

INSPECTION REPORT

**RAWTHORPE ST JAMES CE(C) INFANT AND
NURSERY SCHOOL**

Rawthorpe, Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107700

Headteacher: Mrs J Rock

Lead inspector: Dr J N Thorp

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th March 2004

Inspection number: 257279

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	213
School address:	Rawthorpe Lane Rawthorpe Huddersfield West Yorkshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs R Sixsmith
Date of previous inspection:	May 2000

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Rawthorpe St James CE (C) Infant and Nursery School is located in Rawthorpe, about one mile to the east of the centre of Huddersfield. The school is located on a large site, which also includes the junior and secondary schools. Most children come from the surrounding estates. There are currently 213 pupils on roll, the majority of whom are white, and organised into six classes and a nursery. Although the school is broadly average in size at present, the number of pupils on roll is falling. There is some mobility of pupils, with 20 joining the school other than the usual time of first admission last year and 50 leaving. The area around the school displays the characteristics of socio-economic disadvantage, with around 45 per cent of children entitled to a free school meal. Attainment on entry is below average. There are 30 pupils (14 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, which is about average compared with schools nationally. Most of these pupils have learning difficulties, but a significant proportion have emotional or behavioural difficulties. Eight pupils (3.75 per cent) have statements of special educational need, which is well above average. This includes a number of children with physical disability for whom the school provides specialist facilities and staff to meet their needs. There are 37 children (17 per cent) who have English as an additional language, including 15 children who come from asylum seeking families. The school is involved in the Excellence in Cities initiative. A PFI (Private Finance Initiative) building and improvement project has recently been completed, providing the school with significant additional and re-modelled accommodation.

The school won a Department for Education and Skills (DfES) achievement award in 2003 and achieved Active Mark status in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6327	J.N.Thorp	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Music
9224	M.Vineall	Lay inspector	
33236	K.Dodd	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Religious education
32827	J.Marshall	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an outstanding school. The excellent leadership of the headteacher has inspired a total transformation since the previous inspection. The school is fully inclusive and has a most positive ethos. There is very good provision for children with physical disability and for those with English as an additional language. There is very purposeful and effective teamwork among the strong team of teaching and other staff, and a firm commitment to further improvement. Teaching has improved significantly and is now good overall, with some lessons of very high quality. This ensures that learning is good and pupils now achieve much higher standards. **The school provides very good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent; she provides a clarity of vision and purpose, which has inspired staff with a determination to improve and has transformed the school
- The school's commitment to inclusion is excellent, ensuring all pupils are fully included in the life and work of the school
- There is a strong focus on pupils' learning; while it is good overall, it is very good in mathematics, enabling pupils to achieve above average standards
- Teaching is good, frequently very good, and classroom assistants provide high quality support
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and learning; behaviour is consistently very good
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs
- There are high levels of care, ensuring pupils' needs are met and that they have a safe and secure environment in which to learn
- The use of the outdoors to promote children's learning in the Foundation Stage is underdeveloped

There has been excellent improvement since the previous inspection. Standards are considerably better in English, mathematics, science and religious education because teaching is now very much better. The previously high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has been completely eradicated. Leadership and management have improved out of all recognition. Governors are now fully involved in the management of the school and individual co-ordinators make a positive contribution to monitoring and supporting the development of teaching. Financial management is very good. The provision for children with physical disability is now very good because staff have been properly trained and are now able to meet their particular needs. Parents and pupils have very positive views about the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	E	E	D	B
writing	E	C	C	A
mathematics	E	C	E	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.*

Achievement is good overall. Children start school with below average attainment. They make good progress and achieve well, the majority achieving the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year in all areas of learning. Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2, with pupils reaching above average standards in mathematics, and they do well to reach standards that are average in reading and writing. Pupils' achievement in information and communication technology

(ICT) is good, as they reach higher than expected standards by the time they leave the school. All this indicates that there has been very good improvement in standards since the previous inspection.

Pupils' personal development is very good. There are high levels of care and very good relationships, which contribute to pupils' very positive attitudes. Behaviour is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is satisfactory and the school continues to work hard to improve it further.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching is good overall and often very good, with some lessons of very high quality. Teachers plan effectively so lessons build on what pupils already know and understand, and there is consistency across the classes of similar age pupils. Teachers manage behaviour very well and have very good relationships with their pupils, which helps them promote positive attitudes to learning. Assessment is good. It is used effectively to track pupils' progress and to help teachers plan activities to move pupils' learning on.

Very high levels of care, guidance and support ensure that pupils' varied personal needs are identified and met. The curriculum and the range of activities the school provides to enrich it are very good. The school has good links with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall **leadership and management are very good.** The headteacher provides excellent leadership, inspiring strong teamwork and a commitment to improvement, which has led to the transformation of the school. Management systems are very good and ensure the school runs smoothly. Leadership and management of the provision for pupils with physical disability are very good and have resulted in very good improvement. The school evaluates its performance rigorously and plans very effectively for further improvement. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well, making an effective contribution to the management of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a very positive view of the school. They are pleased with their children's progress and with the way that teachers pick up on their individual needs. Parents are right to think that behaviour is very good. Parents like the fact that teachers always have time for them and can discuss any problems at any time. Parents consider a key feature of the school is the way that teachers meet the needs of all the children.

Pupils have very positive views about school. They enjoy coming to school and they want to learn. They like the new building and the opportunities they have to work in the computer suite.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the planning and provision to promote and support children's learning outdoors.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall pupils' achievement is good. There are wide variations in standards on entry to the school, but overall they are below average. There is also some mobility of pupils which has a significant impact on the progress these pupils can make and a negative effect on overall standards. There is very good provision made for children in the Foundation Stage, which enables them to make good progress and ensures that achievement is good, with the majority of them attaining the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2, because pupils' learning is good. As a result, pupils reach standards which are in line with those expected in English, and higher than those in mathematics and in some aspects of science. Pupils do well to achieve above expected standards in ICT. There has been very good improvement in standards since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards on entry are below average, but very good provision enables children to achieve well in the Foundation Stage;
- standards in reading, writing and mathematics are improving; pupils already achieve higher standards in national tests in these subjects than pupils in similar schools;
- overall standards in literacy are satisfactory; and reading is better than average in Year 1;
- pupils make good progress in mathematics and standards in numeracy are good;
- pupils do well to achieve above average standards in ICT by the end of Year 2;
- very good support for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language enables them to achieve well;
- pupils with a physical disability are making good, and in some lessons very good, progress.

Commentary

1. Children enter the nursery with wide-ranging levels of attainment, but initial assessment indicates that overall standards are below average. These are not as good as reported in the previous inspection. A significant proportion of children have difficulties in their ability to communicate and use language. However, the very good provision made right from the start and the consistently good teaching enable these children to make good progress and they achieve well, with most of them reaching the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. There is an appropriate focus both on personal, social and emotional development and on language and communication, and so children do well in these areas of their learning. There is also very good provision for higher attaining children, which helps them make the progress of which they are capable.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.8 (14.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.6 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.4 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. This table shows that standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were below average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing compared with pupils in other schools. These test results also show that in reading and writing pupils did better than they had

the previous year. The picture is much more positive when results are compared with those achieved by pupils in similar schools. In comparison with these schools, pupils achieved higher than average standards in both reading and mathematics, and in writing they achieved standards that were well above average. There are some fluctuations in standards from one year to the next because sometimes there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in a particular year group and sometimes there is a higher rate of mobility among pupils. But generally, over the past four years there has been an upward trend, with standards rising faster than is the case nationally. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are now much higher than they were at the time of the previous inspection.

