

INSPECTION REPORT

**RADCLIFFE HALL CE/METHODIST CONTROLLED
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Radcliffe, Manchester

LEA area: Bury

Unique reference number: 105330

Headteacher: Mrs G R Watson

Lead inspector: Mr Ian Hocking

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th July 2004

Inspection number: 257264

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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	344
School address:	Bury Street Radcliffe Manchester
Postcode:	M26 2 GB
Telephone number:	0161 253 7412
Fax number:	0161 253 7401
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs E Jones
Date of previous inspection:	9 th November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Radcliffe Hall Church of England and Methodist Primary School admits pupils from the town of Radcliffe near Bury. Most pupils come from the immediate area of the school and from the Church of England and Methodist parishes. The school is in a built-up area and housed in a building dating from before the turn of the nineteenth century. There are 344 pupils on roll including 44 who attend Nursery part-time, 22 in the morning and 22 in the afternoon. Falling rolls have resulted in mixed-age classes in Years 3/4 and Years 5/6; other year groups are each organised into two classes of pupils of the same age. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below average.

Thirty pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, of whom four are at an early stage of learning English. There are also eight pupils from families seeking asylum but none of these pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. Thirty-two per cent of the full-time pupils on roll are eligible for free school meals, well above the national average. A large number of families living in the area have a high level of socio-economic stress. More than 25 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs; four have Statements of Special Educational Need. There is a rising number of pupils who are admitted with emotional and behavioural problems.

The school serves a transient population of families, including a few who are refugees and asylum seekers. During the last academic year 28 pupils left and 32 were admitted; this is higher than in most schools. Many of the children being admitted to Radcliffe Hall, especially those joining in Years 5 and 6, have had interruptions to their learning that adversely affect their progress.

The school received a Healthy Schools award in 2000. A Positive Parenting programme was introduced in May 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1272	Mr I Hocking	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education
13448	Mrs D Lloyd	Lay inspector	
16761	Mr M Hemmings	Team inspector	Science Geography History
30362	Mrs J Henshaw	Team inspector	English Citizenship Music Religious education English as an additional language
30745	Mrs P Thorpe	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Foundation Stage Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Radcliffe Hall provides an effective academic education and its pupils achieve better standards than those of similar schools. It benefits from good management and satisfactory leadership and governance. However, the unusually high number of exclusions is a serious concern. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are expected to do their best and most achieve well because of the good quality of teaching they receive. It provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Educational standards are above those of similar schools.
- Teaching in most lessons is good, enabling all pupils to achieve well. However, a significant proportion is no better than satisfactory and needs to be improved.
- Management is good.
- The provision for pupils' personal, social and emotional education is unsatisfactory.
- The positive attitudes of the majority of pupils contribute significantly to their learning.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) match national expectations but pupils are not making sufficient use of computers to assist learning in other subjects.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since it was previously inspected. All the key issues have been dealt with successfully. In addition, there has been significant improvement in teaching. The high number of exclusions, reported previously, remains an issue.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals; the usual comparison against Year 2 prior attainment is not appropriate because many Year 6 pupils were not at the school in Year 2.*

The above table shows that the school's results in national tests in 2003 were below those of all schools nationally, but standards were better than those of similar schools. Overall, pupils' **achievement is good**, especially when taking into account that one in three pupils has special educational needs. Furthermore, a high proportion of pupils join the school from other schools. Many of these pupils have behavioural and/or learning difficulties.

Standards in the present Year 6 are below the national average for mathematics and science. However, standards in English and ICT are much improved and match those expected nationally. Standards in religious education match those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

Standards in the present Year 2 are in line with national averages for English, mathematics and ICT and below average in science. Standards in religious education match those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

Standards in the Foundation Stage (namely Nursery and Reception classes) are below average. Few children reach the goals they are expected to meet by the end of Reception. This represents

satisfactory achievement from their starting points which were well below average when they began in Nursery and results from satisfactory teaching.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are unsatisfactory. Attitudes are good and, in many lessons, very good; this contributes significantly to learning. Insufficient provision is made for pupils' social and spiritual development. Behaviour is only satisfactory because there are a high number of exclusions. Pupils' attendance is average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is good for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory in Foundation Stage. Pupils have equal opportunities and most achieve well because of well-planned lessons and good teamwork between teachers and support staff. Where teaching is good, pupils are well motivated and apply themselves to their work, making good gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. However, there is a significant amount of teaching that is only satisfactory. In these lessons, often the teaching lacks inspiration and/or pupils' behaviour is challenging. In most lessons, pupils have relatively few opportunities to use ICT to support their learning in other subjects. Arrangements for assessing pupils' work are good, especially for English, mathematics and science, but they are unsatisfactory for ICT. Pupils experience a satisfactory curriculum that is supported by adequate resources. However, the provision for pupils' personal development lacks structure and is unsatisfactory. Therefore, those pupils whose behaviour and relationships lead to problems eventually tend towards exclusion. The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and higher attaining pupils are well challenged. Links with parents, the community, other schools and colleges are all satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's management of the school is good and is an important factor in pupils' good achievement. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. Governance of the school is satisfactory and ensures all statutory requirements are met. Staff with key responsibilities, including the deputy headteacher, provides satisfactory leadership and management.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents express satisfaction with most of the school's work; in particular the vast majority commend the quality of teaching and management of the school. Almost one in three parents expressed concern, in their questionnaire returns, about pupils' behaviour. However, the inspection team judged behaviour inside lessons and at play to be at least satisfactory and, in many lessons, good.

