughout the lesson, pupils' response was exemplary and all pupils were fully engaged.</p>

18. Because the school caters for pupils with hearing-impairment as well as many others with high levels of special educational needs, there are often several teaching assistants or support teachers in class alongside the class teacher. Although these are mostly there to support specific pupils, all pupils benefit from the availability in class of so many skilled helpers working together as a team. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in classes and in small groups helping them to understand the tasks and to make good progress in them. Teachers and assistants focus clearly on the particular needs of these pupils, helping them to meet their individual targets. They are calm and patient and are clearly aware of pupils' social and other personal needs while supporting them academically. The good support provided by teaching assistants contributes significantly to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.
19. The quality of support provided for the few pupils learning English as an additional language is good. A visiting specialist teacher works in close partnership with class teachers. Good use

is made of initial assessment information to pitch activities at a level appropriate to individual needs and pupils in the early stages of learning English benefit from work with a teaching assistant in small groups. Teachers use questioning effectively to prompt and support pupils' responses, for instance by drawing on their cultural background. This was clearly illustrated in a history lesson on schooling in Victorian times, where a pupil instantly recognised a slate and was able to contribute her knowledge of this artefact having used it in her country of origin.

20. Throughout the school, questioning is used well by teachers to recap what pupils have learnt before and to check their understanding. Most teachers are skilled at posing open-ended questions that prompt more expansive responses from the pupils and so help to develop their speaking and listening skills. Although teachers expect pupils to follow orderly classroom routines, including putting up their hands to answer questions rather than calling out, teachers are careful to ensure that all pupils are included and involved in lessons. They do this by not merely taking answers from those who volunteer them, but by directing some questions at those pupils who are more reticent about putting up their hands.
21. Work is usually well matched to pupils' different needs. In this way, teachers cater well for the wide range of capabilities within their class. In just a few lessons, however, particularly where pupils had been grouped according to ability, more able pupils were set less challenging work than they were capable of. Homework is used well to support pupils' learning. Older pupils, in particular, have a clear understanding of what homework is expected and they have a clear idea, from the marking, of how well they have done in the work they complete at home.
22. Assessment was identified as a weakness in the last inspection. It is much improved. There are some examples of very good marking in the school, particularly in English, that gives pupils very clear feedback and spells out exactly what they need to do to further improve their work. Not all marking and assessment, however, is as good as this. Some work is just ticked or given a smiley face symbol by way of encouragement. Assessment, overall is satisfactory.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **good**. It is enhanced through a good range of clubs and other out-of-school activities as well as the extra opportunities offered through the school's provision for hearing-impaired pupils. The school is adequately resourced but the school buildings are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils benefit from a broader range of learning opportunities than in many other schools, including the opportunity to learn sign language
- There is a good range of clubs and out-of-school activities
- This school provides well for pupils with special educational needs, and for those learning English as an additional language
- The school day is shorter than the recommended minimum
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory

Commentary

23. National Curriculum requirements and those of the locally-agreed syllabus in religious education are fully met and the provision for children in the nursery and reception years is well matched to their needs. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where not all National Curriculum requirements were being met, particularly in relation to the school's provision for ICT. Because the school incorporates infant and junior units for hearing-impaired pupils, widespread use is made throughout the school of sign language. All pupils benefit from the opportunities to learn sign language from the nursery and reception years onwards and,

although few attain fluency, most develop sufficient vocabulary to be able to understand and make themselves understood to other signers. This is a significant enhancement of the curriculum that extends beyond that offered by most other schools. Pelham Primary strongly promotes equality of opportunity and access in all its work, and this inclusivity is an important strength of the school, although more care could be taken in planning work to ensure that where pupils leave class at a regular time each week for, for example, an individual instrumental music lesson with a visiting music teacher, they do not always miss the same lesson.

