

INSPECTION REPORT

POPLAR STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Audenshaw, Manchester

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106204

Headteacher: Mrs C Thomas

Lead inspector: Mrs A Dawson

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th June 2004

Inspection number: 257209

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	398
School address:	Ravenwood Drive Audenshaw Manchester Lancashire
Postcode:	M34 5EF
Telephone number:	0161 3364134
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Gregory
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Poplar Street Primary School is situated in Audenshaw, Tameside. In 1999 the pupils transferred to a new school building. It is larger than most primary schools with 398 pupils on roll. This includes 58 children who attend the nursery part-time. The roll has risen slightly within the last four years. The movement of pupils in and out of the school is above average in Year 6 but below average in other year groups. The school serves a well-established community with most pupils drawn from a range of backgrounds surrounding the school. There are 12 per cent of pupils with special educational needs which is below the national average. Most of these pupils have social and emotional or moderate learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Most of these pupils have physical as well as learning difficulties. Overall, pupils' attainments on entry to the nursery are well below average in language and social skills. Approximately three quarters of the children transfer to the reception class with below average skills. There are 22.3 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals. This is broadly average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly from African and Asian backgrounds, is low. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has increased and the overall attainments of pupils entering school are poorer than at the time of the last inspection.

The school achieved the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' in 2003, the 'Healthy Schools' award in 2003 and gained an 'Eco Award' in 2001. The school won a 'Schools Achievement Award' in 2001.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11608	Anna Dawson	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs
14141	Ernest Marshall	Lay inspector	
20368	Susan Macintosh	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Poplar Street Primary School is a satisfactory school with some good strengths. Pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory and consequently the school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The recently appointed headteacher is providing good leadership to help the school move forward. The school is satisfactorily managed. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils with special educational needs throughout the school achieve well. Most pupils achieve well by the end of Year 2 and standards are above average in mathematics.
- The higher attaining pupils could do better in Years 3 to 6.
- The headteacher has made a good start in moving the school forward. However, the leadership and management roles of the teachers are underdeveloped.
- Although the governors meet statutory requirements, some aspects of governance are unsatisfactory.
- The school takes good care of the pupils. There is good provision for their personal development. Consequently, most pupils are keen to learn and behave well.

The school has made satisfactory progress in resolving the issues from the previous inspection in 1998. The standards in science by Year 2 and standards and resources in information and communication technology (ICT) and pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship have improved. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved. The proportion of teaching that is good or better has increased and the curriculum and pupils' personal development are improved. The accommodation is much better than it was.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. There are variations in achievement between different age groups. Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve well given their low starting points. Most are on course to reach the expected levels when they start Year 1. Pupils continue to achieve well in reading, writing and science and very well in mathematics in Years 1 to 2. Pupils attain average standards in reading, writing and science and above average standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2. In mathematics achievement is better because there is a significant minority of pupils attaining at the higher level. This represents good achievement overall and a very good improvement from the national results in 2003 when standards were well below average.

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

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. There are variations between year groups. Achievement is good in Years 5 and 6 because of consistently good quality of teaching. There is wider variation in the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Results in national tests in 2003 for pupils in Year 6 were average in English and mathematics and below average in science mainly because fewer than usual pupils achieved the higher level.

However, pupils achieved well overall and very well in English when results were compared with those in similar schools. There are marked variations in standards from one year to the next because of the variations in pupils' attainments which have an impact on the overall results for the school. In the present Year 6, although pupils' achievement is satisfactory, standards are below average, mainly because of the high percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs who do not reach the expected levels. The higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 could, however, do better. They find investigational work in mathematics and science difficult and are not consistently challenged in English to read in depth and to write imaginatively at length. Pupils do well to reach average levels in ICT. The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral social and cultural development, is **good**. Attendance is **satisfactory**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The pupils with special educational needs are taught well and fully included in the life of the school. Teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. It is satisfactory overall in Years 3 and 4 and good in Years 5 and 6. Where teaching is good overall, pupils achieve well. Where it is satisfactory, the work is not matched well enough to higher attaining pupils. The pupils' achievement is assessed satisfactorily but not enough use is made of this information to ensure that the needs of pupils are always effectively met. The curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides a good level of pastoral care for pupils but does not always meet the needs of the higher attaining pupils. There is a satisfactory partnership with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The governance of the school is unsatisfactory. The headteacher has made a good start and the action she has taken is leading to improved standards, especially in Years 1 and 2. Since the last inspection the school has been through a turbulent period with changes of staff, including the headteacher and senior managers, and too few governors. Consequently, time has been lost in moving the school forward because of the lack of leadership. The management roles of the teachers are insufficiently developed and they make insufficient contributions to moving the school forward. The governors fulfil their statutory requirements but do not sufficiently monitor the work of the school, give sufficient support to the headteacher and senior managers or satisfactorily shape the direction of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are as supportive of the school as others in similar schools. Some would like to know more about their children's achievements and be more informed about its work. The pupils enjoy school and like their lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- Improve the governance of the school.
- Develop the management roles of the staff.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. Children in the Foundation Stage¹ **achieve well**. Pupils with special educational needs **achieve well**. A small minority of higher attaining pupils **do not achieve** as well as they should in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6. Standards in these subjects are below average by the time pupils leave.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well especially in social and language skills.
 - Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are helped well by the staff.
 - The higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 could do better in English, mathematics and science.
1. Most children start in reception with below average skills. The children achieve well because they are taught well. The majority of children are likely to attain the goals that are set nationally in all areas of learning 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	14.2 (15.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	12.9 (13.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.4 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. In 2003, although most Year 2 pupils attained the expected national levels, very few pupils attained at the higher level. The higher attaining pupils did better in mathematics overall when compared with their attainments in reading and writing. In science, there is a similar picture: most pupils attain the expected level but too few attained at the higher levels. The inspection finds that for the present Year 2, there is a good improvement in reading, writing and science and very good improvement in mathematics. Standards for the present Year 2 in reading, writing and science are broadly average. The majority of pupils achieve well. In mathematics, there has been very good improvement and children achieve very well to attain above average standards. The overall trend for improvement in Years 1 to 2 has been above the national trend as standards have risen in Years 1 and 2.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (26.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.8 (26.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.3 (27.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The overall results of national tests fluctuate between the year groups because of the differing attainments of the pupils taking the tests. In 2003, there were fewer pupils with special

¹ The Foundation Stage refers to children in the nursery and reception classes

educational needs than in the present Year 6. However, compared with similar schools, pupils achieved well overall and very well in English. Overall, even though the rate of improvement has increased during the last two years, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in 1998. Then standards by Year 6 were broadly average in English and mathematics but below average in science and ICT. Standards have risen in ICT and science. A factor that has a negative impact on standards in Years 3 to 6 is the present higher than average number of pupils moving into school, particularly in Year 6. In light of a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs entering the school than in 1998, the school is keeping pace with the national trend for improvement in standards in Year 3 to 6.

