

INSPECTION REPORT

PENTLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Billingham

LEA area: Stockton on Tees

Unique reference number: 111642

Headteacher: Mr D Campbell

Lead inspector: Mrs J Stephenson

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th April 2004

Inspection number: 257183

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

Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	414
School address:	Pentland Avenue Billingham
Postcode:	TS23 2RG
Telephone number:	01642 397361
Fax number:	01642 360235
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Hart
Date of previous inspection:	1 st June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Pentland Primary is a large school situated in the centre of Billingham, a town in Stockton on Tees. There are 348 pupils on roll and 66 children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Children come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds and the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is 31 per cent, which is above national average. The vast majority of pupils come from a white UK background. Three pupils come from different ethnic minority backgrounds; their first language is English and they do not receive any additional support. There are 16 classes across the school. Some pupils in Years 1 and 2 and all pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught in mixed age range classes. Standards when children start school are below average. The school has a special unit, the Support Base, to support the learning of up to ten pupils with more severe and complex special educational needs. These pupils are aged between seven and eleven years and are allocated to the base by the local education authority through its statutory identification, assessment and review arrangements. All pupils are integrated into mainstream school in the afternoon sessions. The overall percentage of pupils with special educational needs throughout the school is 18 per cent, which is in line with the national average. The school has recently received a number of achievements, including the Artsmark, the Active Mark Gold and the Healthy Schools Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27384	Mrs J Stephenson	Lead inspector	Music
12503	Mr M Cundick	Lay inspector	
32097	Mrs J Bennett	Team inspector	Art Design and technology Foundation Stage
1550	Mr M Pinch	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship
31622	Mrs L Richardson	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education
16359	Mr J Farrow	Team inspector	Science Physical education Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

peakschoolhaus ltd
BPS Business Centre
Brake Lane
Boughton
Nottinghamshire
NG22 9HQ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	10
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	13
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	18
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	20
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school is not as effective as it should be. Despite the good standard of education for children in the Foundation Stage, pupils in Key Stage 1 and for pupils with special educational needs in the Support Base, too many pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not achieve as much as they should. This is because the school has serious weaknesses in the leadership and management that impact upon the quality of teaching, particularly in Years 3 and 4 and in one class in Year 5. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is a lack of clear leadership by the headteacher and some other key members of staff; there has not been a rigorous approach to monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of teaching.
- Standards at Key Stage 2 are unsatisfactory in English, history, geography and religious education.
- There are significant weaknesses in the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 and in one class in Year 5.
- Assessment is not used effectively to plan pupils' work and marking does little to help them improve.
- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage, in Key Stage 1, in the Support Base and in one of the classes in each of Years 5 and 6.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well supported and are effectively included in the life and work of the school.
- There is a welcoming and secure environment. Pupils enjoy school and their behaviour is good.

There has not been enough improvement at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. Many of the key issues still remain. This is because there has been a lack of direction and emphasis from the headteacher and key members of staff to ensure that monitoring and evaluation practices are embedded into the work of the school. A number of subject leaders do not have a clear understanding of their role and as a result are not carrying out their responsibilities effectively. This lack of rigour has allowed weaknesses, particularly at Key Stage 2, to go unchecked.

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	E	E	E
mathematics	D	E	E	E
science	C	D	D	E

*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 6.*

Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall. This is because of the lack of attention given to improving the quality of teaching. Too many pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not make sufficient progress because some teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of their levels of ability and therefore the work that is set is either too easy or too hard. Current standards in Year 6 show an improvement in mathematics and science but English standards continue to be unsatisfactory. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to practise their writing skills in other subjects and this contributes to low standards in history, geography and religious education. Achievement for the younger pupils and for those with special educational needs is better. Children

in the Foundation Stage make good progress because staff know what they already understand and carefully plan tasks that successfully build upon prior learning. By the time they leave reception, most children are achieving standards that are in line with expectations. The effective approach to the teaching of reading in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 provides pupils with a range of good skills. By the end of Year 2 standards and achievement in writing and science are average; they are good in mathematics, history and geography. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), physical education, design and technology and music across the school are average. They are above expectations in art but below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils with special educational needs have good support and achieve well. **Pupils' personal qualities are good**; they behave well, enjoy coming to school and develop good relationships with one another due to the **effective social and moral development**; **provision for spiritual and cultural development is good**. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Although the teaching is satisfactory overall, there are important weaknesses in some of the teaching at Key Stage 2. These have persisted because of the lack of attention given to evaluating the quality of teaching. Teaching is inconsistent between key stages and classes and this results in uneven progress over time. The headteacher has not shared good practice effectively and little has been done to support some teachers who are known to be less effective. There is some tracking of progress but too many teachers do not use what they know about pupils to plan work, nor do they provide sufficient information for pupils to improve their learning. As a result, many pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not achieve as well as they should.

Overall, curriculum planning is satisfactory but in too many subjects there is insufficient guidance to ensure that pupils learn skills progressively. A good range of sporting and musical activities enhances the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good; the support and challenge for these pupils are effective. The care and welfare of pupils are good because the headteacher works energetically to achieve this. Links with parents are good; they take an active part in their children's education. Links with the community are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is not enough rigour in evaluating or improving the quality of teaching to ensure that all pupils' needs are met. Some subject leaders do not have a clear understanding of their role or the skills and time to carry out their work effectively. As a result, they do not have a clear enough view of how different groups of pupils are performing, to determine what is working well and what requires attention. Developments in promoting pupils' personal skills are effective; all pupils have high levels of confidence and self-esteem. **Governance is satisfactory** and all statutory requirements are met. The governors are now actively challenging the poor standards at Key Stage 2.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views of the school. They have confidence in the staff and appreciate the way in which their children are cared for. A minority are concerned about the challenging behaviour of some pupils but teachers manage this behaviour well. The pupils like coming to school. They are involved in making decisions about the school and are confident to make evaluations about the quality of provision.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve standards in English, history, geography and religious education by Year 6.

- Improve the school's leadership at all levels by establishing rigorous systems for monitoring, evaluating and improving teaching and learning.
- Ensure that teachers in Years 3 and 4 and in one class in Year 5 use the information they have about pupils to plan work that meets the needs of the differing groups within the class.
- Establish a clear and consistent approach to assessment that allows teachers to track pupils' progress and establish targets for improvement.
- Ensure that all pupils receive well-focused comments in marking to help them to understand how to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Too many pupils **underachieve in Years 3 to 6**, particularly in English, history, geography and religious education. **Achievement is good in one of the classes in each of Years 5 and 6.** Children make **good progress** in the **Foundation Stage**, in **Years 1 and 2** and in the **Support Base**. Current standards by Year 2 are average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, current standards overall in English, mathematics and science **are below average by Year 6**. Standards at Year 2 have improved since the last inspection but there has been insufficient progress in improving standards in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 3 to 6 are unsatisfactory in English, history and geography.
- Most pupils underachieve in Years 3 and 4 and in one class in Year 5.
- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage, in Years 1 and 2, in the Support Base and in one of the classes in each of Years 5 and 6.
- Standards in reading are very good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.
- All pupils achieve well in art and attain standards that are above expectations.
- Standards in religious education are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