24. Further enhancement of the curriculum is offered through a wide range of clubs and other out-of-school activities, including several organised and run by pupils themselves. Rather than ban new crazes, the school has encouraged pupils to pursue their interests, so that, for example, dedicated areas have been set aside for pupils to play with their battling gyroscopic spinning tops and for others to paint their wargaming figurines. The level of pupil participation in sports, music and other clubs is very high. The school choir, for example, which includes children from the hearing-impaired units and signs as well as sings, involves around one in six of the pupils.
25. The school day is shorter than the recommended minimum, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teachers' good use of time in lessons largely counteracts the negative effect of this, in that pupils' work shows no evidence that subjects have been studied in any less depth as a result of the reduced teaching time. Nevertheless, a revision of the school day to bring it into line with the recommended minimum would enable teachers to provide more structured opportunities for guided reading and other activities that might further raise standards and achievement. More time during the school week might also extend the opportunities for more structured provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Although this is satisfactorily provided for within other subjects, it does not currently have a formal slot in the timetable.
26. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and teaching assistants carefully adapt work to meet the specific needs of individuals, including academic, personal, social and physical needs. This enables them fully to access all subjects. Opportunities are used well to raise pupils' awareness of languages spoken by bilingual learners, for instance, when the register is called and pupils are quickly taught a new greeting in Arabic by one pupil.
27. Resources are satisfactory, overall. They are good in ICT – a significant improvement on the last inspection. The computer suite is used well, although little use was seen during the inspection of the computers in classrooms. The playing fields are large, giving pupils plenty of space to enjoy their playtimes as well as outdoor sports lessons. The nursery has a fenced well-equipped play area, although the reception class is not so fortunate, and the lack of a dedicated play area for reception children impacts adversely on their achievement in the physical development area of learning.
28. The main school building is unsatisfactory for delivering the curriculum to the number of pupils in the school. With just one exception, the classrooms are too small to comfortably accommodate all the pupils, teachers, support assistants and equipment, so that they can work and move around the rooms. There are two halls but neither is large enough to offer sufficient room for performers and audiences at school productions. The main corridor around the school is cluttered with all manner of tables, storage, chairs and racks, which restricts the easy and safe movement of the large numbers of pupils and staff around the school. When it rains, because of blocked drains and missing guttering, the playground floods making access into the school difficult and limiting the useable playground for some time after the rain has stopped. All these factors combine to inhibit pupils' learning and achievement.

Care, guidance and support

The care that the school takes of pupils is **good**. Monitoring and guidance for pupils, and arrangements for involving pupils and listening to their views are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of pupils
- Vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs are identified and sensitively provided for
- Pupils are able to put forward ideas through a school council, although this is led by staff rather than the pupils themselves

Commentary

29. Pupils are very happy; they feel safe and well looked after. Parents spoke very highly of the quality of care and support given to their children. Good child protection procedures are in place. Particular attention is paid to ensuring that all members of staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in this area, with regular reminders at staff meetings. There are good, well-established routines in place for dealing with first aid and administering medicines, with four staff fully trained in emergency first aid. Notices around the school ensure that staff are all aware of and able to respond quickly to the particular needs of pupils known to be at risk from sudden illness through serious allergies or diabetes. Safety checks on potentially dangerous equipment take place annually, alarms are tested regularly and practice evacuations of the premises take place each term with their timings and any difficulties recorded.
30. A school council meets regularly to enable pupils in Years 3 to 6 to voice their opinions and represent the views of others in their class. All pupils, and particularly the class representatives, take the work of the school council very seriously, and feel that their reasonable views are taken into consideration. They were not surprised that their less realistic requests, for example, for a swimming pool, were not followed up. At present, school council meetings are, in effect, chaired and run by a member of staff. Older pupils do not currently have the opportunity to develop their roles and take more of a lead in running meetings.
31. The headteacher and staff are aware of the needs of individuals with special educational needs which are identified early in their school lives. This is reflected in the good provision made for them from the outset and ensures that they receive good levels of support as they progress through the school. Individual learning plans are of good quality and are reviewed and updated regularly. Class teachers and support staff monitor progress closely. As a result, they know these pupils well and have a clear awareness of their strengths and weaknesses.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is **good**. Links with the wider local community and other schools are satisfactory. Educational support programmes for parents are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have a high regard for the school
- The reports on pupils' progress are good
- The school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents do not fully meet reporting requirements
- Parents give good support to the school, particularly through the Parents Association
- The work of the Family Learning Group makes a positive contribution to the school

Commentary

32. Parents are happy with the school. In meeting parents at school, informally and at the parents meeting, and from the questionnaire, their views were very favourable and no significant concerns were expressed. Parents feel able to approach the school at any time to discuss their children with the staff. They particularly appreciate the standards that their children achieve, the care that the school takes, the standards of behaviour and the general ethos of the school. Many commented very favourably on the benefits to all children of the hearing-impaired units being in the school, including the opportunities to learn signing.
33. In the summer term, parents receive the annual reports on individual pupils. These reports are good and appreciated by parents. They describe what the pupil has done, what effort and progress they have made, and include some helpful comments on things that are not so good or need working on. Reports include a commentary on attitudes to school, social and personal development, as well as targets for the future. These targets are reviewed again with parents in the autumn term. The school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents do not fully comply with reporting requirements in that they do not currently include the results of statutory tests and comparisons with national averages.
34. Parents support the school through a successful Parents Association which runs a number of functions throughout the year and raises substantial funds which are spent on providing additional facilities for the school, such as television and video equipment in all the classrooms, library books and playground equipment. Some parents, however, could do more to support their children's education by getting them to school on time and ensuring that they do not take them out of school for avoidable reasons, such as holidays in term time.
35. In co-operation with the adult education department of the local education authority, the school runs a Family Learning Group. Presently, there is a literacy programme which takes place on two mornings each week where parents attend to refresh their own literacy skills, and later take formal qualifications. For half an hour, they are joined by their children so that they may work together and then carry on with similar work at home. Similar courses have been run in numeracy and ICT. Not only do these activities benefit the parents who attend, they add a significant dimension to the learning of their children.
36. The special educational needs co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the quality of information provided for parents about their children who have special educational needs. She has been very sensitive to the fact that some parents find it difficult to approach the school about some problems and has established less formal ways to discuss problems and give advice.
37. The school has satisfactory links with other schools and with the wider community which include appropriate links with the main secondary schools to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. Pupils regularly raise significant sums for a range of, mainly local, charities.