Pupils' views are positive, as reflected in their good attitudes and the interest they show in learning. Pupils have welcomed the opportunity to express their views through the newly revived School Council, which presently offers a satisfactory means of taking their views into account.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the provision made for pupils' personal development;
- raise the quality of teaching where it is only satisfactory; and
- provide greater opportunities for pupils to use ICT to boost learning in other subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards attained by Year 6 pupils and Year 2 pupils are higher than those of similar schools, and are improving. Most pupils, regardless of background or ability, achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 in English and ICT match national expectations.
- Standards in Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and ICT match national expectations.
- Achievement is good in most subjects in Years 1 to 6 because of good teaching.
- Standards in religious education match those expected by the locally agreed syllabus.
- Standards in history and art are below national expectations.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.1 [24.3]	26.8 [27.0]
Mathematics	25.5 [24.9]	26.8 [26.7]
Science	28.0 [26.1]	28.6 [28.3]

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

1. The above table shows that at the end of Year 6 the school's 2003 results in national tests were below national figures but higher than those of similar schools. These results, nevertheless, represent good achievement for this group of pupils, taking into account that one in three pupils has special educational needs. Furthermore, a high proportion of pupils join the school from other schools. Many of these pupils have behavioural and/or learning difficulties. The school's results in national tests have been well below national averages since 2000. However, standards in the present Year 6 match national expectations in English and ICT.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.9 [14.5]	15.7 [15.8]
Writing	13.0 [13.6]	14.6 [14.4]
Mathematics	14.6 [16.1]	16.3 [16.5]

There were 52 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The above table shows that at the end of Year 2 the school's 2003 results in national tests were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to national figures. Teacher assessment in science also shows that standards were well below average. In all of these subjects, standards match those of similar schools. In relation to the well below average starting point when they begin school, these results represent satisfactory achievement for this group of pupils. However, standards in the current Year 2 class are much better than the previous year's results, reflecting considerable improvements in teaching. Standards in English, mathematics and ICT now match national expectations. In science, standards are better than

last year, but are below national expectations. Overall, this represents good achievement for the present Year 2 pupils.

3. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well in most subjects, because of the mainly good teaching they receive. The good teamwork between teachers and support staff results in the needs of individual pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language and those who are asylum seekers, being met well. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Similarly, those pupils who are particularly able are presented with additional challenges that ensure they are extended in their learning. Reading and writing skills are developed well not just in English lessons but also in other subjects. Good emphasis is given to the development of numeracy skills, including both mental and written calculations. Though pupils are able to successfully carry out scientific investigations, with guidance from teachers, they do not have sufficient ability to plan investigations and interpret results independently of the teacher. Pupils make good gains as they learn about ICT, in the ICT suite, and, though too few opportunities are given, they successfully apply these skills in other subjects.
4. Attainment in Reception is below average because few children attain the levels expected in each of the Early Learning Goals for children in Reception. This represents satisfactory achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, relative to their well below average attainment when they began school in the Nursery, and results from satisfactory provision in the Foundation Stage.
5. Standards in religious education match those expected in the locally agreed syllabus, for pupils in both Year 6 and Year 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to discuss beliefs and present their own opinions. Achievement is good because of the good provision made for the subject.
6. In history and art, standards at Year 6 and Year 2 are below those expected nationally. Nevertheless, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in these subjects because of satisfactory teaching.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to school and their behaviour is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is unsatisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- When teaching is good, pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are also good.
- The number of pupils excluded from school is too high.
- There are too few opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual awareness.
- Most pupils co-operate and work together well.
- The school encourages pupils to take on responsibilities around the school.

Commentary

7. Most pupils have good attitudes to school. In lessons where the teaching is good, pupils are attentive, are eager to answer questions and show enthusiasm for their work. However, where teaching and tasks are mundane, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are not as good and for a few pupils they are poor. Behaviour in the playground and around school is satisfactory. A significant number of pupils have behavioural and emotional problems, causing them difficulty in listening, concentrating and controlling their anger. Older pupils have noticed an improvement in behaviour but cite angry pupils and pupils not getting on together as the main reasons for poor behaviour. On occasions, poor behaviour from these pupils negatively affects the learning and well-being of others. The school's system of rewards and sanctions is effective with the majority of pupils, but less so for a significant minority. The number of occasions when the school has judged it

necessary to exclude pupils is far higher than in most primary schools. Most pupils with special educational needs show the same good attitudes to school as most of their fellow pupils and understand the impact of their actions on others. A few pupils with special educational needs show challenging behaviour on occasions.

8. Provision for the spiritual development of the pupils is unsatisfactory. This, in part, reflects the few opportunities pupils have for quiet reflection. The brief moments in some assemblies are not developed enough in other situations to help pupils to explore thoughts and feelings. In general, too few opportunities are planned, through curriculum subjects, for pupils to develop spiritual awareness.
9. Provision for social development is unsatisfactory. There is no structured programme of provision to ensure that pupils in each class have a regular opportunity to discuss feelings, attitudes and concerns. During lessons, most pupils are increasingly able to work in pairs and groups. They are expected to co-operate and support each other, for example when working in the ICT suite.
10. Pupils are expected to persevere when things become difficult and the school recognises and rewards effort and achievement in various ways. The good provision for pupils' moral development is closely linked with the school's emphasis on teaching pupils to recognise right from wrong and to show consideration for others. The opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative are good. In each class, pupils carry out a variety of necessary tasks to ensure that equipment is stored correctly and available to all. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take on responsibilities around the school, such as manning the office phone at lunchtime and taking on the role of House Captain or 'Buddy' in the playground. These opportunities have a good impact on the personal development of pupils, enabling them to become more self-assured as a result.
11. The provision for cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Pupils gain satisfactory knowledge of their own local culture by studying art and music, but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to study traditions and values from non-European cultural backgrounds.
12. On starting school in Nursery, few children have developed social skills appropriate to their age. Though they make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage their social skills are lower than expected by the end of Reception. They begin to understand the need to share and take turns but many remain relatively immature.
13. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The level of attendance is about the national average although the level of unauthorised absence is higher than average. The school is working to improve attendance and rightly uses local support agencies to follow up absences well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.2
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

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	281	22	1
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	2	1
Mixed – White and Asian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	33	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 quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum, care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Links with parents, the community and other schools are also satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are mainly good. They are good for Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good in most lessons and the majority of pupils achieve well.
- A significant proportion of teaching is no better than satisfactory and lacks opportunities to enthuse, encourage and motivate pupils. In these lessons, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
- The quality of teaching for pupils who have special educational needs, who speak English as an additional language or who are asylum seekers, is generally good.
- Assessment is good overall but it is unsatisfactory in ICT.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6 (13%)	23 (49%)	17 (36%)	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.

