

INSPECTION REPORT

SCRAPTOFT VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 120086

Headteacher: Miss B Raper

Lead inspector: Mr Sean O'Toole

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th January 2004

Inspection number: 257418

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	275
School address:	New Romney Crescent Netherhall Estate Leicester Leicestershire
Postcode:	LE5 1NH
Telephone number:	0116 2413444
Fax number:	0116 2417889
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Burden
Date of previous inspection:	14 th September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Located three miles from the centre of the city of Leicester, this larger than average sized primary school draws its pupils from an area of socio-economic deprivation, comprising mainly local authority owned housing. Most of the 252 pupils (120 girls and 132 boys) are from white UK heritage backgrounds. About six per cent are from other ethnic backgrounds (mainly Punjabi, Gujarati and Urdu speakers) and are all bi-lingual. A further 46 children attend the nursery. An above average percentage of pupils (33%) are eligible for free school meals. The percentages of pupils with special educational needs and those with statements are about average. Since the previous inspection attainment on admission to the school has declined significantly and is very low. The number of pupils attending the school has fallen and there have been major changes of staff which have disrupted the pupils' education. The school has been given three achievement awards since the previous inspection and is involved in the Leadership Development Strategy and Healthy Schools Initiative.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20891	Sean O'Toole	Lead inspector	English as additional language; Mathematics; Science; Information and communication technology.
14178	Patricia Willman	Lay inspector	
32207	Jennifer Thomas	Team inspector	Special educational needs; English; Art and design; Design and technology; Music; Physical education.
22509	Gail Cowmeadow	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Geography; History; Religious education.

The inspection contractor was:

Inspire Educational Ltd

The Coach House
132 Whitaker Road
Derby

DE23 6AP

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

With many good features this school provides a sound quality of education. Achievement is satisfactory overall and standards are rising. The school is inclusive, provides good leadership and management and mostly effective teaching. The school offers good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides very clear vision and is ambitious for the pupils' success
- Standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and in writing and speaking throughout the school are not high enough
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well
- Some teaching lacks sufficient pace and challenge
- The curriculum is good
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships are good
- Standards of care are high and the school involves parents and the community effectively

Improvement since the last inspection in September 1998 has been good. The school has worked hard to raise standards although more remains to be done in writing and speaking and mathematics. Leadership, management and governance, and many aspects of teaching are much improved. The significant weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report have been dealt with despite significant staff turnover and there have been improvements in almost all areas. There is very good potential for further improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	E	D	C
Mathematics	C	E	D	C
Science	A	C	C	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*

Overall the trend in improvement in national test results at the end of Year 6 has been above the national average and the school has three achievement awards in recognition of this. However, the trend in Year 2 results has been below that expected. In recent years attainment on admission has fallen significantly and this has an effect on standards as does the high number of pupils joining the school after the normal time of admission. The dip in standards in 2002 was due to the high percentage (42%) of pupils with special educational needs. The school sets sufficiently challenging targets and is on course to meet them.

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory although standards in writing and speaking and mathematics are below average. Pupils in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve well but few attain the expected goals for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. They make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development and are prepared well for Year 1. Progress and achievement in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory but could be better and test results have shown little change since the previous inspection. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English and mathematics are below average in Year 2. Tests results in 2003 showed that pupils attained well below average standards in reading and writing and below average standards in mathematics. When compared with similar schools standards were below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. The current Year 6 are on course to attain average standards in science and are close to achieving average levels in some aspects of mathematics, although overall standards are below average. Standards in writing and speaking lag behind those expected of pupils of a similar age,

though most pupils reach average standards in reading. An important factor in low standards in English is the pupils' limited vocabulary. Boys and girls attain similar standards in national tests.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. The school identifies and supports gifted and talented pupils effectively in design and technology although the more able pupils are not always challenged enough. Standards in ICT, religious education and music are average and achievement in these subjects is at least satisfactory. Some good work was seen in design and technology and art and design.

One of the school's successes has been the creation of a purposeful ethos in which pupils are encouraged to take responsibility, be involved in decision making and develop positive attitudes. These attributes are the result of the **good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** and the very good attention given to personal, social and health education. The pupils are well behaved, very polite and have positive attitudes to school and in lessons. Although pupils say they enjoy school and punctuality is good, attendance is below average despite the school's very good systems to encourage parents to bring their children.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is mostly good. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6 most of the teaching is good. English teaching is satisfactory with writing being the weakest aspect. The teaching of mathematics and science is good. Strengths in teaching include the very good use of support staff, homework, the use of resources and management of behaviour. In some lessons, the work is not matched closely enough to pupils' needs, and the pace of lessons drops because teachers talk too much and leave insufficient time for pupils to complete tasks. There are good procedures for assessment and some fine examples of marking but some inconsistencies in target setting. Pupils are keen to learn and work hard although there is a general lack of confidence when tackling work independently. The school's very good resources and accommodation, good curriculum and enrichment opportunities, including extra-curricular activities, help to promote inclusion and equal opportunities and stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm for school. The headteacher and staff provide high quality care of individuals and are trusted and respected by the pupils. The school works hard and with good success to involve parents in their children's learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Good leadership and management have enabled the school to improve and to create effective systems to raise achievement and improve teaching and learning. Good and supportive governance has ensured that the school meets statutory requirements. The headteacher has been very effective in creating a purposeful ethos and developing pastoral systems that support learning. She has built a hardworking team. Though many subject leaders are new to the school, they are beginning to make an impact on raising standards. Good management and administration effectively contribute to a well organised school where all are clear about their roles. This is reflected in the good system of performance management. Finances are used well, with priorities linked to the school's good strategic plans, which are reviewed regularly. The management has coped very well with the pressures of high staff turnover and has good plans to cope with the falling numbers of pupils attending the school. Governance is good and ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are highly satisfied with the school. Pupils have a real understanding of the school's mission statement; they are especially pleased with the way staff help them to learn.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in writing and speaking throughout the school and in mathematics in Years 1 to 2
- Improve important aspects of teaching and learning, especially the pace of lessons and challenge for the more able, and particularly in Years 1 and 2