Hearing-impaired units

The provision for pupils who are hearing-impaired is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and pupils make good progress
- The two units are managed well and there are effective systems to check pupils' learning
- Links with parents and with the other professionals involved in pupils' care and education are good
- Good opportunities for training ensure that pupils' needs are well met and that there is a good level of integration and deaf awareness in the school

Commentary

38. Teachers in the two units, who are both qualified teachers of the deaf, have very good knowledge and understanding of pupils' special educational needs. They use teaching methods that are extremely effective in promoting pupils' communication skills and there is a consistent emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary and their understanding of language. Teachers and support staff are effective in modelling signs and full sentences so that hearing-impaired pupils become fluent communicators who are willing and confident to contribute. Pupils are quick to learn from their mistakes and staff are careful to ensure that pupils learn how to interpret and use the cues and prompts they are given. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and they insist on good levels of participation. As a result, pupils concentrate well and try particularly hard to answer questions in detail. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievement because it enables teachers to check if they have understood. There is very good teamwork between the teachers and the teaching assistants which makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievement and their personal development. The staff from the two units are particularly effective in supporting pupils learning when they join mainstream classes for lessons.
39. There are good systems to check pupils' achievement which clearly identify what pupils know and can do and what they need to learn next. This information is used effectively by teachers to plan work and this enables pupils to achieve well. Activities and tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities, providing good opportunities for them to acquire new skills and to practise what they already know. In relation to the targets set for them, pupils make very good progress in developing their language and communication and they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, all of which are taught by the two teachers from the units. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in all other areas of the curriculum because they are effectively supported, through interpreters and adapted work, to participate in lessons with their mainstream peers.
40. The units are managed effectively. The two teachers have established enthusiastic and experienced teams to support pupils' learning. There is a strong commitment from unit staff to developing and improving their skills and there is good participation in a wide range of training opportunities, such as signing courses. The two unit teachers provide a good level of training and support for their mainstream colleagues by promoting deaf awareness. Teachers, particularly for younger pupils, are beginning to use their understanding to consider the needs of their deaf pupils when they plan lessons. The promotion of deaf awareness for pupils across the school is good and amongst the youngest in particular there are a growing number of hearing pupils who are confident to sign single words. The school's signing choir is well thought of in the local community. The effectiveness of teaching and of the support provided for pupils is monitored well by checking pupils' achievement.
41. The two teachers have worked hard to establish good links with other professionals who are involved in the care and education of pupils, and with the local deaf community, which contribute significantly to pupils' success. The effective and co-operative working relationship that has been forged with the speech and language therapist and the audiology service, in particular, ensures that pupils' needs are addressed well. There are good relationships between staff and parents which result in a constant flow of information between home and

school about pupils' experiences, their needs and their achievement. This information is used well to promote and support pupils' learning and their personal development. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher and key staff are an effective team that has been successful in ensuring all pupils achieve well. Governors are satisfactory. They support the school well, but have been too focussed on the issue of buildings to address other weaknesses.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has been successful in building an effective team
- Key staff lead their subjects well and this has resulted in all pupils achieving well
- The headteacher and other key staff know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have taken effective steps to improve provision, although available data could be organised better so that issues can be identified early enough to take action
- Governors are very supportive of the school and understand what the school does well, but are not sufficiently aware of what needs improving

Commentary

42. The headteacher provides good leadership and has a clear vision for the future of the school. This vision is to raise standards and include everyone in the life of the school. This has been successful, as all pupils feel fully involved and all, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. The headteacher has created a successful teaching and support team, who work together very well, and this has led to consistently good teaching and learning across the school.
43. Key staff are enthusiastic and lead their subjects well. All have had time to look at planning and the work that is done in their area and this has resulted in improved provision and raised standards. Planning has been a particular focus and this is a positive feature of the school. Tasks and activities in all subjects are well planned so that the necessary skills and knowledge are taught effectively. Subject co-ordinators have played a vital role in this as they have been able to check pupils' work to ensure that all of the elements are covered effectively.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003			
Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,121,041	Balance from previous year	38,409
Total expenditure	1,088,225	Balance carried forward to the next	71,225
Expenditure per pupil	2,667		