Commentary

1. In the 2003 national tests, standards at Key Stage 1 were very good in reading and mathematics. They were good in writing. When compared to schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, standards were excellent in reading and were very good in writing and mathematics. The school's trend in standards at Key Stage 1 is above the national trend. Standards at Key Stage 2 are much lower. The overall standards attained by pupils in the 2003 national tests were poor. When compared with schools whose pupils achieved similar results in the national tests at the end of Year 2, the standards in English, mathematics and science continue to be poor. The school's trend at Key Stage 2 has not kept pace with the national trend. There has not been enough improvement in raising standards at Key Stage 2 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	24.5 (23.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.4 (24.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.7 (28.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 68 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Standards are below average in English for the present Year 6 pupils and achievement is unsatisfactory, particularly in writing. This is because the approach to the teaching of writing is not structured enough and therefore teachers do not have a clear understanding of the skills that pupils need to learn and practise. As a result, tasks frequently do not match pupils' different levels of ability and the work that is set is either too easy or too hard. Although pupils use their good reading skills across the curriculum, the opportunities for them to develop their writing skills in other subjects are limited and this also affects the standards that pupils achieve in history, geography and religious education. Current standards being reached in

mathematics and science are higher than those achieved in the 2003 national tests and the school is on track to reach the expected levels.

3. There are inconsistencies in teaching across Years 3 to 6 that result in uneven progress over time. Many pupils underachieve in Years 3 and 4 and in one class in Year 5. This is because there is not enough good quality teaching to ensure that pupils make as much progress as they can. Expectations for these pupils are not high enough and the teaching lacks rigour and challenge. Teachers do not have a clear understanding of what pupils can do and the steps they need to take to improve their work further. As a result too often the work given to pupils does not always match their level of ability and tasks are too easy or too hard. These pupils are not achieving as much as they should. However, pupils make good progress and achieve well in one of the classes in each of Years 5 and 6. Teachers know their pupils well and they provide challenging activities to support and extend their thinking. They plan interesting lessons that engage and motivate pupils to achieve as much as they possibly can.
4. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well because teaching is good overall. They do very well in ICT, counting, knowledge of letters and sounds and personal and social development. They are supported well in the nursery and reception and this provides a firm basis for future learning. Children start nursery with standards that are below national expectations. They make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage and by the time they leave the reception class they are working in line with national expectations.
5. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well because the Key Stage 1 team leader is effective in working with staff to raise standards and to ensure that pupils make as much progress as they can. Current Year 2 standards are good in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing still lag behind, mainly due to not enough children reaching the expected levels by the end of reception.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.4 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.3 (14.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.5 (18.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

6. Pupils in the Support Base make good progress against their individual targets and their prior attainment and they achieve well. These pupils almost always make significant gains in relation to the learning and personal targets set out in their individual education plans. This helps them to gain in confidence and self-esteem and enables them to be fully included in some lessons alongside mainstream pupils of similar ages.
7. Reading is taught very well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. This provides a good foundation for teachers to build upon in Years 3 to 6. The majority of pupils have good attitudes and enjoy reading because they have very good skills that enable them to read fluently, with good understanding. These highly effective reading skills are put to good use in science, mathematics and design and technology.
8. Pupils' speaking skills are not well developed. They have limited vocabulary, which affects their ability to reach the higher levels in writing. Pupils are given few opportunities to discuss ideas with each other, and in too many lessons they are passive listeners.
9. Standards in ICT, physical education, design and technology and music across the school are average. Standards in art are above expectations and pupils achieve well because teachers provide a good range of opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. However, provision

in religious education is unsatisfactory. Pupils in each year group tend to cover the same work and there is little account taken of the poorly developed literacy skills of a significant number of pupils. As a result, the achievement of too many pupils is unsatisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes and values. They like coming to school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are interested in what they do at school and enjoy their work.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good because the school sets high expectations and has secure codes of conduct.
- Good relationships are formed between pupils and between pupils and adults because they show respect for each other.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good in the Foundation Stage because they follow the very good role models presented by staff.

Commentary

10. Pupils are well behaved and this has a positive impact on their learning. Positive attitudes to their work and interest in their learning have a good effect on pupils' achievement and the standards they attain, particularly in the Foundation Stage, in the Support Base and in Key Stage 1. Pupils like coming to school and enjoy their work both in lessons and in out-of-hours learning. Values and attitudes in the school are good and all adults who work there seek to provide good role models from which pupils learn. This is particularly evident in the Foundation Stage where a very good beginning is made in building confidence and self-esteem. In most classes pupils show high levels of participation in their learning. In Years 3 and 4 and in one Year 5 class, some pupils become distracted because teaching is not lively or interesting. The school is a purposeful community that is secure and caring. It is guided day to day through well-understood routines and high expectations. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning.
11. Pupils relate well to each other and to adults. They work and play together, mixing comfortably with all ages and either gender. In lessons, pupils generally work well in partnerships. They discuss common tasks, share ideas and take turns with consideration and growing independence. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities through which they can accept responsibility and meet the expectations of adults with confidence.
12. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are given opportunities for reflection through which they can examine their feelings, emotions and personal wellbeing. Their spiritual development is further enhanced through in-depth participation in activities such as art, music and dance. However, there are missed opportunities for reflection in assemblies and religious education. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong, and of fairness. From an early age children know what they should do and how to behave towards each other. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to work, play and share together. Team games and working in groups allow pupils to co-operate well and they are encouraged to do so both in good lessons and in out-of-hours learning. Pupils gain a good understanding of their own and other cultural traditions through local visits and visitors to school. These are chosen to enhance the cultural aspects that arise from subjects such as art, music, history and geography.
13. Pupils care for each other and for the environment in which they learn. The school actively promotes good attitudes and values and these provide positive support for the quality of their learning.

14. The school promotes good relationships effectively; it seeks to involve all pupils in the life and work of the school and treats them with respect. Consequently pupils with special educational needs enjoy coming to school where they feel secure and valued and they show their appreciation of the school's provision by behaving well and working hard.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

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

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

15. Pupils enjoy school. This is reflected in attendance levels, which are in line with national expectations.

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	411	4	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0

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

16. There were four fixed term exclusions last year. Pupils were excluded for demonstrating challenging behaviour. The school handled the exclusions well and followed procedures correctly.
17. All pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds speak English as their first language and do not receive any additional support. They are included well into the life and work of the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. However, there are **important weaknesses** in the teaching in Years 3 and 4 and in one class in Year 5 that, too often, is mundane and fails to build upon pupils' prior learning. The curriculum is **sound** and is enriched by good opportunities for learning beyond the school day. The level of care for pupils is good and the school has **effective** links with parents.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** overall. It is consistently good in the Foundation Stage, in the special educational needs Support Base, and in one of the classes in Years 1/2, Year 5 and Year 6. There is some **unsatisfactory** teaching in Years 3 and 4 and in one class in Year 5. The quality of teaching is too variable and results in uneven progress over time. Teachers' use of assessment is **unsatisfactory**. The quality of teaching is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage, the Support Base and in one of the classes in Year 1/2, Year 5 and Year 6.
- Teaching in Years 3 and 4 and in one class in Year 5 is not good enough.
- Teachers do not always use assessments effectively to plan work for the differing groups of pupils and therefore tasks do not sometimes move learning forward fast enough, particularly in some classes in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils' learning.
- Marking does not consistently help pupils to improve their work or to understand their next steps in learning.