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall achievement is satisfactory. By the time they leave the school pupils attain average standards in reading, science, religious education, music and ICT, although standards in mathematics and writing and speaking are below average. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but is often good in Years 3 to 6. Girls and boys are equally successful.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a rising trend in standards in English, mathematics and science in national test results at the end of Year 6 despite falling attainment on entry
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and very well in personal, social and emotional development
- Standards in writing and speaking throughout the school and in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 are not high enough
- More able pupils could do better

Commentary

1. Children in the Foundation Stage start school with limited skills, knowledge and understanding but make good progress because the teaching in the nursery and reception class is good with some very good features. Few children attain the expected goals for their age by the end of the reception year but they achieve well in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, learning effectively through play. A particular success is the way in which they improve their personal, social and emotional skills and most are close to attaining the early learning goals in this area of learning by the start of Year 1.
2. Trends in results at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics show that little headway has been made in raising standards. In 2003 the results showed that standards in reading and writing were well below average and below those of schools in similar contexts. Standards in mathematics were below the national average and the average of similar schools. These results need to be seen in the context of the following barriers to learning:
 - The attainment on admission to the school has fallen significantly in the last three years and is well below average
 - The school has had a high turnover of staff which has particularly affected younger pupils
 - Pupils come from socio-economic backgrounds which are well below average
 - Pupils have poorly developed language skills on entry to the school
3. The school compensates for these barriers with varying degrees of success. Improved provision and teaching in the Foundation Stage is having a positive impact but staff mobility still affects consistency in developing skills, knowledge and understanding. Additionally, the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2, although satisfactory, is not as good as in other year groups. Inspection evidence points to some improvement this year, especially in reading and mathematics, and standards are rising, although they remain below average. Less headway has been made in writing and speaking and many pupils still struggle to express their thoughts clearly and imaginatively.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.3 (13.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.2 (13.1)	14.6 (14.4)

Mathematics	15.5 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)
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There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Test results show that over time standards in English, mathematics and science have risen and the school has been given three achievement awards in recognition of this success. The rate of improvement has been better than the national trend but more remains to be done to secure higher standards, especially in English. There have been dips in performance in some years but well documented evidence from the school shows that in 2002 almost half of the pupils had special educational needs. In 2003 the pupils achieved average results in the tests at the end of Year 6 in science and, when compared with similar schools, standards were above average. The school's success in science has been largely due to the additional support and specialist teaching provided. Results in English and mathematics were below the national average but average when compared with schools in similar contexts. Inspection evidence points to further improvement this year with standards in science being average. Standards in mathematics are rising and, although below average overall, they are close to average in number and data handling. The weaker aspect of mathematics is in investigating and solving problems. Standards in English are below average and, although most pupils attain standards which are close to average in reading, few are successful writers. Staff turnover has had a negative impact on the school's ability to achieve a consistent approach to improving standards. Several other factors have had an impact on the pupils' performance in national tests which include:
- High mobility; over half of the pupils taking the tests in 2003 started school after Year 3
 - The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has increased significantly
 - Pupils lack confidence in interpreting questions
5. The school works hard to compensate for these barriers and makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The teaching programme for mathematics now includes regular and frequent opportunities for the pupils to investigate and solve problems using a good range of strategies and mathematical vocabulary. The school sets suitably challenging targets and in most instances meets them. There has been a steady improvement in the percentage of pupils attaining above average levels in national tests and inspection evidence points to further improvement this year, although the percentages are below the national average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.9 (24.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.9 (24.3)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.5 (28.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Progress in the school is variable, being mostly good in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. This has an impact on learning and achievement and is the result of some inconsistencies in teaching. The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables these pupils to take a full part in lessons because of well focused support and sharply focused individual education plans. Where the school identifies specific needs and provides targeted support, as in raising attainment through literacy initiatives, the pupils meet with good success. This focus is not as strong in supporting more able pupils and targets for them are too general, resulting in steady rather than good progress. The school recognises and supports some gifted and talented pupils who achieve very well in design and technology because of specialist support. The standards achieved by pupils in ICT, religious education and music are average and pupils achieve well because the curriculum has been developed effectively.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to their learning. The majority enjoy coming to school and respond well to the effective promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural values by the school. As a result, their behaviour and personal development are good overall. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The personal, social and emotional development of the children in the Foundation Stage is very good
- Most pupils participate with enthusiasm in the educational and personal opportunities provided
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good
- Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and are consistently encouraged and praised for making the right choices

Commentary

6. Whilst many pupils have very good attendance records, a significant number of parents do not send their children to school regularly enough. Illness accounts for much of the absence, but there is also an unacceptably high level of holiday absence. Last term alone almost one third of pupils in Years 1 to 6 missed ten per cent of their lessons, including important elements in their learning, placing them at a significant disadvantage to their peers. The school impresses on parents the importance of regular attendance and has very good formal and informal procedures for following-up absence and closely monitoring attendance. Records are kept of pupils who arrive late and parents are encouraged and helped in their efforts to bring their children to school on time. Most pupils arrive at school in good time. The school is well supported by outside agencies in their efforts to improve attendance.
7. The promotion of spiritual development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Opportunities are provided in assemblies for pupils to reflect on their feelings and on moral issues and in many lessons pupils become excited about what they are doing. In a Year 2 religious education lesson, for example, pupils thought it was very special to be able to write their age in Chinese characters with a gold pen. Because teachers listen to pupils' ideas, they develop good levels of confidence and become involved and interested in their learning. As a result, the majority of pupils have good attitudes to school and enjoy both their learning and their play. Pupils with special educational needs generally work hard during lessons. They have good relationships with teachers and teaching assistants, and grow in confidence as they move through the school.
8. Because the school promotes moral and social development well, pupils learn the difference between right and wrong and understand the value of respecting each other's viewpoints even if they may disagree. As a result, during their time in school most pupils become sensible and useful members of the community. They talk with enthusiasm about their school life and many are able to express their opinions clearly, explaining why they feel as they do. Pupils have a good understanding of how the school expects them to behave and they generally comply with the school rules. This contributes significantly to the secure and happy atmosphere in the school. Because of the generally very good relationships between most pupils, there are few concerns about bullying. Disputes do occur, but pupils trust the staff to deal with any such incidents quickly, fairly and effectively. All staff consistently praise pupils' good work and behaviour and this motivates them to try to live up to their teachers' high expectations. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility within the school community and the school provides good opportunities for pupils to do this. The School Council representatives, for example, discuss the many ideas put forward by their classmates and make decisions which have a positive impact on day-to-day life in the school. Two pupils were excluded from school during the last year as a result of persistently unacceptable and potentially violent behaviour.