44. Management of the school is satisfactory. The school has identified appropriate areas for improvement in teaching and learning, but does not always use the available data to help them pinpoint issues. An example of this is attendance. All of the data is available but the school had carried out little analysis of pupils with poor attendance, and therefore, has few strategies to combat this. Performance management is established in the school. The headteacher has a clear understanding of 'best value'. He knows how well the school is doing compared with other schools, and has taken steps to ensure that money is spent wisely. However, as the table above shows, the school has a large amount of money that has built up and, although the

headteacher has specific spending plans for this, these have not yet been approved by governors.

45. Governance, overall, is satisfactory. The governors of the school are very supportive and understand clearly what the school is doing well. However, the issue of the unsatisfactory buildings has taken up much of their time and they are not sufficiently focussed on addressing other issues. They have worked hard to try and secure funding to improve the buildings, but this has so far been unsuccessful and another attempt is being planned. Although they know that the school is effective and pupils are achieving well, they have not held the school to account for the low attendance rate, or the fact that the taught day is shorter than the recommended minimum. There is some information missing from their annual report to parents as the national test results have not been reported.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision, overall, in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) is **good**.

When children join the nursery, they have skills and knowledge that are below those expected. However, children's language skills are well below those expected and many have difficulty communicating with adults and other children. During their time in the nursery and reception classes, children make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning. Most of the children reach most of the expected goals for children's learning, although few exceed them and a significant number of those who join the school with learning difficulties or very low prior attainment do not reach the early learning goals. Overall, children's language skills are below average when they enter Year 1.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn to sign so that others with hearing-impairment are fully included in lessons
- Children settle into school well and are happy
- Children behave well because staff expect them to

Commentary

46. Children make very good progress towards the expected goals for personal, social and emotional development. Staff in both the nursery and reception classes form very good relationships with the children. Consequently, children are happy in school and quickly settle to the routines. Children play well together and share their toys willingly. A particularly strong feature of the provision is the expectation that all children will sign, so that when hearing-impaired children join the class they can all communicate. Young children enjoy signing as well as singing songs, such as *'Old MacDonald had a Farm'*. Throughout their time in the nursery, children become increasingly independent and staff expect them to dress and undress on their own, with just a little help if necessary. As a result, when they go into the reception class, the children cope with their own needs and work independently at tasks and activities.

Communication, Language and Literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers expect children to listen attentively and speak confidently
- There are many opportunities for children to begin to write, although too many use capital letters in the middle of their name
- Children enjoy making up their own stories and acting out their experiences

Commentary

47. Children make good progress towards the expected goals in communication, language and literacy. Although many of the children will not reach all of the goals, and standards are below average when they enter Year 1, they nevertheless achieve well. In the nursery, children have many opportunities to make up their own stories, as well as listening to those teachers read out. All children have access to a wide variety of books and they learn to use them appropriately. During group and activity times, staff encourage the children to listen attentively by giving them an appropriate amount of time sitting on the carpet. So, by the time they go into the reception class, children listen to what others are saying and speak clearly in response. Early writing skills are encouraged well in the nursery, and when they go into reception the children begin to write their names confidently. However, many children use capital letters in the middle of their name and staff do not always correct this. Children are encouraged to listen to the sounds that letters make and this helps them when they begin to write on their own, as they sound out words and try to spell them correctly.

Mathematical Development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn to count accurately
- Children know a wide variety of shapes
- Children use mathematical language appropriately

Commentary

48. Children make good progress in their mathematical development and achieve well. In the nursery, early counting skills are encouraged well so that children learn to count accurately. By the time they go into the reception year, children count how many are present and calculate how many children are away. In the nursery, the children learn a wide variety of mathematical vocabulary and more able children identify the properties of simple shapes. This knowledge is developed well in the reception year as children are encouraged to talk about and look at three-dimensional shapes. They use words such as *edges* and *faces* to describe what these shapes are like. Staff plan the use of sand and water carefully so that children experience talking about *big, small, full* and *empty*.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Provision for this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn a lot about other religions
- The outside area is used well so that children can plant and grow things
- Children gain confidence when using the computer

Commentary

49. Activities to promote children's understanding of their growing world are well planned. The outside area in the nursery is very well used so that children can plant their own bulbs and seeds and tend them as they grow. In the reception year, children learn about light and dark and understand where light comes from. This is linked effectively with festivals involving light so that children learn about other faiths and religious practices. There are many opportunities for

children to design and build their own models, although the cramped space in the reception classrooms makes it difficult to have these readily available for the children. Computers, and relevant programs, are provided so that children can become confident when using the mouse and the keyboard. Children talk about events that are important to them and in the reception year have the opportunity to take home *Barney Barker* – the class toy mascot - so that they can share what they do at home with the rest of the class.