Commentary

18. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because staff use methods that are well matched to the children's stage of development, and they plan tasks carefully to build upon prior learning. The teacher and teaching assistants in the Support Base have a good understanding of the pupils' needs. They plan stimulating lessons and provide effective support, encouragement and challenge to ensure that pupils succeed. Consequently, when these pupils are sensitively included into mainstream lessons they cope well and play a full part in the life and work of these classes. Teaching in one of the classes in Year 1/2, Year 5 and Year 6 is consistently good because teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour and they use assessment well to plan interesting lessons that effectively build upon prior learning. Pupils in these classes respond positively, try hard and achieve well.
19. Too much of the teaching in Years 3 and 4, and in one class in Year 5, is mundane and does not inspire pupils to achieve as much as they can. For example, in a Year 5 literacy lesson pupils were asked to undertake too much copying of work that resulted in low levels of engagement and pupils were not sufficiently challenged. All of the lessons in these classes are either unsatisfactory or satisfactory. This is not good enough. Assessment is not used effectively to check pupils' understanding or to plan tasks that build on prior learning. As a result activities are either too hard or too easy and consequently pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
20. In some other lessons teachers do not use their knowledge of pupils' learning to consistently plan tasks that are challenging, and expectations for higher attaining pupils are not high enough. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, the teacher's introduction, emphasising the technical aspects of writing an opening paragraph, was too long. Many of the pupils were bored because the work was too easy and there were insufficient opportunities to extend their thinking and their learning.
21. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils' learning because they understand their role well and are deployed effectively during lessons. For example, in a Year 5 lower ability numeracy lesson the teaching assistant helped a group of pupils to actively contribute to a whole-class session by encouraging their involvement and checking their responses.
22. The quality of marking is too variable across the school. When it is most effective teachers make comments that demonstrate high expectations, that reward pupils' efforts and that help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. However, too often marking is not used to explain to the pupils what they have done well and to point to areas where they can improve. This leads to many pupils not having a clear understanding of how well they are doing.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3 (5%)	19 (35%)	30 (55%)	3 (5%)	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum. It is enriched by good opportunities for learning beyond the school day. The accommodation is **satisfactory** overall although the outdoor accommodation for the Foundation Stage is inadequate. The range of resources to support teaching and learning is **satisfactory** but the library needs further development. There is a good number of support staff to help and guide pupils with their learning; the number of teachers is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is good for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum are limited.
- Inclusion is good because the curriculum provides for equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that supports and enhances pupils' learning.
- The school library is insufficient to support pupils' learning because there are too few books and access for pupils is inadequate.
- Accommodation for learning out of doors in the Foundation Stage is inadequate because continuous access is not available.
- Teachers do not have sufficient guidance about the development of skills and knowledge in science, history, geography, design and technology and physical education.

Commentary

23. The curriculum provides well for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Pupils identified on the special educational needs register are clearly known to their teachers who use the pupils' individual education plans sensibly to inform their short-term planning. In some lessons this has helped teachers to place a significant emphasis upon the development of basic skills or aspects of pupils' personal development in support of their individual education plan targets.
24. The school provides a curriculum that is relevant to the needs and interests of its pupils and meets statutory requirements. It also provides well for learning outside the school day. There is a dominance of English and mathematics in daily lessons and opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects are limited. For example, in literacy, too few opportunities are given to write imaginatively about events in history and religious education or in geography from the viewpoint of someone living in another country. As a result, standards in these subjects are below expectations at the end of Year 6.
25. Opportunities for learning outside the school day are good and the curriculum is further enriched by visits to places of interest and by visitors to the school. Together with a range of sporting activities such as football, netball, rugby, basketball and gymnastics, pupils enjoy cultural pursuits that include gardening, wildlife, art, choir, recorder playing and drama. A small number of pupils also receive specialist music teaching for violin, keyboard and brass instruments. The computer club has an enthusiastic following and older pupils make an annual residential visit to a field centre. Activities that take place out of school hours are well attended

and some are offered to Key Stage 1 pupils. This part of the curriculum contributes significantly to the development of pupils' good attitudes, values and personal qualities.

26. Curriculum planning is sound overall. Literacy and numeracy lessons are organised so that pupils of similar attainment work together. This helps teachers in some classes to plan work that is accurately matched to pupils' differing abilities. However, in Years 3 and 4 and in one Year 5 class, there is too little use made of the information gathered on pupils' performance to set work that matches their needs. The curriculum for other subjects is based on a national framework of schemes of work that has generally been adapted by the school to best meet pupils' needs. Teachers do not have sufficient guidance in science, history, geography, design and technology and physical education to ensure that pupils develop skills and knowledge that build on prior learning, so that they achieve as much as they possibly can. The schemes of work are arranged on a two-year rolling programme to meet the needs of mixed-age classes and history and geography are taught for half a year at a time. This is unsatisfactory, as the long interval that occurs between re-visiting the subjects does not support good progression in skills or consolidation of knowledge and understanding of specific issues.
27. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop their personal, social and health education because they are given opportunities to share ideas and discuss issues. This takes place both in lessons and through learning outside the school day.
28. Indoor accommodation is adequate. However, it is difficult to maximise the space available for indoor physical education because of the shape of the halls. Accommodation for continuous access to learning out of doors for children in the nursery is unsatisfactory. Resources provided to support the curriculum are sufficient and suitable and for some subjects they are good. Library provision is unsatisfactory because there are too few books, access is limited and it is situated too far from many of the youngest pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure that pupils are well cared for in a secure and supportive environment are **good**. The advice, support and guidance for pupils are **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All staff work hard to provide a secure and supportive learning environment.
- Relationships between pupils and with staff are positive and help to provide a good standard of pastoral care.
- Systems for monitoring academic progress are satisfactory, but the information is not used effectively to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress.
- Pupils in the Support Base are well supported and effectively challenged to achieve as well as they can.

Commentary

29. The good standard of individual care, support and guidance provided for pupils ensures that they feel happy and safe. Staff work energetically to provide a secure and caring learning environment for all pupils. Pupils have very positive relationships with each other and are confident to approach their teachers with any personal problems. They share concerns and make positive use of the opportunities to express their opinions through class and school councils. Pupils speak positively about the opportunities provided by the school to take on roles of responsibility and the range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school to develop their sporting and musical skills.
30. A minority of teachers mark pupils' work well. However, the quality of marking is too variable and some teachers do not offer suggestions on how pupils could improve their learning. The

school keeps regular records to track how well pupils are doing but the checking of progress for different groups of pupils is insufficiently rigorous. For example, the school's own assessments show that when the present Year 6 were in Years 3 and 4, most of the pupils did not build effectively on their achievements in Year 2. Teachers in one of the classes in Year 1/2, Year 5 and Year 6 work hard to include pupils in setting targets for improvement, but this approach is not consistent to ensure that all pupils receive a good level of support and guidance to help them progress and do better.