9. Cultural development overall is good. Pupils learn about their own and others' culture through many subjects of the curriculum. They enjoy singing and listening to a wide variety of music. Year 5 pupils, for example, relished the words of the song about Macbeth and sang with emotion and expression. Through their religious education lessons pupils learn about the lifestyles of others and what motivates different communities.
10. The children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development. They are encouraged to work and play constructively and happily together and learn to make sensible choices. They listen carefully to instructions and try hard to please their teachers and other adults who work with them. They behave well.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	7.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.3
National data	0.4

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

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	258	4	2
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	12	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the school provides a good quality of education which meets the needs of the pupils and enables them to achieve at least satisfactorily. Teaching and learning are at their best in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6. Care for pupils is very good and the school involves parents well.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6. Assessment procedures are good. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from interesting and well planned lessons
- The teaching of mathematics and science is mostly good in Years 3 to 6
- Improvements in the teaching of writing and speaking are needed
- Some lessons are too long and not challenging enough
- Classroom assistants are used very well
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is well focused
- Good relationships and an insistence on high standards of behaviour help to create a purposeful learning environment
- Homework contributes much to learning

Commentary

11. Staff in the Foundation Stage have a very good understanding of how young children learn and focus very well on promoting independence. There is a good balance in the activities with opportunities for the children to explore and investigate as well as learn through direct teaching. Lessons are made fun by imaginative planning and the staff working together to act out parts and to encourage the children to use their imaginations. The staff have a very positive approach to fostering personal, social and emotional development and the children blossom as they grow in confidence. The children are encouraged, through the use of praise, to use their initiative and to work alongside others. Well focused questions and much encouragement help the children to make good gains in communication, language and literacy skills. Most of the activities are linked to promoting speaking and listening skills and developing the children's awareness of early reading and writing. The children learn these skills effectively and proudly share their early attempts at writing. The staff make very good use of practical resources to help the children to develop mathematical understanding and there are lots of opportunities to learn number rhymes and play games. The staff compensate very well for the children's lack of experience in knowledge and understanding of the world by using every opportunity to investigate and explore new ideas. For example, making castles from snow following a heavy fall. The staff know the children well and meet their needs effectively through making good use of records and assessment to pinpoint the next step in learning. As a result of the positive experiences provided, the children develop good learning skills and are prepared well for the work in Year 1.
12. There are variations in the quality of teaching between year groups which account for peaks and troughs in the pupils' learning. The best teaching is in mathematics where much has been done to analyse weaknesses and to provide brisk and purposeful lessons which include well focused mental starters, well planned activities and a good match of work to challenge the different abilities. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, the teacher provided high levels of challenge and her explanations were brought to life through everyday examples so that pupils grasped the concept of area very quickly. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is also effective as staff, including classroom assistants, have a secure grasp of learning objectives and the pupils' needs. Staff use resources well and ask questions which check on understanding so that tasks are set at the right level. Teachers are careful to direct questions at pupils with special educational needs so that they are fully included in lessons. Teaching is most successful where clear targets are set and tasks are explained clearly and succinctly. This is not always the case in English where in some cases the work is too hard or pupils are not clear about what is expected. Overall, English is taught satisfactorily and there are good approaches to developing reading skills. Writing is less successfully developed, partly due to targets that are too general. Marking is accurate and often includes good guidance but this is not linked tightly enough to the pupils' targets. Assessment procedures have improved much since the previous inspection and are now good. This information is used very well in

assessing pupils with special educational needs but less successfully in identifying the next steps in learning for more able and average pupils.

13. Pupils work hard and concentrate well but introductions to some lessons are too long, leaving insufficient time for pupils to produce good quantities of work. They have positive attitudes and are keen to please their teachers by producing well presented work. However, many pupils lack initial confidence when tackling tasks and need much reassurance before committing pen to paper. Staff compensate for this through encouragement and reward. Another factor which inhibits learning is the limited range of vocabulary of most pupils. The school has embarked on a programme of teaching subject vocabulary and this is beginning to have an impact, especially in mathematics and science. Other good strategies to promote learning include the emphasis placed on getting pupils to explain their reasoning and answers and this is giving the older pupils much improved competence in tackling problems in science and mathematics.
14. Teachers are generally secure in their subject knowledge and this was seen to good effect in several lessons in ICT and science. The most successful aspects in the teaching of these subjects was in clarity of explanations, brief but focused tasks and involvement of pupils in making choices and being asked to explain them. Throughout the school there are good relationships between staff and pupils. Discipline is firm and fair and the pupils understand and follow rules willingly. Less successful lessons are often the result of slow pace and overlong explanations which tend to confuse the pupils. Sometimes tasks require only simple responses as in a science lesson in Years 1 and 2 and learning is, as a result, pedestrian.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2.7 %)	4 (10.8 %)	22 (59.5 %)	8 (21.6 %)	2 (5.4 %)	0 (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.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good and meets statutory requirements. Learning is enriched through a wide range of purposeful and enjoyable opportunities, well matched to the pupils’ diverse needs. The school has very good accommodation, resources and staffing levels.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and well balanced
- There is a very good programme for personal, social and health education
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs
- Spacious accommodation and plentiful resources are used well to enhance learning

Commentary

15. The curriculum is well designed to include all pupils equally and to make learning interesting by catering for their different strengths and needs. It is much improved since the previous inspection. It covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. Improvements since the previous inspection include the well developed schemes of work for religious education and ICT that are raising standards in these subjects. The school is continuously seeking to improve the curriculum, as in the current work on increasing the links between subjects to make learning more coherent for pupils. This is reflected in the satisfactory use of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Developments in the subjects are not always followed up sharply enough to evaluate their impact on pupils’ learning. The curriculum generally prepares pupils well for transitions between stages, as when the Year 6 pupils start to learn French with the teacher from the

secondary school. However, the lack of improvement in the standards attained in Years 1 and 2 means that some pupils are not fully prepared for the next stage of their education