Physical Development

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff plan well for physical development
- The lack of dedicated outdoor space hinders children's physical development in the reception year

Commentary

50. Children make satisfactory progress overall in their physical development. In the nursery, they get off to a good start and have the space to run, jump and climb safely and with increasing control. They learn to use a wide variety of tools, such as scissors and paintbrushes, and they become well co-ordinated. However, progress slows in the reception year as there is no dedicated outdoor space for these children to use. This results in them having to use the playground when others are not using it and this is not always convenient. Teachers make good use of the hall to encourage children to develop their large muscles, but space is at a premium and children do not make as much progress as they could. However, they do make good progress in using tools safely and correctly and there are many activities planned to develop these skills.

Creative Development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have many opportunities to explore materials and to make pictures
- Children sing and sign enthusiastically
- Children enjoy making up their own stories and games

Commentary

51. Children make good progress in creative development, although the cramped conditions in the reception classrooms make it difficult to provide many experiences at the same time. In the nursery, children have access to a sensory area where they talk about music and lights. This area is quiet and is used well to develop children's speaking and listening skills and to extend their vocabulary. There are many opportunities for children to paint and create pictures and models. In the reception year, the skills they have learnt in the nursery are developed well, so that children print and paint at various times. Sand and water are available, although space limits the amount that can be experienced in the reception year. Children sing enthusiastically and willingly learn to use sign language so that hearing-impaired children can join in with the

activities. In both the nursery and the reception classes, there are many opportunities for the children to role-play. They make up their own stories confidently and enjoy listening to music.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 & 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well by the time they leave school
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are positive and enable them to focus on learning
- Leadership and management of the subject are good
- ICT is not used sufficiently to enhance learning
- Provision for reading is not fully developed

Commentary

52. The school has made good progress in developing pupils' English skills since the previous inspection. Many pupils enter the school with standards that are below average but by the time they leave school, standards are above average. Although attainment remains below average by the end of Year 2, the recent focus on improving writing is beginning to make a positive impact, with the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieving well. These strategies, together with improvements in the quality of teaching, and good marking of pupils' work, have enabled the school to significantly improve the situation at the last inspection when progress for older pupils was judged as unsatisfactory.
53. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are below average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Whilst more able pupils speak confidently and make themselves understood, many younger pupils are limited by having too restricted a vocabulary. Consequently, their ability to communicate effectively is often hampered. However, as the pupils move through the school their performance improves. This is because emphasis is increasingly put on rehearsing vocabulary and opportunities are planned for pupils to brainstorm ideas with partners and work more collaboratively. This was well exemplified in Year 6 when pupils worked in pairs as they planned a writing task on effective story openings. Pupils with hearing-impairment use signing effectively and offer good opportunities for others to be exposed to a different system of communication.
54. Whilst pupils attain above average standards in reading by the end of Year 6, standards are below average in Years 1 and 2, with many pupils lacking in fluency and accuracy. The school has a structured reading programme, with pupils working through a published scheme. However, approaches to the teaching of guided reading vary from class to class, with instances where there is little diagnostic information and clear strategies for supporting pupils who struggle in their reading. There are few planned opportunities during the school day for pupils to engage in group, paired and silent reading and, as a result, a number of pupils are not clear about the strategies that they need to use to work out how to read words and sentences and tackle new reading material confidently. Older pupils, on the other hand, are developing firm preferences for the work of different authors and most read with good expression and intonation. The school acknowledges it needs an agreed approach to teaching and managing reading.
55. Writing has been an area for development and the school has worked hard in identifying strategies for improvement. Standards are below average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. A good practice that has been routinely established for younger pupils is the use of special diary books where pupils record their own daily entries and, judging from the sample of work seen, this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Teachers are

increasingly demonstrating writing of different kinds, with independent work used judiciously to practise and consolidate skills. Another factor that is impacting well is some of the examples of good marking of pupils' work and the links made by teachers to pupils' identified improvement targets.