4. In the present Year 6, there are six pupils with a statement of special educational needs and others with learning difficulties who are working well but at lower levels, affecting the overall results. Consequently, even though most attain the expected standards, the overall result for the year group is likely to be below average in English, mathematics and science. In ICT, pupils meet the expected standards and achieve well. However, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. This is because the higher attaining pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4 are not sufficiently challenged in their work and could achieve higher standards, in English, mathematics and science. There are insufficient opportunities for these pupils, for example, to write imaginatively at length, or to devise their own investigations in mathematics and science.
5. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls or those from minority ethnic groups. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well because the work is well matched to their targets. There is an above average percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Most of these pupils have physical difficulties are well catered for and they take a full part in school activities.
6. There are no pupils identified by the school as being gifted or talented and requiring specialist provision. The school aims to include all pupils in all its work and activities. Consequently, all have equal access to the curriculum. However, higher attaining pupils could achieve better standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. Pupils' attendance is steadily improving and is **satisfactory**. Punctuality is good. Most pupils have **good** attitudes in lessons. Behaviour in class and around the school is predominantly **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall. Cultural development is less well developed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attitudes and behaviour in classes are good overall, helping pupils to concentrate and waste very little time in lessons.
- Behaviour around school and in the playground is good and leads to effective social development formed through pupils' good relationships.
- Pupils' personal qualities are good and are promoted through the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' awareness of growing up in a multi-cultural society is less well developed.

Commentary

7. Pupils have maintained the same good standards of attitudes and behaviour in class noted at the last inspection. They listen carefully to instructions, concentrate well on their tasks and try hard to please. They will share resources sensibly and work well in pairs or groups when required to do so. Pupils are often paired in order to discuss and decide ways to tackle problems. This helps them to develop their speaking and listening skills as well as helping to form mutual respect. On the few occasions where inappropriate behaviour occurs it is dealt with effectively and fairly by

the staff. Challenging pupils, particularly in the older age groups, are taken aside by senior staff if poor behaviour arises and have the incident discussed. This enables the problem to be resolved and the pupil to return to class without disrupting others. When moving around school between lessons or in the playground areas pupils show respect for visitors and for each other. Pupils with physical disability are included in play as far as possible and have no shortage of friends. Children in the nursery and reception classes also show these good attitudes and this enables them to make good early progress.

8. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development. Particularly through music and themed assemblies, pupils have good opportunities to develop their spiritual qualities and they respond well. The school choir is a good example of pupils being able to express themselves in this manner. Special merit assemblies are well used to promote pupils' self-esteem and to give them time to reflect on their own inner beliefs. Group working, team games and lunchtime friendship groups are well-taken opportunities for pupils to form good social attitudes. Pupils have good moral qualities. They have discussed the school rules and show an understanding that they are required to keep the school as an orderly and friendly community. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and most come up to teachers' expectations with no effort. The school provides circle time for all classes. This is a session where pupils can identify any problems or concerns they may have and the class openly discusses them to find ways of improving or preventing the situation. Behaviour and pupils' personal responsibility to behave well are current topics.
9. Lessons and topic work have enabled pupils to gain a good knowledge of their own history and culture. Other faiths and their celebrations are taught within the curriculum, but pupils have insufficient opportunity to further their knowledge by visits to such places as temples or mosques. This means that pupils have little knowledge of how people of other faiths are integrated into British society and how this has developed in recent times. There have been three fixed-term exclusions of white boys in the last school year. Since then behaviour is improved.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.8
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
390	3	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning, and assessment, are **satisfactory** overall. The quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory**. The school takes **good** care of the pupils. There is a **satisfactory** partnership with the parents and there are **good** links with the community and with other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage and those in Years 1 to 2 are taught well and achieve well as a result. However, there is too much variability in the teaching in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good help from their teachers and teaching assistants and achieve well towards their targets.
- Teachers have used their assessments of pupils' learning consistently well in Years 1 and 2 to plan work. In Years 3 to 6 the use of assessment to plan pupils' work is inconsistent.
- Teachers manage the pupils well and consequently most behave well in lessons and relationships are good in school.

Commentary

10. The table below summarises the teaching seen during the inspection. There is a greater proportion of good or better teaching than at the time of the last inspection of the school in 1998.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 58 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6 (10%)	39 (67%)	12 (21%)	1(2%)	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.

11. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Although the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in the reception and nursery classes and in Year 1 to 2, the picture in Years 3 to 6 is mixed and is generally satisfactory.
12. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and insist on high standards of behaviour. The basic skills are taught well. Some teachers are especially enthusiastic and skilful in using the interactive whiteboards to enhance their teaching and the pupils' learning. In the good and very good lessons, the work is well matched to meet the needs of the pupils and the teachers are skilled in moving the pupils on in their learning. During one lesson in Year 2, for instance, pupils worked on devising questions for a database they have constructed about animals. Group work and the teacher's questioning were particularly effective in ironing out mistakes and ensuring that everyone completed the task. Where teaching and learning are satisfactory and on one occasion unsatisfactory, teachers do not have a high enough expectation of the achievement of a small minority of the more able pupils. Too often, especially in English, mathematics and science, insufficient attention is paid to the wide range of ability that is found, particularly in Years 3 and 4 and work is not challenging enough. A low expectation is found where assessment of pupils' achievements does not sufficiently inform lesson planning.
13. Overall, teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are good. This is because there is an effective balance of planned and targeted in-class support by teaching assistants, and reinforcement of basic skills identified in pupils' individual education plans. When

pupils are withdrawn for individual help, ICT is used particularly well to help them learn basic literacy and numeracy skills. Assessment procedures and systems for referral are effective in the early identification of pupils, for additional help and for monitoring their learning. The teaching assistants are well deployed. The assistants are well trained for the work they do, particularly those who help the physically disabled pupils. However, when help is not available in class for small groups or on an individual basis then pupils' learning is generally satisfactory. Several pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties struggle to participate when individual help is not available.