16. The programme for personal, social and health education includes lessons in sex and relationships and the use and misuse of drugs. Its impact can be seen in the very good relationships and behaviour throughout the school. Staff make very good use of this programme of study to enhance pupils' speaking skills.
17. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school has deservedly earned a reputation in the local area for its care and success in working with these pupils. Work and behaviour programmes are very well planned to match pupils' needs, and pupils achieve well. Individual learning programmes support pupils where necessary. These include appropriate targets which are shared with relevant staff and parents and are regularly reviewed.
18. Many extra-curricular activities are provided to enrich pupils' experiences. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and particularly enjoy the lunchtime and after school clubs provided, as well as the many visitors and educational trips they make. These opportunities are available for all pupils, including the youngest, and nearly all participate. They motivate pupils to learn and help them to achieve well.
19. The school uses its very good accommodation and resources to promote pupils' achievement. Staffing levels are high and teachers and support staff work very well together to ensure that every pupil is learning. Training for all staff, and support for those new to the profession, is good. The school is also providing effective support for a number of students training for a range of roles in education and social work. The accommodation is bright and attractive. The provision for the Foundation Stage, including outdoor provision, is much improved since the last inspection and this has contributed significantly to better teaching and learning for the youngest pupils. The school is working to continue the improvements in the general outdoor environment. Subject leaders ensure the high quality and quantity of resources provided. Many new books are available in two libraries and the provision for ICT and religious education is now very good.

Care, guidance and support

All pupils are very well cared for in this school. Staff know them well and this ensures that each individual has access to good support and guidance. Pupils' views are sought both formally and informally and this has a good impact on the life of the school community. The quality of this provision has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The kindness and commitment of all staff ensures that parents and pupils feel confident that any problems will be handled fairly and effectively
- The personal support and guidance for each individual is of high quality
- Health and safety procedures and practices are very good
- Provision for the protection of children is very good

Commentary

20. There is a very good awareness of health and safety issues that ensures that the school provides a clean and healthy environment. The headteacher is responsible for child protection issues and staff clearly understand the procedures to follow if concerned about a pupil. Pupils learn about the benefits of good hygiene and a healthy diet through their science lessons and the school is part of the Promoting Healthy Schools initiative. The school council is an effective channel through which all pupils can express their ideas and views. The school takes these views very seriously and is currently supporting many of the plans and ideas to improve the playground. The school keeps very good records of the progress made by the pupils with

special educational needs. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are reviewed regularly and include measurable targets to help them improve.

21. Because of the very good relationships at all levels in the school, pupils trust their teachers and other adults who work with them, confident that they will help them if they are unhappy or worried about something. Personal, social and health education lessons provide good opportunities for teachers to monitor and support pupils' personal development and to identify any specific issues that may be troubling them. Educational support and guidance for the children in the Foundation Stage are very good. In Years 1 to 6, because the use of assessment is not as closely linked to individual needs as it could be, the educational support and guidance for individual pupils, whilst satisfactory overall, is not as effective as it should be in raising achievement. There are good induction procedures for new arrivals that enable both parents and their children to be confident of the high standard of care provided by the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with parents, other schools and the community. This is an improvement since the last inspection and has a beneficial impact on the achievement of the pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views about the work of the school
- Many parents respond very well to the many opportunities the school provides for them to be involved in the learning of their children
- The very well supported curriculum evenings and courses offered to parents have a good impact on parental involvement in the children's learning
- A significant number of parents do not support the work of the school

Commentary

22. The school provides good information for parents through the prospectus, the annual governors' report and the newsletters. The annual reports on the progress of children provide good information about what the children have done and a clear indication of how well they are achieving. Simple targets for future development are included. Consultation evenings are very well attended and teachers are always willing to give parents any further information they may require. Many parents are keen to help with visits and fund-raising events. Because of the success of the curriculum evenings and the courses for Oracy and Numeracy, many parents play an important role in helping and encouraging their children with their homework and this has a good impact on the standards they achieve. Evidence from a recent survey of parents' views shows a high level of approval for the work of the school. A significant number, however, do not send their children to school regularly and do not value the opportunities provided. The links between the school and the parents of pupils with special educational needs are very good. Parents are invited to a meeting at which their child's progress is reviewed. They receive a written record if they cannot attend.
23. The school has developed good links with the local community. For example, the local vicar is a regular visitor to the school and helps to run the design and technology club. Other visitors extend pupils' knowledge and interest in learning well. The school provides facilities for a playgroup and other community groups use the premises. The school has established good systems to ensure effective transfer to secondary education and pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education. Links with other primary schools are well developed and effective. The work with the nearby special school is of particular benefit and contributes well to pupils' awareness of the difficulties of those less fortunate than themselves.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides a very clear sense of direction. The school is managed well. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff share common aims and work together very well
- The commitment of the headteacher and staff and the capacity for further improvement are good
- The governors are very supportive and knowledgeable about the school
- The school's priorities are clearly stated although measures to monitor them are not focused well enough
- Administration, financial planning and management are effective