31. Health and safety appraisals and risk assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. There is insufficient guidance for staff in design and technology to ensure that tools are used safely in lessons and that classroom organisation promotes safe working practices. As a result, during one lesson, there was a potential risk to some pupils using tools inappropriately. The school immediately put procedures into place to eliminate this safety risk. Any instances of bullying are openly discussed by pupils through class councils and are promptly and effectively addressed by staff when reported. Relationships between pupils are good and younger pupils value the support they receive from playground buddies as well as teaching and non-teaching staff.
32. There are effective induction procedures for children entering the nursery and for pupils preparing to transfer to secondary education.
33. Staff in the Support Base provide good quality care and support to their pupils. This is reflected in the tolerant, supportive and robust relationships that exist between adults and pupils that help them to fully engage in their learning. Following their admission, pupils' past achievements are carefully re-assessed and the results are used effectively to produce individual education plans that provide specifically and well for their individual needs. The strengths from the last inspection have been successfully maintained, enabling staff to demand consistently high standards of attention and behaviour from pupils who are very settled and secure in the unit. This means the teacher rarely has to accept less than their best efforts while gently encouraging them to strive to achieve more.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **good**. They are very supportive of the school and are actively encouraged to be involved in their children's education. Partnership with the wider community is **sound**. Links with other schools and colleges are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is regular and informative communication with parents. They have a high opinion of the school.
- There are good procedures to ensure parental satisfaction and to deal with any concerns and complaints.
- Links with the community are satisfactory but under-developed.

Commentary

34. The vast majority of parents have very positive views of the school. They value the care that teachers provide for their children's personal development. The school keeps them well advised of their children's progress through detailed reports, and provides both formal and informal opportunities for consultation with staff, as well as workshops to enable them to better understand the content of the curriculum and ways in which they can help their children to improve.
35. Parents are particularly appreciative of the caring environment created by staff and the positive encouragement given to their children to take on roles of responsibility to further develop their

self-confidence. Parents are supportive of the behaviour and reward strategies adopted by the school and are also confident that any concerns regarding behaviour or bullying will be effectively addressed. The home and school contact book is used well and parents regularly make comments about concerns they may have or the work that their children are doing.

36. A small group of parents and teachers work effectively together to raise funds for additional school resources. These good social links between parents and staff help to support and further develop a confident relationship between home and school. Parents provide help in school and supervisory support for outside visits. They respect the expectation that they do not smoke or bring dogs onto the school premises as an integral element of the healthy lifestyle focus of the school.
37. The school has strong links with its principal secondary school – a sports excellence college that helps to promote a range of sports activities to nurture the talents of individual pupils. There is also very good liaison for the confident transfer of pupils to secondary education and preparation for children's entry into nursery. Links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs are good; parents are kept well informed about the progress of their children and their attendance at regular review meetings is good.
38. Some links have been established with organisations within the local community such as the church, Billingham Forum and the Folk Festival. There is, however, much scope for wider and more productive use of local resources to enhance both the national and extra-curricular programmes.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **unsatisfactory**. There has not been a sharp enough focus on raising standards. The work of the governing body is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is insufficient rigour in tackling known weaknesses.
- There has been a lack of effective leadership in monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of teaching.
- The management structure does not bring about systematic improvement.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are successful in providing an inclusive, secure and happy climate for learning.
- The leadership role of some subject leaders in improving teaching, learning and standards is under-developed.

Commentary

39. The headteacher, staff and governors are fully committed to providing an inclusive, secure and happy climate for learning. They have been successful in achieving this aim and the vast majority of pupils enjoy their time in school. However, there is a lack of clear leadership by the headteacher and other key members of staff that has resulted in an insufficiently rigorous approach to improving the educational provision. There are no effective management structures in place, and roles and responsibilities have not been clearly defined. Few records have been kept of decisions and plans made, during informal meetings, so it is impossible to track or check progress properly. Some key members of staff lack confidence and have had too few opportunities to influence and improve the practice of others.
40. Although the headteacher is aware of weaknesses, not enough has been done to deal with them, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Until recently, there were no structures in place to ensure that improvements in the quality of teaching and learning were brought about. The headteacher has not shared good practice effectively and has done little to support some teachers who are

known to be less effective. Consequently the improvements that are now being seen as a result of the school's participation in the National Strategy Leadership Programme have been brought about far too slowly. This is mainly why standards are too low and pupils' achievement overall is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. There has been insufficient progress since the last inspection in raising levels of achievement for these pupils.

41. The majority of subject leaders now check teachers' planning to ensure it matches curriculum requirements and look at pupils' books to see that the work covered matches plans. Some have had limited opportunities to observe teaching and learning. A very small number of leading staff, such as the Foundation Stage, the Support Base and Key Stage 1 leaders, have been effective in working with others to raise standards and to ensure that pupils achieve as much as they can. This is because they are clear about the strategies needed, have good levels of confidence in these areas and have high expectations. However, most subject leaders do not regularly check the progress of standards reached by pupils in comparison with expectations for their age. As a result, too many pupils at Key Stage 2 are underachieving. Subject leadership has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection and is currently unsatisfactory overall. This is because roles and responsibilities have not been clearly outlined; there has been insufficient appropriate training and senior managers have not given subject leaders enough time or support.
42. The headteacher and deputy work together effectively on day-to-day management issues. However, the leadership role of the deputy headteacher is under-developed particularly in relation to leading improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, and in providing a role model for other key leaders in the school.
43. The governors' role in the life of the school is now well established and they are knowledgeable about its main strengths and weaknesses. There is an appropriate committee structure, which means that issues are discussed thoroughly and good advice can be given to the full governing body to support appropriate decision-making. The headteacher provides informative reports about the progress of the issues in the school development plan. Other members of staff present information at meetings so that governors have an overview of the curriculum. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The governors support the headteacher and the school very well and work with him effectively, such as in the case of the good management of the tight budget due to a falling pupil roll. Spending decisions are appropriate and are made in accordance with the principles of best value. However, until recently, governors have provided too little challenge, particularly in relation to the drop in standards in English in Key Stage 2. This, coupled with the headteacher's lack of drive to tackle these educational priorities, has resulted in the under-achievement of too many pupils.
44. The annual school development plan is satisfactory. It is drawn up by the headteacher after discussion with the deputy headteacher of issues raised in the whole school review. Each development is appropriately costed in terms of time, money and other resources needed. However, key members of staff are not clearly identified to lead developments and this means that good progress and appropriate quality are not ensured. In addition, the measures for judging success are insufficiently precise which makes the evaluation of the effectiveness of the work difficult. Apart from a longer-term strategy for managing the budget, all other intended developments are planned over a single year. This results in too many being included and there is a lack of focus to the key areas requiring the greatest improvement.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	972,095
Total expenditure	936,400
Expenditure per pupil	2,198

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	20,443
Balance carried forward to the next	35,695

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

45. When children enter nursery their range of attainment is broad but overall standards are below those expected nationally. Children make good progress in the nursery and reception classes so that by the time they enter Year 1 they are attaining standards that are in line with those expected for their age. Standards in ICT, counting, knowledge of sounds and letters, and personal and social development are above those expected nationally. Progress and achievement in these areas are very good because of the high quality provision. Progress in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory and children attain standards that are in line with national expectations overall but in writing, and in speaking and listening, they are below expectations. This is because strategies to develop these skills are not well established. As a result children do not achieve as much as they should.
46. Teaching in both the nursery and reception classes is good. Methods are well matched to the children's stage of development, and tasks are carefully planned to build upon prior learning. Staff have high expectations of children and take good opportunities to consolidate and extend learning across the day.
47. All staff work well together under the effective leadership of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. Regular meetings ensure that all staff remain fully informed and involved. As a result teaching assistants understand their role well and make a positive contribution to children's learning.
48. Staff plan regularly for learning out of doors and, overall, children have access to a good range of opportunities. However, the enclosed outdoor area provides limited opportunities for exploration and is liable to flooding. This inhibits the provision that staff can make for continuous access to this area.
49. The quality of teaching is the same as it was at the time of the last inspection. The provision that is made for children's personal and social development, and the teaching of ICT, counting, and sound and letters, has improved.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are high levels of care given to children and they feel safe and secure.
- The Foundation Stage is well organised and there are good opportunities for children to take responsibility and to develop independence.
- Children learn how to celebrate each child's uniqueness through planned activities.