14. The teachers in Years 1 and 2 have used well their assessments of children's learning to plan challenging work for them in English, mathematics and science. As a result, the pupils learn well and standards have risen from well below average in 2003 to average. The current pupils in Year 2 have made very good progress in the infant classes and are achieving very well. In Years 3 to 6, where work is not matched consistently to the needs of all pupils, this results in pupils learning at a satisfactory rate overall. Many pupils have a limited understanding of how to improve their work because the marking comment does not tell them the next learning steps. Some pupils have targets to work towards and although they are helpful to some they are not always clearly defined. Additionally, disruption in staffing in the past and inconsistencies in the level of challenge have led to some average and above average pupils not achieving as well as they might, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
15. The teachers manage the pupils well. The relationships between the staff and pupils are good. As a result, most pupils are happy in school and respond well and work hard because they know that their efforts in lessons are valued. The staff consistently praise and reward pupils for their efforts and encourage them to take responsibility for their actions and learning. This builds their confidence and self-esteem and contributes successfully to pupils' personal development. Pupils co-operate well with one another in lessons and often work successfully in groups, for example in science or design and technology where they learn from others as they discuss their work.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**. The school provides **satisfactory** opportunities for enrichment, including through extra-curricular provision. The quality and quantity of the accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The curriculum does not consistently meet the needs of the higher attaining pupils.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health and citizenship education is good and pupils are well prepared for later stages of education.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in sport.
- The quality of the accommodation is good.

Commentary

16. There is good provision for the children in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum provides a wide range of planned and structured activities which gives the children in the nursery and reception classes a good start to school across all the areas of learning.
17. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they achieve well as a result. The Code of Practice is fully implemented. Including these pupils in all the school has to offer is a priority. Staff work hard to support the pupils who have learning and physical difficulties. The curriculum is changed and adapted well to the needs of the pupils with a statement of special educational needs. For all pupils with learning difficulties, individual learning programmes are devised to help the pupils learn the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. They

achieve well in these sessions which are planned to meet their needs well and are frequent and regular. The provision for those who learn English and mathematics within a small lower set each day is less effective as the work is not consistently as well planned to meet their needs. Overall learning objectives are general and individual targets and marking to help pupils improve are not as specific as they could be. As a result, the achievement of these pupils is satisfactory.

18. The curriculum is not as well planned to meet the needs of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 as it is in other year groups, especially for the higher attaining pupils. This results in their achievement being satisfactory.
19. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good. All relevant topics such as sex and relationships education and awareness of the dangers of drugs and alcohol are taught at the appropriate times. 'Crucial Crew' days enhance the provision for Year 6, and all pupils are involved in the Healthy Schools initiative. Pupils are offered frequent opportunities to learn to become good citizens, either in lessons or by taking responsibility within the school. They also benefit from regular opportunities to listen, think and speak about a variety of issues such as bullying and friendship, and caring for the environment. They learn to take care of the school environment through projects such as the millennium garden and anti-litter activities. They take an active interest in their school through participation in the school council and the Eco committee. Year 6 have additional jobs, for example reading with Year 2 children, which increases their sense of responsibility and self-esteem.
20. Pupils are well prepared for transfer to secondary school. Pupils in Year 6 meet and work with staff and other pupils at a local secondary school on a science project and 'Crucial Crew' project with the emergency services and the secondary school hosts a regular chess match. Staff from local secondary schools pay regular visits to the school and talk to the Year 6 pupils and meet the staff. These initiatives help to ease pupils' transition to secondary school effectively.
21. The school provides a good range of sport activities for pupils outside of school hours, that are well attended. These include football, gymnastics and cross-country, run by school staff, and short sports courses such as tag-rugby and football, run by local authority coaches. Other clubs include French, chess, choir and ICT.
22. In the spring term staff provided booster sessions for Year 6 in English and mathematics before and after school for higher and lower achievers, which were well attended and helped to improve pupils' performance in their tests effectively. Good use is made of the local area to enrich the curriculum, and specialist dance workshops in Year 5 enhanced the provision, but there are relatively few visits and visitors beyond that, for example to places of worship to support learning in religious education, and at present there are no residential learning opportunities planned for older pupils.
23. Accommodation in the relatively new main building is generally good with hard and grassed areas outside. The nursery and reception areas, however, which are in an older building, are a priority for development. This includes the need for increased space and outdoor equipment for reception children. There has been an improvement in resources in ICT since the last inspection, both in the ICT suite and in classrooms with the recent provision of interactive whiteboards. Teachers are starting to use them effectively across a range of subjects, for example in history in Year 2 and religious education in Year 6. Elsewhere resources are mainly sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. However, though planned, a systematic audit of the resources has not yet been carried out to reveal any likely gaps.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **good** pastoral care of the pupils. Support, advice and guidance based on teachers' monitoring of all pupils are **satisfactory**. The school seeks pupils' views through the school council and questionnaires, and the resulting involvement in the work of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a good level of pastoral care for all pupils and this enables them to work and play in an attractive and stimulating environment.
- The relationships between staff and their pupils are good and pupils are able to approach staff with confidence if they are worried or in need of advice.
- Good induction arrangements in the nursery and reception classes enable children to settle in quickly and to make good early progress.
- Pupils' personal development is supported well.

Commentary

24. This is a caring school where all pupils are known individually and are respected by the staff. Pupils enjoy a good level of care throughout the school day. The level of care throughout the school is good. Pupils with physical disabilities are especially well cared for both by the staff and by the visiting specialists. Pupils with other special educational needs are also well supported and have individual educational plans that are regularly reviewed for progress towards the targets previously identified.
25. The school carries out regular risk assessments and the statutory requirements for equipment testing are met. First aid provision is good and pupils' medicines are carefully controlled. Safety instruction in lessons where tools are used, such as in design and technology, are clearly given and emphasised. Child protection arrangements, including Internet security, are fully implemented and all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Statutory requirements for health and safety are met.
26. Pupils' behaviour is monitored well. Consequently, the good relationships that are developed and maintained between the staff and the pupils enable pupils to gain trust and confidence. This is necessary for them to be able to approach an adult in school if they are worried or concerned. Pupils know they will be listened to sympathetically and helped where possible.
27. The school has implemented good induction procedures into the nursery and reception classes. There is an active mother and toddler group located adjacent to the nursery and within the same open plan accommodation. Frequent contact, such as joining both sets of children for outdoor play, enables the younger children to become familiar with the nursery staff and children. The nursery staff offer home visits to prospective parents if they wish. The reception classes are located in the same area and the nursery children join in with lessons or activities as they approach the time for transfer. The regular contact enjoyed by children means they can quickly gain trust and confidence and this enables them to make good progress. There are equally good arrangements for transfer between year groups and key stages.
28. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education lessons is good and supports pupils' personal development well. For example, children are encouraged by their teachers to have a healthy lifestyle by eating fruit at break times. Training of Year 6 pupils to help younger pupils read means they are developing strategies to share their skills with other pupils as well as improving their own self-esteem and confidence. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Their needs are regularly assessed and appropriate strategies adopted to ensure that they are guided and supported to best effect. Pupils like their teachers and feel they are fair. Where targets are effectively set and shared with pupils, they learn well. These pupils know what they need to do next to improve. However, target-setting, although satisfactory, is in an early stage of development and there is inconsistent practice across the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school is seeking to improve the current **satisfactory** partnership with parents. Links with the community are **good** and well used to enhance the curriculum. **Good** links with other schools and

colleges are used well to provide support for both staff and pupils, particularly for those with disability and special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold positive views overall about the school but some would like to be more involved in its work and to know more about the achievements of their children.
- Good links with the community help to make learning relevant.
- The school uses its good links with other schools and colleges to provide support for learning.
- There are effective transfer arrangements for Year 6 leavers.