Commentary

24. Despite the many difficulties and barriers to learning encountered by the school there has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher's strong sense of purpose, determination to recruit good staff and ambition for the pupils to do well have provided the spur to significant developments. Although more remains to be done to raise standards, especially in writing, speaking and mathematics, the school has good capacity to move forward. The many significant weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report have been tackled and the good school development plan has contributed to make this possible.
25. Several areas of school life are led well, including the Foundation Stage, mathematics and the provision for special educational needs. There are some variations in the quality of leadership in some subjects due to staff turnover and recent appointments but all staff share a common commitment to raising achievement. There has been some monitoring of teaching and learning but this has lacked a strong enough focus on pinpointing exactly what needs to be done next to improve standards. However, rigour in analysing strengths and weaknesses in mathematics have led to real improvements in teaching and learning and higher standards especially in Years 3 to 6. The leadership of the provision for special educational needs contributes much to well focused support, effective teaching and very good procedures which are used effectively to promote learning. A very good feature of this aspect of the school's work is the early intervention and support given to pupils. The school spends its additional funding well to provide support from teaching assistants and to improve resources for learning. Staff from external agencies give very good support in specialist areas such as behaviour management and speech and language therapy.
26. The headteacher has been successful in attracting well motivated and skilful governors. The governors are much improved since the previous inspection and have a good understanding of the school's work. They participate fully in setting priorities and understand and use performance management to measure how well the school is doing. Although understanding the difficulties faced by the school they are not complacent and are rigorous in challenging the headteacher and staff while providing good backing to initiatives and monitoring their success. Governors are fully involved in setting the school's priorities and checking on progress. They fulfil their statutory duties well and have ensured that there are good policies and procedures to promote inclusion and equal opportunities. They strongly support the school's practice in promoting effective race relations and in providing for those with disabilities.
27. Effective management of the school has been constrained by high staff turnover and yet there is a strongly shared ethos and commitment to improvement. Difficulties in recruiting staff have been largely overcome and there is now stability. The school has a good reputation among its pupils and their parents because of well explained policies and procedures which keep everyone informed. The good staff handbook underpins the principles and practice in the school. Staff are encouraged to further their skills through training and there is good guidance and support for staff new to the school. Day-to-day management and administration work well and help to ensure that the school runs smoothly. Good systems are bringing consistency. The use of data analysis and performance management have sharpened up the school's targets and provided the spur for raising standards.
28. Although the school's finances are limited and the falling number of pupils attending the school has an effect on provision the headteacher and governors have robust systems for financial

planning. The budget is linked very well to school priorities and governors make good use of data and past performance when awarding contracts and purchasing supplies and services. An example of the school's success is seen in the very good resources available to support teaching and learning.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	775,849
Total expenditure	763,477
Expenditure per pupil	2,454

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to the next	12,372

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING

SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The children in the reception and nursery classes (known as Foundation 1 and Foundation 2) are given a good start to their education. When children enter the nursery, their attainment varies but is generally well below average. Although many children are not on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year, their progress is good from their starting points. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the previous inspection and is now good or very good. High quality planning and very careful assessment help the children to achieve well. Staff create a secure and happy atmosphere and a well planned curriculum ensures appropriate experiences for different groups of children including those with special education needs. The six areas of learning are covered well and there is a good balance of child initiated and teacher directed activities. Good leadership and management leads to very good team work. Teachers and support assistants complement each other effectively so that children are productively engaged in learning throughout the sessions.

It was not possible to judge the standards attained or the quality of teaching and learning in **physical development** because only one dance session was observed. Children in both classes have timetabled sessions in the hall for physical education and dance with access to a wide range of opportunities to develop their physical skills. They also have daily opportunities to play outside with a range of toys for riding and pushing. Equipment such as scissors, jigsaws and construction toys develop dexterity and control. In the one lesson seen children achieved well because teachers and assistants provided good role models and made their expectations about the use of space clear.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children feel secure and confident because the staff provide caring role models and consistently encourage and praise children's efforts
- A strong emphasis on social development ensures children develop good relationships and understand what is expected

Commentary

Children enter the nursery class with very limited personal, social and emotional development. They achieve very well and many children in the reception class are on course to attain most of the early learning goals for this area of learning by the end of the year. Daily routines, such as registration, are well organised in both classes and so create a calm atmosphere. Careful monitoring ensures all children participate in activities and sensitive responses to their efforts promote confidence. By the time they reach the reception class children show improved confidence and independence. Through very good teaching, the staff capture children's interest and attention, ensuring concentration is fostered and maintained well. Teachers and assistants in both classes promote good behaviour and teach the necessary relationship skills at every opportunity, as when the nursery class teacher explained clearly why one little girl should not tap another on the head when counting.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children’s speaking and listening skills are fostered effectively
- Teaching of early reading and writing skills is matched well to individual needs and is good

Commentary

29. Many of the youngest children in the nursery are reluctant to speak or have speech problems which make it difficult to understand what they say. The teaching is planned carefully to deal with these problems. For example, staff and children learn to use signs as well as spoken language so that all can participate in registration and similar routines. Interesting activities are devised for all areas of learning and adults intervene thoughtfully, encouraging children to talk about what they are doing. Children achieve well in the nursery and by the time they reach the reception year most are beginning to speak willingly, although other difficulties remain and attainment is still below average when children enter Year 1.
30. Children make good progress with their early reading and writing skills because teachers monitor learning carefully and have a good understanding of the next steps for each individual. Children in the nursery begin to enjoy stories and other books and are encouraged to act as readers and writers in their play. Teachers make good use of children’s own experiences to model reading and writing. In the reception class literacy lessons are introduced and gradually extended. Tasks are well matched to children’s differing abilities. Role-play, such as the Garden Centre, is used to support language and literacy development. However, intervention from adults is not always deep enough to help the children build story lines in their play. More able children in the reception year are on course to achieve most of the early learning goals for reading and writing but most children will still be working towards these at the end of the year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links are made between mathematical development and other aspects of the curriculum
- New ideas are introduced clearly and carefully consolidated
- Teaching and learning are good

Commentary

31. Children in both classes develop their mathematical understanding through teacher directed activities and self chosen tasks. In the nursery, teachers consistently seize opportunities to develop mathematical ideas as children play counting games, sing songs, fill and empty containers and paint and build shapes. They match the challenge to the stage of development, as when the teacher changed the dice used in a game when more able children joined her to play. In the reception class mathematics lessons are introduced and gradually extended. The teacher explains new mathematical ideas such as “in between” very clearly and reinforces them in a variety of ways. This means children quickly gain confidence and competence. Good links, such as the bicycle race with big and small wheeled bikes linked to the story of “Titch”, make mathematical activities more purposeful. Children enter the nursery with very limited ideas about number, shape and measures. They achieve well in both classes although most children are not likely to attain the early learning goals before they enter Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use computers very well to support their learning
- Through good teaching the staff make good use of the local environment and incidental matters to capture children's interest