Commentary

45. Provision for children's personal and social development is a strength of the school. Teaching is very good. As a result children achieve very well and by the end of the reception year attain standards above those expected for their age.

46. Staff know children well and provide high levels of care that are well matched to the needs of individuals. Children understand the well-established procedures and as a result they settle well and quickly grow in confidence. Good opportunities are provided for children to take responsibility both through planned activities and through the daily organisation of lessons. These activities promote children's self-esteem, improve their ability to make decisions, and offer opportunities to work independently and co-operatively.
47. Staff organise good activities to promote children's independence and plan opportunities to develop their personal and social skills. As a result children learn to be independent and to be helpful to others. For example, when working in the technology area nursery children access materials themselves. They behave responsibly, make sensible choices, and help others by showing where equipment is stored. Through planned activities children learn about the qualities that make each child special. As a result they learn to respect each other and to work together well, sharing and taking turns.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress in their knowledge of sounds and letters.
- Achievements in writing, and speaking and listening, are not as good as they should be because skills are not continuously built upon and too many opportunities to develop children's understanding of new words are missed.

Commentary

48. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Children make sound progress and by the time they enter Year 1 they attain standards overall that are in line with those expected for their age. The teaching of sounds and letters is good. Children learn about sounds in the nursery and this knowledge is built upon effectively in the reception year where children are taught how to use these skills to read and spell simple words. As a result children make good progress and achieve well.
49. Good opportunities are provided for children to 'write' for a purpose in their play and to talk with adults as they work. This results in satisfactory progress. However, the strategies to help children to continuously develop the skills needed to become independent writers have not been clearly identified, and too many opportunities for children to talk within a group, and to learn the meaning of new words, are missed. As a result children do not achieve as much as they should and by the end of the reception year standards are below those expected nationally.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children make good progress. They make very good progress in their counting skills.
- There are good opportunities to develop mathematics understanding across the day.

Commentary

50. Children make good progress and achieve well. By the time children leave reception they are attaining standards overall that are in line with those expected for their age. Teaching is good overall, and is particularly effective in developing children's counting skills. This is because regular opportunities are provided for children to apply their mathematical knowledge in practical situations. For example, during registration, nursery children count how many children are present, work out how many children are absent, and know how many snacks need to be prepared. This contributes well to their learning and as a result children attain standards above those expected nationally in mathematical development.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress in ICT because skills are taught effectively.
- There is good quality role-play that extends children's experiences.
- The accommodation for continuous access to learning out of doors is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

51. Teaching is good. As a result children make good progress and attain standards in line with those expected nationally by the end of the reception year. ICT skills are taught very effectively. Teachers demonstrate carefully and provide good opportunities for children to practise and consolidate skills with effective support from teaching assistants. Reception children can access programs with confidence. They can use draw tools with increasing levels of independence, and can add text to their picture.
52. Role-play activities are well planned to extend children's experiences. For example, nursery children can 'row a boat to adventure island' and reception children learn to 'cook a meal on a camping stove' and 'find their way with a map' while on a 'camping holiday'.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress because staff plan good opportunities to develop their skills.

Commentary

53. Teaching is good. Staff plan good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. As a result they make good progress and achieve well. By the end of reception standards are in line with those expected nationally. Children show increasing control and use different parts of their bodies as they move along, through and over large apparatus. Nursery children know how to use apparatus safely and reception children can simulate the movement of different insects in response to a poem.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress because activities are interesting.

Commentary

54. Teaching is good. Staff provide good opportunities for children to record their ideas through two- and three-dimensional work, and to listen to, and respond to, music. Through well-planned lessons children learn about the work of professional musicians and develop their own repertoire of songs. By the time they leave reception, standards are in line with those expected for their age.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

The overall provision for English is **unsatisfactory**. There are **significant weaknesses** relating to writing, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing at Years 3 to 6 are too low and pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their ability to produce extended pieces of writing.
- Most pupils achieve well in reading.
- Leadership in English is having insufficient impact on improving writing in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' spoken language is not well developed.

Commentary

55. Standards reached by Year 2 pupils in the national tests in 2003 were well above average in reading and above average in writing. A large proportion of pupils exceeded the national average at the higher levels, particularly in reading. The written work of current Year 2 pupils is not of such a high standard. However, they are achieving standards that are close to the national average in writing and they are exceeding it in reading. The picture was very different at the end of Year 6. In 2003 just over half of the pupils in Year 6 reached the expected level in English and only one pupil achieved highly in writing. Although this is an improvement on 2002 when standards in English fell significantly, it still shows considerable under-achievement of many pupils in comparison to their results in Year 2. Standards being reached by the current Year 6 pupils are higher. There are more pupils on track to reach expected levels this year. This is as a result of the school's more focused approach since joining the Primary Strategy Leadership Programme in September. Pupils with special needs generally achieve well in English because of the good teaching and support they receive from the specialist teacher and learning support assistants. Good examples of this were seen in the Support Base and in lessons throughout the school where these pupils were included and catered for well.
56. The under-achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is largely as a result of insufficient good quality teaching, which means that pupils do not make as much progress as they should, especially in Years 3 and 4 and in one class in Year 5. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy effectively for teaching reading, which is linked to a well structured, varied reading programme, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils have good attitudes and enjoy reading because they have learned the skills that enable them to read fluently and understand the meaning well. This

is generally true of both boys and girls of all abilities. The teaching of writing is much less effective particularly in Years 3 to 6 because the majority of teachers do not have a clear understanding of what pupils need to do to become effective writers. Assessment of what pupils can do and what steps they need to take to improve their work further is poor. Consequently the work given to pupils often does not match their ability and their achievement is limited because the tasks are either too easy or too hard. In addition, teachers have been very slow to adapt the national strategy to suit the needs of pupils, particularly in relation to the inadequate amount of time given for them to apply literacy skills in extended pieces of writing, and too much time is spent being inactive in whole-class sessions. Much of the work given is in the form of mundane exercises that many pupils find uninteresting. In the very small number of lessons where teaching is good or better, pupils are given more stimulating activities such as a Year 5 session for higher ability pupils on pronouns. Pupils asked their classmate, who was posing as 'Granny', well prepared, open-ended questions. During this session pupils were actively and creatively involved in their learning and achievement was very good.