14. Pupils have recently made good progress and achieved well. This is because teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is generally good. The major factors that account for this improvement are that the management of the school ensures that the quality of teaching is systematically checked, especially in English and mathematics, and that staff training is given high priority.
15. Staff have worked hard to use the guidance offered by Local Education Authority (LEA) consultants to develop teaching and improve standards. However, there remains a significant proportion of teaching which is no better than satisfactory. In light of the recent improvement in standards and the school's history of generally low attainment, teaching needs to be further improved to maintain and build upon these higher standards.
16. Teaching is mainly good in English, mathematics, science, religious education and ICT. It is satisfactory in art and history. Within the Foundation Stage, teaching is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in Reception.
17. Where lessons are good or very good, the pupils behave well because relationships with staff are good. Teachers consistently use rewards and positive reinforcement to build self-esteem. Pupils in these lessons, including those with very challenging behaviour, want to please and do well. These teachers appear confident and good humoured and maintain good discipline. Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic and motivated and they learn well. For example, in a very good lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher carefully explained to the pupils why particular rules were in place so that they fully understood and good behaviour was reinforced with praise. In this lesson, support staff were well informed and fully understood the need for consistency of treatment of pupils' behaviour.
18. In most lessons, teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour. Lessons proceed at a good pace, sustaining pupils' interest. Pupils' work is generally well presented, particularly in Year 6 where work is very neat and handwriting is good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects taught and lessons are well planned. The tasks set by teachers are usually well matched in order to challenge different groups. The very good teamwork between teachers and support staff is an important feature of the best lessons.
19. However, in a significant minority of other lessons, pupils do not always focus well enough because activities are uninspiring and not timed well. This sometimes leads to disruption, which results in further delays in learning. For example, teachers do not always make the best use of the final section of a lesson to reinforce learning or for pupils to reflect and judge what they have learned. Sometimes work is not matched well enough to pupils' abilities or to their previous knowledge. Consequently, on these occasions, pupils find the work too easy, too difficult or just dull. In one case, science work undertaken by a younger class would have been more suited to an older age group and that of an older class more suited to a younger group. This shows low or unrealistic expectations. Sometimes, difficulties in managing pupils' behaviour restricts teaching and learning styles – for example, when the teaching is so prescriptive that pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to explore and investigate for themselves.
20. There are many pupils who have special educational needs and, across the school, these pupils are taught well. They have good support from both their class teachers and support staff. Pupils who have English as an additional language and those who are asylum seekers are also well taught. Good advice is available for teachers to plan, and set oracy and numeracy targets, for these pupils and to help them to achieve well. Management, therefore, ensures that the school is inclusive in this aspect of provision.
21. Assessment overall is good, especially for English and mathematics. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language have precise and

appropriate targets for improvement. These are checked and linked to class work. During the year, all pupils take a variety of tests in mathematics and English; pupils' progress is monitored and support identified. Assessments for science and other subjects are satisfactory. However, assessment for ICT is unsatisfactory. This, in part, is due to the recent illness of the new co-ordinator and the need to revise and refine assessments to enable pupils to gain a clear picture of what they have learned and of the next step in their learning. This is acknowledged by the school.

22. There has been an improvement in the daily checking of pupils' understanding in lessons, and teachers' marking is generally useful. Work is also checked orally, which gives pupils instant feedback for redrafting and correction, but some marking does not include enough guidance.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory, with a suitable range of opportunities for pupils to extend their learning beyond the school day. There are sufficient numbers of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of pupils. Accommodation and learning resources are adequate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does not have a planned programme to promote pupils' personal development.
- Provision for ICT has been much improved since the previous inspection and is helping pupils to make good progress in this subject.
- Good provision is made for those pupils with special educational needs.
- Parts of the building are dull and uninviting and do not provide a stimulating setting for pupils to learn in.
- All statutory requirements, including the demands of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, are met.

Commentary

23. In the Nursery, children are provided with many interesting and practical activities that enable them to make good progress and achieve well across the areas of learning. This rate of progress slows in the Reception class and is satisfactory. In this class, the curriculum is not as well structured, with some activities not being focused enough on developing pupils' learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is broad and balanced and meets all statutory requirements. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills to support their learning in other subjects. This makes a positive contribution to the good achievement that pupils show in English and mathematics. The science curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to take part in structured, practical investigations. As a result, pupils are able to gain scientific knowledge and skills in an interesting way. The creation of an ICT suite has enabled the school to provide whole-class teaching of basic skills in the subject. Because of this, pupils are making better progress than was noted during the previous inspection. However, there are not enough planned opportunities for them to practise these skills when working in other subjects. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop their swimming skills and knowledge of water safety during a four-week intensive course for pupils in Year 5. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in an interesting range of visits, including a residential stay, which enriches the curriculum by providing further worthwhile learning experiences. A range of visitors, such as theatre groups and musicians, who have worked with the pupils to develop a variety of skills, complements these visits. The infant and junior choirs take part in the Bury Music Festival and also give performances for parents and members of the community. Pupils can also take part in extra-curricular activities, such as football, guitar, art and computer clubs.

24. There is no planned programme for pupils' personal development and this aspect of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Many pupils have low levels of social skills and a lack of self-esteem when they begin school, and a significant number have behavioural problems. Because of this,

they require a great deal of guidance and support to help them grow into responsible citizens. As a start to improving provision, and in an attempt to reduce the number of exclusions, the school is to appoint a member of staff with responsibility for this aspect of work.

25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, with the individual educational plans having specific and manageable targets in them. This enables these pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Teachers plan carefully for the needs of these pupils and support staff are used well to support their learning. Good use is made of ICT to provide relevant and interesting work for individual pupils.
26. Resources for teaching and learning are adequate and enable all aspects of the curriculum to be covered. The accommodation is satisfactory, with spacious outside areas, including a well-drained playing field. Recent improvements to the interior have included improving the library provision and refurbishing the boys' toilets. However, some parts of the building, especially the Nursery, do not present a stimulating environment in which to work and learn.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes satisfactory provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Support and guidance, based on monitoring of their academic and personal development, are satisfactory. The newly revived School Council has been welcomed by pupils and is a satisfactory means of taking their views into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Where particular needs are identified, staff provide good support for individuals and groups of pupils.
- Pupils are made aware of health and safety issues, in principle and in practice.
- Trusting relationships with adults help pupils to feel safe and confident.