Commentary

29. Parents overall have positive views of the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in their children's learning and consulted at all stages about their children's achievements. The parents take a full part in review meetings when possible. The parents are encouraged to come into school to discuss any aspects of their children's work and development. A small number of parents would like better consultation with the school in order to become more involved in its work. Some parents would like to know more about their children's achievements. The school is working towards improving its links with the parents and both of these issues are recognised for further development.

30. The school has established good links with businesses and other organisations in the community that make good contributions to pupils' learning. Several locally based businesses donate to help the work of the Friends of School Association. The school is deeply involved in Local Education Authority (LEA) projects such as sports coaching, environmental topics, early years development and art competitions. The school uses the local environment well to broaden topic work and make it more interesting for the pupils. Visits to local churches, the memorial grounds, and the public library and local theatre all help to stimulate learning. Annual visits to the 'Crucial Crew' activity day are popular and give pupils valuable instruction on home and personal safety matters.

31. Parents from the community use the school premises to operate the lively mother and toddler group and the popular before-and-after school club. Some 30 pupils come to school early and enjoy a healthy-eating-type breakfast and join in games or activities. At the end of the day more games and outdoor play are arranged.

32. The school's good links with other schools and colleges also support learning and provide staff with joint training opportunities. Links with special schools are used very effectively to provide additional support and encouragement for pupils with special needs through disability. Special events days are arranged and are well received. The school also benefits from assessment data being prepared and passed on to help identify progress and future targets. Staff meetings in the local cluster of schools provide a means for discussion of common problems and for training. The links with colleges provide opportunities for national vocational training courses for the school's assistants and also provide adult support in classrooms when students are given placements for practical or work experience.

33. The secondary school membership within the cluster of schools helps to co-ordinate the transfer arrangements for the Year 6 leavers. The school has a link with the local university and this allows for secondary school staff to visit the school and provide an activity day based on scientific experiments. Staff from the secondary schools also visit to meet their new pupils and to explain about the first year of secondary education. The Year 6 leavers can then attend the secondary school they will be attending for one or two days to gain first hand knowledge of the premises and sample lessons. These well-planned arrangements help to avert problems.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school overall are satisfactory. The headteacher has made a **good** start to her leadership. The management is **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has made a good start to raising standards in the school.
- Although the governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities, some aspects of governance are unsatisfactory.
- The management roles of the staff are underdeveloped.
- There is good management of special educational needs.
- There is good financial management

Commentary

34. The headteacher took up post in September 2003. During the previous 18 months, the school had been without a substantive headteacher and there had been many staff absences which led to very high staffing costs. At this time without leadership of an appointed headteacher, school development was slow and hampered by staff absences. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is supported by hardworking staff. The headteacher maintains a clear and accurate overview of the work of the school. There is a high priority given to raising standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The drive and commitment, from the headteacher and the hard work of the staff are successfully raising standards in Years 1 to 2, in spite of a diminished budget and reduced staffing because of decreases in the number of pupils on roll.
35. The governance of the school is unsatisfactory even though governors fulfil their statutory duties. There is a satisfactory committee structure in place. However, the curriculum committee is not effective. Individual governors take responsibility for aspects of the school's work such as literacy, numeracy and special educational needs as well as other subjects and aspects of the curriculum. Although meetings have taken place, contact with the school has not been effectively established. This in part has been due to a governing body that has not always had its full complement of members. The governors have an over-reliance on the headteacher for information and do not check further. Monitoring of the work of the school is insufficient. While governors may have a general overview of the work of the school, they do not have sufficient and accurate information about pupils' achievement. As a result, they are not in a secure enough position to challenge the senior management about the academic standards or to help the school move forwards. The governors have had little training; consequently, some governors are unclear about aspects of their roles and responsibilities. This has resulted in governors having inadequate information upon which to base their support and challenge for the school.
36. The management roles of the staff are under-developed. During the past few years, however, when there has been a lack of leadership and no secure management structure in place, not enough time has been allocated to the subject leaders to check on teaching and learning and standards across the school. This limits not only their view of how well the pupils are doing but also the quality of their action plans to raise standards further. Consequently, the managers have not made a full contribution to the school's development, and the pace of change which within the past few years has been slow. The exception is ICT. There have been increased resources and staff training which have resulted in improved standards across the school since the last inspection. The subject leaders are enthusiastic and, within the confines of the time available for them to carry out their duties, have identified where improvements can be made.
37. The management and leadership by the special educational needs co-ordinator are good. The liaison with the teaching and learning support assistants and the outside agencies is good. There are clear channels of communication. The school benefits from the close liaison with the nearby special schools that assists the staff in training to meet the needs of the pupils with physical needs. Appropriate funding from the budget ensures there are an adequate number of support staff and resources. ICT is used particularly well by one teaching assistant who matches

individual learning programmes as well as designing resources so that pupils' understanding of basic skills are secure. The school has a very positive approach to meeting the pupils' specific needs and works very closely with the parents and local special schools.

38. The budget is at present well managed. A deficit has occurred since the last inspection because of staff absences and falling rolls. The resolution of this issue has taken much of the governors' time. Financial management is now good. There is a well thought out financial plan agreed by the governors and headteacher and supported by the LEA to resolve the deficit. There is good financial control but the contingency for unplanned expenditure is very small.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	998310
Total expenditure	956382
Expenditure per pupil	2360

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-49594
Balance carried forward to the next	-7666

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

39. Teaching is good in both the nursery and reception classes, and the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Consequently, the children achieve well. This year a quarter of the children who started the reception class did not attend the nursery class. Most of these children have been to some pre-school settings before they started in the reception class. The children start in the reception class in the September of the year in which they will become five. For the majority of the children, when they start in the nursery class their attainments are well below average in their personal, social, language and communication skills. When the children start the reception class their skills are below the levels expected. However, children's attainment of entry varies significantly between year groups. In some year groups the numbers of children with special educational needs and behavioural problems are higher and this means that the attainment of these year groups is not so high. The staff in the nursery and reception classes work well in their teams and are looking forward to a greater integration when they form a Foundation Unit. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory and have provided satisfactory curriculum and assessment procedures for the children. Although the Foundation Stage has been implemented since the last inspection, the staff do not work together yet as a cohesive team. The accommodation in the nursery and reception class is spacious but is in need of renovation with the outdoor areas needing improvement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables the children to feel happy and secure.
- Staff encourage the children to be polite and to share.
- Clear routines enable the children to become independent.