57. The quality of marking varies considerably throughout the school. Where it is most effective teachers indicate what is good about a piece of work and what the pupil should do to improve. However, the marking done by the majority of teachers is not of a high quality. Too often it just shows that the work has been seen and does little to move pupils' learning on. Some pupils are given the opportunity to follow up the teacher's comments but this is only in a minority of classes.
58. Pupils' spoken language is not well developed. Few pupils have a sufficiently wide vocabulary and their ability to give extended, articulated answers is limited. This affects their ability to reach the higher levels in writing. In the best lessons teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas with each other, which increases the time they have to improve their spoken language. A good example of this was seen in a Year 2 lesson when pupils talked with their partners about what makes a good footballer. However, these methods are used too infrequently and many pupils spend the majority of the time in whole-class sessions as passive listeners.
59. The leadership and management are just beginning to have a better impact on improving provision for English. The subject leader is knowledgeable and there is sound guidance available for teachers. She also leads the Key Stage 1 team and her influence on the teaching of English in this area of the school is a main reason for the high standards reached by Year 2 in recent years. However, until recently, she has been given very limited opportunities to monitor, evaluate, and influence the practice of teachers in Years 3 to 6. This has resulted in significant inconsistencies in the quality and range of activities, pupils' interest, the accuracy of assessment and the quality of marking. Consequently pupils do not always achieve as well as they should in many classes. The current development plan for English outlines a more appropriate role for the subject leader across the whole school but does not sufficiently emphasise the priority to improve writing in Years 3 to 6.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum

60. Pupils apply their well-developed reading skills to good use across the curriculum, which helps them to extend their knowledge in subjects such as science, to follow instructions accurately in design and technology, and to solve problems in mathematics. However, the poor spoken language skills and limited vocabulary of many pupils prevent them from developing a deeper understanding of some more complex ideas in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. It is also in these subjects where opportunities are missed for pupils to practise and develop writing skills because teachers have not yet included literacy across the curriculum in their planning. The presentation of work in several subjects as well as English is regularly marred by poorly formed handwriting. There has been insufficient improvement in this area since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **just satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good because teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils.
- Pupils' achievement in Years 3 and 4 and in one Year 5 class is unsatisfactory because the expectations of their teachers are not high enough and the work pupils are given lacks depth.
- Leadership in mathematics is unsatisfactory because the strengths and weaknesses in teaching across Years 3 to 6 have not been accurately identified.
- Marking of pupils' work in mathematics is inconsistent across the school and does not always make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

Commentary

61. Standards in mathematics are good in Years 1 and 2 and have improved since the time of the last inspection when they were average. Pupils achieve well and make good progress by building upon the good start they make in the Foundation Stage. This is the result of teaching by staff who have well-developed mathematical knowledge and an expectation that pupils will learn as much as they can. Current standards in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory overall, as they were at the time of the last inspection. However, they are significantly lower in the Years 3 and 4 classes than those attained by Year 6 pupils. This is because much of the teaching and learning in the Years 3 and 4 classes lacks rigour and challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
62. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is good in Years 1 and 2 and they make good progress because teachers set tasks and provide support to meet the needs of pupils according to their ability. This is most evident where higher attaining pupils are encouraged to work independently and solve problems that they have created themselves using what they have learned. In Years 3 and 4 the achievement of many pupils is unsatisfactory. While the topics they work on form a sound basis for what they should be learning, the tasks pupils are given often lack the depth and rigour required to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding. In these classes pupils are good at counting backwards and forwards in multiples of numbers to nine. However, the connection between this activity and the early stages of multiplication and division is not secured. In Years 5 and 6 pupils' achievement is good in all but one Year 5 class. This is because pupils are challenged and their teachers have high expectations of them, which most are keen to meet. In mathematics the least able pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported in their work by teaching assistants who are both caring and knowledgeable.
63. In lessons where pupils make good progress there are clear learning objectives that they know and understand. Particular emphasis is placed on methods of calculation and number application to solve problems. Some teachers, particularly in Years 5 and 6 and in Years 1 and 2, assess pupils' ongoing understanding by asking for frequent explanations and responses on whiteboards from all pupils. Most pupils reply quickly and confidently to these challenges, which enhances the pace of learning. Less able pupils receive good individual support from able teaching assistants. This enables them to undertake tasks such as rounding decimals to the nearest whole number with considerable success. Where progress is slower and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 3 and 4, the expectations of teachers are not high enough. The work that most of these pupils are given does not present sufficient challenge, and they lack the skills necessary to support the next stage of their learning.
64. Overall the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory and sometimes good. Where teaching is good, teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that pupils of different levels of ability are suitably supported and challenged. They do this effectively because they ask well-structured questions and have a good knowledge of pupils' understanding. This enables the pupils in their classes to make good progress.

65. Curriculum leadership of mathematics is unsatisfactory because weaknesses in the planning and teaching of lessons in Years 3 and 4 and in one Year 5 class have not been addressed. Limited staff training has taken place and the systems for the assessment of pupils' progress are not carried out fully by all staff. An audit of resources for mathematics has been carried out and this usefully enables staff to support their lessons effectively with the materials they need. The resources are satisfactory and often good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Some teachers make useful links between mathematics and other subjects. However, these occur less frequently than they should and the practice is under-developed. There are some links between mathematics and other subjects and this provides a good content and support for learning. For example, data collected in a geography survey was processed using ICT and was later used to further develop mathematical skills involving interpretation of bar charts by younger pupils.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Systems to track pupil progress are under-developed and pupils do not always achieve as well as they should.
- Pupils benefit from good opportunities to learn from first hand observation and investigations.
- Teachers use questions well to extend and challenge pupils' thinking about scientific predictions.

Commentary

67. The current standards attained by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
68. The quality of teaching and learning in science is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers and teaching assistants effectively support pupils with special educational needs so these pupils achieve well. Teachers plan interesting practical investigations that successfully stimulate all pupils' interest in science and in the best lessons teachers use probing questions to extend, support or challenge pupils' thinking and learning. However, the lack of an effective progress tracking system, allied to weaknesses in some teachers' subject knowledge or their use and application of national assessment criteria, means that pupils are not always challenged sufficiently rigorously. For example in Years 3 and 4 where pupils were learning to draw circuit diagrams, using symbols to represent batteries, bulbs and switches, some pupils made basic errors but their work had still been marked as correct. This means the continuity of pupils' learning within and between some classes is variable and overall their achievement is only satisfactory.
69. The school successfully develops pupils' experimental skills by involving them actively in first hand observation and investigation. As a consequence, pupils learn effective enquiry skills while exploring a wide range of scientific knowledge, and they achieve a sound understanding of key scientific concepts. For example, Year 6 pupils exploring how evaporation rates vary under different conditions were able to reflect critically upon their observations and results and suggest conclusions consistent with their evidence. From this they realised that the rate of evaporation from a sample of liquids appeared to increase in proportion to their surface area in contact with the air. In their experimental work pupils are aware of the need to control all but one variable in order to achieve a fair test and they also realise they need to interpret their results with caution and the need to repeat experiments to check suspicious outcomes. Pupils also use ICT satisfactorily to record key elements of their own learning in science and to store

and present selected information to others. For example, Year 5 pupils drew upon their recent learning about a healthy diet to prepare individualistic, well-structured *PowerPoint* presentations that they presented to their classmates and which helped them develop a deeper understanding of the elements of a balanced diet.