Commentary

27. Members of staff quickly identify situations where pupils have specific needs and take positive action to meet them. The Before and After School Clubs were established to provide help for working parents, but also to contribute to the personal development of the pupils who attend. When they play together and share snacks in the secure, comfortable setting of the After School club, pupils are strengthening their social skills. Organised activities, such as the exploration of friendship and caring, which resulted in the preparation of an attractive display, help pupils to appreciate family, friends and teachers and how to relate to one another. The fact that the clubs are run by school staff, who know the pupils well, makes them a particularly effective additional resource for the school.
28. There is extensive and good quality liaison with external agencies to support pupils and families with problems and special arrangements are made to deal with specific difficulties. For example, one-to-one adult support is provided at lunchtime for a pupil with particular special needs. Awareness of need extends to explaining to pupils how they can help. For example, one class has learnt that if they respond appropriately, they can have a calming effect on a pupil with behavioural difficulties.
29. By introducing sports leaders and playground buddies the school tries to ensure that all pupils feel happy and included. Older pupils have been trained in how to engage younger ones in active games at playtimes. They take great pride in this responsibility. Pupils who are new to the school are teamed with a friend to help them find their way around on their first day and given all the information that they and their parents need to help them settle in. Most of the children entering Nursery will have visited the school previously to watch the Christmas nativity play and will have attended an Open Day, so that their first session, when parents are allowed to stay with them,

will be less stressful. Most parents agree that they are happy with the school's arrangements to help their children settle.

30. Pupils are constantly reminded of the need to be aware of rules that are designed to ensure their health and safety. In class, special attention is paid to using equipment, such as scissors, sensibly and safely, while outside, staff are careful to discourage excessively boisterous behaviour that might lead to accidents. Pupils are also encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle, through the distribution of fruit at playtimes and the constant availability of drinking water throughout the day. Proper attention is paid to necessary health and safety checks of the building and equipment and there is appropriate provision for first aid.
31. Most pupils get on well with the adults who work in the school. Non-teaching staff, including the mid-day supervisors and the caretaker, have developed good relationships with the children, which leads to a happy, relaxed atmosphere. Pupils agree that there is an adult in school they could approach if they have a problem. This is clear from the trust that pupils show when they turn to adults for help. For example, a pupil in tears, who did not want to come into school after a 'falling out' incident, allowed herself to be comforted and persuaded by the kindness of a teaching assistant.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The highly successful Parent/School Association supports the school well.
- The school has good links with the Church of England and Methodist churches.
- Parents are offered a range of opportunities to find out about the school and about the progress pupils are making.
- Some parents do not respond to the school's attempts to involve them in their children's learning.

Commentary

32. The Parent/School Association (PSA) is a very active group of people who organise social and fund-raising events. As a result of their effective, imaginative activities, significant sums have been raised to support the school. In the last year, pupils have benefited from the purchase of furniture, a television, plants for the newly developed quiet area and Christmas gifts. There are plans to support the refurbishment of other parts of the school with the remaining funds that have been accumulated. As well as raising money, the PSA contributes substantially to the community spirit of the school by organising events that bring pupils and parents together to enjoy relaxation and fun.
33. Good links exist with the local churches. Young children attend the playgroup and mother and toddler sessions at the local churches. Assemblies are regularly led by the local clergy.
34. Parents are kept informed through both written communications and opportunities for them to talk to staff and attend workshops. The prospectus gives basic information and is supplemented by occasional newsletters that bring parents up to date with new developments and current issues. School reports give detailed information on how pupils are performing in relation to National Curriculum targets and set out what pupils need to do to improve. Although specific targets for improvement are set out clearly by some teachers, others use educational jargon which is not easy to understand and is therefore less helpful to parents.
35. The school arranges workshops for parents of the pupils in Years 2 and 6 to explain the national test system (SATS) and this year has provided the venue for a course on Positive Parenting run by the National Children's Homes. It has also run a successful Better Reading Partnership, where parents and governors have worked with individual pupils to give them additional support

with reading. The school has provided a multi-cultural reading morning that involved parents and their children.

36. Although there are many opportunities, both formal and informal, for parents to find out what pupils are learning and how they are progressing, the school has rightly been disappointed that a minority of parents does not take advantage of them. Most events that involve pupils directly, such as performances and sports days, are very well attended, but invitations to workshops, to consultation meetings with class teachers and even to reviews of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs often meet with a poor response. The school works hard to ensure that the needs of parents are met, for example by inviting an Arabic speaker and an Albanian speaker to be available at parents' evenings. A number of parents show a keen interest in their children's learning by helping in classrooms and overseeing homework tasks and the school continues to hope that more parents will follow their example.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are satisfactory. Management of the school is good, which is an important factor in the good achievement that pupils of all abilities make. Leadership and governance are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good management means that staff have access to a wide range of training opportunities.
- Leadership does not successfully promote pupils' personal, social, health and emotional development.
- Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
- The procedures for the induction of new staff are good.
- There are secure systems of financial management.

Commentary

37. There is a clear commitment by the headteacher to helping pupils achieve well and she endeavours to ensure that staff understand the school's goals and their role in reaching them. Recently, however, leadership has been hindered by absences of key staff and unsuitable delegation of responsibility. For example, an injury to the newly appointed deputy headteacher and resulting absence has meant that her leadership role has not been fully developed. Also, the co-ordination of the provision in Nursery and Reception classes by a teacher in Year 1 is inappropriate, as her teaching commitment prevents her having a clear view of teaching and learning in these other classes. Members of the senior management team provide good role models for other staff and pupils because of the good quality of their teaching. The high level of expertise of the deputy headteacher has also made a significant improvement to the provision for ICT.
38. To try to improve the provision for pupils' personal development, and move towards a smaller number of exclusions, the school is aptly to appoint a member of staff with responsibility for this aspect of the school's work. Currently, there is too much emphasis on sanctions rather than rewards, which is less effective in helping pupils to gain self-discipline.
39. Though many governors are relatively new to their role they have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, they are able to give suitable support to the school and also question the senior management team to help them reflect on their decisions. They carry out their statutory duties diligently.
40. The headteacher manages the school well. Performance management is well linked to school improvement priorities. Teachers are given targets, which, together with classroom observations, help them further improve the good quality of their teaching. All staff are able to take part in good quality training to promote their professional development. As a result, teachers'

confidence and expertise in teaching ICT have been much improved since the previous inspection. The management of the provision for special educational needs is good and helps these pupils to make good progress and achieve well. There are good induction procedures for teachers new to the school, particularly newly qualified teachers, so that they quickly settle into daily routines. Pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science are systematically checked, with the information gained being used well to help them improve their performance.

