

INSPECTION REPORT

SKERTON ST LUKE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Skerton, Lancaster

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119534

Headteacher: Mrs J E Moore

Lead inspector: Mr M Newell

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th March 2004

Inspection number: 257486

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	208
School address:	Slyne Road Lancaster Lancashire
Postcode:	LA1 2JH
Telephone number:	01524 65445
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Ralston
Date of previous inspection:	July 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated just outside the city centre of Lancaster in Lancashire. The school gained a School Achievement Award in 2002 and 2003 in recognition of the standards it achieved. The school caters for pupils aged 4 to 11 and there are 208 pupils on roll with an equal number of boys and girls. The school is about the same size as other primary schools nationally. There is no significant level of pupil mobility. The vast majority of pupils are of white ethnic origin and only a very small percentage of pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is 17 per cent and this is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is below the national average. The nature of special educational need covers specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, severe learning and speech or communication difficulties. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals stands at approximately 18 per cent, and this is broadly in line with the national average. Attainment when children start school covers the full ability range with assessment data indicating that attainment overall is below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10638	Mr M Newell	Lead inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Personal, social and health education and citizenship
31729	Mr B Harrington	Lay inspector	
8263	Mrs M Forsman	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology
22556	Mr E Morgan	Team inspector	English as an additional language English Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **satisfactory** and continually improving school. The headteacher has a very accurate grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is driving the school forward successfully. There are some notable strengths in teaching, learning, care and guidance of the pupils and links with the parents and the community. The school has recognised the need to improve reading and information and communication technology standards and the behaviour of a minority of pupils. Taking all factors into account, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- Over time pupils have achieved well in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards in reading and information and communication technology are not yet high enough, although aspects of art and design and music are above average.
- The headteacher provides strong, determined and effective leadership and governance of the school is good.
- Teaching is at its strongest in the Foundation Stage and in Years 2 and 6 with support assistants making a significant contribution to pupils' learning across the school.
- Curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage, learning opportunities outside of the formal curriculum in Years 1-6, and provision for pupils with special educational needs are all good.
- Although the behaviour of many pupils is good, a minority of pupils behave unsatisfactorily.
- Pupils are cared for very well and are given every opportunity to be actively involved in the life of the school.
- The school makes every effort to involve parents as partners in their children's education, provides good information to parents and has established strong links with the community.

The school has made good progress since the time of the last inspection. The headteacher ensured that identified issues were tackled in a rigorous, systematic and dynamic manner and this has led to improvements in standards, teaching, leadership and management and the partnership with parents. The school, however, shows no signs of complacency and led by the headteacher and an effective governing body, recognises that there is still work to be done.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Evidence indicates that over time pupils achieve **well** in English, mathematics and science and aspects of some foundation subjects. The above table shows that when pupils leave school they often attain standards above, and at times, well above the national average. The 2003 results indicate a lower level of attainment which reflects the fact that this group of pupils included a significant percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Inspection findings paint a more positive picture with standards in writing, speaking, mathematics and science being above the national average by Year 6. Standards in reading and listening are at an average level. Although achievement by the time that pupils leave school is good, progress is accelerated and more consistent in Year 6. Pupils attain good standards and achieve well in aspects of art and design and music. In information and communication technology, the oldest pupils in school have not benefited from the full programme of study over time, and although standards are improving at a good rate at the present time, gaps in pupils' knowledge means that standards for Year 6 pupils are currently below average. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level and the achievement of all pupils is satisfactory.

Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average and that overall pupils achieve well with the progress and achievement particularly good in Year 2. Standards in aspects of art and design and music are good. Standards are at an average level in information and communication technology and have improved significantly and pupils achieve well. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level and achievement is satisfactory.

When children start school at age four, their attainment covers the full ability range and is below average overall. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children's attainment meets all the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals. In the area of personal, social and emotional development, children make very good progress and exceed the Early Learning Goals. Children achieve well in all areas of learning from their entry level.

The school makes **good** provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although the behaviour and attitudes of the younger and many older pupils in school are good, a minority of pupils in each class in Years 3 to 6 behave inappropriately, and so attitudes and behaviour overall are satisfactory. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Despite the strenuous efforts of the school to promote good attendance and punctuality, a number of families take holidays during term time and a number of pupils arrive late for school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is **satisfactory** with some strong and notable features. Teaching and learning are generally **good** over time as reflected in the standards that pupils achieve, although evidence indicates that it is consistently stronger for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Teaching during the inspection week, although satisfactory overall, was again at its best in these year groups.

Assessment procedures are good and good use is made of the data for setting challenging targets. Throughout the school, teaching assistants make a powerful contribution to pupils' learning. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. The satisfactory curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is enhanced by a good range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. The school places a very high priority on the care and welfare of pupils and it is a school where the views of the pupils are listened to, respected and taken on board through initiatives such as the very successful and respected school council. The school has worked extremely hard and has been successful in establishing strong and effective links with parents, the community and other schools, which all impacts positively on children's education. Despite

these efforts, there are a small number of parents who are not as supportive of their children's education or of the work of the school as they could be.

LEADERSHIP AND MANGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher shows very good educational vision and has a very clear and accurate grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She shows a steely determination to move the school forward. Leadership in areas such as English, mathematics, science and the Foundation Stage are good because of the very good procedure that the headteacher has initiated for monitoring teaching, learning, standards and provision. Governors make an important contribution to the management of the school and governance is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are happy with all that the school provides. Many parents feel that the school enables their children to achieve well in a caring and supportive school. Most parents are very appreciative of the school's efforts, but a minority are not as supportive of the work of the school or in supporting their children's learning as they could be.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and many take part enthusiastically in all the activities that are provided for them. The school council, which has been established for some considerable time, provides a forum where pupils' views are listened to, respected and acted upon.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that reading standards improve to the same level as writing standards.
- Continue to improve standards in information and communication technology.
- Ensure that the behaviour of a minority of pupils improves to match the good and at times very good behaviour of other pupils in the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are **above average** in the core subjects by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Children achieve **well** in the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 to 6, achievement of pupils over time has been good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start to their educational lives in the Foundation Stage and achieve well across all areas of learning.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and achievement is good.
- Reading standards, although satisfactory, are not as high as writing standards.
- Standards in information and communication technology are below average for Year 6 pupils.
- Pupils achieve well in aspects of art and design and music.