56. In the lessons seen, teaching was often good and occasionally very good or excellent. It is good overall. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of English, often reflected in the range of methods used and the creativity with which learning objectives are implemented and achieved. Where teaching was particularly effective, pupils were enthused, challenged and became actively involved. Very good use was made of demonstration and questioning to establish and extend learning and the lesson was conducted at a brisk pace. A distinctive strength in the best teaching is the judicious use of demonstrations to practise specific skills. This was demonstrated in a Year 6 lesson with lower attainers where the discussion in the first part of the lesson and the guidance given was used by pupils in planning their writing. Teaching assistants, including those supporting pupils with hearing-impairment, were effectively deployed and provided good one-to-one support. Where teaching, though satisfactory, was less effective, this was mainly due to the occasional lack of challenge for more able pupils and missed opportunities for using ICT.
57. Leadership and management are good and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Much of the improvement in provision is due to the effective collaboration of the two subject leaders. Although they have been in post for a relatively short time, they have a clear view of what needs to be improved and have already started putting some of the improvement strategies into practice. Monitoring is effective and is being used well to identify areas for development.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Provision for teaching literacy skills across the curriculum is good, with some good examples seen during the inspection, particularly in history, geography and science. In geography, for example, pupils in Year 6 have used skills in persuasive writing to argue for and against the need for sewage works in India. In history, younger pupils are taught to make booklets on historical topics using a contents page and illustrations. There are effective planned opportunities to extend pupils' writing in Years 1 and 2 through the use of diaries.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**, following recent improvements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall, creating lessons in which pupils feel confident and achieve well
- There are good systems for checking pupils' progress
- Pupils' individual needs are catered for well and teaching assistants make good contributions
- Teachers' marking provides insufficient information about what pupils need to do to improve
- More challenge is needed for more able pupils

Commentary

59. Pupils achieve well and by the end of Year 6 attain standards that are at expected levels. Teachers' methods and strategies are effective in stimulating pupils and inspiring them to enjoy their learning. The significant proportions of pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Boys and girls respond and achieve equally well.

60. Although standards remain below average by the end of Year 2, pupils are now achieving well in Years 1 and 2 compared with their past attainment. They build systematically on their knowledge and understanding of number, shape and measurement. They respond well to the direct teaching of mental calculations, including solving problems. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to set targets and are helped to overcome any learning difficulties as a result of the good support they receive in lessons.
61. Assessment procedures are good and information is used effectively to meet the needs of different attainment groups. Performances in annual tests contribute effectively to teachers' tracking of progress in relation to set targets, and detailed information is passed on each year to the new teacher. The *National Numeracy Strategy* is implemented successfully throughout the school. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The main strengths shared by teachers include high expectations of work and behaviour and the establishing of very good relationships through prompts for explanations and reasons behind pupils' answers. Teachers plan tasks that are well matched to the needs of the average and lower attaining pupils within each class but more capable pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to extend their knowledge and understanding. Teaching is particularly good in Year 6, where pupils are taught in an upper set of higher and average attaining pupils and a lower set of the remaining average and lower attaining pupils. Expectations are high and, as a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to learn and contribute answers. They are encouraged to share and explain their answers and do so willingly. Resources are satisfactory in quantity and quality and are used effectively to support pupils' learning. However, throughout the age range, one weakness is the quality of marking. Teachers do not usually provide pupils with enough information in their written comments to help them understand what they need to do to improve.
62. Evidence shows good recent improvements in pupils' standards and the quality of teaching since the recent appointment of the joint co-ordinators. Co-ordination of the subject is good in both its leadership and its management. The co-ordinators' detailed analysis of pupils' performances in regular testing has highlighted specific areas for development in each year group. The annual action plan identifies relevant tasks that are aimed at raising standards. As a result, teachers' expectations are now higher and different strategies are used to develop mental calculations and investigational skills. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Pupils have regular opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge in other subjects. These include measuring and data handling in science to present results of investigations. This is further extended by the use of ICT to present information in a variety of graphs and patterns. This includes, for example, calculating the mean, mode and median, and investigating the range of mathematical probability from impossible to certain. Measuring is used regularly in design technology and pupils' awareness and understanding of pattern is developed well in art and design.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although standards in national tests are lower than in 2002, pupils of abilities all achieve well
- Teaching and learning are good
- The subject is well led and this has resulted in good achievement

Commentary

64. Standards in the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 were lower than the previous year as the performance of a few pupils affected the overall results of the school. However, more able pupils achieved higher levels in tests, and those pupils with special educational needs achieved well in relation to their ability. There is no national test in science in Year 2, but standards are in line with those expected and all aspects of science are covered effectively. Throughout the school, pupils of all abilities achieve well. Investigations are carried out thoroughly and pupils learn how to make predications based on what they already know about science, and they explain their findings clearly, using charts and written accounts.
65. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make science interesting and fun. Subjects that could be boring are made relevant to the pupils so that they are enthusiastic about learning. In Year 3, for example, pupils investigated the best rock to build a cave with. They talked excitedly about what they were doing because the teacher had read a letter from a caveman who needed a new cave as his one was being damaged. Lessons are usually brisk, although sometimes the pace slows when pupils become restless and behaviour issues have to be addressed. Teachers have high expectation of what pupils will learn in lessons and explain clearly the purpose of each session. This results in pupils being able to explain clearly what they are learning and working together very well to produce careful work. Literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well in science so that accounts are accurately written and results of experiments are recorded in a variety of formats. This results in work that is usually neatly presented. Although marking does not always let pupils know what they have to do to improve their work, end-of-unit assessments are used well to encourage pupils to evaluate their own work. The results of these assessments are used effectively to plan further work.
66. Science is well led. Careful analysis of work and planning has resulted in weaknesses in the curriculum being identified and strategies being introduced to tackle these issues. The lack of investigations and experiments had been identified and dealt with and pupils are now thinking as scientists and becoming more confident when talking about their work. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved and pupils are achieving well
- Resources and staff expertise have improved considerably and teaching is good
- Good leadership and management of the subject has a positive impact on pupils' progress and teachers' increased confidence
- Procedures for assessment are not fully in place