41. The arrangements for checking and improving the school's work are satisfactory. The format of the school's improvement plan has been improved since the previous inspection so that it now contains criteria against which the school can measure its success in achieving its targets.
42. The school budget is managed well with efficient systems in place to ensure that the finances are carefully controlled and expenditure regularly reviewed. Principles of best value are carefully applied to all budgetary considerations. The higher than usual budget surplus is a result of the school sensibly earmarking funds towards a major refurbishment of the building. The work of the secretary is good and contributes to the smooth running of the school on a day-to-day basis.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	720,531
Total expenditure	728,626
Expenditure per pupil	1,936

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	42,273
Balance carried forward to the next	34,178

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

43. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The level of attainment when children first start in the Nursery is well below that expected for three year olds. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching observed. More weaknesses are evident in the teaching in the Reception classes. These weaknesses are related to a lack of challenge and a specific learning focus and making sure children get the very best out of the activities on offer. When teaching is good children make good progress and achieve well. Although children achieve satisfactorily overall in the Foundation Stage, their low starting point is a significant factor preventing them reaching the goals expected. Therefore, by the end of Reception the attainment of most children remains below average in all areas of learning. Children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported and their achievement is satisfactory. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are relatively ineffective, not because of the qualities of the teacher concerned, but because she is not currently based in this area.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for children's personal development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good focus is placed on the sharing of work and ideas.
- Emphasis is given to improving the low social skills of children and to involving those who speak little English.
- Play activities in the Reception classes often lack a clear structure.

Commentary

44. When they start in Nursery, few children have developed the social skills expected for their age. Although they make satisfactory gains in their social and personal development, their skills remain lower than the level expected by the end of the Reception year. This represents satisfactory achievement. Teaching is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in the Reception classes. In the Nursery, children experience a range of activities where they can work on their own or with others. They begin to understand that they should take turns and share fairly. This ensures that children have the opportunity to develop effective working relationships with one another and with the adults who work with them. This is also evident not only in the Nursery but also in the Reception classes. However, in the Reception classes, children's play often lacks structure because they are left to their own devices for too long. As a consequence, children do not get the best from the activities provided and this slows their learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Taking part in imaginary play or working in small groups enables children to develop their conversational skills.
- Insufficient emphasis is given to key words that children need to know and understand.
- There are insufficient opportunities for children to develop their reading and writing skills, in the Reception classes, through play.

Commentary

45. Standards are below those expected by the end of the Reception year. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Children make steady progress and achievement is satisfactory. In the Nursery, many children have immature speech patterns and it is initially difficult to make out what they say. In both the Nursery and the Reception classes, the range of activities provides opportunities for adults to engage children in conversation and to encourage them to talk to each other. A good example of this was when the nursery nurse entered the 'house corner' and became 'one of the family'. However, planning does not go far enough in identifying the key words children should meet in the course of their work and play. Teachers plan for children to work in small, adult-led groups, where they are encouraged to both listen and speak clearly in front of others. There are missed opportunities for children to develop their reading and writing skills through play. When teachers do plan occasions for children to write during their play, children see the purpose of writing. This is because activities are often linked to work in other areas of learning such as knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are developing a love of books and stories and make good attempts to read words and names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop their understanding of shape and size through regularly building with construction kits.
- Activities in other areas of learning support children's mathematical development.

Commentary

46. Standards are below those expected by the end of the Reception year. Children's achievements are satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Nursery and Reception classes. Children gain an understanding of number, pattern and shape through practical activities, such as counting and sorting objects and regularly building with construction kits. Teachers make purposeful links between children's mathematical development and activities related, for example, to knowledge and understanding of the world. In one such activity, children in the Nursery were finding leaves and small natural objects in the garden and making patterns with them. Opportunities for children to practise counting, sing number rhymes and play mathematical games ensure that they gain a secure understanding of the work they are covering.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outside environment is used well.
- Children are excited as they discover through first-hand experiences.

Commentary

47. Due to good teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception classes, children achieve well but, because of their low starting point, only a few will reach the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to learn about everyday items in the classroom and during outdoor activities. Children in the Nursery responded

with great enthusiasm to the teacher's bag of 'mystery holiday souvenirs' and were inspired to later bring their own from home. Children have access to a good quality outside area and this is used particularly well to investigate the range of 'minibeasts' living there. The children are encouraged to use magnifying glasses to make closer observations and, in discussions later, they remembered well what each one is called. Adults place great emphasis on the care of tiny creatures and children's respect for living things is developing well. Children are learning mouse control skills on the computer and programs are satisfactorily used to support learning in other areas. Teachers tell stories from other cultures and the children occasionally celebrate festivals from several faiths.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good outdoor play facilities.
- Children have limited skills for activities such as drawing and writing.

Commentary

48. Children frequently engage in physical activities, both indoors and out of doors. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in both the Nursery and Reception classes and children develop and achieve gross motor skills at an appropriate rate for their age. Teachers are careful to teach the skills needed to write and for the use of small tools and children are increasingly able to paint, join objects together and cut shapes from paper. However, although children's achievement is satisfactory, they do not reach the levels expected in this area of learning. The outdoor areas offer a range of surfaces and there are wheeled toys and climbing apparatus on which children move and balance safely whilst engaged in imaginative and adventurous play. Staff use the outdoor areas well to support all areas of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan and create areas for role-play.
- Interesting activities, such as painting, are available every day but learning is restricted because children are left too much on their own.

Commentary

49. Standards are below those expected by the end of the Reception Year. Children's achievements are satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Reception classes and good in the Nursery. There are plenty of opportunities for children to develop their imaginative play in the Nursery in role-play areas, such as the house corner and the 'caravan at the seaside'. In the Reception classes, some interesting activities to develop imaginative play lose their impact because children are left too much on their own to explore the tasks. This often leads to some aimless activity, excessive noise levels and children not getting the best out of the activities. Children explore colours and textures through painting and drawing. They enjoy singing action rhymes and songs and exploring the sounds that musical instruments make.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment have improved and pupils are achieving well.
- Teaching overall, including assessment, is good.
- There needs to be further planned development of speaking and listening skills.
- The presentation of work is inconsistent.
- There is insufficient use of ICT in lessons.
- The subject is managed well.