Commentary

FOUNDATION STAGE

1. Attainment levels when children start at the school cover the full ability range but are below average overall. Children make good progress and achieve consistently well in the Foundation Stage. By the time that children are ready to start in Year 1, many meet the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. The progress that children make in their personal, social and emotional development is particularly good and as a result many children exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.

KEY STAGE 1

2. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, attainment in writing and mathematics was above the national average and in line with the national average in reading and science. When compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment was above average in writing and mathematics and below average in reading. The school's trend of improvement has been above the national trend. Inspection findings show attainment to be above average in writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and science. All pupils achieve well over time in these areas of the curriculum with progress and achievement being stronger for pupils in Year 2. Reading standards are at an average level with clear signs of improvement as reading skills are increasingly taught in a more direct and systematic manner. Although standards in art and design and music are at an average level, observational art, printing and singing standards are above average and pupils achieve well in these aspects of the subjects. Standards in all other subjects are at an average level and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory and at times good in year 2 because of the good quality of teaching.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2- average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.5 (14.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.4 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.1 (16.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

KEY STAGE 2

3. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was below the national average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools, attainment was below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. These results are not typical of the school's performance as in the previous two years attainment has either been above or well above the national average in all three subjects. The results reflect the fact the 2003 cohort of pupils had a high number of pupils with special educational needs. The school's trend of improvement over time has been in line with the national trend. Inspection findings show that standards in writing, speaking, mathematics and science are above average. Over time, evidence indicates that pupils achieve well in these aspects of the curriculum with achievement at its strongest in Year 6. Reading standards are at an average level and achievement is satisfactory with indications that standards are improving as more advanced reading skills are being directly taught. Standards in art and design and music are satisfactory with aspects such as observational art, knowledge of famous artists and singing being above average. Although pupils are currently achieving satisfactorily in information and communication technology, standards by the end of Year 6 are below average because over time pupils have not been taught all elements of the subject in sufficient depth and pupils' access to computers has been more limited. Achievement is currently satisfactory but over time it has been unsatisfactory. Standards for the younger pupils in Key Stage 2 are at an average level in this subject. Standards in all other subjects are at an average level and achievement is satisfactory.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6- average points score in 2003.

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3(27.9)	26.8(27.0)
Mathematics	26.4(27.9)	26.8(26.7)
Science	27.8(29.4)	28.6(28.3)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good levels of support and this enables them to achieve as well as their classmates. Good levels of support are provided on the occasions when pupils whose first language is not English attend the school. The support provided for these pupils and those with special educational needs enables them to take a full and inclusive role in all that the school has to offer. The provision that is made for the higher-attaining pupils is satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils overall have **satisfactory** attitudes to school and behaviour is satisfactory. **Attendance** is **satisfactory**. Provision made for pupils' personal development is **good**, including the **good** overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although many pupils behave well, there are a minority of Key Stage 2 pupils whose behaviour is less than satisfactory.
- Good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development adds to the quality of pupils' personal development.
- Although attendance is satisfactory, too many holidays are taken in term time.

Commentary

5. Attendance is satisfactory and during the last academic year, was broadly in line with the national figure. The rate of unauthorised absence, however, exceeds the national figure. Despite the school's promotion of good attendance and the work of the Educational Welfare Officer, some parents still do not appreciate the need for regular attendance, as a significant number of family holidays are being taken during term time. Punctuality is satisfactory with a small number of pupils regularly arriving late for school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.0
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.7
National data:	0.4

6. Relationships across the school are generally good. The attitudes and behaviour of many pupils are good. This is particularly the case for pupils in Key Stage 1 and in the Foundation Stage, where children and pupils are enthusiastic to learn, well behaved, polite and show a natural enjoyment for all the activities they participate in. Children in the Foundation Stage demonstrate maturity beyond their age when, for example, they initiate and organise their own play activities. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 behave equally well, demonstrate positive attitudes to school and are courteous to adults and to one another. However, there are a minority of pupils at this key stage whose attitudes to school are far more indifferent and at times unsatisfactory. The same pupils behave at times in an unsatisfactory manner and show little self-discipline. The school has undertaken a number of initiatives to develop strategies to manage the inappropriate behaviour of some pupils and has met with some success. However, all staff members do not always consistently apply the strategies. There was one exclusion last year when all other attempts to modify a pupil's behaviour proved ineffective. Discussions with pupils indicate that bullying is not an issue or a problem. Pupils state that there is no bullying and if it were to arise, they are confident that it would be dealt with quickly and fairly.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	172	1	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other background	2	0	0

7. The school makes good overall provision for pupils' personal development. Whole-school assemblies provide pupils with a sense of belonging, and in addition to providing them with interesting moral tales, often offer them moments of dramatic and spiritual tension. Younger children enjoy the sense of anticipation that the retelling of well-known stories brings. Pupils of all ages are able to distinguish right from wrong and understand the need for class and school rules. Most pupils value the rewards that they can earn and are keen to be mentioned in special assemblies. Older children also have the opportunity of attending a residential activity week which further develops their social skills. A wide range of extra-curricular activities allows pupils to develop their team skills. Activity weeks, such as poetry week, enable pupils to develop their creative talents and to heighten their cultural awareness. Pupils have a good understanding of their own locality and its culture, and although their awareness of other cultures is satisfactory, it could be better.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching and learning have been **good** over time. Assessment is **good**. The curriculum is **satisfactory** with **good** opportunities for enriching pupils' learning outside of the formal curriculum. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning over time has been **good**. Assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained in the core subjects indicate that teaching over time has been good.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 2 and 6 is consistently good because it provides pupils with challenging and vibrant learning opportunities.
- Writing skills are taught well across the school.
- Teaching assistants make an important and pivotal contribution to pupils' learning.
- Reading skills have not been taught systematically or rigorously enough over time.
- Effective assessment procedures enhance pupils' achievement.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn through practical and investigative tasks in mathematics and science.
- Not all teaching sets high enough expectations as to how well pupils behave or to listen to others.