70. By the end of Year 2, pupils are also involved in learning from investigations. They are beginning to understand the need to carry out fair tests and to make predictions, and how to make direct observations of living things found within the school grounds. For example, in a lesson involving Year 1 and 2 pupils the younger children showed a sound knowledge of the names of 'mini-beasts' shown to them in photographs while older more able children were learning to suggest the types of habitat where they might be found around the school grounds. Higher attaining pupils within the class were also gaining experience of using simple classification keys to sort living things into appropriate groups.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' skills in ICT are good because they are taught systematically.
- The use of ICT is used too infrequently to support pupils' work in other subjects.

Commentary

71. Standards in ICT are average overall, as they were at the time of the last inspection. This is because pupils are given insufficient opportunity to use the good skills they develop to support their work in other subjects.
72. Pupils develop good ICT skills across the school and there is clear progression in their learning from the Foundation Stage to Year 6. The school has a well-equipped ICT suite and lessons are dedicated to learning and practising a wide range of skills. All areas of the subject are taught and by the end of Year 6 almost all pupils can undertake word-processing tasks to a good standard. They compose directly onto the screen, change fonts, move and insert text, check spellings and save and print their work with ease. Pupils learn to use a range of software that offers simulations, control technology, art and design, data-handling and problem-solving games. Less able pupils, including those with special educational needs, are helped well by teaching assistants.
73. The teaching of ICT skills is satisfactory and staff are confident in the use of the hardware and software systems available. For most classes, systematic records of pupils' progress are kept and they make steady progress. Pupils are encouraged to work together and those who acquire higher level skills, often learned at home, are given the opportunity to explore further and work independently.
74. All pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills in the ICT suite. The Internet is about to be installed and this will allow pupils to access information to support their learning in other subjects. The ICT subject leader is currently building up a stock of carefully chosen software that will both further advance pupils' skills and support learning in other subjects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. Computer access is provided for pupils in all classrooms. However, insufficient use is made of ICT to support their learning. There are good examples of word-processing being used to help story writing, the use of electronic sensors to support work in science and the use of ICT to promote the healthy eating project. Pupils often use digital cameras to record their work. While such examples indicate pupils' ability to use ICT in their learning, they are too often special events. Too few opportunities are taken by teachers to use ICT regularly and frequently to promote and enhance pupils' learning in lessons.

HUMANITIES

History, Geography and Religious education

76. Religious education was inspected in full and is reported on below. History and geography were sampled, therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. Only one lesson was observed in geography and no lessons were seen in history because of the way these subjects are block-timetabled across the year. Discussions took place with subject leaders and with pupils from some classes. Pupils' work and subject leaders' files were evaluated.

Commentary

77. Pupils' enquiry skills in **history** are developing in line with expectations in Years 1 and 2. Pupils use their growing knowledge of facts to be able to identify differences between times past and the present day. A good example of this was the work they did on visits to the seaside following a discussion with an elderly member of the community. The same topics are covered by Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in mixed-age classes but activities are sensibly less dependent on literacy skills, such as in the activity to sequence events in the life of Florence Nightingale.
78. This is not the case in Years 3 to 6 where many activities are just based on gathering knowledge. As a result the achievement of a significant number of pupils is limited by activities that do not develop enquiry skills sufficiently. For example pupils in Years 3 and 4 looked at the story of Romulus and Remus as part of their study of the Romans but did not explore the concepts of fact and legend. Also, in Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is limited by their poor literacy and spoken language skills; this is compounded by very limited opportunities to write at length. Although Year 6 pupils knew some key facts about life in World War 2 they found it difficult to explain because of poor reasoning skills.
79. Some teachers' marking gives useful pointers to extend pupils' learning through written questions that check understanding. However, pupils do not have opportunities to set and answer their own research questions and this results in higher ability pupils, in particular, achieving less than they could.
80. Pupils in both key stages enjoy their work in history. This is because of the good sources of information used, such as photographs, opportunities to discuss first-hand experiences, and objects from the period studied. A ration book brought in by a Year 6 pupil, resulted in many pupils recalling facts well about World War 2.
81. Curriculum planning and organisation minimise duplication in mixed-age classes. However, in Years 3 to 6, progress in the development of subject specific and enquiry skills is limited by this arrangement. The study of history in half-year blocks in Years 5 and 6 does not support good progression of skills or consolidation of knowledge and understanding of specific subject issues.

82. Leadership and management of history are satisfactory overall, with some good features. The subject leader's management file is an example of improving practice since the last inspection because guidance is now good in the way that it clearly outlines the elements that must be taught. However, the collection of pupils' work in the file has not been evaluated or compared with national expectations for their age. This has resulted in missed opportunities to focus teaching on areas of weakness to improve standards. There is a one-year development plan to build links with other subjects and to review the assessment programme, but it is not clear how these developments will take place, as they are not reflected in the whole-school development plan.
83. Standards in **geography** are in line with expectations for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. Higher ability pupils in Year 2 draw very detailed routes from home to school including key features in the locality and they give well reasoned explanations of their likes and dislikes in the area in which they live. The same geographical topics are covered by pupils of all abilities in Years 1 and 2 and lower ability pupils are given good additional support that enables them to achieve well.
84. All pupils in Years 3 and 4 cover the same work and therefore this limits the achievement of higher ability pupils because they do not develop geographical or enquiry skills. Year 6 pupils have good knowledge of facts related to the British Isles such as the location of their hometown. Their ability to describe the positions of countries using compass directions is good. They speak confidently about their work in geography but their poorly developed language and vocabulary skills limit their learning. This means that pupils do not achieve as much as they could and standards are below expectations for their age.
85. Pupils have good attitudes to geography because the curriculum is taught through interesting activities supported by an adequate range of resources. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In the one lesson seen good links were made with work in literacy and the teacher emphasised key geographical knowledge which resulted in pupils developing a good understanding of the differences in the main uses of water in Africa and England. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in too many lessons.
86. The leadership and management of geography are just satisfactory overall. The main priority outlined in the whole school development plan is to revise the way that skills are taught and this is appropriate because the lack of a structured programme is a significant weakness in geography. However, no time or resources have been allocated in the whole-school plan for this development. Resources for geography have improved since the last inspection and teachers make good use of curriculum support materials. However, these are not structured into the whole-school plan, which means that opportunities to strengthen pupils' subject specific and enquiry skills are missed.

Religious education

Provision in **religious education** is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are too few opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of their own and other religious beliefs.
- The leadership and management of religious education are currently not effective in improving standards.

Commentary

87. Standards are below the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus in both key stages and too many pupils do not achieve as well as they could. This is because most activities

concentrate on extending pupils' knowledge rather than deepening their understanding of their own and others' beliefs. In addition the poor presentation of the work of a significant number of pupils lowers standards. Many pupils start school with limited knowledge of key events in Christianity and other religions. They make good progress through Years 1 and 2 so that by the age of seven many know the main aspects of the advent story and that a synagogue is a place of worship for Jews.