Commentary

67. Pupils throughout the school attain at levels similar to those expected nationally. In the lessons seen, good teaching enabled pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Since the last inspection, substantial improvements have been made in resources for the subject and staff confidence and expertise have been developed through training. The unsatisfactory provision reported in the last inspection is now good, and this represents very good improvement.
68. The use of national guidance as the basis for planning ensures that all pupils experience the expected subject strands. Examples of pupils' work show they are learning to use ICT for

word-processing, graphics, the internet and data-handling, as well as control, monitoring and modelling. Teachers' planning and conversations with pupils confirm that classroom computers are increasingly being used to support learning in other subjects, although inspectors saw little use being made of classroom computers during the inspection.

69. The teaching is good. In the lessons seen in the computer suite, the teachers' improving subject knowledge was used well to give clear succinct explanations, although the absence of a data projector made demonstrations u__nwieldy. In the best teaching, good use of questioning maximised pupils' learning and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved well. Year 3 pupils were adept at using a simulation program to explore options and learn about how decisions affect consequences. In Year 6, pupils quickly accessed a *Powerpoint*[™] program and showed good skills in using its potential for a presentation about their recent trip to Sayers Croft. Discussions with pupils and examples of their work show they are confident in accessing the internet for research. They are enthusiastic about the use of ICT, clearly enjoy their lessons and work well with partners or groups to achieve well.
70. The subject is well led and managed with good guidance and training being provided for staff and teaching assistants. Assessment procedure__s are being developed enabling the teachers to recognise and record pupils' achievements, although these are not fully in place.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. During the inspection a number of good examples were seen of ICT being used in other subjects, including in mathematics, art and history. The computer suite is now increasingly being used to focus on the use of ICT in other subjects, especially for older pupils. Much of the planning also identifies opportunities for the use of ICT and this is being enhanced by the purchase of specific subject software.

HUMANITIES

In **history**, work was sampled. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgment about provision. However, evidence from pupils' work indicates that standards are average and have been maintained since the last inspection. In the three lessons seen, the quality of teaching was go__od and enabled the pupils to consolidate and extend their understanding of chronology. In Year 2, pupils showed good understanding of the passing of time as they sequenced the key events of the Great Fire of London with more able pupils adding detail and explaining the reasons behind some of the events. Resources are used effectively to bring the subject alive, with pupils in Year 3 gaining good insights into Victorian society as they handle artefacts from the period and research information from the internet. As pupils move through the school, they build on their previous learning and begin to extend their research skills to find out information, for example about the Romans and the Egyptians. History is used effectively to promote literacy skills, with younger pupils writing booklets on Guy Fawkes, using a content page and illustrations, and pupils in Year 6 writing in the role of an archaeologist discovering the pyramids for the first time.

Just one **geography** lesson seen during the inspection and therefore no provision or teaching judgement can be made. However, by looking at the work available, and by talking to pupils, standards are in line with what is expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Geography is well planned so that the skills and knowledge required is systematically taught throughout the school and pupils learn about their own and other locations.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn about a variety of religious faiths and customs and this has a significant impact on their spiritual and cultural development
- Teachers make good links with other subjects so that religious education lessons are interesting
- Resources for religious education are good and the subject is monitored effectively