Commentary

8. Teaching and learning have improved well since the time of the last inspection. During the week of inspection teaching overall was satisfactory and consistently good and at times very good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 2 and 6. Not all teachers present during the inspection were permanent members of staff. Standards attained and scrutiny of pupils' work shows that over time, pupils have attained good standards and have achieved well given their attainment when they start at the school. This indicates that teaching over time in the core subjects has been good.
9. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and at times very good. Activities are well planned and are often challenging and vibrant, which promotes in children a real desire for learning. Lots of activities provided are practical, hands-on learning experiences which heighten children's interest, leaving them wanting to find things out for themselves. All this is done alongside the direct teaching of key skills which all helps to ensure that children get off to a flying start in their educational lives.
10. Writing skills are taught well across the school. The school has recently adopted a more direct approach to the teaching of reading skills, and this is starting to impact positively on standards. Previously, this had not been the case and some of the older pupils experience some difficulty in tackling unfamiliar words or reading beyond the literal level, because such skills have not been directly taught to them. Good opportunities are often provided through discussion time in lessons for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. However, there are times when some teachers do not set high enough expectations as to how pupils listen and respect the contributions of others.
11. Good opportunities are provided in mathematics and science for pupils to learn through investigative and practical activities as well as the teaching of key mathematical concepts and scientific knowledge. This means that pupils develop a good understanding of the subjects and also learn the benefit of testing, experimenting and finding things out for themselves. There are times when teaching in science is too directed and opportunities for pupils to initiate their own investigations are not taken, which prevents pupils' learning from being even better.
12. During the week of inspection, teaching in Years 2 and 6 was of a good standard and at times very good. This is because tasks set were closely matched to the individual needs of pupils and were challenging enough to keep pupils interested and motivated. In these classes, pupils are managed very well and left in no doubt as to what is expected of them in terms of the amount of work that they are to complete and how they are to behave and show respect for one another. Invariably, the pupils rise to the expectations and lessons are fun, enjoyable and pupils learn a lot. There are occasions in other year groups when this is not the case. Teachers do not always make clear to pupils how they are expected to behave or for example, work in an orderly and self-disciplined manner in lessons such as physical education. In these instances, some pupils do not make the progress they are capable of and adversely affect the learning of more diligent and hard-working pupils.
13. During the week of inspection, there were some good examples of teachers' subject knowledge or enthusiasm helping to bring subjects to life and to enhance pupils' learning. In music the co-ordinator's piano playing skills heighten the sense of occasion and encourage the pupils to sing with great enthusiasm as well as tunefully. Good direct teaching of artistic skills often produce good pieces of observational art. Over time not all elements of the information and communication technology curriculum have

been covered in sufficient depth. However, the school has now addressed the issue and there are examples of good teaching which are seeking to plug the gaps in pupils' knowledge. The marking of pupils' work is variable and satisfactory overall. It is good when it clearly outlines why a piece of work is good or what is needed to improve. This good practice is not as consistent as it should be.

14. Teaching assistants contribute a great deal to the quality of teaching and learning. Their questioning is challenging and their unobtrusive support of pupils during whole-class introductions and subsequent follow-up activities enables pupils to take a full and inclusive role in all aspects of the curriculum. Occasionally, pupils attend the school whose first language is not English. The school quickly arranges external support and this, together with the support and guidance that the school provides, enables pupils to quickly learn English and join in all that the school has to offer. Teaching for the higher attainers is satisfactory, but occasionally there are times when teaching does not set high enough challenges for these pupils.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	11	14	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.

15. Assessment procedures are good in the core subjects, in the Foundation Stage and are satisfactory and developing well in the foundation subjects. Information gained from test results and other assessment tasks is used well to identify strengths and areas for school development and improvement. In addition, effective use is made of the data for tracking the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils, for setting challenging targets and for guiding curriculum planning. Assessment has improved significantly since the last inspection, is now a strength of the school, and has made a major contribution to the improvement in standards since the school was last inspected.

The curriculum

The provision for the curriculum is **satisfactory**. The enrichment of the curriculum is **good**. The quality of the accommodation and resources is **satisfactory** overall but good in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and for any pupils whose first language is not English.
- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage offers a good range of vibrant learning opportunities.
- The good range of activities provided outside of the formal curriculum and provision for personal and social development add much to the quality of pupils' learning.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 do not have enough scope to develop independence in learning.