3. Throughout the school overall standards in literacy are satisfactory. This represents good achievement since a significant proportion of pupils in Year 2 have special educational needs and have underdeveloped communication skills. Staff work hard to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills; this works effectively and standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2. There is a high priority given to improving reading and this is having a major impact on raising standards. Teaching of reading is good and pupils receive very good support from both teachers and classroom assistants, which enables them to make good progress. Pupils enjoy reading and like discussing the books they are reading; some read frequently at home but not many visit the local library. By the end of Year 2 standards are average; pupils in Year 1 are doing particularly well with their reading and overall standards are better than expected. Standards of writing are broadly in line with those expected throughout the school, although there is currently an appropriate emphasis on improving standards in spelling which are not yet high enough. At times teachers' handwriting in pupils' books is not effective in helping pupils to improve theirs.
4. Pupils make good progress in numeracy in Years 1 and 2; their learning is good and a significant proportion of them are on course to reach better than expected standards by the end of Year 2. Since the majority of them begin Year 1 having achieved the goals set for them by the end of reception, this represents good achievement.
5. Overall standards in science are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2, although in the scientific enquiry aspect the pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are better than average. This is because there is very good teaching and very good opportunities provided to extend these skills.
6. Pupils' learning and achievement in ICT are good. Pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2 and they reach standards which are above those expected of pupils their age by the time they leave the school. There has been good improvement in this subject since the previous inspection. Teachers make good use of the improved resources, which is contributing positively to the improvement in standards.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because their particular needs are identified early and they are very effectively supported by both teachers and classroom assistants. This enables them to achieve well in the Foundation Stage and very well in Years 1 and 2. Good assessment information enables teachers to provide work which is clearly matched to their learning needs.
8. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and achieve the levels of which they are capable because they also receive very good support. Continuity in learning is sometimes made difficult for these pupils since a significant number of them move into and out of the area over a short period of time
9. There is very good provision for pupils with physical disability. They are fully included in the life and work of the school and this contributes effectively to their making good progress. In some lessons they make very good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and work are very good; many of them show remarkable maturity for their age. Behaviour is very good, especially in lessons, where this greatly helps pupils learn and achieve. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance at the school is average; most pupils arrive punctually.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships amongst everyone in the school underpin its excellent ethos;
- pupils have very good and mature attitudes to work and equally good learning habits;
- behaviour in class and around the school is consistently very good;
- there is very good and imaginative work to improve attendance and punctuality.

Commentary

10. At the heart of much that is so good in this school are the very good relationships among everyone involved. The very good relationships between staff and pupils contribute to the effective teaching, the very good behaviour and the support provided. Pupils have a delightful trust in all the adults because they feel so secure in the school and this is used pivotally to drive forward their learning. It is not just with teachers that such relationships flourish; teaching assistants have similar warm and close ties and other staff such as playground supervisors and dinner ladies appear as friends to the children. Moreover, parents commented spontaneously on the closeness of the pupils' relationships with teachers.
11. A very real strength of the school is the way in which pupils from all social, cultural and minority group backgrounds live and work happily together. This is because teachers and support staff genuinely welcome and include all pupils, rigorously supporting their individual needs. The pupils interact very well as a single body, just as the staff are very much one team.
12. Pupils' behaviour in school, whether in class, around school or in the playground, is very good. Pupils are bright, cheerful, friendly and polite; adults, including inspectors, are met with cheery greetings. Play is lively, noisy, occasionally rough, but very rarely threatening. In lessons, behaviour is exceptionally good, especially in the way children move from sitting on the carpet to, or from, sitting at desks or in a circle. Consequently, lessons flow and learning is not interrupted. Children care for each other and help each other. Even the youngest pupils are capable of working or discussing issues in pairs or small groups. The school's behaviour policy has been well worked out and especially well presented in a comprehensive staff document that results in consistency and ensures that pupils understand expectations, rewards and sanctions.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	130	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	17	1	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	26	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	8	0	0
Black or Black British – African	9	0	0
Any other ethnic group	9	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	8	0	0

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

13. Attitudes to school are also very good and remarkably mature. Pupils have a very positive desire to learn and are keen to participate in lessons. They want to come to school, which is confirmed by parents, and they want to learn. Pupils learn to co-operate well with each other right from the start in the nursery, and they also learn to work independently, which contributes to their good learning as they move through the school. Pupils are willing to take on responsibilities such as helping younger pupils at break times.
14. Bullying or other harassment is rare, and quickly and very effectively dealt with. The school's excellent commitment to inclusion and the high expectations that all staff have of them ensure that pupils happily embrace all the different groups in the school, and especially those pupils with physical disabilities. Parents commented on the benefits of their children mixing with a wide range of other pupils.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	School data	1.6
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

15. Attendance levels last year were well below national norms and unauthorised absence was well above the national average. However, last year saw a dramatic rise in attendance levels in response to some really good and imaginative work led by the then community development worker, along with the school's administrative staff and the learning mentor. There was considerable contact with parents, many special 'Attendance Weeks' and similar events took place, stickers were given, and rewards and certificates presented. Significantly, although the previous community development worker has since left the school and her successor has only just been appointed, the attendance level has been maintained for the first half of this academic year. Similarly, unauthorised absence has also been reduced. Poor punctuality is a lesser

problem, but is to be addressed further by the same team. Very good work has been rewarded with very real improvement.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education for all its pupils, very much better than at the time of the previous inspection. Teaching is good, and at times very good, contributing positively to pupils' good achievement. The curriculum is very good and there are very good opportunities provided for pupils to learn outside of lessons. Provision for pupils' care and welfare is very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall. There is a clear focus on learning as teachers work hard to improve standards and this ensures that in most lessons pupils' achievement is good. All pupils are fully included, enabling them to access lessons. Assessment is good, enabling teachers to track pupils' progress carefully and plan effectively to meet their learning needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection;
- teachers manage behaviour very well, enabling them to focus on pupils' learning;
- teachers manage behaviour very well, enabling pupils to focus on their learning;
- inclusion is excellent; all pupils are fully enabled to participate and learn;
- teachers have good skills, enabling them to extend pupils' learning effectively;
- very good assessment procedures ensure pupils' progress is tracked effectively;
- while oral feedback is good, teachers could provide better written guidance on how pupils could improve their work.

Commentary

16. Teaching is good overall, although there is a significant proportion of very good teaching and some lessons are of very high quality. Throughout the school teachers work very hard to raise standards, but they also have a strong commitment to personal development and good behaviour. There has been very good improvement in teaching since the previous inspection. In eight out of ten lessons seen during this inspection, teaching was good, very good or excellent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed. Teaching in literacy, numeracy and science is particularly effective and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	14 (34%)	18 (44%)	8 (20%)	0	0	0

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

17. Teachers manage the pupils' behaviour very well, drawing on a good range of strategies to ensure that their classrooms are orderly. The school's policy of positively reinforcing good behaviour is consistently applied and successful in ensuring that lessons proceed smoothly and that classrooms are pleasant places to learn. Relationships between all the adults and pupils are very good; teachers and classroom assistants are very good role models; they communicate their expectations clearly and consistently and they respond very positively to all pupils' needs. Teachers achieve a good balance between the need for warmth and caring in dealing with pupils' personal needs and the challenge and demand needed to extend their learning.