Commentary

72. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils reach standards in religious education that are in line with those expected in the locally-agreed syllabus. Pupils in Year 2 understand the importance of being a friend, and begin to learn about celebrations, such as the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. By Year 6, pupils have studied a wide range of religions and make comparisons between the common signs and symbols of these faiths. They know about the importance of prayer mats to Muslims and the relevance of Diwali lights to Hindus. Pupils reflect upon meditation techniques and some have written thoughtful prayers and meditation chants. These experiences and activities have a significant impact on pupils' spiritual and cultural development and they learn to respect and understand the beliefs of others. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
73. Teaching and learning, overall, are satisfactory. Teachers are knowledgeable about religious education and plan interesting activities so that pupils are interested and keen to learn in lessons. For example, in Year 2, pupils played with a *dreidl* and worked out how to play this game of chance played by Jewish children. In Year 3, pupils make diwa pots to place small lights in and understand how this relates to the story of Rama and Sita. Teachers have high expectations of pupils recording work clearly and this results in more able pupils writing clear accounts of stories and practices in various religions. Work in books is usually marked, giving praise for what each pupil has achieved, but no points for development to help pupils improve. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well so that they can be fully included and take a full part in lessons.
74. Religious education is satisfactorily led. Resources are good and a keen eye is kept on these to ensure that they fully support learning in lessons. Plans have been monitored and work analysed so that weaknesses in learning can be identified and tackled. This is quite recent and has yet to have an impact so that pupils achieve as well in religious education as they do in English, mathematics and science. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only one lesson was seen in **music**. It is therefore not possible to make an overall judgment about provision in this subject. In music, pupils were only observed in Year 6. It is quite clear that the good subject expertise of the subject leader is being used well to support teaching and learning and to help pupils move forward. Very good provision is made for pupils to extend their learning through a range of lunchtime clubs such as recorders, a choir and bell ringing. Many pupils benefit from additional tuition in learning the clarinet, cello, clarinet and trumpet. Singing heard in assembly during practice for a Christmas presentation was very good, with pupils showing well developed skills in projecting their voice and adapting it to hold notes. Hearing-impaired pupils were fully included and effectively supported with all pupils signing while singing. The intervention of the teachers during these rehearsals was very effective and helped pupils gain in confidence.

In **physical education**, again just one lesson was seen and so no overall provision judgement has been made. The school works hard to promote sports and makes good provision in out of school activities with a number of clubs in netball, football, gymnastics and rounders. Pupils are also

enabled to participate in a range of competitions with other schools and have recently won two of them. From viewing planning and discussions with teachers and pupils it is evident that all strands of the subject, including outdoor and adventurous activities, are regularly taught during the year. Standards in swimming by the end of Year 6 are good.

Just one **design technology** lesson was seen during the inspection and therefore no provision or teaching judgement has been made. However, by looking at work and talking to pupils, standards are in line with those expected and pupils achieve well. The strength of design technology within the school is the planning for the development of skills needed to design and make a variety of items. Pupils sew and cook, making thoughtful evaluations of their work as they go. By the time they are at the end of Year 6, pupils confidently carry out the designing and making of a hamster house, identifying the materials they will need and the problems they may encounter. At the end of the project pupils evaluate what they have done, deciding what went well and what they would improve next time. One pupil wrote in a heartfelt way that she would *'try something easier next time'*.

Art and design

Provision is **satisfactory** overall and encourages pupils' creativity.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- The teaching is good
- Pupils are provided with a good range of resources and learning opportunities

Commentary

75. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards and achievement in art and design are at expected levels. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection, when progress in Years 3 to 6 was described as unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection, the subject is valued not only for its own merits but also because of the contribution it makes to pupils' understanding of other subjects through well-developed curriculum links. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through these links. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve at the same rate, especially when supported by additional adults or their peers.
76. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work together well creating portraits of themselves and each other. Teachers develop communication skills well when asking pupils to look at the different styles of famous artists such as Matisse, Rossetti and Dali and when evaluating their own and others' work. In Years 3 to 6, good cultural links are made when making diwa lamps, Islamic patterns and when looking at the work of aboriginal artists. Pupils thoughtfully reflect on what might have motivated various artists from around the world in their work. Inspired by good teaching and a good range of resources, pupils work creatively with a good variety of media and materials, developing skills in colour mixing, sketching and clay work. Good links are made with mathematics and ICT when pupils design symmetrical patterns in the style of Mondrian and Islamic mosque patterns.
77. Teaching and learning are both good. Strengths in teaching are in teachers' good subject knowledge and sensitive questioning that encourages pupils to look analytically at their own work and the work of others. In this, teachers make good use of the work of famous artists using their techniques to inspire and raise the standards of pupils' own work. Teachers' assessment procedures are satisfactory and, together with the evidence from sketchbooks, teachers maintain a secure knowledge of pupils' levels of work. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management showing good enthusiasm and has successfully

imparted this to staff and pupils alike. This has contributed to the raised status of art, the enjoyment of the subject and the improved standards attained.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The school does not specifically timetable lessons on citizenship or personal, social and health education (PSHE), although PSHE is covered within other curriculum subjects. In this way, the school makes **satisfactory** provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The school nurse supports the school by teaching sex education to pupils in Years 5 and 6 and other issues regarding growing up and developing are dealt with as they arise. Older pupils learn what it means to be a good citizen and understand about living in a community.

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	2
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	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
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	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and Colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4
<i>Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).</i>	