Commentary

32. Children in both classes achieve well in this area of learning and the more able are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. They use computers with confidence because they are given many opportunities, including access to the school's ICT suite, and careful support to build their knowledge and skills. Children in the reception class used a graphics programme to make pictures of Jack's beanstalk. They learned to use a new tool and evaluated each other's success. Teacher's plan local visits and invite parents into school to encourage the children to be curious about their world. An Indian parent helped children to make diva lamps when they learned about Diwali and a trip on a bus supported learning about transport. During the inspection children in both classes were encouraged to use all their senses to explore and observe snow and ice after a heavy fall.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The wide range of linked activities for children to respond to using many senses

Commentary

33. Children achieve well in this area of learning and many in the reception year are on course to attain the early learning goals. Teachers in both classes plan enjoyable activities in art and design, dance, music, role play and small world toys and these are well linked to other areas of learning. This helps children to absorb new ideas, as when nursery children explored wet jelly when introduced to the sound and the letter "j". However, teachers and assistants do not always make enough time to intervene effectively when children are playing creatively.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing and speaking are below average
 - Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils, especially those with special educational needs
 - The work set is not always sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able pupils
34. Whilst standards are improving in Years 3 to 6, progress in Years 1 and 2 is below the national trend. Achievement is satisfactory and there is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils make better progress in reading than in writing. By the end of Year 6, most pupils read at an appropriate level for their age. All enjoy reading and achievement overall is satisfactory. Most are confident and expressive readers. They give opinions about characters and about different authors saying which ones they like best and why. The much improved library is very well stocked and is used for the teaching of library

skills. Year 6 pupils know how to locate books in a library and use these skills when they undertake research.

35. Standards in writing are below average. The added emphasis which is being given to developing pupils' writing skills is beginning to result in improved standards. Most teachers mark pupils' work very conscientiously. They correct mistakes and generally tell pupils what they need to do next to improve. However, pupils frequently have insufficient time to respond to this marking and this slows their progress. When pupils correct mistakes for themselves and are actively involved in identifying what they need to do next to improve, they make good progress. All pupils have individual targets in the front of their books. These generally need to have a sharper focus and be reviewed more regularly. Handwriting is usually neat and work is well presented.
36. Pupils generally listen at an appropriate level for their age although standards in speaking are below average. At the end of Year 6, many pupils answer questions in short phrases or simple sentences, use a limited range of words and have to be prompted to extend their ideas. In some lessons, teachers inform and direct the pupils rather than asking for their ideas, and rely too heavily on question and answer styles when the same pupils tend to respond. As a result, opportunities for discussion are limited.
37. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good teaching in Years 3 to 6. Good teaching is characterised by the teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, effective planning and good use of time and resources. Teachers are very clear about what they want the pupils to learn. A range of teaching methods are used so that lessons move at a fast pace and pupils' interest is maintained. Work is set which caters well for pupils of different abilities. Homework is well used to support learning. Teaching is less effective when pupils' work is not well matched to their abilities and learning intentions in the lesson are very broad. In these lessons, more able pupils are set the same tasks as other pupils and are insufficiently challenged. Introductions to lessons are sometimes overlong leaving less time for the main activity, and this slows the pace of the learning. Satisfactory use is made of ICT in helping pupils to edit and present their work and to improve their basic skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The support given to those pupils with special educational needs, particularly by teaching assistants, is very effective in allowing them to be included in the work of the class. These pupils make good progress and achieve well.
38. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a clear view of what the school needs to do next to improve. Good use is made of data to identify which pupils need additional support. Resources for the teaching of the subject are very good. Provision in English has improved since the last inspection.

English across the curriculum

Satisfactory use is made of English across the curriculum. Pupils use their reading skills to carry out research in history and geography and describe and write about the pictures conveyed by pieces of music they have heard. However, in some subjects, such as science and history, pupils are set the same worksheets to record their ideas. This limits the opportunities pupils have to make decisions about content and presentation and to practise their writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 attain average standards in number
- Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good because of effective teaching
- There are some weaknesses in teaching in Years 1 and 2
- The subject leader has a very good grasp of how to raise standards

Commentary

39. Standards in mathematics are improving due to several initiatives in the school which are focusing on improving pupils' competence in mental arithmetic and extending their skills and understanding in interpreting questions. Inspection evidence shows that standards overall are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6. The rate of pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 is good but satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because lesson planning and support effectively meets their needs. National test results show little variation in the performance of boys and girls in Year 6 tests but boys tend to be more successful than girls in Year 2. Results in 2003 showed that standards were well below average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. Compared to similar schools they were below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. There has been good improvement in the subject in Years 3 to 6 but more remains to be done in Years 1 and 2.
40. Throughout the school the strongest aspect of mathematics is number work and this has been improved this year with good attention given to mental agility and improving pupils' understanding of mathematical vocabulary, signs and symbols. The effective setting of problems at the end of lessons is helping pupils to gain a secure understanding of how to interpret questions and to develop different strategies. The good use of computers in data handling has done much to promote pupils' understanding of graphs and pupils attain appropriate levels in this aspect. Their grasp of shape and measurement is less secure because their understanding is hampered by limited vocabulary.
41. The teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 with some excellent features and this is promoting effective learning and achievement. The well structured and briskly paced lessons spur on pupils who show a willingness to learn and a desire to have a go. Teaching is less successful in some Year 1 and 2 classes because the pace is too slow and insufficient planning is done to match the work to the pupils' needs. Throughout the school, support staff contribute well to learning and this is especially effective with lower attaining pupils. Focused marking often guides the pupils on what to do next but target setting is variable in quality and not specific enough. The development of homework has been effective in raising standards and pupils respond very well by completing it on time. Pupils generally work hard but some introductions to lessons are too long and this reduces the time available for pupils to complete work.
42. Subject leadership is good. The subject leader has done much to raise pupils' and staff confidence in mathematics in a short time and this is helping to raise standards, especially in Years 3 to 6. The provision for mathematics has improved and is now good. Levels of subject knowledge are mostly good but there is not enough support for some staff in Years 1 and 2. Monitoring of teaching and learning is regular but is not sufficiently focused on supporting teaching in Years 1 and 2. The school's assessment procedures are good and include rigorous analysis of test results. The next step is to use this information more effectively in setting challenging work for the more able.