18. The school's commitment to inclusion is excellent and a very important strength. There is a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs, many with learning difficulties but some with very specific behavioural difficulties. There are also a number of pupils with English as an additional language, some from asylum-seeking families who enter the school with no English. The school also provides specialist provision for pupils with physical disabilities. Throughout the school, teachers and support assistants are very good at ensuring that all these pupils are fully enabled to participate and are included in their lessons.
19. Teachers and classroom support assistants recognise, plan for and support the differing needs of pupils effectively, so that those with English as an additional language make good progress in lessons and achieve well over time. A strength of the teaching of these pupils is the many opportunities taken to talk with them and to encourage them to reply. This has a marked effect on those who are learning to speak English, enabling them to gain confidence, noticeably persevering to communicate in lessons. Teachers effectively adapt their teaching styles, interspersing teacher talk with worthwhile activities, enabling pupils to remain interested and attentive in lessons.
20. The teaching of pupils with physical disabilities is good and at times very good. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that pupils' physical disabilities do not prevent their access to learning. This was the case in one very good physical education lesson with a group of reception children, in which the teacher and support assistant enabled one profoundly physically disabled pupil to access the movements, ensuring he was fully included in the lesson. However, some of these pupils show clear signs of weariness during the latter part of the school day and this has a negative impact on their achievements in these lessons. The quality of the teaching teams is very good and at times excellent, with class teachers managing their very well trained support assistants very well indeed to ensure that the pupils' learning is moved on.
21. There is a clear focus on extending pupils' learning; teaching is purposeful and lessons are well planned. Teachers have good skills, which enables them to manage their pupils' learning effectively. In most lessons they make the learning objectives clear to pupils at the outset; in the best lessons these objectives provide a clear structure for the various activities and inform the concluding discussions at the end, enabling teachers to evaluate pupils' learning. This was the case in two very good lessons in science with a Year 2 class. The teacher ensured pupils understood the objective to be tackled over the two lessons. In the first she modelled the planning of a scientific investigation and guided pupils carefully as they completed it; very good use of questions kept pupils focused on the task and thinking about what they were doing and why. In the second lesson the teacher provided time for pupils to plan and undertake the investigation themselves, again using careful questioning which helped draw out and extend pupils' understanding. In an excellent lesson in mathematics with pupils in Year 1, the teacher demonstrated her skills by managing pupils' learning exceptionally well. Again there were very clear learning objectives. Teaching was inspirational; the whole lesson was managed with very good pace, there was a very good range of activities provided to meet the specific needs of all the pupils in the class and the classroom assistant was used very effectively indeed to support different groups of pupils. The plenary part of the lesson was outstanding, imaginatively reviewing and extending pupils' learning. Such skilful teaching ensures that pupils' learning is good.
22. Assessment is good. There are very good systems in place to track pupils' progress. In the Foundation Stage, individual records of achievement are well used to record teachers' observations. These are readily accessible to parents so that they too can monitor their children's progress. In Years 1 and 2 class teachers are given a clear programme of expected assessment, the results of which are recorded in assessment files. This information effectively supports the target-setting process. The assessment co-ordinator manages procedures well and has a clear view of progress because tracking is so effective. The results of statutory assessment are carefully analysed and this, with other assessment information, effectively informs teachers' planning and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers are able to plan and provide appropriate activities for all the pupils in their classes because they have such

a clear understanding of their learning needs. In lessons teachers show how well they know their pupils with their ability to focus appropriate questions directly at individuals. Teachers provide good oral feedback about learning as pupils work on tasks they are set. Although teachers' written comments in pupils' work are very positive and encouraging, they generally provide insufficient guidance on how pupils could improve it.

The curriculum

The school's curriculum is a very good, with many opportunities provided for enrichment, through extra-curricular activities in sport and music. Accommodation and resources meet the needs of most pupils very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement to the curriculum since the previous inspection, so it now meets statutory requirements;
- equality of access and opportunity for all pupils are excellent;
- the introduction of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy has helped raise standards;
- extra-curricular opportunities are very good;
- provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good due to the effective match of support staff to the curriculum.

Commentary

23. The curriculum is planned well and provides a very good range of opportunities for all pupils. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection when the curriculum was unsatisfactory. The introduction of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, along with national in-service training in ICT for staff, has contributed most positively to raising standards and improving teaching and learning. The school has justifiably focused on these subjects since the previous inspection and is now rightly aware of the need to prioritise the development of other subjects. Good progress has been made in addressing this through, for example, gaining Active Mark status in physical education and organising many enrichment days. The curriculum meets statutory requirements in all subjects including religious education and the good links between subjects ensure pupils experience a meaningful and coherent curriculum.
24. Personal, social and health education is taught very effectively through a balance of focused and cross-curricular work. Very good extra-curricular provision, including sports and arts clubs, exists together with visits and visitors that enrich the curriculum and ensure it addresses pupils' needs well.
25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well planned. Their individual education plans have clear targets that all understand. They are largely taught with their peers in small groups, mainly to supplement their literacy, and this is effective. The very good management of the co-ordinator for special educational needs ensures that, where necessary, the pupils receive specific support from outside agencies.
26. The close attention the school pays to inclusion ensures that pupils with English as an additional language, including those children from asylum-seeking families who join the school part way through their education, sometimes with no English, all have equal access to the curriculum and equal opportunities to learn. In Year 2, for example, pupils at an early stage of learning English are given additional support to prepare them for new work, or extra time to consolidate their learning. The school is also proactive in seeking further ways to support these pupils, through the extra-curricular homework club, for example.

27. Numbers of support staff are high, which is a well-planned use of funds. This is very effective as support staff are making a significant contribution to pupils' achievement throughout the school. Resources are very good as subject co-ordinators audit their areas annually and bid for funds to address any shortfalls. An assistant headteacher has monitored the curriculum well, using national guidance to ensure it is appropriately balanced and supports pupils' learning, and effective assessment systems have been developed linked to planning.
28. The accommodation has recently been extended and effectively remodelled. The school is secure and clean. The high standard of display helps create an attractive interior and contributes to the effectiveness of the school as an environment for learning. The extended accommodation provides very good storage space. A very good computer suite and library have been created, already having a positive impact on raising standards in ICT. Resources for meeting the needs of pupils with physical disabilities are good and when the remodelled facilities are fully in use, including the much needed physiotherapy suite and the parents' room, they will be very good. The problems of access to this specialist provision have been resolved and further necessary modifications agreed. There is a large playing field, which provides outside space, but the open site lacks suitable secure fencing, making it difficult for the school to provide equipment to interest pupils on the playground.

Care, guidance and support

The school works very well to ensure a safe, secure and healthy environment for pupils; the care and welfare provided for pupils are very good. The close relationships ensure pupils' views are well known and integrated into the school's work, whilst advice and guidance are firmly based on teachers' knowledge of the pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures to ensure a safe and secure environment, including attention to child protection and health and safety issues;
- very good relationships amongst pupils and staff, and teachers' very good understanding of individuals, enable them to address their pupils' particular needs effectively;
- there are very good procedures for induction, including for those pupils joining at different times;
- support and guidance provided for pupils are good, with the learning mentor making a significant contribution.

Commentary

29. Very good attention is given to ensuring all pupils are safe and secure in school. Health and safety issues are well handled, by a governor's sub-committee, the headteacher, another key member of staff and the caretaker. Child protection is given a high priority, being led by the headteacher and with regular training and briefing for all staff. All drills and checks are efficiently carried out and well documented where relevant. The school is closely addressing health issues and working towards Healthy School status. Personal, health, social and citizenship education is used well to address many related issues, including drugs awareness and sex education, which is also included in the science curriculum.
30. A key feature of the school is the quality of the relationships between pupils and staff. The staff also have very good knowledge and understanding of individual pupils' backgrounds and needs. This is essential with so many pupils with special educational needs, physical disability, English as an additional language, or language and communication needs as children from asylum-seeking families. Induction of these recent entrants is very good and could be seen very evidently in the school. The school's excellent approach to inclusion ensures all pupils are quickly integrated into the work and social life of the school.
31. The very good knowledge that teachers have of their pupils enables them to provide good support and guidance. This is very well complemented by the work of the learning mentor.

Having won the pupils' trust, teachers use it well to guide the sometimes vulnerable children. The effective relationships also enable staff to absorb the pupils' views and involve them in the work and development of the school. Although there is no school council, there is a suggestions box (and also one for parents), pupils do discuss issues, and personal, health, social and citizenship education lessons and circle time offer opportunities to consult pupils.