Commentary

50. Standards of attainment in Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally and are well above those of similar schools. Similarly, standards in Year 2 have risen significantly and are generally in line with national expectations for both reading and writing. There are a significant proportion of pupils who do not attain the expected Level 2 in reading because almost one third have special educational needs. Nevertheless, from a well below average standard when they start school, pupils have achieved well.
51. These improvements in standards and achievement are due to good teaching in most lessons, and in a few lessons teaching is very good. Very good lessons are found particularly in the mixed age classes. Where the teaching is good or very good, teachers have good subject knowledge, use varied strategies to hold pupils' attention and have high expectations of good behaviour. Some other lessons are not timed well enough and tend to have a slower pace. These lessons sometimes lack variety and, consequently, some pupils lose interest and become unsettled. As behaviour in the school needs careful control, the features of good teaching need to be extended to all classes.
52. Various support strategies for literacy are in place and pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported in most lessons. The children of asylum seekers have good support and these pupils are also achieving well. Pupils' work is regularly assessed and the effectiveness of support strategies is systematically checked. This results in the targeting of pupils for specific support as required. Marking is usually good but pupils in some classes do not receive enough guidance on how they could improve. Therefore, some pupils are not always aware of their targets and are not very clear about how they could improve.
53. Reading has become a recent focus for the school. However, this was a late reaction to consistently poor results. The LEA consultant has worked effectively with all year groups and the high focus on books and reading has created interesting activities. Pupils have a good attitude to books and enjoy reading.
54. The presentation of work and the standard of handwriting are inconsistent. In Years 3 to 6, work is generally neat and is particularly well presented in Year 6. A good handwriting session in Year 3, for example, linked handwriting to spelling and was systematically taught. Pupils were involved in the lesson by spelling out their own words. As a result, the pupils learned well and improved their skills. However, in Year 1 and Year 2, the presentation of work and illustrations is of a lower standard than would be expected.
55. Writing overall has improved. Older pupils learn to re-draft their work and to plan carefully. They are taught to understand, and to write, a range of texts including letters, poetry, reports and

stories. The LEA literacy consultant has successfully worked with staff for the past two years to improve teaching and raise standards.

56. Within the ICT suite, pupils are generally well taught and make good progress. Pupils learned to send email as part of their communications topic and in one lesson they were involved in using the interactive whiteboard in class. However, these skills are not used sufficiently often within all the classrooms as a support for learning and, therefore, pupils lack opportunities to practise their skills.
57. Although there has been an improvement since the previous inspection, the emphasis on the planning and use of speaking and listening skills is still insufficient. Sometimes pupils are asked to discuss with partners but they do not have a specific focus and are not sure how to use talk purposefully. Drama and role-play are used occasionally and are effective. For example, in a Year 5/6 lesson, pupils played communication games in the hall, which resulted in good co-operation and improved their concentration.
58. In one very good Year 3/4 lesson, pupils were taught to engage in purposeful discussion. The teacher used a spinner to select pupils to read out their poems. This led to increased confidence as pupils knew what to expect and were prepared. Better lessons include some provision for pupils to evaluate learning and to express their opinions, but this is not used often enough and pupils lack practice.
59. The subject is generally well managed in spite of several unforeseen changes in subject leadership. The present temporary leadership is satisfactory but there needs to be a permanent subject leader to ensure that recent improvements are maintained. There are two libraries displaying mostly good quality books. However, books are housed in the Foundation Stage building and are not readily accessible to other pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Generally, with the exception of opportunities to use speaking and listening skills and drama, language and literacy skills are used well across the curriculum. Pupils use and improve their writing skills within other subjects and teachers mark the work carefully for language as well as for content. For example, pupils label maps in geography, make information books for their science topic and write diary pages in history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils now in Year 2 reach standards in line with national expectations.
- Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well.
- Teaching is good, in most lessons, but is only satisfactory in a significant number of lessons.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and work hard.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

61. Standards in Year 6 are below average. Nevertheless, this represents good achievement for these pupils when taking into account that about one third of them have individual learning and/or behavioural needs. Standards in Year 2 are similar to those expected nationally. This represents very good achievement for this group of pupils considering that their attainment on entry to the school was well below average. All pupils, including those who find learning difficult and those who are particularly able in mathematics, achieve well. This reflects the school's good response to a criticism reported in the previous inspection that those of higher ability were not being

sufficiently challenged. Overall, pupils show below average competence in mathematics because a significant number of pupils find difficulty in mentally manipulating number. However, pupils in Year 2 show average levels of competence in this area.

62. Teaching is invariably at least satisfactory and in most lessons it is good. One of the major factors of this successful teaching is the good teamwork between teachers and support staff. As a result, pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to work hard, listen attentively and behave well. In the best lessons, for example as seen in Year 2 and in a Year 3/4 class, teachers have very good relationships with pupils and their enthusiastic approach is communicated to the pupils. Such lessons proceed at a good pace so that pupils' learning is maximised. In some of the less successful lessons, that are nevertheless satisfactory, pupils are given mundane and uninspiring tasks. In general, pupils have limited opportunities to explore mathematics and to develop their independent and collaborative learning skills.
63. There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning in mathematics. However, some good use of the application of ICT to mathematics was seen in the ICT suite, for example when Year 4 pupils were programming the computer to draw shapes.
64. Pupils' good attitudes to mathematics reflect their interest and contribute significantly to their learning. Pupils' mainly good behaviour results from good relationships between adults and pupils. Most pupils work enthusiastically, co-operating fully with staff and taking pride in their work, as reflected, for example, in the high quality of presentation seen in Year 6 pupils' workbooks. Teachers take care to give pupils clear guidance, by word of mouth and in written comments.
65. Subject leadership and management are good. The two co-ordinators present good role models for colleagues. They have an informed view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection, for example in the quality and monitoring of teaching throughout the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics in other subjects – for example, in a Year 6 science lesson when pupils measured their pulse rates before and after exercise. Similarly, Year 2 pupils' mathematical skills were applied well when they measured the distance travelled by model cars and produced graphs of their results. Other examples seen include measuring materials in design and technology and making a statistical analysis of English texts.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good, which enables all pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils lack the required skills for making scientific conclusions and interpreting their findings.
- The curriculum is planned well, with an emphasis on developing pupils' learning through practical investigations.
- Management is good and has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- Pupils have positive views about their work in science and their attitudes are good.
- There is not enough use of ICT to support learning.