88. All pupils cover the same work and little account is taken of the poorly developed literacy skills of a significant number of pupils. Consequently the achievement of too many pupils in religious education is unsatisfactory. In Year 6 pupils tackle more challenging issues such as those related to racism and beliefs and this provides them with good opportunities to extend their understanding of their own and others' views. This type of work is often closely linked to their personal, social and moral development and shows that they are able to empathise and understand how others feel, but they have too few opportunities to compare and contrast different religions and the beliefs within them.
89. Assemblies contribute well to the positive whole-school atmosphere and the sense of unity. They meet the requirements of collective acts of worship in the broadest sense. However, they do not sufficiently emphasise the Christian nature of the worship or give pupils opportunities to reflect and develop their spirituality. Pupils visit local Christian churches, and visitors from other denominations visit the school to talk to pupils, but very limited use is made of other religious places of worship in larger towns nearby which means that pupils' knowledge of different faiths and cultures is not well extended.
90. The leadership and management of religious education are not yet well established because of staffing changes this year. Currently the subject leader does not have a clear enough understanding of the quality of provision across the school or of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work that affect the standards achieved.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

91. Physical education was inspected in full and is reported on below. Other subjects were sampled. It was not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in art and design, design and technology and music because of the small number of lessons seen. No lessons were seen in art and design; two lessons were observed in design and technology and one lesson was seen in music, as well as listening to pupils sing in assembly and observing some pupils receiving music tuition.
92. Discussions took place with subject leaders and with pupils from some classes. Pupils' work and subject leaders' files were evaluated.
93. Overall, pupils make good progress in **art and design** and they achieve well. This is because pupils have a good range of opportunities to develop skills and knowledge. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 effectively builds upon pupils' prior learning and as a result standards by the end of Year 6 are above expectations. For example, Years 1 and 2 pupils are able to use thread and fabric to create three-dimensional pictures, using stitches to join materials together and to add decoration. These skills are developed and extended in Years 3 to 6 when pupils use batik techniques to make hangings and create texture by adding padding that is carefully stitched into place. Good opportunities are provided for all pupils to learn about the work of well-known artists to develop their ideas further and to try to work in their style. Planned activities beyond the school day support pupils' learning further and this makes a positive contribution to their development in the arts. The subject leader in art and design provides effective support for other staff. Her involvement in the school achieving the Artsmark has provided her with a clear view of the quality of provision across the school

94. There is insufficient guidance for staff in **design and technology** to ensure that tools are used safely in lessons and that classroom organisation promotes safe working practices. As a result, pupils are not consistently taught how to use tools safely or to evaluate risk and teachers do not have sufficient information to help them to organise classrooms effectively for practical lessons. Pupils do not achieve as much as they should in design and evaluation because teachers do not plan work that successfully builds upon their prior learning. This is because insufficient progress has been made with the development of guidance to help staff to teach these skills. Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils attain standards that are in line with expectations and achievement is satisfactory overall. By the end of Year 2 pupils can use their cutting and joining skills to create moving pictures, and with support, they can follow a simple recipe and make sensible suggestions for improving the product. Older pupils understand that a specification is needed to inform decisions about a design so that the product is well matched to the intended function. They make sensible decisions about the materials that they will use, drawing upon their learning in other subjects. For example, pupils know that the soles of a slipper must be non-slip and they select the most appropriate materials based upon this knowledge.
95. In **music** pupils sing well in assemblies. They are encouraged to sing a variety of songs and they use their voices well to respond to the different musical elements. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy playing musical instruments and are confident to do this in front of their classmates. There is good provision for learning musical instruments. The music co-ordinator effectively teaches the recorder to both boys and girls. Although the boys can sometimes respond in a silly and noisy way, they are enthusiastic in their learning. Pupils play the recorder particularly well when the teacher accompanies them on the keyboard. Some older pupils learn how to play the violin and the keyboard. These opportunities motivate boys, in particular, to achieve well. They have well-directed individual guidance and they confidently ask questions to develop their understanding further. ICT is used very effectively during a keyboard session to produce a very competent playing of a 'Sugar Babes' song. Some teachers lack confidence and therefore, throughout the school, pupils follow a published scheme. This provides coverage of the main areas to be taught. The music co-ordinator has played an important role in the school achieving the Artsmark.

Physical education

Provision for **physical education** is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to develop a wide range of skills.
- Teachers do not always provide activities that build upon what pupils already know and can do.
- Opportunities to develop links between learning in physical education and other subjects are missed.

Commentary

96. Current standards and achievement in physical education are satisfactory throughout the school.
97. In Years 1 and 2 pupils begin to learn how physical exercise affects their bodies and they understand the need to behave safely in their lessons. By the end of Year 2 pupils of differing abilities all make satisfactory progress during individual lessons when improving and consolidating their throwing and catching skills or when repeating and improving these skills using beanbags. Pupils are able to use these new skills while competing in simple games against each other. In Year 4 pupils build on previous learning about different types of fitness while undertaking timed exercises during circuit training. By the end of Year 6 pupils can describe the effects of vigorous exercise on their bodies and its value to their health and fitness. These pupils can take part in a range of games or work together in small groups to improve

precision, control and fluency of movement, for example when handling a hockey stick or using it to travel with a ball under good control.

98. The quality of teaching and learning in physical education is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of pupils with special educational needs and strive to ensure they are fully included in the lesson. In the best lessons teaching is confident and enthusiastic, building well upon the teachers' sound knowledge and understanding of the skills being demonstrated or taught. In Year 6, for example, good teaching effectively observes pupils' emerging skills and responds well; this then informs ongoing discussions that help pupils to make good progress. However, assessment is not always used to guide planning or to help teachers provide activities that are based upon clear evidence of what pupils already know and can do. Similarly, good opportunities to promote cross-curricular links are sometimes missed, for example when Year 4 pupils undertaking circuit training also could have been involved in measuring their own performance to reinforce their recording and number skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The development of personal, social and health education is readily apparent both in lessons and in extra-curricular learning.
- Staff provide good role models because they consistently demonstrate the qualities they expect pupils to acquire.
- The school has a broad well-balanced programme for this aspect of learning.

Commentary

99. Pupils' development in personal, social and health education is good. Pupils undertake a range of activities in lessons, during discussion time and out of school hours that encourage positive attitudes to learning, and promote high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Behaviour and self-control are good and pupils develop a sense of independence by making contributions to the day-to-day running of the school. All pupils participate in this and younger pupils help with tasks such as the distribution of fresh fruit, which is one part of the school's healthy eating initiative. Pupils also develop good relationships, and a thorough understanding of health and bodily awareness.
100. Pupils are able to develop these qualities and became aware of their value because of their involvement in activities such as the school council, talking together in circle time, role-play and taking responsibilities in the school 'buddy' system.
101. Links with the community are sound and could be further developed but pupils value the few opportunities provided for them to meet and work with people such as the police, artists, musicians, sports coaches and the local clergy. Pupils gain insight into what these members of the community do and how their work affects the lives of others.
102. The school has a well-understood system of rewards and pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. As a result of this, lunchtime is a relaxed social occasion when pupils can talk together and build good relationships.
103. The school council is valued by pupils and is recognised as a useful forum through which their views can be formally recognised. It makes a significant contribution to pupils' growing understanding of citizenship and the structure of the community in which they live.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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