Commentary

16. The curriculum has improved well since the last inspection because the shortcomings identified then have been rectified. Planning and provision is secure and the school is now in a position to introduce new and more innovative approaches to learning. The current school improvement plan outlines the development of an enriched and creative curriculum through "Super Learning Projects" that encourage links between subjects. The school has recognised the need for more emphasis to be put on developing pupils' independence as learners in Years 3 to 6. At present too many opportunities are missed and curriculum planning does not directly allude to this important aspect of learning.
17. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are firmly embedded in curriculum provision and pupils are encouraged to use their skills in other subject areas. The use of computers to support pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum is broadly satisfactory and the school is working to improve planned links. Curriculum provision in other subjects is satisfactory and fully meets statutory requirements. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good and meets the needs of young children well. The curriculum is well considered in every aspect and a wide range of first-hand, practical and often exciting learning experiences enable children to achieve well.
18. The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is effective and enables pupils to take a fully-inclusive role in all that the school has to offer. The co-ordinator has developed good quality systems to ensure that there are good learning opportunities and support for pupils. Early identification and good deployment of support staff enable pupils to achieve well and make good progress. The school makes good provision for any pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue. Good levels of support are provided and this enables pupils to quickly settle into school and to acquire English at a good rate.
19. The school provides well for the enrichment of pupils' learning through the good number of visits and through the many visitors it invites to the school. These support different subject areas such as Kids in Space for science, and broaden pupils' awareness of drama and music. The good quality and range of after-school clubs provide well for the different interests and ages of pupils. The residential visits for the oldest pupils provide good opportunities for developing pupils' computer skills as well as enhancing their personal and social development.
20. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship. The curriculum makes pupils aware of the responsibilities and challenges of social living. The good relationships evident in school make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. The school council strengthens the sense of community in the school and pupils are encouraged to express their views.
21. The school has sufficient qualified teachers to teach the National Curriculum and to provide cover for teacher non-contact time. The match, experience and deployment of support staff to the demands of the curriculum are very good throughout the school and their input to lessons helps to improve the quality of teaching.
22. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory. Accommodation and resources in the Foundation Stage are good. New accommodation has been built for the Foundation Stage and Year 1. The outdoor play area for children in the early years unit is of very good quality. The school has extensive playing fields which are well used for curricular and after-school activities. The infant library is good and is well used. The main

playground is small for the number of children on roll. Elsewhere all space is used to the maximum and the small size of some classrooms restricts movement in more practical activities. Learning resources are generally satisfactory for all subjects. The Foundation Stage is well resourced. Although the school has reached its target for the ratio of computers to pupils, in practice access is inadequate when pupils are taught as whole classes, because it means up to 4 pupils sharing a machine. It is expected that a new computer suite will be ready by the beginning of the next school year.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are **very well** cared for and are provided with **good** support and guidance. The provision for seeking and acting upon pupils' view is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction arrangements for children entering the Foundation Stage are very well planned and carried out.
- Members of staff have benefited from good training activities that ensure the well being of all pupils.
- There is a well established school council that enables pupils to share in the work and development of the school.

Commentary

23. Good procedures are in place for Child Protection. The headteacher provides support and, through half-termly training provided for teaching assistants and welfare staff, ensures that all staff are aware of the necessary procedures to follow. Risk assessments are carried out regularly by members of staff with responsibilities for health and safety. A number of teachers and teaching assistants have received training in first-aid and pupils are aware of who to approach should they get hurt or feel unwell.
24. Records of personal achievement are kept for all pupils. These include examples of good work, achievement awards and certificates gained in activities undertaken outside school. Annual progress reports contain support and guidance comments. The good records that are kept enable pupils' personal development to be tracked and monitored well and inform teachers so that they may provide appropriate support and guidance where necessary.
25. There are very good arrangements in place for the induction of younger children. The reception teacher and the nursery nurse liaise with local playgroups and nurseries and make home visits prior to the children starting school. These events help the children to come to know the new adults in their lives and to reassure them about starting school.
26. The school places a high priority on listening to and acting upon the views of pupils. There is a school council that has been in existence for a number of years. The council provides pupils with opportunities to present their views and ideas on how the school may be improved. It also enables pupils to take responsibility for representing their classmates and for presenting information to their classes. Through annual questionnaires, pupils' views are sought more formally and used well to inform the school improvement plan.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents. There are **good** links with the community and with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are kept well informed about life in school and about how well their child is doing.
- The promotion of the school as a community resource is beneficial to parents and pupils.
- The very strong links with the church provide pupils with enriched experiences of their own community.

Commentary

27. The school provides all parents with good quality information about the school. Efforts have been made in the presentation of the newsletters to make them readily accessible to all parents. The school has a wide selection of good quality advisory booklets for parents. The quality of pupils' progress reports is good because they clearly outline what pupils have achieved and what they need to do to improve.
28. A number of parent volunteers help in school on a regular basis, helping pupils to practise their reading skills, assisting with sporting activities, and assisting with the pedestrian training programme. The Friends' Association raise substantial funds to provide additional learning resources for the school. Unfortunately, the contribution of parents to pupils' learning is variable, as not all pupils receive support for the work that they carry out at home and a small number of parents do not ensure that their children attend regularly and on time. Parents are not always satisfied with the amount of work that their children are expected to carry out at home, but the finding of the inspection team is that the requests of the school are appropriate.
29. The school nurse provides a fortnightly surgery in school for the benefit of parents and pupils. The community police officer undertakes a similar activity. By providing these facilities, the school reinforces its position in the community and provides all concerned with professional advice and guidance.
30. The headteacher and staff make themselves available to parents at the beginning and the end of each day so that they may help to resolve minor concerns. More serious problems are brought to the attention of the headteacher who goes to great lengths to provide parents with a satisfactory outcome. Parents' surveys are undertaken annually and generally have positive responses. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the school and in particular with the influence of the headteacher. They cite a few incidents of bullying which she has resolved effectively. Parents are particularly pleased that teachers know them as individuals and not just as the parents of pupils.
31. The school has good links with the community, particularly the church. The vicar is a regular visitor to school and the school has established good links with parishioners and other members of the local community. Members of the local community visit the school to share their skills and experiences. The headteacher undertakes a survey of parishioners as part of the preparation for the review of the school improvement plan and to establish the perceptions of the school within the community. The school has a comprehensive primary/secondary liaison policy which provides well for pupils transferring to different secondary schools. The school accommodates disaffected

pupils from one of the local high schools as part of the Valued Youth Programme. The neighbouring high school shares resources with the school and invites pupils to its annual performance. There are good sporting and musical links with other primary schools in the area and the headteacher acts as mentor to a new primary school head in the district.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher's leadership is **good**. Governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for improving the school.
- The governing body supports and challenges the school well.
- Good quality procedures are in place for monitoring teaching and learning.
- Management of key aspects of school life are executed well.
- Financial planning and control are very good.