32. The school ensures that newly arrived pupils, including those children from asylum-seeking families who speak English as an additional language, settle quickly into school. Good use is made of support staff to give additional support at this time, so that these new pupils experience a welcoming, caring environment. Care and inclusion are hallmarks of this school; they are very much improved since the previous inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Very good links have been built up with the local community as well as beneficial links with local schools and colleges. The school provides very good outreach support and guidance to other schools providing for children with physical disabilities. Very good work has been done to build a better partnership with parents, which is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good outreach service to other schools to assist the integration of physically disabled children;
- very good links with other local schools provide several mutual benefits;
- good links with the local community enhance the curriculum, support pupils' learning and aid the community;
- the school works hard to find more ways to engage effectively with parents.

Commentary

33. The resourced provision unit, which enables pupils with physical disabilities to enjoy mainstream education, has been another of the school's successes. The skills and knowledge acquired have now been made available to other local schools, on the school's own initiative through the local education authority's Pupil Support Unit. The teacher in charge and teaching assistants provide very valuable outreach help, professional advice and support on issues like access, resources, support, review and individual education plans.
34. Very good links also exist with several local schools. Such benefits as joint staff training days and networks for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs, as well as headteacher meetings, all arise from these links. The school also enjoys a beneficial link with a local Beacon school. Whilst the school has deliberately avoided involvement with students in teacher training in recent years, it does provide work experience for students from colleges of further education and supports trainee nursery nurses with teaching experience. Several parents are also taking further education courses and benefit from gaining their direct experience in the school.
35. Many very good links exist between the school and the local community, to their mutual benefit. Links to St James' Church are strong. Teachers also arrange visits a local mosque and the Methodist church as part of the school's provision for religious education. A wide range of other visits enhances teaching and learning, including visits to local museums, the art gallery, where pupils work with an artist, and other local sites of interest. A very good range of visitors come to speak to pupils, including storytellers, a footballer, musicians, artists, health advisors, police, road safety officers, dance troupes and drama groups. The local pyramid of schools has shared an 'Imagine Project' on brass instruments, which was of great benefit to the pupils. Local charities are well supported, including an initiative where pupils visited the local hospice.
36. The school has worked long and hard to establish a good partnership with the parents. In particular the school has been imaginative and intelligent in developing appropriate ways to

communicate with parents. A key element in forging stronger links has been the work of the community development worker, who spends much time working with families. There are good communications, including a simple but effective regular newsletter and two similar, in-school parents' notice boards. Beyond this, the greatest success has been through face-to-face communication. Parents' evenings are well attended and there have been several successful curriculum workshops to provide parents with information about teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy and how parents might help their children. Parents are very enthusiastic about the opportunity to watch their children being taught. Similar approaches include 'Key Skills Days' for parents of nursery age children prior to their starting at the school. Parents also enjoy coming into school for class and celebration assemblies; they come in great numbers for nativity plays and other performances. A small number of parents help in school, with reading in class or with the 'Fun and Games' club. This latter event enables parents to borrow toys for their children. The provision of guidance for use is a valuable help for parents in supporting their children's learning, and is well used. Personal contact with parents is also much enhanced by the contacts made by the community development worker, the learning mentor and the 'Fast Lane' worker (literacy project). These many, well thought out initiatives have done much to bring parents closer to the school.

37. The school's 'open door' policy is effective in ensuring that parents are welcome to come and discuss their concerns at any time. The school provides interpretation services at parents' evenings, which enables all parents to participate. However, the co-ordinator dealing with the needs of pupils with English as an additional language has a full teaching timetable so that planned opportunities to meet with parents are limited. This reduces the scope of provision and the ways in which parents can support their children at home.
38. These links with parents, the community and other local schools all demonstrate that despite its recent problems, there has been no hint of insularity.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership, ensuring strong teamwork and a firm commitment to improvement. Governors provide effective support, ensuring that governance of the school is very good. The overall management provided by key staff is very good so that the school runs smoothly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the headteacher is excellent, inspiring a team of teachers and support staff who are equally committed to providing education of the highest quality;
- the commitment to inclusion is excellent;
- the headteacher has nurtured a culture of improvement, which recognises the potential of individual staff and provides opportunities for them to realise it;
- the governing body supports the school very well and acts very effectively as its critical friend;
- there has been very good improvement in the provision for pupils with physical disabilities since the previous inspection.

Commentary

39. The excellent leadership of the headteacher is the major factor in the school's overall effectiveness and its excellent improvement since the last inspection. Her vision, drive and understanding of the school's needs have enabled her to create a team which shares her extremely high aspirations and her firm commitment to further improvement.
40. Fundamental to the school's ethos is inclusion. It is a community where every pupil is given the opportunity to fulfil their potential. This also extends to all staff and is developing into the wider community also as the school seeks to become a real community school. This is a direct result

of the clear vision of the headteacher, which she communicates so effectively to everyone and is shared by every member of her team. Teamwork is very good; a number of teams have been created and empowered to make decisions. A good example is the creation of the assistant headteacher posts, which the headteacher has developed in place of a deputy. In addition to working alongside the headteacher, the assistant headteachers also take the lead in some areas of development, such as the curriculum and target setting, whilst also delegating elements of their responsibilities to other staff, encouraging and enabling these others to develop their roles within the school. A number of key staff lead their areas very well and have been instrumental in the rapid improvements in teaching and learning. The school continues to prioritise the development of individuals' expertise by working to ensure that all subject co-ordinators are performing to the same very high levels.

41. Self-evaluation underpins the whole culture of the school. It exists in every aspect of school life and is used and valued by all staff. The senior management team analyses a wealth of data effectively to identify areas for development, establishing clear priorities for further improvement. The headteacher is aware of the need to widen this group and plans to involve the literacy co-ordinator more fully in this process, benefiting not only the subject area, and as a result teaching and learning, but also the co-ordinator's own professional development.

Example of outstanding practice

The headteacher was appointed to her post four years ago, just after the school's previous inspection, when it was placed in special measures. A key feature of the excellent improvement since then has been the development of staff.

The headteacher has a clear vision which underpins the drive for improvement. Rigorous self-evaluation has informed her understanding of the school's needs, in particular the need to improve the quality of teaching and the support provided by classroom assistants, and the expertise of staff working with pupils with physical disability. Evaluation also enabled the headteacher to recognise the potential of the staff already in the school, and the systematic provision of high quality continuing professional development enabled individuals to realise theirs. The headteacher has provided the inspiration, the motivation and the opportunities to all staff to engage in further training. As a result there is now a culture in which staff demonstrate their determination to provide the highest possible quality of education for all pupils. The school has sought out and benefited from the best sources of support, including a local Beacon school. Two leading teachers for literacy and numeracy were appointed and have provided first class in-house support. Monitoring and mentoring are strong; all staff are involved in evaluating practice and provision and in supporting their further improvement. The invitation to a former local education authority advisor to join the governing body has been very successful, enabling him to model aspects of the role of governors, particularly in evaluating the work of the school. This is a real 'learning school' at every level and this has been the key to its transformation.

42. Staff performance is managed very effectively, with each member, both teaching and non-teaching, having targets for improvement that link to whole-school priorities, which contributes effectively to improvement. A very good system for monitoring the quality of teaching is in place and has impacted directly upon the quality of teaching throughout the school. The headteacher has increasingly delegated this task to co-ordinators and key staff, retaining an overall monitoring and supportive role, and plans to extend this further to include non-teaching staff taking on some of these responsibilities. The continuing professional development of all staff is exceptionally well managed and is another example of the headteacher's commitment to a belief that it should be a developing school in all senses, with staff development playing a key role. This strategy has helped the school in developing a highly qualified and dedicated staff that are constantly striving for improvement. From belonging to a school in special measures, the staff now confidently share their expertise with other schools within the authority.
43. Governors support the school very well and fulfil their statutory duties effectively. The headteacher has built a strong relationship with the governing body, ensuring that it plays a full part in realising her vision and aspirations for the school. Following the previous inspection the

headteacher made a strategic decision to invite an additional governor with specific educational skills to join. This appointment has been highly effective and, as a result, most valuable support was provided for the headteacher at an early stage of the school's development and the whole governing body has benefited from the lead provided by this governor. As a result the governing body has evolved into the current very effective team, fully able to hold the school to account. The chair meets regularly with the headteacher to discuss the school and its work, individual governors have attended training and visit the school to develop a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of provision, whilst working parties tackle the key issues raised from the last inspection.