Commentary

67. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach standards below those expected for their age. However, as most pupils start school with low skill levels, this shows that pupils make good progress and achieve well. The school acknowledges that there are aspects of scientific investigations that require further improvement. Pupils know the reasons why a test needs to be fair but are limited in their ability to devise one and carry it out independently of the teacher. The conclusions to their experiments are mainly descriptions of what they have done rather than evaluations of what they have found out, based on prior scientific knowledge and understanding. Their skills in interpreting data and identifying patterns in their findings are below the expected level.
68. Teachers give careful explanations of what pupils are to do so that they are clear about what they are to learn and what is expected of them. Activities are interesting, which helps to maintain pupils' concentration and results in a good work rate. Lessons are planned well to build on previous work, so that pupils can use prior scientific knowledge and understanding to support their learning. This was evident in lessons for pupils in Year 2, in which they were learning about the different stages of an investigation. Throughout the school, teachers' marking is quite basic and does not usefully suggest to pupils how they might improve their work. There are times when the work given to pupils, particularly the higher attainers, lacks sufficient challenge and so restricts the progress they make. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their activities in science. They show interest and curiosity in what they are doing, which has a positive impact on the quality of their work.
69. The curriculum is well planned to provide many interesting opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills by being involved in practical scientific investigations. Often, activities are based on science in everyday life, which enables pupils to use their own experiences to support their learning. There are planned opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills during their investigations. For example, pupils in Year 6 have taken careful time readings when measuring pulse rate before and after exercise. They have then written detailed accounts of their work, with accurately labelled scientific diagrams. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their ICT skills to support their learning in the subject.
70. The co-ordinator manages the subject well, with her good quality teaching being an effective role model for colleagues. She has a clear view of the subject's weaknesses and how they might be tackled. There is insufficient opportunity for teaching and learning to be checked by lesson observations. Resources are adequate for the demands of the curriculum. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good improvement in ICT, since the last inspection, has been very effective in raising standards to match those expected nationally.
- Teaching is good, resulting in good learning and good achievement for all pupils.
- Subject leadership and management are good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and contribute to learning.
- Assessment does not give a clear picture of the standards achieved by individual pupils.
- ICT skills are not applied sufficiently in other subjects.

Commentary

71. The school has significantly improved its ICT facilities since the last inspection. There is now a central ICT suite of networked computers and all classrooms have at least one computer. This has resulted in pupils having far greater opportunity to learn new skills and the potential to apply

them in their work in other subjects. At the time of the previous inspection, standards attained by the Year 6 and Year 2 pupils were judged to be below average and pupils were making unsatisfactory progress. Standards have improved and are now in line with those seen nationally. This represents very good achievement over time when taking into account pupils' low levels of ability when starting at the school. The very good improvements in resources have been supported by an effective programme of staff training which has improved staff expertise and confidence in the subject. The use of national guidelines on planning, to inform the teaching and learning, has contributed to improving standards.

72. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, enabling all pupils, regardless of prior attainment, to achieve well in lessons. Teamwork between teachers and support staff is very good, ensuring that all pupils are well provided for. The digital projector in the ICT suite is used effectively as an integral feature of teaching. Teachers ably demonstrate the software and use the large screen to make clear, crisp and effective teaching points that enable most pupils to proceed with minimum adult intervention. In the best lessons, namely in a Year 3/4 class and a Year 5/6 class, the additional strengths present were the teachers' enthusiasm, good subject knowledge, high expectations, and excellent relationships with pupils.
73. Pupils are well behaved and eager to use ICT, and most respond well to teachers' expectations for listening to instructions. They co-operate well as they help each other and take turns in inputting information. The pupils' good behaviour and largely positive attitudes contribute considerably to the good quality of learning in most lessons.
74. Checks on individual pupils' progress are made and recorded at the end of each unit of learning but this system does not allow teachers to make sufficiently informed judgements on the standards pupils are achieving and does not inform pupils about what they need to do to improve. The school has plans to improve the assessment and recording systems.
75. The subject is well led and managed by the recently appointed deputy headteacher. She has a high level of expertise that she shares enthusiastically with colleagues. She has highlighted the future developments needed for the subject. The school is aware that the ICT suite is too hot on occasions and results in uncomfortable working conditions for staff and pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. During the inspection some good use of ICT was observed in science and religious education lessons. Particularly effective teaching was seen in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson when the teacher made skilful use of an interactive whiteboard in her classroom. However, such examples are not widespread and, at present, insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

Geography was not inspected. History and religious education were inspected in full and are reported below.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- Pupils generally achieve well.
- There are good relationships with local churches and visitors from other faiths.
- There is limited use of ICT in the subject.
- Links between religious education and pupils' personal education are not sufficiently established.