Mathematics across the curriculum

43. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily in other subjects. Examples of accurate measurement were seen in their model making in design and technology and pattern work in art and design. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of co-ordinates and use this to read and interpret maps in their geography work. Younger pupils tally the number of vehicles they see passing the school and older pupils use graphs and charts well in their science investigations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and attain average standards
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are below average

- Teaching is mostly good
- The subject leader has a good understanding of how to raise standards further

Commentary

44. National test results at the end of Year 6 show improvement over time although teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 show that standards have remained at below average levels. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6 but satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 because of variations in the quality of teaching. There is good challenge for more able pupils in Year 6 as they receive additional support through specialist teaching and this has a positive impact on standards. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well because of the good support they receive. Inspection evidence shows that standards are average at the end of Year 6 and below at the end of Year 2.
45. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 cover the different aspects of science in the programmes of study satisfactorily but their work is presented poorly and often mixed with other subjects which leads to some misunderstandings and confusion. Although pupils have a basic knowledge of materials, physical processes and living things, the depth of understanding is limited and hampered by poor vocabulary. Conversely in Years 3 to 6 there is good coverage of scientific terms and processes so that pupils' grow in competence. A recent innovation has been the use of guidance in writing and this has enabled pupils to structure their recording of experiments and investigations effectively. It is a tribute to the good teaching that pupils use scientific terms accurately and are able to describe their work logically and effectively.
46. Teaching varies between unsatisfactory and good. It is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Lessons are planned and prepared thoroughly and teachers make good use of a range of resources. Support staff are fully involved in lessons and contribute well to learning. Most lessons are well structured and include good opportunities for pupils to experiment and to make decisions about processes such as finding ways to make investigations reliable; this is especially effective with the oldest pupils. However, some lessons in Years 1 and 2 are too long and the momentum of learning is lost in activities which run out of steam. Pupils are keen to learn about science and especially enjoy practical work. Boys and girls work together equally well and there is little variation in the standards they achieve. Productivity levels in Years 3 to 6 are good but satisfactory elsewhere. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in recording experiments and data but computers are not used enough in science lessons.
47. The recently appointed subject leader has begun to make an impact on science teaching at the school through good analysis of data. By watching some staff teach she has identified training needs and planned courses. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress in science and staff use the information to plan work which is mostly matched to pupils' needs. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well
- Pupils in Year 6 have below average skills in control technology
- Most of the teaching is good
- The subject leader has a good grasp of how to raise standards

Commentary

48. The school has improved provision, teaching and learning and the leadership and management of the subject well since the previous inspection. Most progress has been made in Years 1 and 2 where pupils achieve well and attain standards which are average. In Years 3 to 6 the pupils make steady progress and have secure knowledge of most elements of ICT. The standards attained are average in most aspects but below average in control technology. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their learning. Most teachers are

confident in developing pupils' word processing skills and this aspect of the subject is taught well. There are good opportunities to practise and refine writing and to draft and edit using the computers' tools such as the spell checker. Skills are developed consistently and good progress is made in extending these skills to desktop publishing and making multi-media presentations. Pupils become increasingly competent in cutting, pasting, editing and formatting as the teachers make good use of the school's scheme of work. Skills in data handling and using spreadsheets are average and link well with work in mathematics. Pupils' skills in using ICT systems to control events and to sense physical data are below average. They make satisfactory use of the Internet for research and are well aware of the school's policies and procedures for safe use of ICT.

49. The quality of lessons observed during the inspection was good. The staff have reasonable levels of competence and the subject leader does much to support and guide her colleagues. Planning is satisfactory and the school uses national guidelines to give some continuity in developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Lessons are prepared well and support staff are fully involved, especially working alongside those with special educational needs. The computer club is oversubscribed and has a good impact on standards. Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons and many say that ICT has helped them to improve their work in other subjects. They are very co-operative and collaborate well. Pupils work hard and quickly grasp new ideas because the teachers are good at explanations. Lessons have good pace and often include a balance between the introduction of new skills and opportunities to practise and develop skills.
50. The subject leader has had a very good impact on raising standards and teachers' levels of competence through support and guidance and the provision of good resources. The very clear action plan for the subject clearly provides a focused way forward. There is a good system of assessment which is used well to set challenging targets for staff and pupils. Monitoring is a regular feature of the subject leader's work and the development of a good portfolio clearly illustrates how standards have been raised in recent years.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

51. Pupils use computers satisfactorily in their work in other subjects. In some history and geography lessons the pupils make appropriate use of the Internet to find out information. In English lessons there are opportunities for the pupils to write directly onto the computer and to make use of tools such as the spell checker to refine their writing. Some good links are made with mathematics in creating databases and using spreadsheets to present information. Around the school there are good examples of work in art and design where pupils have created patterns and pictures using a variety of drawing software. However, opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in depth are limited and computers are not used enough to support learning in some subjects such as music and science.

HUMANITIES

Three lessons were observed in religious education but none in history or geography. As no lessons were observed, no judgement can be made about the overall provision and quality of teaching and learning in **history** and **geography**. Inspectors looked at teachers' planning and talked to the pupils about these subjects. They also looked at a range of work completed since the start of the school year. The curriculum is well managed with planning for both subjects meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum. Good cross curricular links are evident, as when Year 6 pupils used atlases to locate Greece at the start of a history module about the Ancient Greeks. Both subjects also give pupils good opportunities to apply their literacy skills. Inspectors saw examples of description, biography, reporting and poetry in the Year 6 work. There is limited evidence of pupils applying their ICT skills in these subjects, although Year 6 have researched some topics using the Internet. Pupils' achievement in the work seen is satisfactory, although the standard of work is generally below average.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are thoughtful and interested in lessons
- Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development
- The organisation of learning leads to some confusion about different religions