44. Staff and governors very successfully ensure that the educational inclusion of all pupils is paramount and that all have equal access to the curriculum. The school systematically tracks the achievements of pupils with English as an additional language and uses this information well to identify and support small groups of Year 2 pupils. However, because the co-ordinator has a full teaching commitment and a reception class-based teaching role, the impact of her leadership and management role is reduced. This limits opportunities, other than for Year 2 pupils, for early intervention work, individual teacher assessments and support for individuals and groups.
45. The co-ordinator of the resourced provision for pupils with physical disabilities provides very good leadership and management of the unit. She has responded very effectively to the issues identified in the previous inspection, ensuring that all staff involved have received appropriate further professional development and enabling them to meet these pupils' specific needs well. The unit is now staffed with a highly trained teaching and support team. Whilst the number of pupils with physical disabilities remains low, the school is using its expertise well, providing an outreach service to advise and support other schools in meeting the particular needs of similar pupils.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	748,744	Balance from previous year	25,442
Total expenditure	654,105	Balance carried forward to the next	120,081
Expenditure per pupil	3371.67		

46. Financial management is very good. The headteacher is very well supported by her administrative assistant. The headteacher allocated the underspend, identified at the last inspection, prudently. There is a well thought out school development plan, which has an appropriate longer-term view of development closely linked to the key issues identified in the previous inspection. Items for development are costed and sources of funding identified. The budget is monitored effectively by the headteacher, administrative staff and governors. All the minor recommendations of the recent audit report have been addressed efficiently. The school follows the principles of best value well by securing competitively priced contracts, seeking advice from the local education authority and using the resources of the community and other schools well. The headteacher is aware that commitments resulting from agreements made as part of the recent PFI project may well impede the securing of best value and is discussing this with the local education authority.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective leadership is ensuring that provision is continuing to improve; the approach to inclusion is excellent;
- there is a strong focus on children's learning, well supported by a rich variety of resources, but provision for children's learning outdoors is underdeveloped;
- the quality of teaching is consistently good, contributing positively to children's good achievement;
- effective partnerships with parents are built right from the start.

Commentary

47. The good features reported in the previous inspection have been maintained and the very effective leadership provided by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator is ensuring that provision continues to improve. The recently remodelled rooms for both the nursery and reception classes provide very good accommodation, enabling staff to work flexibly with children in a variety of different and appropriate groupings. In both areas there is a good range of resources readily accessible to children. The wide variety of learning activities are very well organised to ensure that the needs of individuals or small groups of children are met and that their learning is good. The approach to inclusion and the provision made to ensure that all children's needs are met is excellent. Although the nursery and reception areas are separate, there are now opportunities to organise coherent and effective provision for all children in the Foundation Stage. The significant improvements made have resulted in provision that is now very good.
48. There is a very strong focus on children's learning, particularly in the reception classes where the rich variety of resources and the flexible organisation enable staff to stimulate and extend children's learning effectively. In the nursery there is an appropriate balance of adult-led activities and opportunities for children to exercise choice, initiating activities for themselves or with others, and thus developing independence and the ability to manage resources for themselves. In reception there is a balance of more formal taught sessions and opportunities for individually chosen activities, which also promotes independence. There are good routines established for children selecting and working in the different areas or with particular pieces of equipment. While there is some provision to support children's learning outdoors, more readily accessible for children in the nursery, generally the lack of appropriate security around the school building has resulted in this being insufficiently developed for all the children in the Foundation Stage.
49. The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers, nursery nurses and other staff all work very effectively in the nursery and reception teams. Planning is good; assessment is very good in reception and good in the nursery. All staff are skilful in observing aspects of children's learning; they understand children's learning needs and plan carefully to meet them. Teachers use a good range of teaching strategies, appropriate for children of this age, in both their direct teaching of the whole group and in more intensive work with individuals or small groups. This ensures that children have very good opportunities to learn through a variety of structured practical activities, which contribute positively to the progress they make and their good achievement. At times very good provision is made to extend higher attaining children in reception, when a small group works separately with one of the staff on more challenging planned activities. Although some use is made of the existing outdoor area in the nursery, overall in the Foundation Stage, teachers are not planning for and making the most of the outdoor area to promote and extend children's learning.

50. There are effective partnerships with parents. These are built up right from the start. Induction arrangements are good, including valuable home visits prior to children starting in the nursery. The informal start to the day in the nursery enables parents to bring in their children and help them settle to a chosen activity. The display of children's achievement folders also enables parents to keep track of how well their children are doing. Good opportunities are taken to talk to parents about their children's learning and progress at the beginnings and ends of sessions. Parents are very pleased with the provision made for their children in the Foundation Stage unit.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in their social and emotional development and achievement is good;
- relationships are excellent and teaching very good, so children have fun and enjoy learning.

Commentary

51. This area of learning has an appropriately high priority when children start in the nursery, because initial assessment indicates that personal and social development are generally below average. Children make good progress through both the nursery and reception classes however, so that by the time they enter Year 1 the majority do well to achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. This is because teaching is consistently good, and there are very good relationships amongst the children and all staff, and a well-planned range of activities, ensuring that children quickly settle and feel secure. The inclusion of children is excellent. All the staff work successfully to ensure children learn to share, co-operate and play confidently with others. Adults are good role models and their interaction with children ensures they feel safe, confident and secure. They make learning fun and as a result children enjoy it. At the same time adults communicate clear expectations about behaviour, which ensures that children behave well. They learn to share and take turns at the various activities. Most children co-operate well with each other, in the role-play areas for example, or in working with the sand or water. These opportunities contribute positively to children's social development. There are good routines to help children develop the need for personal hygiene which are effectively reinforced.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in developing their language skills and do well to achieve average standards by the end of reception;
- good opportunities are provided to develop children's speaking skills;
- there is good provision for higher attaining children in reception.

Commentary

52. There are very good opportunities for children to develop their language and communication skills in all the activities provided in both the nursery and reception classes. Teachers and other staff give an appropriately high priority to extending children's language skills. This enables them to make good progress and helps most of them achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. There are good routines for speaking and listening, which are introduced right from the start in the nursery and which are successfully and consistently reinforced throughout the Foundation Stage. Some children are more reluctant to speak, but staff are patient and work hard to include them. Staff in the nursery make good use of the opportunities they create in the various activities to engage children in conversation. In reception teachers are skilful in their use of questions to promote children's speaking. In a whole-group discussion about a big book, *The Go Kart* for example, the teacher posed questions effectively, like "What do you think mum is saying?" and "Why do you think dad is angry?" which were successful in encouraging children to express their views. Many of the children write their own name unaided and most are making marks in free writing activities, in the role-play garage for example, where they fill in repair sheets as they repair the cars and bikes. In both the nursery and reception classes, children enjoy listening to stories or sharing books with an adult. The very well planned provision is extended for reception children with a specific focus on literacy. At times some higher attaining children are taught separately, working with a teacher on more challenging tasks, which ensures that their progress is good.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good practical activities ensure children's learning is good;
- good teaching enables children to make good progress.

Commentary

53. Teaching is consistently good because all staff make the most of the practical activities set up in both the nursery and reception classes. This contributes positively to ensuring children's learning is good and helps the majority reach the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Teachers and other staff are good at helping children count in a variety of practical activities and children do so enthusiastically. They encourage children to use appropriate mathematical language, in working out problems in their play for example, and they are skilled at posing questions to make children think about number, quantity or shape. In the different areas they have set up, teachers and other staff work hard to extend children's learning. Working with a small group of nursery children in the water, for example, the nursery nurse very effectively engaged the children in thinking about different amounts in different containers. Playing a game of Snakes and Ladders provided an opportunity to reinforce recognition of numbers to six on the dice and the children were helped to count on to six on the board. In reception, children can count up from different starting points and they take great pleasure in doing so. In more formal whole group work, children show that they know the names and properties of some common two-dimensional shapes, like triangle, rectangle and circle. Teaching was very good in this activity, as the teacher introduced the children to a new shape, a hexagon, with appropriate discussion of its properties, reinforced with a 'feely bag' game. There is a very good range of practical activities provided for children throughout the Foundation Stage and this is contributing positively to the effectiveness of their learning and the progress they make.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's learning is good, because good opportunities are provided for them.