Commentary

40. As a result of good teaching, the children achieve well. Most are likely to reach the levels expected of this area of learning by the end of the reception year. The teachers and nursery nurses have established clear routines so that the children feel confident and happy. The children know the school routines and happily select the activities they choose to do with confidence. The reception children get changed for physical education lessons well. They organise their clothes sensibly, placing their clothes carefully in their bags so that they are ready to get changed at the end of their lesson. The reception children take turns in taking home at the end of the day a favourite teddy bear or a mathematics game and this enables the children to link home with school. Snack times in both the nursery and reception classes are sociable times. All are polite and are praised when they remember to say 'thank you'. The children chat happily as they eat and drink. They express their preferences of the different fruits on offer and ask politely to have their apples peeled. This session provides a good opportunity for the children to develop their social skills. The children tidy up at the end of sessions. They try hard to wash the mixing bowls after they have baked and they wipe the tables they have been using to prepare for the next activity. In this way the children learn to develop their social responsibility. The children work well together. The older children in the reception class share their equipment well and work alongside each other. In the nursery class the staff engage and encourage the children to help to share and work with each other to become effective learners. The staff work alongside the children supporting the children in their learning. In the reception class the children select their own tasks and persevere well. They play enthusiastically together and they sustain their activities well. The children are growing in confidence and developing positive attitudes to work.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are taught well and achieve well.
- The children have many good opportunities to develop their speaking skills.
- Children enjoy stories and work hard to develop their writing skills.

Commentary

41. Good, carefully structured teaching in small groups enables the children to learn well in their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. As a result achievement is good. The staff employ a wide range of strategies to encourage the children to develop their vocabulary and confidence in speaking. For example, in the nursery class the children making jam tarts for the 'Grand Ball' were talking about the pastry they were rolling out, whether it was thin enough and the shape of the cutter they were to use, whilst in the reception class the children were finding suitable words to describe the cake mixture wondering, whether it was 'sloppy' or 'slippery'. The children chat about their work and there is a buzz of conversation throughout the classrooms. All the children enjoy stories and rhymes. The nursery children, for example, enjoyed listening the class teacher tell the story of 'The Frog Prince'. The children are at present engaged by the traditional stories the teachers are reading them. They listen with rapt attention to the stories and then act out castle sieges and princes coming to rescue princesses in distress with play figures. Books are displayed throughout the nursery and reception classes and this enables the children to understand that books also contain information as well as well-loved stories. The reception children are learning to read and they take home their reading books to share with their parents or carers. There are helpful hints in the books, which help and guide the adults as they share the reading books with the children. The children enjoy their reading and have made a good start. They all like looking at the pictures and discussing what is happening in the story. The higher attaining children are beginning to read competently. The children are encouraged to become writers. In the nursery class the children write appointments in the appointment book in the hairdressing salon. They answer the phone and chat to the customers. In the reception class the children write their names on their paintings and are developing good skills. The children are learning to spell simple words. The lower attaining writing simple words whilst higher attaining children write more complex words. More able children write two simple sentences with capital letters and full stops. Writing skills are taught carefully and systematically and the main aim is to encourage the children to think of themselves as writers. The staff work with small groups of children giving them very individual help, and as a result, they achieve well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching promotes children's good achievement in the development of their mathematical language and understanding.

Commentary

42. As a result of the good provision the children achieve well in developing their mathematical awareness. The children in the nursery enjoy singing counting rhymes, working in the sand and water, and developing good mathematical skills. They sing about 'Five speckled frogs' counting how many are left as one by one they jump into the pool. In the reception class the children

confidently count to 20 and back. They work out simple number sums using both addition and subtraction and work out problems with great enthusiasm. Higher attaining children use a 100-number square to count to 50 and then estimate the number of sweets the class teacher has placed in a bag. Here the children were learning the value of making considered judgements about the numbers of sweets and not just random guesses. The staff make good use of a wide range of activities to promote the children's learning and because their activities are at the correct level of demand the children do well and their learning is good. They learn good mathematical vocabulary and talk about 'heaviest' and 'lightest' and the names of a range of shapes. Because the children are taught in both the nursery and the reception class in small groups the children's learning is carefully matched to their needs and so their learning is secured. This is a good feature of the teaching and learning in both classes. The teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the learning of the children as they work with their groups.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an exciting curriculum to stimulate children's learning.
- ICT is used well in teaching.

Commentary

43. The classrooms are used effectively to stimulate a desire to learn. The teachers have provided good opportunities for children to learn about living things. The children have been studying mini-beasts. The nursery children have been watching butterflies emerge from their pupae. They were particularly interested to watch them fly off into the outdoor area and knew that they must be handled with great care because they were living creatures. Another child was carefully studying the tadpoles as they swam in the tank. She observed them closely with her hand lens and confirmed that they were growing legs. The children also worked with a range of materials wondering if they would 'float' or 'sink'. In this session the children extended their understanding of things that were 'heavy' and those that were 'light'. In the reception class the children used the small world area to work with plastic mini-beasts that live in leaf litter. Good use is made of ICT to aid the children's learning. The reception class visit the computer suite for some of their lessons. The children used a program to create their own front cover of a magazine to write about Cinderella. The children decided on the name for their paper, 'The Castle News' being a firm favourite. They then wrote a sentence for a headline. Pictures were then used to illustrate their work. The children were effective in the use of the computer. The children worked hard to select the correct upper case keys. They used the tools to draw their pictures and to rub out lines they did not want. At the end of the session they saved their work on the computer. Achievement is good.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor area is used well by the staff to develop the children's physical skills and is targeted for improvement.

Commentary

44. The children in the nursery have good opportunities to use the outdoor area to work with bicycles and play resources. This area is a large area which is prioritised for further improvements. It is clear that the outdoors is used appropriately for physical activities such as developing children's throwing and catching skills and their coordination skills with the use of play equipment such as tricycles, and large equipment. The children clearly enjoy moving round this space and are beginning to develop co-operative play as they use the equipment. The reception children have opportunities to work in the school hall as well as outside, for example to develop their control of small apparatus. In one lesson, the children knew the benefits of exercise and enjoyed their warm-up activity of 'jumping beans'. Collaboration and co-operation were also developed as the children worked hard to pass balls to each other. In this lesson the children achieved very well because the group was small and the children's learning was very carefully tailored to their needs. Skilful teaching and the careful development of skills ensured the lesson was very successful.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of experiences is used to stimulate the children's imaginations.
- The staff make good links with other areas of learning.