Commentary

32. The headteacher leads and manages the school well and her influence pervades all aspects of school life. Since the last inspection her very clear educational vision has ensured that the school has a very clear sense of direction and purpose. She has an accurate and very astute grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has put in place mechanisms for improving the quality of education and raising standards. Overall, these initiatives have been successful. However, there is no sense of complacency and the headteacher readily acknowledges that there is more to be done in raising standards in some subjects and in continuing to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
33. The school has rigorously addressed the identified areas for improvement from the previous inspection. The headteacher has given members of staff clearly defined roles and responsibilities. There are good procedures in place for monitoring teaching and learning, particularly in subjects such as English and mathematics, and these procedures are developing well in other subjects. The procedures have proved successful in raising standards in writing and also accurately identified the need to raise standards in reading and information and communication technology. Strategies have already been put in place to address these weaknesses and are proving successful. The headteacher analyses test and assessment data well. She disseminates the information to all staff members and the information is used well to set challenging targets for all pupils and to closely track their progress.
34. The Foundation Stage is very well managed and this ensures that teaching, learning and curriculum provision are very closely matched to the needs of young children and help to ensure that children get a good start to their educational lives. Management of special educational needs is good. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and support is quickly and accurately targeted to where the need is greatest. Documentation is well maintained and provides a good and detailed account of the progress of each individual pupil. Occasionally, pupils whose first language is not English attend the school. This is currently the case and the school worked quickly to

provide good levels of support and guidance, enabling the pupil to be fully involved and included in the life of the school as a community.

35. There are good procedures in place for the induction of new staff and to ensure the continuing professional development of staff, including non-teaching support staff. The school also makes an important contribution to initial teacher training.
36. Governance of the school is good. Governors are very supportive of the school and individual governors' expertise is used well. The governors are effective in challenging and holding the school to account for the quality of education that it provides. Governors frequently visit the school and have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development. They contribute well to strategic planning and fulfil their statutory duties well.
37. Financial planning and budget control are very good. The school constantly seeks to ensure that it gets the best value for money from agreements and the purchase of goods. Spending is very effectively linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan and to educational priorities. Day to day administration and financial management undertaken by the office manager is of the highest standard. These factors all help to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 – March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	465,782	Balance from previous year	35,804
Total expenditure	482,945	Balance carried forward to the next	18,641
Expenditure per pupil	2,344		

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

What is the effectiveness of community provision?

Community provision is **good**.

38. The school has worked hard and successfully to forge strong links with the community that the school serves. The establishment of effective links with the police and health services has resulted in the school hosting surgeries on a regular basis for parents and the wider community where any concerns people may have can be addressed. By providing these facilities, the school reinforces its position in the community and provides all concerned with professional advice and guidance. The same agencies visit the school on a regular basis and talk to pupils about many issues such as health education, the dangers of talking to strangers and how pupils can play an important role in caring for their community. Local colleges run courses in the school aimed at developing the role of parents as educators. During the summer, the city council runs summer play schemes in the school and these are very well attended and much appreciated by the local community.
39. The school has established very good links with the wider community through the church. The headteacher canvases the views of the parishioners to establish a vision of how the school is perceived in the community and the information is then used to help inform identified areas for improvement in the school development plan. The good links that the school has established with other schools and colleges adds to the sense of the school existing in a wider community. It also shows the commitment of the headteacher in seeking out and capitalising on opportunities to advance the learning, achievements and personal development of all pupils at the school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The quality of provision is **good** in the Foundation Stage.

40. When children start school at age four, their attainment covers the full ability range and is below average overall. There are currently 30 children attending full time in a single reception class. The quality of teaching is consistently good so that children benefit from a positive start to their school lives. By the end of the Foundation Stage many children meet the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. In the area of personal social and emotional development, children make very good progress and exceed the Early Learning Goals. Children achieve well in all areas of learning from their entry level. Provision for children with special educational needs is good.
41. Foundation Stage provision has improved very well since the time of the last inspection and the curriculum is of a good standard. A new unit has been purpose-built for the youngest children and a new soft-play area has been provided outside. Overall, the accommodation and resources, including the outdoor provision and access to the main school facilities, are good. The school's policy of offering the best resources it can afford encourages imaginative and creative responses from children. All the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum are met.
42. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. Induction procedures are very good and ensure that children make a smooth transition into the school. This practice is maintained so that children are equally happy about moving into Key Stage 1. Parents are kept well informed about what and how their child will learn through regular newsletter and home/school diaries. Planning is exemplary. Long-term, medium term and weekly plans are all treated as working documents and used very well to record curriculum coverage and to evaluate the impact of teaching. The good quality of assessment ensures that the co-ordinator has an accurate overview of individual progress and is in a position to ensure that activities match each child's needs well.
43. Teaching is consistently good across all the areas of learning and there are examples of very good teaching in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. There is a valuable emphasis on first-hand experience as a basis for all learning. All adults are good role models and have high expectations of behaviour, which results in early development of good social skills and positive attitudes to learning. The very good teamwork between teachers and support staff is based on a common understanding of how young children learn. The purpose and effectiveness of activities are reviewed constantly to ensure ongoing improvement in teaching and learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

The provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships between children and adults create a positive atmosphere for learning.
- Children achieve well because of the good teaching.