Commentary

54. Teaching and learning are good, ensuring that children make good progress and achieve well in this area of learning. The majority reach the goals children are expected to achieve by the end of reception. Children are provided with a wide range of opportunities to learn about the world about them. Areas like that set up for role-play in the nursery about going on a voyage in a boat, for example, or the role-play garage in reception, provide very good opportunities for adults to engage children in discussing plans, responsibilities and activities. As children in the nursery played in the water, the teacher made very good use of the opportunity to engage children in discussing why some objects float. The idea was then reinforced as the children made a model ship with the nursery nurse and floated them in the water tray. Children have access to computers in both nursery and reception and some are confident to use them, playing various games or listening to stories. At times teachers make good use of the computer suite with the reception children and this is having a very positive impact on the progress they make. The children show they are developing good mouse control as they use the 'flood' and 'fill' functions in the program to colour their picture. With support children learn to print their own work.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good range of opportunities to work with a variety of tools contributes effectively to the children's physical development;
- accommodation is spacious but the outdoor area is not used effectively to promote children's learning.

Commentary

55. Children have good opportunities to develop their skills in manipulating equipment such as scissors, writing and drawing pencils, paintbrushes and other tools and in handling a range of equipment when making models or playing games. They also learn to manipulate pieces as they do jigsaw puzzles. Such activities contribute to the progress they make in this area of their learning. The provision to develop their skills outside is satisfactory in the nursery, but underdeveloped for children in reception. Teachers and other staff work hard to provide a range of activities outside to enable children to move, climb, balance, and control large play equipment, but provision is restricted by the need to remove everything at the end of each session because there is insufficiently secure fencing. Teachers make very good use of the hall for physical education lessons however, which is enabling children to develop an awareness of space and to gain control over their own bodies in various situations. This enables the majority of children to achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. Inclusion is again excellent, with provision made to include all children. Specialist provision for children with physical disabilities has been built at the school, and this will be available for use soon to further enhance provision for these children.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy the range of activities provided for them and they achieve well;
- demanding musical activities contribute to their good progress.

Commentary

56. Teachers plan a good range of interesting activities in both the nursery and reception classes to stimulate children's imagination. Teaching is good as adults provide appropriate levels of support and encouragement. This enables the majority of children to achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. Children enjoy the variety of well-planned art, music and role-play activities. In the nursery they concentrate very well as they work with the teacher to create and print patterns or make model boats. They know how to use the available materials. By the time children are in reception, they enjoy working with others in role-play, creating their own imaginative stories. In music lessons they are making good progress because some of the activities provided for them are demanding. Children enjoy singing and joining in clapping rhythms and are keen on playing percussion instruments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement in standards since the previous inspection;
- teaching and learning are good throughout the school with some very good features;
- effective leadership and management have been instrumental in staff development;
- classroom assistants are used very effectively to support specific groups of children;
- high quality resources enhance pupils' learning;
- standards of handwriting and presentation are inconsistent.

Commentary

57. The school has put a great deal of effort into raising standards in English. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were low. These have risen considerably since then, with the majority of pupils reaching standards in reading and writing which overall are in line with those expected for their age by the end of Year 2. While the standard of work in Year 2 pupils' books is broadly average, their work in lessons observed was often better. Pupils in Year 1 were consistently performing at a higher than expected level. There are a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2, some of whom have joined the school recently. Although teachers and classroom assistants have ensured these pupils are supported well, enabling them to achieve their potential, they have recognised that this has an impact on overall standards. Nevertheless pupils in both Years 1 and 2 achieve well, with some groups of children, particularly those for whom English is an additional language, achieving very well. Very effective support from teaching assistants and other adults is planned and provided both in lessons and when children are withdrawn for smaller group work. For example, a small group of Year 1 pupils, in the early stages of English acquisition, were observed during an oral activity. They made good progress in developing their descriptive skills due to effective questioning by the teaching assistant.

58. Teaching and learning are good overall; in some lessons teaching is very good. Planning now follows national guidelines, enabling teachers to ensure that learning activities are matched effectively to pupils' different needs, including the needs of those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils. This is contributing effectively to the progress pupils make and their good achievement. The rigorous pace of lessons, good use of resources and interesting range of activities and tasks planned are a particular strength and in sharp contrast to the teaching reported in the previous inspection. Pupils make a real effort in their work and are engaged in and excited about their learning. In a highly effective lesson with a Year 2 class, in which the pupils developed story settings, pupils made rapid progress as a direct result of the very good subject knowledge of the teacher, highly effective questioning and her high expectations of pupil behaviour and participation throughout the session. All pupils were extremely motivated by the task, took an active part in the discussion, developed an engaging and lively alternative story opening and wasted no time in producing their own adaptations, which they shared and evaluated together. Such high quality teaching is effective in ensuring pupils make good progress.
59. Questioning is used effectively by teachers and support staff to assess pupils' achievement and understanding. The information gained is often shared during the lesson and pupils challenged or supported accordingly. Whilst targets are clearly identified in children's books and regularly assessed, the quality of marking within the books is inconsistent and does not always help pupils to understand the next steps in their learning. Consistently high expectations are not always evident in pupils' written work, where the quality of handwriting and presentation is varied. This has been identified by the co-ordinator as an area for development. A recent teaching focus on developing pupils' use and understanding of subject specific language has been highly effective. Year 1 pupils confidently explained the meaning of the title, author, illustrator, index and contents of a book and knew the difference between a fiction and non-fiction text. An example of the high standards being achieved by Year 1 readers was also observed during this session when one pupil was able to describe the main characteristics of a play and then read an example using different voices consistently for the narrator and different characters.
60. Leadership and management of the subject are good overall. The co-ordinator has used her expertise as a leading English teacher very effectively to support and develop other teachers' skills through lesson observations and enabling others to observe her own teaching. As part of an ongoing monitoring role she regularly scrutinises teachers' planning and pupils' work to ensure coverage, clear learning objectives and differentiation. Through monitoring and analysis of question papers she has established a clear understanding of the subject's strengths and weaknesses and put in place initiatives to address them. The next stage in the co-ordinator's own development will be to take part in more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the impact of these initiatives and to play more of a key role in analysing data with the senior management team.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. There is very good use and development of the subject across the curriculum. Purposeful links are made to other subjects wherever possible, an example being in Year 2 where teachers reinforced pupils' understanding of how to use labels in design and technology, science and geography. ICT is used effectively in English with whole literacy lessons being taught in the computer suite in addition to computers supporting learning within the classrooms. Attractive displays around the school positively promote all aspects of the subject.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average overall by the end of Year 2;
- achievement is very good overall in Years 1 and 2;
- teaching and learning are very good due to the excellent subject expertise among teachers and the use of teaching assistants;
- leadership and management of the subject are very good; the co-ordinator is an excellent role model, enabling her to effect excellent improvement since the previous inspection.