Commentary

77. When pupils start school, their standards of attainment are well below expectations. However, they meet the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus for the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This denotes good achievement. The broad curriculum has been covered well and pupils usually demonstrate interest in their lessons. Year 6 pupils are able to discuss beliefs and to share and develop their own opinions about a range of issues.
78. However, it is important that the school raises the profile of religious education to support its planned work in personal development. The natural links between spiritual, social, moral and cultural aspects and faiths should be made more specific and incorporated into the programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall but is sometimes less so when activities become mundane and do not stimulate and motivate pupils' interests. This approach sometimes leads to disruptions by a small minority of pupils. Generally, attitudes to the subject are good.
80. Year 2 pupils talked in detail about the work they had covered in Christianity. They have a good knowledge of stories, festivals and places of worship. They understand about other faiths and know that Jesus was Jewish. Most of the work with younger pupils is oral and practical but they have also covered a reasonable amount of written work that indicates their understanding. There are sometimes lower expectations of presentation and even higher attaining pupils produce illustrations of a lower standard.
81. Visitors are used very effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 1, the visiting speaker, a Jewish lady, immediately involved pupils by engaging them in role-play. She brought interesting artefacts and held pupils' attention as she lit a candle and recited a blessing. She used questioning well and made the lesson interesting for the age group. The pupils had previously prepared well-considered, word-processed questions which the visitor answered well. The pupils, consequently, learnt a great deal about the important Jewish festival of Shabbat because they were fully involved and the activities were varied. The good relationships that exist with visitors need to be further developed to extend to visits to places of worship, whenever possible.
82. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they have covered a wide range of interesting topics and work in Years 3 to 6 is usually well presented. There are sometimes good links with other subjects such as history. In a good lesson in Year 4, pupils quietly made their own mini Torah. Good relationships in the class resulted in mostly good behaviour and pupils achieved well in developing their own ideas for rules to improve everyone's lives. Pupils talked confidently about Judaism and had a secure knowledge of the faith.
83. Although there is some good use of ICT, this could be used more extensively throughout the school. In a Year 5/6 lesson, a website was used very effectively for a virtual tour of a church. In the absence of a visit to a church, this helped pupils to understand the vocabulary used for key aspects of a church and to identify church furniture and items of interest.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is planned well so that pupils can study historical artefacts to learn about the past.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning.

Commentary

84. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach standards that are below those expected for their age. This represents satisfactory achievement from the time they start school, with pupils of all abilities making suitable progress. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge about famous characters and important events in history. They show less competence in being able to use a range of historical evidence to discuss and express their ideas about how change has been brought about over time.
85. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are helped to develop their understanding of time by listening to stories about the past and about famous people. Teachers use books, photographs and historical artefacts to teach them how to recognise similarities and differences through the years. This was evident in the work of pupils in Year 2, who have looked at photographs of holidays in the past and present and discussed how they have changed. As they progress through the school, the pupils are taught how to use evidence to find out how things change over a period of time. The teachers place emphasis on pupils understanding the significance of historical artefacts and the need to study them in order to find out about times gone by, as seen for example in Year 3 when pupils were learning about life in Tudor England, and in a Year 5/6 lesson about life in Victorian times. There tends to be an overuse of worksheets, which limits the development by pupils of their own ways of recording their ideas and findings. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their ICT skills to support their learning in the subject.
86. Pupils talk with much enthusiasm about their work in history and especially enjoy being able to handle and discuss historical artefacts.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design was inspected in full and is reported below. Only one lesson was seen in physical education and two were seen in music. Design and technology was not inspected.

87. Teaching in the two music lessons seen was at least satisfactory. Pupils talked about music with interest. Older pupils appreciate music and have a good knowledge and understanding of mood, instruments and composers. They listen to music from different cultures and have experienced live music, both European classical music and African music. Younger pupils talked about using instruments to illustrate lightning and thunder and are aware of a range of instruments. Most can clap and copy complex patterns and can sing in a variety of ways. These pupils have a wide repertoire of hymns, which they sing clearly. They have been well taught and take their singing seriously.
88. Very good teaching was seen in a Year 6 dance lesson. The very good, enthusiastic example set by the visiting teacher inspired pupils to work hard and persevere in an attempt to refine their dance movements. Pupils behaved well because the teacher set high expectations of them and they were highly motivated to work co-operatively in their group dances. Pupils have achieved very well over the period they have been learning to dance, but their overall standards are below the level expected for Year 6 pupils because their previous experience of dance has been limited.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Appropriate emphasis is given to developing pupils' observational skills.
- Art is used to good effect to enhance work in other subjects.

- Pupils' printing skills are underdeveloped.

Commentary

89. Standards of attainment are below national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. However, achievement has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory for all pupils.
90. Pupils are taught how to make good use of sketch books to record their ideas and observations. Teachers encourage pupils to look carefully at examples from the natural world and other objects before drawing them. Their developing observational skills and attention to detail help them to create their own pictures in the style of significant artists in the past. For example, the work of Van Gogh inspired Year 2 pupils, the result of which was a colourful art display of sunflowers. Similarly, in Years 5 and 6, pupils' pictures were influenced by their own interpretation of the work of the surrealist painter Magritte.
91. Pupils' efforts in other subjects, particularly history, are supported well by their work in art. Pupils enjoy looking at old toys and domestic objects from the past before drawing them in their books. Pupils are enthusiastic about art and design lessons and are keen to share their enjoyment.
92. Teaching is satisfactory overall and some good teaching of skills and techniques was observed. Pupils subsequently apply these skills effectively to their individual pieces of work. Pupils have good opportunities to express their ideas in a variety of ways, although pupils' experience of printing, and hence their skills in this area, are limited. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. She is enthusiastic and is clear about the development needs of the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a lack of a co-ordinated personal, social, health and citizenship education and (PSHCE) programme, which therefore fails to respond to some poor relationships among a minority of pupils.
- Although 'Circle Time' (discussion time) features on the timetable, pupils do not understand the purpose of the sessions.
- There are isolated successful attempts to develop pupils' awareness of this aspect of the curriculum.

Commentary

93. The school has appointed a PSHCE co-ordinator from September 2004 but there is a great deal of work to be done to develop a programme which incorporates areas of the religious education curriculum and the development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The school has an unusually high number of exclusions and needs to develop much more positive relationships between small groups of pupils.
94. Individual teachers have different strategies to develop confidence and to build pupils' self-esteem but the success of the strategies is not systematically checked and there is no consistent school-wide approach. This aspect should be at the heart of every part of the school day and a consistent approach to positive reinforcement upheld by every member of the school community. Where there are attempts to structure discussion times, pupils show they are not used to this way of working. Some pupils lack confidence to express their ideas or to motivate themselves to think more deeply. Discipline is mainly imposed or the session is dominated by the adults. Some pupils do not fully understand the need for self-discipline in many areas of life.

95. Some good work has begun in the Friendship groups, which have been successful and have improved understanding and behaviour. Pupils also enjoyed an interesting project on re-cycling, which included a trip to the re-cycling plant visitors' centre. They collect for charity and supervise younger pupils and the choir sings in the community. All of these activities contribute to pupils' preparation for citizenship.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
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	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (Ethos)	5
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	5

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
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	4
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	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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