Commentary

44. Most children exceed the expected Early Learning Goals before they leave the reception year and achieve well. This is due to good teaching and to the way expectations are made clear to the children. They are familiar with all the classroom routines, know what is expected of them and respond well. Children's confidence and self-esteem are built up because staff help them to realise that their efforts and opinions are valued. Children understand the basic rules such as tidying in the classroom. Even in the excitement of running and chasing, they keep to the rules. The children's ability to select and use resources independently and to exercise initiative is encouraged through the emphasis on child-initiated activities in a significant part of their learning. They behave well and sustain their chosen activities for appreciable periods of time.

Communication, language and literacy

The provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good teaching and learning of the basic skills of reading and writing.
- Children's literacy skills are developed in everyday situations.
- Very good use is made of teaching assistants and other adult support.

Commentary

45. Most children reach the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the time that they start in Year 1, and children of all abilities achieve well. The quality of teaching is good and early reading and writing skills are taught well. Teaching assistants and other adult helpers make a significant contribution to the quality of children's learning. Children's written work is always marked with comments which are relevant to the children and indicate ongoing assessment of their needs. At the time of the inspection, nearly all children were able to write their names independently. By the end of the reception year, many children have acquired useful early reading skills and know many letter sounds, and the higher-attaining children are writing independently. Children develop their speaking and listening skills well because teaching ensures they have plenty of opportunities to talk with adults, such as explaining what the animals are doing in the pretend jungle or using puppets to act out the story of the "*Three Little Pigs*." Teaching emphasises the importance of writing for a purpose so that children see how it helps to write invitations, labels, cards and lists.

Mathematical development

The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching provides lots of opportunities for children to learn through practical activities.
- Good ongoing use is made of assessment information.

Commentary

46. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children reach the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well from their entry level. Numeracy skills and mathematical concepts are taught directly and then reinforced through well-planned and interesting practical activities. For example, the role-play area was converted into a supermarket at the time of the inspection so that children had a context for using counting skills. Good interactions with the support assistant help children to use the appropriate mathematical vocabulary and to be accurate in their calculations. Children gain a sound knowledge of two-dimensional shapes by identifying them in everyday objects. Most children are secure in counting numbers up to ten, and use the number bonds to solve problems. Assessments of what the children know inform planning well and ensures that teaching challenges the higher-attaining children.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

The provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good, well-planned hands-on and practical activities enhance children's learning.
- Information and communication technology is embedded in much of children's learning.

Commentary

47. Children of all abilities achieve well from their entry level and attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching ensures that children learn through lots of practical activities with sand, water and different materials. Good opportunities for investigation and exploration are provided through child-initiated activities in the afternoon. Children's learning moves forward in these sessions because good monitoring ensures that these activities are worthwhile and relevant. First-hand experience is provided whenever possible. Children made gingerbread men biscuits so that they could relate to the story. The pond in the school grounds is used well as a stimulating resource for the development of early scientific skills. Children have regular access to computers and are becoming competent in selecting tools and negotiating menus. Some are able to control the movements of a floor robot. Digital cameras are used well by staff to provide immediate records of events for the children. Observation of the real world helps children to make junk models of vehicles which show a good attention to detail.

Physical development

The provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Co-operative skills are actively encouraged in games lessons.
- Teaching in formal physical education lessons is very good.

Commentary

48. By the end of the reception year, children reach the Early Learning Goals. The good and at times very good teaching ensures that all children achieve well. Careful planning and high expectations ensure that all children are challenged. Their physical skills and stamina are developed through very well planned and taught formal physical education lessons. There are well-established routines for children to use large and small equipment. Teaching employs carefully considered strategies for class management with a significant emphasis put on collaborative play and the sharing of resources. Children pay close attention because lessons move at a good pace and children are directly taught how to balance or how to catch or throw accurately. Formal teaching is linked with playtime. Teachers take advantage of the separate breaks provided for reception children by practising the throwing and catching skills, which were learnt in the lessons, in the playground. Fine motor skills are developed well through the good range of practical activities so that children use small tools safely and purposefully.

Creative development

The provision for creative development is **good**.

- Role-play is stimulated by first-hand experiences whenever possible.
 - The good interaction between adults and children encourages imaginative play.
49. By the end of the reception year, children reach the Early Learning Goals and some exceed them. The quality of teaching is good and enables children to achieve well. The emphasis on first-hand experience and interaction with real people such as nurses and vets gives children information which they use imaginatively as a basis for their role-play. Creative and vibrant painting activities allow children not only to explore and convey ideas but also to attempt different methods such as Jackson Pollock splatter painting. Teaching encourages children to make their own choices about colour, brushes, texture and pattern. Their paintings are regularly used as resources for other areas of learning such as number. Children take part in three-dimensional modelling in play dough, making imaginative and well formed frogs with protruding eyes and elongated legs.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and over time pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' writing skills are well developed across the curriculum.
- Reading strategies are not always taught as effectively as they could be.
- Marking of pupils' work does not always indicate pointers for improvement.
- Leadership and management of the subject have impacted well on improving standards and provision.