Commentary

62. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a very good grounding in number calculation, shape and space and handling information. Although standards in national tests last year were not as good as in previous years, standards judged in lessons and from analysis of pupils' work are above average compared to schools nationally and well above average in comparison to those in similar schools. Achievement from Years 1 to 2 is very good due to consistently effective teaching. The school's consideration for the needs of pupils through the careful attention given to the matching of work ensures all pupils make very good progress commensurate with their ability. The overall trend, taking account of performance in recent years, is above the national average and the standards seen indicate that this trend is likely to continue and that pupils will surpass the challenging targets set.
63. Teaching and pupils' learning in lessons seen were very good, with teachers planning very effectively from the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons start with a brisk mental arithmetic session that pupils enjoy. In an extremely effective Year 1 lesson, pupils were encouraged to develop their knowledge and understanding of number through the teacher's skilful questioning and use of vocabulary, ensuring all pupils were actively involved and able to demonstrate their developing knowledge and understanding of counting and place value linked to addition and subtraction. The teacher's use of resources, including whiteboards and time, together with her strategic deployment of classroom assistants to support pupils during this time, enabled the lesson to proceed at a rapid yet appropriate pace. Classes are well managed during the main part of the lesson and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs effectively, who consequently achieve well. Effective intervention and questioning deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and very good work match and support enables pupils to achieve well in lessons. An innovative review session was seen at the end of a Year 1 lesson when pupils were challenged to sort numbers according to two criteria thus consolidating and extending work on counting and odd and even numbers in the mental and main parts of the lesson. Pupils were enthused when told a 'magic fairy' had left numbers and sums beneath their seats and asked if they could sort them. With support and guidance from the class teacher and her assistants, pupils sorted the numbers and sums into sets and in so doing enabled the teacher to assess pupils' understanding. Marking, although positive, sometimes provides insufficient feedback to enable pupils to improve.

Example of outstanding practice

In the introduction to an excellent numeracy lesson with Year 1 pupils, the teacher managed the mental and oral activities to ensure that pupils of all capabilities were fully engaged.

The teacher's planning was excellent, ensuring that all pupils' needs were addressed during every part of the lesson, beginning with the mental/oral starter. At the outset the teacher encouraged the children to read the learning objectives for the lesson and then very effectively built the whole structure of the lesson around them. She quickly deployed a teaching assistant to work on the first objective with a group of lower attaining pupils while the other assistant supported the remaining pupils, thus enabling the teacher to conduct the session at a vigorous pace. She used increasingly challenging questions to develop pupils' vocabulary, such as "count back one ... what's one less than... find the difference between...take away one from...my number with one less is 25, what is my number?" She could focus questions to the different groups in the class because pupils who needed it were very well supported. Very effective use of whiteboards for recording enabled the teacher to quickly address pupils' misconceptions. At the end of the session the teaching assistants reported back to the teacher on the progress of the pupils they had been supporting, so the teacher was clear about the progress of all the class. This enabled the teacher to give immediate effective feedback and praise to these pupils and provided accurate information to enable her to plan appropriate activities for the next session.

64. The co-ordinator is a leading teacher and her subject expertise and managerial skills have enabled her to effect excellent improvement. Since taking up her post she has improved standards through a combination of analysing pupils' test results and providing in-service support to staff to raise achievement. This was evidenced by her approach to the fall in standards last year. She quickly identified difficulties encountered by pupils in questions associated with subtraction and shape and space due to changes in the national tests and has developed an action plan to address these needs. She has created effective teams through joint planning together with evaluations undertaken by both teachers and classroom assistants. Vigorous monitoring of teaching and learning has ensured good practice has been disseminated, leading to consistency in the high quality of teaching throughout the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Although the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well in mathematics lessons, it has not been systematically planned in other subjects. Nevertheless there are good links with science when data is presented in the form of tables and charts and with English through the development of mathematical vocabulary. Pupils use fractions of turns in physical education lessons but links with ICT are underdeveloped.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a significant improvement in standards in science since the previous inspection; pupils' learning and their achievement are now good;
- teaching is consistently good; some lessons are of high quality;
- the development of pupils' skills of investigation through practical investigations is very good;
- very good leadership and management of the subject have contributed positively to the very good improvements made since the previous inspection.

Commentary

66. Overall standards are currently in line with those expected of pupils of their age. Pupils' completed work indicates that they reach better standards in some aspects of science, as shown in what they have done on 'Life processes and living things', and observations of their work in lessons indicates that many of them have better than expected skills of investigation. A significant proportion of pupils are on course to reach better than average standards by the time they reach the end of Year 2. This represents good achievement since the majority started Year 1 with average prior attainment. In their science lessons in both Year 1 and Year 2, pupils appear interested and enthusiastic, participating fully in the range of planned activities and concentrating well on the tasks set. Pupils in Year 2, in particular, were highly motivated and excited by their own investigations. This contributes to the good progress pupils are making in science. Standards are significantly better than those reported in the previous inspection.
67. Pupils achieve well in science because teaching is consistently good; in some lessons it is very good. Teachers plan effectively and organise their lessons well, which enables them to ensure that planned activities meet the particular needs of the different groups in the class. This careful planning also ensures an appropriate consistency for pupils of the same age in the different classes. Teachers are very good at posing questions to extend pupils' thinking. In a very good lesson with Year 1 pupils, the teacher provided a range of materials and challenged them to find out how the tissue paper fish could be moved across the floor. Having allowed time for their investigation, the teacher very skilfully drew out what the pupils had found with her careful and probing questioning, responding very positively to their ideas and using them to develop the direction of the discussion. There was a clear structure to the lesson, managed with good pace, which enabled pupils to learn very effectively. Teachers are good at ensuring pupils are introduced to appropriate scientific vocabulary and they reinforce this effectively during lessons.
68. The approach to developing pupils' understanding of scientific enquiry and their investigative skills is very good. Teachers pose interesting challenges for pupils and provide opportunities for them to explore solutions through the use of well-structured practical investigations. In the first of two very good lessons with Year 2 pupils, for example, the teacher very carefully and systematically modelled the planning and organisation of an investigation into the ways materials are changed by heat. This very successfully enabled pupils to work through the process a step at a time. There was good discussion of the key variables and ways to make the tests fair. In the subsequent lesson pupils were then able to organise a further investigation for themselves, showing how very effective their learning had been. In all the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils had good opportunities to develop social and collaborative skills as they conducted practical activities in small groups. The very good use of additional support ensured that all pupils were enabled to participate fully in the lessons.
69. The subject is very well led, which has contributed significantly to the very good improvement since the previous inspection. The careful monitoring of provision has enabled the co-ordinator to identify key aspects for development, as in the teaching of the skills of investigation for example, and she has very effectively led and managed improvement. While there is a significant range of work in pupils' books, there has been insufficient attention paid to presentation. Although teachers are very positive and encouraging in their marking, there are limited comments to help pupils improve the quality of their work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT are higher than those expected of pupils by the end of Year 2;
- pupils' achievement and attainment are insufficiently monitored;

- pupils with special educational needs are well supported; some are able to use specialised equipment to enable them to record their work;
- leadership and management are effective, and there is clear plan for further development;
- ICT is used to promote learning in other subjects.

Commentary

70. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards in ICT that are higher than those expected for their age. This indicates that there has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Throughout the inspection pupils were able to demonstrate their confidence in using the keyboard, mouse and interactive whiteboard as well as a range of other ICT equipment. They used their skills to support their learning in other subjects, using a drawing program to create pictures of animals for their work on the Creation in religious education, for example. In discussing their work, pupils were able to explain, using correct technical terms, which tools they had chosen and why as well as describing how they had developed and modified their work.
71. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The teachers' demonstrations of skills and techniques are effective and make good use of the interactive whiteboard in particular to engage pupils actively in their learning. Whilst practice to reinforce skills is essential in ICT, teachers make insufficient use of assessment to ensure that pupils are challenged and achieve even more during lessons. All pupils speak enthusiastically about their work and the atmosphere during lessons in the newly-created suite is that of a workshop with children engrossed and animated.
72. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons. The use of teaching assistants and other additional adults is particularly well targeted within the computer suite to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to develop. To support those pupils who need access to a computer in order to be able to record their work, the school has purchased *alphasmart* keyboards. These allow all pupils to work alongside their peers during lessons rather than always being withdrawn to work on the computer.
73. Leadership and management of ICT are good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, which she has addressed in a detailed action plan. She recognises the need for consistent assessment procedures to measure pupils' progress and attainment and has plans to introduce a more rigorous monitoring process to analyse standards throughout the school. Resources for supporting teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection and the newly completed computer suite is now in regular use. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop its use further and has also identified the need to target the development of all staff's skills in using the new resources available.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is good. Teachers make use of the computer suite to teach other lessons. For example, Year 1 pupils were observed consolidating their learning about labels from previous English lessons. The class teacher planned effective links producing a series of activities on the interactive whiteboard where pupils wrote their own labels for a series of pictures, chose a label from a limited range and finally used a word bank to label a diagram of a bicycle. Pupils also consolidate their mathematical skills both in the suite and in the classroom. The co-ordinator is keen to build upon the links already made and to introduce them throughout the whole curriculum.