Commentary

45. Children enjoy a good range of well-planned art and design and role-play experiences to stimulate their imagination. They enjoy working in the hairdressing salon and 'Cinderella's kitchen' and enthusiastically take on the different roles. The children are beginning to relate well to each other and play and share imaginative ideas. This is developing well in the reception class. The children are at present making hats for 'The Grand Ball' and designing, making and decorating them to their own artistic ideas. They select their own materials well and glue and stick energetically. They enjoy painting and have created some good pictures. The children learn to mix their own powder paints to create the exact colours they wish to use. These skills are developing well. The children also look at the work of famous artists and create their own pictures in response. For example, they have made pictures in the style of Matisse's *Snail* picture. The staff effectively theme the children's learning so that they see the relevance of their learning and vocabulary, and ideas are developed securely.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 2 but more able pupils in Year 6 do not achieve as well as they might.
- There are good opportunities to learn to read, and spelling and handwriting are good features of pupils' writing.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

Commentary

46. Pupils achieve well from their starting points to attain broadly average standards by the end of Year 2 in reading and writing, speaking and listening. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2,

particularly of the basic skills. Standards over the last few years have been below average in Year 6. This is due to a number of factors. For example, the pupils' learning has been affected by staff changes. This has led to some pupils not being consistently challenged well in their learning. The present pupils in Year 6 attain below average standards in reading and writing and average standards in speaking and listening. There are an unusually high number of pupils with statements of special educational need in the present Year 6. Most other pupils in Year 6, because they are taught well, reach the expected standard for their age. However, the higher attaining pupils could do better in their understanding of more challenging texts and writing imaginatively at length.

47. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn to read. In lessons, shared reading as a class reinforces the teaching points very effectively, such as reading dialogue very expressively, as does working with small groups on reading strategies such as the role of punctuation. In addition, regular time daily in school for individual reading, as well as reading with adults at school and at home, helps pupils achieve well. Boxes of requested books on topics or particular authors such as Michael Morpurgo and Jacqueline Wilson on loan from the local school library service motivate pupils, including boys, to read. In most classes pupils listen attentively to their teachers, other adults and each other, which helps them learn effectively. Teachers encourage all pupils to participate in lessons and most use questioning skilfully to cover the range of abilities in the class. Good questioning by the teacher in Year 5 for example, leads to improved comprehension of the story they are reading as a class. Pupils then use their speaking and listening skills effectively when they discuss different points of view and read the story working in pairs. This promotes their learning and understanding very effectively, as they show when they support their answers with evidence from the text. However, the most able are not consistently challenged to extend their comprehension skills sufficiently.
48. Teaching overall is satisfactory with some good features. It is good in Years 1 and 2. Teaching of spelling is systematic throughout the school and helps pupils to develop independent spelling strategies effectively. Handwriting and presentation of pupils' work are generally good, with more able writers joining their writing from Year 2. Good, lively teaching in Year 2 means that pupils achieve well in all aspects of their work. However, in Years 3 to 6, disruptions in staffing and inconsistencies in the level of challenge have led to a small minority of average and higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 not achieving as well as they might. For example, in Year 4 the work for some pupils does not match their different abilities closely and there are very few comments in these pupils' books to help them know how to improve and write imaginatively at length. Some higher attaining pupils, however, make great strides in their learning, for example in their writing, due to the good teaching. These pupils learn how to write their own longer stories due to the good systems put in place and the very effective strategies employed by the teacher which help pupils achieve as well as they can. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour which is generally good as a result. A minority of pupils exhibit challenging behaviour which teachers manage well and consistently.
49. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good and helps these pupils achieve well throughout the school. Teaching assistants provide good support in all years with work well matched to pupils' abilities. For example, in Year 2, working with a group of pupils with special educational needs, the teaching assistant uses questioning effectively which increases pupils' understanding of the book they are reading. Together with class teachers, teaching assistants are particularly effective in encouraging and enabling pupils with special educational needs to participate in lessons, for example volunteering to answer teachers' questions. This helps to build pupils' confidence.
50. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The leadership is satisfactory. The subject leader has identified the right priorities to work on to improve the standards pupils achieve. ICT has been planned satisfactorily into lessons. However, the systematic checking on standards and teaching and learning have yet to have a positive impact in Years 3 to 6. For example, not all teachers refer to pupils' targets in their written comments to help pupils improve. Where the marking is less effective, pupils do not know how to improve their work and tend to repeat errors.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in other subjects. For example, the pupils in Year 2 write about the Great Fire of London in history and the story of Moses in religious education. Pupils in Year 6 use their reading skills effectively when skimming and scanning for information on the computer, for example when researching the changes in Britain since 1948 in history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well by the end of Year 2 and attain above average standards.
- The pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- A small minority of average and higher attaining pupils could do better in Years 3 to 6.
- Oral mathematics provides a good start to lessons and motivates pupils to learn.
- Basic skills are taught well.
- The subject leader is not allocated enough time to monitor teaching and learning and to check on standards across the school.

Commentary

52. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve very well and attain above average standards. There is good improvement from standards in 2003 in Years 1 to 2. Standards have risen because the teaching is consistently well matched to the needs of the pupils. Consequently, the pupils have achieved well this year to attain above average standards. Last year results were well below average. Between Years 3 to 6 the pupils' achievement varies between year groups but overall it is satisfactory. This is because the work is not consistently challenging enough for some average and higher attaining pupils, especially in Year 4. In Year 6, pupils achieve well. Standards overall by the end of Year 6 are below average which is similar to last year. This is mainly because there is a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in this group which affects the overall results for the school. Most other pupils attain the expected standards, which is similar to the results in 2003. However, there were fewer pupils with special educational needs in this group. The overall trend for improvement over the last four years has seen the greatest improvement in Years 1 and 2. Here pupils are exceeding the national trend by Year 2 as greater numbers are achieving at the higher level. In Years 3 to 6 the trend for improvement is not as great and is broadly average. However, there are several factors causing fluctuations between the year groups which adversely affect results by the end of Year 6 besides the variations in the quality of teaching. For example, there are differences between the percentages of pupils with special educational needs from one year to the next. The overall percentage of pupils moving in and out of school is high between Years 3 to 6. There has been a greater level of staff changes. Nevertheless, the trend for improvement has kept pace with the trend nationally.

53. All aspects of the curriculum are covered. The basic skills in calculations using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are well taught. Pupils know more than one strategy to solve simple number problems. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, but a small minority of higher attaining pupils, especially in Years 3 and 4, could do better. There are not enough opportunities for them to work independently on devising investigations and some find it difficult to interpret word-problems and find solutions. This area is recognised by the school for further development. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well because work is planned well for the pupils, and the additional help they receive, particularly from the teaching assistants, is generally effective.

54. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 6. A good feature of lessons is the successful start, with teachers often using interactive whiteboards confidently. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, lower attaining pupils successfully learned about co-ordinates and negative numbers by using an ICT program to move 'Billy Bug' around a grid. The program held their interest well and because the learning was planned well in small learning steps the pupils responded well. As they used the whiteboard to demonstrate their answers their self-confidence grew considerably as they achieved success. Most pupils enjoy mathematics and generally have good attitudes to their work. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are set into ability groups. This allows some average attaining pupils and the higher attaining pupils to move forward at a slightly faster pace. It also allows some average and lower attaining pupils to learn basic skills

they need. However, this arrangement is not effective when work set, particularly in Years 3 to 5, is not matched well to the individual and group needs of the pupils. In these instances, teachers' expectations are set too low and the work is too easy. There are insufficient opportunities for the higher attaining to devise investigational work.

55. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed although the subject leader has worked hard within the constraints of her role. The results of tests are closely looked at to identify weaknesses and strengths. Targets are set for all classes. However, insufficient use is made of assessment information in Years 3 to 6 to consistently plan work for individual and groups of pupils. The subject leader has a good idea of what needs to be done to further improve mathematics. While monitoring and taking action to improve standards in Years 1 to 2 has been successful, there is still work to be done to check and take action to improve pupils' learning in Years 3 to 6. Improvement is satisfactory since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. Mathematics is satisfactorily incorporated into the planning of most subjects. Pupils apply their skills in symmetrical pattern work in art and design and in reading co-ordinates in map-work. There is some good practice, particularly in science as pupils draw tables and graphs in science, using ICT effectively to represent their data.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement by Year 2 is good.
- There is a good use of ICT to support achievement.

Commentary

57. Standards at the end of Years 2 are broadly average and pupils achieve well. There is very good improvement from the national results for Year 2 in 2003 where too few pupils attained at the expected and higher levels. By the end of Year 6 standards are below average. This is mainly because there are a large percentage of pupils within this year group with a statement of special educational needs, and not expected to reach the national expectations, which depresses the overall standard for the year group. There is satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been hampered by a significant number of pupils who started in this school in Years 3 to 6. In some year groups staff absence has had an adverse effect on the continuity of the pupils' learning. Throughout the school pupils' achievements in science are rising, especially in Years 1 and 2. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Overall, achievement by the time pupils leave school is satisfactory. There is still more to do to bring about further improvements. The subject leader has rightly identified the needs of the above average pupils for further improvement. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and they are well supported in lessons.

58. The quality of teaching and learning in science is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. For example, in a very good lesson seen during the inspection in Year 2, work was skillfully matched to the needs of the pupils. In this lesson, held in the computer suite, the teacher very effectively used a program to enable the pupils to clearly identify which mini-beasts lived in particular habitats. Higher attaining pupils were stretched and challenged by their tasks whilst the pupils with special educational needs were carefully guided so that their achievement was also very good. The teachers ensure that the pupils' learning is rooted in scientific enquiry and investigation. The use of technical scientific language is also a common feature throughout the school. This enables the pupils to answer the teachers' questions with good use of scientific terms and as a result this aids explanation and discussion. Good attention

is given to issues such as the misuse of drugs and living a healthy lifestyle. However, where teaching and learning are satisfactory, in Years 3 to 6, work is not as well matched to the individual needs of the pupils, particularly the higher attainers. For example, there are insufficient opportunities for the most able to plan their investigations.

59. The teachers are effective in engaging the interests of the pupils, with ICT being used well to support the pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson, the teacher made good use of the interactive whiteboard to teach the pupils that plants and animals live in different habitats.
60. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 research different food and their nutritional content. Pupils present their data in graphs and charts using ICT. Pupils enjoy their science lessons. They enjoy the practical nature of the subject and like experimenting and working together. Throughout the school the pupils get on well with their learning and work well together. Generally work is well presented in their books but this is not consistent through the school.
61. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader has worked hard and correctly identified areas for further improvement. The need to take on a more effective monitoring role is recognised. Test results are analysed and the findings are used to improve the curriculum. Resources are satisfactory and ICT is used well in lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well to attain the expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The computer suite and interactive whiteboards are being used well to help pupils learn.
- Leadership and management of ICT are good.
- ICT is used well to support other subject areas.

Commentary

62. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards of work are at the levels expected of pupils of their age. Achievement is good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average, the pupils under-achieved and there were barely adequate numbers of computers in the school. Teaching and learning are also better and this has made a significant improvement to the opportunities presented to the pupils. By the end of Year 2 the pupils create their own branching databases. This lesson for Year 2 was particularly successful because the class teacher made sure that the work was carefully and securely matched to the needs of all the pupils in the class. In this way all achieved very well. The pupils with special educational needs achieved very well because they had sufficient time to finish their task, they had very good support from a teaching assistant and the work they had to do was at the correct level. By Year 6 the pupils are creating their own *PowerPoint* presentations to support their learning about the Tudors in their history lessons. The pupils type quickly and efficiently using both hands.
63. The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection both in the computer suite and in the classrooms with the interactive whiteboards was good overall. The teachers use the suite well and often present their lessons in class, by using the whiteboards. The ICT technician gives good help and support in lessons and is on hand if any of the computers develop a technical hitch. The teachers demonstrate a good familiarity both with the programs they use and the interactive whiteboards. Good support is given to those pupils who do not work as fast as the others by the technician and the teaching assistants. Planning is appropriate. It is clear that the pupils are eager to learn and are confident in the use of the computers.
64. There is good leadership and management of the subject. There have been significant improvements in resources and standards since the last inspection. The school has a secure

scheme of work and assessment procedures are linked to this although the school has rightly identified that there are still some areas of assessment which remain to be improved. The staff have all worked enthusiastically to develop their skills especially in the use of the interactive whiteboards. The strategic management of the subject is effective and it is clear that the school is well placed to raise standards further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. ICT is used well to support the pupils' learning in other subject areas to enable the pupils to develop, refine and use their skills. ICT is used particularly well by the staff as they introduce their lessons. For example, in Year 1 the pupils plotted a pathway using positional language on a maze, whilst in Years 3 and 4 the class teacher showed a range of habitats around the school for the pupils to consider where various mini-beasts might live. Research into artists' lives and work and the changes observed throughout the decades of the recent past are just a few areas explored by the pupils as part of their learning in lessons.

HUMANITIES

66. Very few lessons were seen in **history** and **geography**. It is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision and standards in these subjects. These subjects were sampled during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils.

67. In **history** in Year 2 teachers made good use of the interactive whiteboard to show pupils photographs of the seaside in the past one hundred years. Teachers' probing questioning draws out well the comparisons between then and now. When discussing what had changed since then in the photographs, pupils had to justify their choices as not all agreed, for example about Punch and Judy. This helped to reinforce their historical understanding very effectively. Pupils in Year 6 also investigate how things have changed in Britain since 1948. They make very good use of ICT facilities for their research in preparing a presentation for Year 5. They undertake their own research projects of the period, covering topics such as fashion, shopping and housing, which make a good contribution to their understanding of the recent past. There have been relatively few visits or visitors recently to enhance the provision in history.