Commentary

50. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was above the national average in writing and in line with the national average in reading. When compared to similar schools, attainment was above average in writing and below average in reading. The 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils showed attainment to be below the national average and below that found in similar schools. This was a cohort comprising a higher than average number of pupils of low ability and the results contrast with the results in the two previous years that were above the national average. Inspection findings indicate attainment to be above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all abilities achieve well over time with achievement particularly strong at the end of both key stages. There is no significant evidence of differences in achievement between boys and girls. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
51. By the end of Year 2, pupils listen well to their teacher and are eager to answer questions. There is an encouraging supportive atmosphere in the Year 2 class and this helps to develop pupils' self-confidence and their ability to speak aloud using a good vocabulary. Speaking and listening skills by the end of Year 2 are good overall. The majority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 have good speaking skills and pupils leave school as articulate speakers. Pupils use an expressive vocabulary when justifying their views and opinions. Pupils' listening skills are satisfactory because there is a minority of pupils in every class who lack satisfactory self-discipline or attentiveness when listening to adults or classmates. This at times has an adverse impact on learning.
52. Whilst pupils' standards of reading are satisfactory overall, pupils, particularly the less able in both key stages, lack good strategies for tackling unfamiliar words and too often guess words they do not recognise. In addition pupils' higher order reading skills, such as reading and understanding beyond the literal level are not sufficiently developed, and this at times holds back the more able pupils. All pupils take books home to read. However, whilst the majority of parents take time to listen to their children reading, a minority of pupils reported that their parents only infrequently listened to them reading.
53. A notable feature of the school has been its success in improving pupils' skills of writing, which are now above average by the end of both key stages. By the end of Year 2 most pupils write legibly, fluently and imaginatively. The more able pupils' writing is often imaginative and incorporates a widening vocabulary. By the time that pupils leave school they write well for a variety of purposes, including both formal and informal styles. Pupils use a good vocabulary and writing often engages and sustains the reader's interest. Spelling is generally accurate and ideas are organised well into paragraphs.
54. Teaching and learning during the week of inspection were satisfactory overall but good for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Scrutiny of work and test and assessment data shows that over time teaching has been good, enabling pupils to achieve well. A particular strength has been the direct teaching of specific writing skills, which has resulted in significant improvements in writing standards and enabling pupils to write well structured and imaginative pieces of work. In contrast not enough emphasis has been put on the systematic development of reading skills in some classes over time and this has meant that pupils do not always have the necessary skills to become more proficient readers. This is now being addressed and proving successful. In good lessons seen during the inspection, lessons proceeded at a good pace and this successfully maintained pupils' interest and motivation. In these lessons, teachers have very good strategies for dealing with any behavioural issues and set high expectations for all pupils. When teaching is not as good as this, work is not always demanding enough

and a minority of pupils often become restless. At present some of the teachers' marking does not indicate sufficiently how improvements can be made.

55. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Good and effective procedures for monitoring teaching and learning have been in place for a significant period of time. These procedures have been instrumental in improving standards and the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Test and assessment data are analysed well and the information used to set targets and track pupils' progress, particularly in writing. The co-ordinator has identified the need to adopt a similarly rigorous approach to help improve reading standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Pupils' literacy skills are well promoted across the curriculum. Pupils' writing skills are well used for a variety of purposes, such as report writing in science, imaginative writing in history, instructional writing in design and technology and story-telling in religious education. Discussion is a feature of most lessons and this helps pupils to become confident and articulate speakers.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement over time has been good and standards at the end of both key stages are above average.
- Many opportunities are provided for pupils to learn through practical and investigative tasks.
- The quality of assessment and leadership and management of the subject have helped to improve standards.
- Teaching assistants contribute significantly to pupils' learning, although occasionally some teachers do not set high enough expectations as to how well pupils are to behave.
- Marking of pupils' work does not consistently outline to pupils what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

57. On the basis of National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was above the national average and above that found in similar schools. Tests for Year 6 pupils in 2003 showed attainment to be below the national average and below that of similar schools. Results in previous years for Year 6 pupils had shown attainment to be at least above the national average. This difference in results can be explained by the fact that the 2003 cohort of pupils contained a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Inspection findings show that attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is above average with pupils across the school achieving well, over time, given their attainment levels when they start school. Achievement is strongest in Year 2 and Year 6 both presently and over time. There is no significant evidence to indicate that boys and girls achieve differently. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

58. By the end of Year 2, pupils have well developed and honed numeracy skills. Teaching provides many opportunities for pupils to put these skills to the test in challenging practical activities. Pupils rise to the challenge and as a result see how mathematics has a real purpose in everyday situations. Pupils have a good knowledge of the properties of shapes and are becoming increasingly confident at handling and interpreting simple data. Teaching places a strong emphasis on pupils using a correct technical vocabulary and so pupils talk about their work confidently and articulately. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of place value and handle large numbers confidently. Teaching ensures that tasks are provided where pupils have to carry out mathematical investigations and to explore different strategies to problem-solve. This enhances pupils' proficiency as mathematical investigators. Occasionally, some pupils find more difficulty when problems are presented in formats they are not familiar with. Pupils attain good standards in their knowledge of properties of shapes, calculating area and perimeter and are secure in their understanding of probability and of interpreting data that they have collated.
59. Teaching and learning were satisfactory overall during the week of inspection with examples of good and very good practice. However, test results and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that over time teaching and learning are good. Teaching makes good use of the mental sessions at the start of the lesson to set the tone for learning. These sessions are often lively, move at a good pace and are challenging. Pupils often respond well, are hooked and are eager for what is to come in the main teaching part of the lesson. Teaching is at its best when work is very well matched to the differing ability levels of the pupils, and a strong emphasis is placed on pupils exploring, investigating and finding things out for themselves. There are gasps of excitement when pupils establish a number pattern or discover another way of solving the problem. Examples of such teaching were observed in Years 2 and 6 where teaching also includes the direct teaching of key concepts and strategies alongside the practical work. This results in good gains in pupils' learning. Teaching assistants make a powerful contribution to pupils' learning. Their unobtrusive support, together with their challenging and perceptive questioning enables the less able pupils to take a fully inclusive role in lessons and builds up their confidence and self-esteem well. There are occasions when teaching does not set high enough expectations as to how pupils are to behave and this means that some do not make the progress of which they are capable. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall, but at times does not provide enough guidance to pupils as to what to do to improve.
60. The subject is well led and managed. The school has well established procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning through regular observation of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress. The school carries out detailed analysis of test data to identify strengths, areas for development and to set challenging targets for individual pupils. These procedures have made a significant contribution to the improvement in standards and quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. The promotion of pupils' mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils are expected to work out timelines in history correctly, to measure accurately in design and technology and to make and record accurate measurements and findings in science. However, opportunities to promote the use of mathematics across the curriculum are not specifically planned for and are only capitalised on if the opportunity arises within a lesson.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Greater emphasis is being put on investigative and practical work than previously.
- Teaching assistants make a major contribution to how well pupils learn.
- Good use is made of computers to enhance pupils' learning.
- Behaviour management strategies are not always as effective as they could be.
- The use of assessment data helps to improve standards.
- Pupils' oral explanations of their work are at times stronger than their written explanations.