HUMANITIES

75. It was not possible to observe any lessons in geography and to observe only two lessons in history during the inspection. Consequently it was not possible to make a judgement about provision in these subjects.
76. In geography, pupils' earlier completed work and that on display around the school indicate that standards are broadly in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and that achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make a satisfactory start to developing their skills in geography and, by the end of Year 1, they understand the component parts of an address and are able to identify and name some different methods of transport. They can describe their route from school to a neighbouring church and are able to give examples of human and physical features in the landscape. In their most recent work, pupils show they understand what is required to get from the mainland to an island. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made appropriate progress in developing their skills in geography. They have extended their knowledge of France and have studied ways of getting there. They understand some of the differences in food and know about some of the sights in Paris such as the Eiffel Tower.
77. In **history**, pupils' work seen indicates that standards are broadly in line with those expected for their age. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were lower than those typically found among pupils of their age. Pupils' completed work shows that they can distinguish between old and new, in houses for example, and that they can give reasons for the differences. Teachers plan work in history thoroughly, providing good opportunities for pupils to learn in a good variety of ways. Good use is made of artefacts for example, although sometimes these are not always fully appropriate for pupils of this age. Teachers provide good opportunities to extend pupils' learning through visits to museums. Classroom assistants contribute effectively to supporting teaching and learning. Teaching in the very small number of lessons seen was satisfactory overall, but both lessons were late in the afternoons when pupils were often tired and this contributed to a lack of pace in one lesson.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement since the previous inspection is good as the school has successfully implemented the new locally agreed syllabus which has helped raise standards;
- greater use of artefacts, visits, visitors and use of the rich cultural diversity provided by pupils within the school are required to extend pupils' experience and appreciation of religions.

Commentary

78. Standards are average overall in relation to the agreed syllabus and achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 to 2. This is an improvement compared with the standards and achievement reported in the previous inspection where provision was found to be unsatisfactory.
79. The main focus is on learning about Christian teaching as set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Evidence from work scrutiny and discussions with pupils indicate that the teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils in Year 2 have covered an appropriate range of work and developed a sound knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and customs, including Christian festivals such as Harvest, Easter and Christmas, and the Muslim festival of Eid. They understand the significance of the Koran to Muslims and the Bible to Christians and reflect on their own 'precious things', including their family and friends and compare themselves with friends. They are familiar with stories from the Bible such as the story of the Creation, Jesus and the Storm and Noah's Ark, together with vocabulary, artefacts and customs associated

with Christianity such as baptism, disciples, candles and crosses. They have reflected on the significance of art and music to Christians and the personal qualities of Jesus and considered what makes a good leader. Their knowledge of other religions is confined to Islam and is limited to the central figures of Mohammed and Allah. Opportunities to experience handling artefacts, and visits and visitors to extend their learning and appreciation of other religions are not yet fully developed. There are also more opportunities to draw on the rich cultural diversity provided by the pupils themselves in the school to support learning.

80. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been in post only a year but has held meetings each term to support staff in implementing the new agreed syllabus. This has successfully addressed the issue raised in the previous inspection, effectively ensuring teachers' subject knowledge is secure. A useful action plan has been developed which rightly recognises the need for the co-ordinator to monitor and support the development of teaching throughout the school, together with an agreed format for assessment and for marking to inform pupils how they can improve their work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. It was possible to observe only one lesson in art and design, none in design and technology and one in music during the inspection. There were too few lessons seen to support a judgement about provision in each of these subjects.
82. In **art and design** discussions with pupils about their work and the work on display around the school indicate that standards are broadly in line with those expected of pupils of their age. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils have good opportunities to work in a variety of media and learn different techniques, such as collage, perspective and tie-dye. They have good opportunities to study and appreciate the work of other artists, as they have in their study of Monet, for example. The art curriculum is further enriched with visits to local art galleries. Good opportunities are also provided to extend pupils' skills in the after-school art and design club and to encourage and develop the use of imagination in the lunchtime club for gifted and talented pupils. All pupils' self-esteem is raised through the school's approach to displaying their art work. In addition to attractive classroom displays, teachers display pupils' work all along the corridors, framed and hung alongside works by established artists. This demonstrates very effectively how highly the school values pupils' work, creating the feel of a gallery and adding to the overall ethos of the school.
83. Discussions with pupils about their work in **design and technology** indicate that standards are in line with those expected of pupils of their age. Pupils have had good opportunities to tackle a range of design projects and teachers make sure that the design process is addressed well. This was very evident in the work of pupils in Year 2. In designing a car they looked at key features needed, drew and labelled their own designs and identified materials to be used. Good cross-curricular links were made with literacy, in writing instructions for example, and making lists and labelling was effectively reinforced. After making their model, pupils had good opportunity to evaluate their work and consider how they could improve it.
84. In **music** pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn about the different elements. They can use appropriate terms such as tempo, *pitch* and *timbre*. By Year 2, they are developing an understanding of rhythm and are able to repeat some simple patterns. Music plays a significant part in daily acts of collective worship, in which pupils have opportunities to sing a variety of songs. On these occasions singing is tuneful; overall standards of singing are in line with expectations for pupils of this age.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of the subject are very good;
- involvement with Active Mark and the Sports Co-ordinator Programme have led to a rise in standards which are now in line with national expectations; achievement is good;
- opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work in lessons are underdeveloped.

Commentary

85. Three lessons of physical education were seen in Years 1 and 2. A discussion was also held with the co-ordinator and documentation was studied. The standards seen in lessons were average and achievement was good overall.
86. Teachers showed good subject knowledge and planned a good variety of challenging activities with effective attention given to the role of the teacher assistant to support pupils. Good attention is paid to safety with appropriate checks and vigorous warm-up sessions conducted at the start of lessons. Teachers also make good links with other subjects, including science and mathematics, during lessons. The pupils are able to use a variety of controlled turns in gymnastics lessons and can throw and catch with increasing accuracy and co-ordination in games. However, they lack the precision in their evaluations to raise standards to above average. In less effective parts of lessons, resources, including time, space and mats, are not used well enough to promote learning and time is sometimes wasted queuing. In one lesson lack of instruction prevented greater progress being made in the development of the skills of throwing and catching.
87. The leadership and management of the co-ordinator are very good. She has used her involvement with national initiatives to audit provision well and increased the amount of time devoted to the subject in the curriculum. Her very good subject knowledge and expertise have enabled her to support staff in the implementation of a new scheme, and the use of resources that have been provided through involvement with national play and dance initiatives. This has resulted in increased opportunities for pupils to take part in sports. She has encouraged the formation of effective teams through joint planning and involvement in the creation of a portfolio of work to moderate standards. She has given good thought to the inclusion of all pupils through a successful bid to develop a tennis club. She has drafted an effective development plan that targets improvements identified from the Active Mark audit, including the need for assessment and evaluation, and she has monitored these priorities effectively.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

88. It was possible to observe only one lesson in personal, social and health education or citizenship during the inspection. However, scrutiny of planning and discussions with teachers and pupils indicate that the school makes effective provision and that this contributes positively to pupils' personal and social development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	1
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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