68. Pupils make good use of the local environment in **geography**. For example, in Year 1, pupils draw plans of the local shops, undertake a traffic survey and study the river in the local park. While developing early mapping skills, this increases pupils' understanding of their local environment effectively. As an Eco-friendly school which promotes care of the environment, pupils identify issues such as litter problems and how to deal with them, and have created a millennium garden in the school grounds, to improve the school environment. Finding out about the climate, the terrain and occupations in parts of India contributes well to pupils' awareness of different cultures as well as geographical understanding and knowledge of the world. Pupils in Year 6 are very excited about a recently started project investigating different samples of water from a local river to find out what has polluted it and locating the causes. This makes good cross-curricular links with science. There are few field trips beyond the immediate locality to enhance the provision in the subject. Pupils are aware of some global issues such as the impact of trade on the way people live.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links with circle time and assemblies and good support for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

- The completed work and discussion with pupils indicate that their achievement overall is good.
- There is too little provision for learning about religions other than Christianity.
- Leadership is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

69. Pupils are attaining the standards expected of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6.
70. Pupils develop a sound understanding of Christianity and aspects of Judaism, Islam and Hinduism through a varied curriculum based on the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and national guidelines. In Year 1 the teacher uses the story of the Good Samaritan to encourage pupils to discuss friendship, what it means in a Christian context and in pupils' own lives, and how to be a good friend. Such themes are further encouraged in circle time discussions and assemblies. In Year 6 pupils understand the word 'sacred' and that it applies to all places of worship. They show respect for the different faiths and a good level of interest. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about aspects of Hinduism and begin to reflect on different aspects of their own character.
71. The quality of teaching and learning in the few lessons observed was good. However, there are few visits or visitors to places of worship beyond Christianity to enhance the impact of this good teaching. Teachers use techniques such as role-play in Year 2 which helps pupils learn and understand effectively. In Year 6, the teachers use music and words at the beginning of the lesson which helps to create a reflective atmosphere. They use the interactive whiteboard effectively to show pupils what the inside of a mosque looks like. In Years 3 and 4, through the teacher's skilled questioning and good use of Hindu artefacts, the class draws up a list of characteristics of Vishnu from what he is holding and wearing. Teaching in the subject overall makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
72. There is no subject co-ordinator at present. Little has been done recently to monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work or teaching in the subject and no audit of resources. There is consequently no clear overview of standards in religious education.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. No judgements on provision are made in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education as too few lessons were observed in each subject. These subjects were sampled during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils.
74. In **art and design** pupils use line, tone and colour to good effect. For example, in Year 1, pupils have worked skilfully, creating a fruit and vegetables print collage to depict the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. In Year 2, pupils use a range of media such as pastels, paint and charcoal to depict the Great Fire of London. By Year 6, pupils, inspired by the work of Bridget Riley, draw and paint black and white op-art patterns. They understand the techniques of a range of some well-known artists, such as LS Lowry and apply the skills learned in their work. Art and design is often successfully linked to other subjects such as history. For example, pupils in Year 6 study the Tudor period and draw warships of that time. Pupils enjoy art and design. They enjoy expressing their feelings and emotions and like working in small groups with their friends. Sketchbooks are used particularly well to develop pupils' drawing techniques. Pupils practise shading and form and perspective as they draw flowers such as daffodils, portraits and landscapes. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. However, there is insufficient checking on teaching and learning. The subject is enriched by a craft club for younger pupils. This makes a good contribution to their personal development and subject skills.

75. In **design and technology** all pupils get opportunities to design and make articles using a range of materials. Pupils are competent in designing and some are able to suggest possible modifications for their products as a result of making them. In Year 2, pupils have worked well on their models of houses. They have incorporated a winding mechanism to make their Incy-Wincy Spiders crawl up the drainpipe. In Years 3 and 4 pupils work, for example, on money containers, using the skills and techniques they have learned in sewing to join their materials together. All pupils enjoy the subject and get great satisfaction from the assembly process. They say they enjoy making their products more than designing them. They take pride in their work and are keen to show it to visitors. Work is linked well to other subjects. For instance, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have made pop-up nursery rhyme stories for a child to read in the Foundation Stage. Pupils in Year 6 say they have made Greek masks, Diwali lamps and Hanukkah boxes.

76. In **music** the pupils experience a satisfactory curriculum of musical activities. Year 1 pupils were keen to perform their version of 'I Hear Water' to which they have added tuned and untuned instrumental accompaniment. In this year group the pupils developed their skills well, firstly by learning the song and then singing in parts before adding their instrumentation. This represented good achievement. The pupils enjoy singing and this is very evident in assemblies. In a Year 5 music lesson, the pupils examined a popular song and identified its good points. Then they began to put together their own lyrics for their own composition. By the end of the lesson the pupils were able to share the initial draft of their songs and to evaluate each other's work. The pupils are involved in an appropriate number of enrichment activities. The choir is at present working on a planned performance of 'The Nutcracker' which they have been rehearsing for some time. Although the subject leader is accomplished and knowledgeable her role is at yet undeveloped and is an area for further improvement.

77. In **physical education** the curriculum is enriched by good opportunities to play competitive sports with other schools. Additionally, sports coaches offer additional tuition in football, hockey, tag-rugby and tennis skills. There is a club for cross-country running. These opportunities make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good programme to promote pupils' learning which is incorporated well into the curriculum.

Commentary

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

79. Teachers use lessons well to develop pupils' personal skills. During circle time pupils have opportunity to express their views and concerns and to listen to others. These sessions are well handled and pupils enjoy the chance to talk about things they feel are important, such as bullying. Pupils in Year 2, discuss how to look after their pets and take care of their environment. In Year 6, they speak with a teacher from the LEA about the arrangements and concerns about transfer to Year 7. The teacher gives particular consideration to supporting the physically disabled, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs feel comfortable about being included as well as others.

80. The school works hard at establishing a 'Healthy Lifestyle'. The curriculum promotes a healthy lifestyle as pupils study a healthy diet. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, design and make a healthy fruit salad. Older pupils learn about the misuse of drugs and the effects of alcohol and tobacco. The school participates in the 'Healthy School' initiative. The distribution of fruit in the infant classes contributes to this area of the curriculum.
81. Pupils take part in school and national initiatives to develop their awareness of citizenship. There is a school council. It is proactive in voicing pupils' opinions and working towards improving their provision. For instance, the council has recently been successful in organising and promoting after-school clubs for rollerblading and skateboarding. The council is now involved in working for a quiet area in school at lunch times and a games room for when the weather is inclement. Pupils consider others in the wider world. For instance, they support some charities. Pupils in Year 6 are developing their opinions on global issues such as 'fair trade'.
82. This aspect is well led and managed. It has been a recent priority for development. The planning of this aspect and the use of good resources have established this aspect well in the curriculum. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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