Commentary

52. Standards in religious education have improved since the previous inspection and are now in line with those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is the result of good leadership and management of the subject, the introduction of a coherent scheme of work and much improved resources. Pupils are motivated to think carefully in religious education because teachers plan interesting lessons and use resources, including visits and visitors, well. This was evident in the thoughtful questions the vicar was asked about prayer by Year 5 pupils, and in the ideas expressed by Year 1 pupils about the importance of celebrations in peoples' lives.
53. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in promoting pupils' understanding of tolerance and respect. Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Scrutiny of written work shows religious ideas being well linked to pupils' personal experiences. For example, in Year 2, when learning about the mosque as a special place for Muslims, pupils described their own special places such as their bedrooms. Year 6 pupils explained confidently the importance of loyalty in friendship and of the school as a caring community, and Year 4 showed a secure understanding of the purpose of pilgrimage in Islam.
54. Pupils' learning from religions is stronger than their learning about religions. The scheme of work provides good continuity and progression across the year groups but the way in which the teaching about a range of religions is organised leads to some confusion. For example, Year 2 pupils were confused about the different places of worship they had studied although their knowledge of the Christian church was clear and their learning had been enhanced by a visit to the local church. Staff members have a secure knowledge of the programmes of study. The subject is well led and managed, and is under review following the introduction of the new syllabus. The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are appropriate links made with literacy although in some classes there is an over-reliance on simple worksheets for recording.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Three music and one design and technology lessons were seen during the inspection. No art and design or physical education was observed. In addition, inspectors looked at teachers' planning and talked to the teachers and pupils about the subjects. They also looked at a range of pupils' work.

There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the standards attained in **art and design** or about the quality of provision but analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and talking to pupils indicates that the curriculum is covered appropriately with sufficient attention given to developing pupils' basic skills in drawing, mixing paint, blending colours and in using three dimensional materials such as clay. Pupils in Year 6 talk enthusiastically about their work and have some knowledge of the techniques used by well known artists such as Seurat, Picasso and Klee. In the work seen, pupils take care and pay attention to detail. Visits and visitors make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. For example, younger pupils visit a sculpture garden and older pupils an Art Gallery, and an "artist in residence" each year enables pupils to experiment with a range of materials and techniques and to produce work on a large scale. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

As only one **design and technology** lesson was observed, no judgement can be made about the overall provision and teaching. Discussions with Year 6 pupils showed that they have a good understanding of the processes involved in planning, designing, making and evaluating their work. They use a range of techniques and materials to design and make quality products, for example, incorporating electrical and mechanical systems into moving cranes and other vehicles. They apply their understanding of structure and strength to create good quality fairground models. These pupils are taught by a member of the community with specialist knowledge, who also runs a club for Year 6 pupils. Pupils who are taught by this subject specialist achieve very well. The school has identified one very able pupil in design and technology who receives individual specialist support each week in order to help develop this talent. Resources are good and include a specialist technology room. The co-ordinator has identified assessment as an area for development.

Scrutiny of planning shows that there is an appropriate scheme of work which meets national requirements for **physical education**. Resources are satisfactory. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject satisfactorily. The subject is enhanced through opportunities for pupils to take part in a variety of extra-curricular activities and competitions.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in singing are good
- Pupils enjoy music and work hard in lessons

Commentary

55. Standards are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in singing are good due to the good teaching and specialist knowledge of some teachers. By the end of Year 6, pupils sing songs tunefully and expressively, in unison and in two parts. They maintain their own part with awareness of how the different parts fit together showing good attention to breathing, posture, timing and diction. They explore their response to music through discussion, dance and art, and use specialist vocabulary such as “pitch, volume and tone” when talking about their work. They listen to the music of well known composers including Mozart, Beethoven and Gershwin and explain which music they enjoy and why.
56. The teachers showed good subject knowledge in the three lessons seen during the inspection. They explain tasks clearly and have high expectations of their pupils, both in what they can achieve and in their behaviour, and pupils respond very well. Pupils in Year 2, for example, resisted the temptation to play their instruments until told. Satisfactory links are made to ICT as when pupils compose music on the computer or record their compositions using a tape recorder. Visits and visitors make a positive contribution to pupils’ musical experiences. For example, older pupils visited De Montfort Hall to see a performance of Tchaikovsky’s ballet, “Sleeping Beauty,” and Indian dancers, and professional musicians such as percussion and string groups performed in school to extend the pupils’ cultural experiences. A pianist visits each week. Music clubs for singing and recorder playing further enrich the pupils’ learning.
57. The subject leader has a clear picture of standards and the quality of teaching and learning and aims to develop assessment procedures further. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils’ spiritual, social and cultural development and to developing listening skills. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's clear framework for relationships and behaviour promotes very good personal and social development
- Pupils' understanding of issues is very good because of regular and carefully planned teaching
- Pupils develop a good sense of citizenship and responsibility

Commentary

58. Personal, social and health education is central in the work of the school. All pupils, including the youngest children in the nursery, are aware of the mission statement and the four clear school rules. These contribute effectively to their positive attitudes about themselves and others so that behaviour is almost always good. The programme for sex and relationships education and teaching about the beneficial and harmful effects of drugs is well planned. All staff are involved in promoting healthy attitudes and these are reinforced through the school's involvement in the Healthy Schools Initiative.
59. The school gives high priority to the subject by timetabling three lessons for each class each week. The scheme of work ensures progression and consolidation of learning. Lessons are planned carefully and effective use is made of resources such as persona dolls. Pupils develop their social awareness well in class, often in 'circle times' when they take turns, listen to others and share their ideas and concerns. Staff have been trained appropriately and are sympathetic listeners. For example, role play was used well in a Year 5 class to help pupils express their feelings and develop an understanding of different points of view.
60. Pupils are given increasing responsibility as they progress through the school. All pupils are involved in the election of class representatives for the school council. The members of the council take their duties seriously and the school responds well to their ideas. This means all pupils begin to develop an understanding of some of the different roles of citizens in a community. In Year 6 pupils are allocated formal responsibilities which are carefully rotated to ensure each pupil has experience of different types of responsibility. For example, a pupil with a caring responsibility such as helping in the nursery might move on to be responsible for operating electrical equipment for assembly.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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