Commentary

62. On the basis of the 2003 teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, attainment was at an average level. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was below the national average and well below average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that attainment is above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and achievement over time is good throughout both key stages and strongest at the end of both key stages. There are significant variations in cohort ability. The 2003 Year 6 cohort contained a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The current cohort in Year 6 is attaining levels similar to those of the 2002 and 2001 cohorts, which showed attainment to be at least above the national average. There are no significant differences between how well boys and girls achieve. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
63. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the factors that might influence fair testing, citing examples from their own experience. They demonstrate a good knowledge of life processes and requirements for growth. Pupils are familiar with a number of materials and readily identify their uses. They are encouraged to evaluate their practical investigations and to identify reasons why things have not worked. Pupils' use of scientific vocabulary is satisfactory, but they are better at explaining orally than in writing conclusions. The rate of learning is improving because regular assessment is used to monitor progress and identify areas of weakness such as scientific enquiry.
64. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have developed a good scientific knowledge across the different aspects of the subject and use an appropriate scientific vocabulary well when talking about their work. They have a good knowledge of the requirements of fair testing and know how variables should be managed. Pupils' ability to record accurately and to write their conclusions clearly is not as secure as their ability to talk knowledgeably about their work. Some written explanations of air resistance and food chains flounder on the terminology. In contrast, pupils give accurate verbal accounts of experiments to measuring friction. The increased frequency of practical work has improved their observational skills and these are of a good standard. However, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to initiate their own investigations.
65. Teaching and learning have been good over the long term as evidenced by the standards that pupils attain. Although teaching overall was satisfactory during the inspection, it was good in Years 2 and 6. Scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils indicates that teaching has been appropriately demanding and there has been good

coverage of the curriculum. Pupils know they are expected to use their scientific knowledge in making accurate predictions and hypotheses and to generalise from observations and rise to the expectations. Good teaching includes interesting well-designed activities backed by effective strategies for acquiring vocabulary and visual learning approaches, which all help to make scientific facts more easily memorable. Teaching is not as effective when it is over-directed or pupils are not allowed to find things out for themselves. There are also times when behaviour management strategies are not effective enough. This adversely impacts on the learning environment as pupils are not attentive and at times distract others. Information and communication technology is used well in some lessons to support the subject, for example, with data-logging devices and digital microscopes, but more use could be made of computers in graphing and reporting. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons.

66. Leadership and management of the subject are good because the co-ordinator observes the very good procedures established by the school. Teaching and learning are monitored well and there is regular scrutiny of work. The rigorous analysis of test and assessment data has helped to improve standards by identifying strengths and areas for improvement. Pupils' attainment is monitored well through written tests at the end of each unit of work. The curriculum is enhanced by special events such as attendance at the Johnny Ball science lectures, Kids in Space group and the "Forensic Science Project" for Key Stage 2. Pupils also benefit from a regular science club.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Specialist teaching in upper Key Stage 2 is helping to improve standards.
- Pupils' access to computers is inadequate in some lessons.

Commentary

67. Standards in information and communication technology are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and pupils of all groups achieve well from their entry level. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 are attaining average standards. At the end of Year 6, standards are below average. The current cohort of Year 6 pupils has not had the benefit of the full programme of study over time and there has not always been an adequate number of computers. However, their capability is improving and achievement is currently satisfactory for all pupils in Years 3 to 6. However, over time, achievement has been unsatisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall with good and accelerated progress being made over the last two years.
68. By the end of Year 2, pupils change font size and colour and open and save files to disc in a satisfactory manner. They know how to merge pictures and text and use a range of painting tools, for example in creating pictures in the style of Mondrian. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to give simple directions to a floor robot. They do not show higher order skills of reflecting on or evaluating their work. By the end of Year 6, attainment in using computers in exchanging and sharing information is at least in line with expectations, but standards in other areas of the curriculum are not as well developed. Pupils create multi-media presentations, combining visual and audio

effects. They use their satisfactory desktop publishing and Internet research skills to produce sizeable projects, such as local history. They appreciate some but not all of the advantages of spreadsheets. Although pupils are aware of elements such as control, monitoring and email, they have limited knowledge of how to use them effectively.

69. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There is clear guidance for teaching from an appropriate scheme of work. Teachers' subject knowledge has improved since the last inspection and there is ongoing training. Time is allocated for discrete lessons, and teachers are beginning to identify more good links between the subject and other subjects. This enables pupils to have more opportunities to use their skills. Classroom management does not always provide adequate access to computers. When teachers choose to provide whole-class lessons with the maximum number of computers available to them, three or four pupils have to share machines. The restricted access does not allow pupils to reinforce or extend their skills.
70. The subject is currently well led and managed because the co-ordinator follows the very good procedures established by the school for subject co-ordination. In addition, there is a good development plan, which shows there is a clear vision of what is needed to move the subject forward. This includes the imminent building of a computer suite and the further improvement of resources. There is regular observation of teaching and learning and scrutiny of work, which have helped to improve the quality of provision. Assessment procedures are good, and based on the recommended local education authority format, are used effectively so that teachers have up-to-date information on the progress of individual pupils. The part-time technician employed by the school is a valuable asset in helping to improve the quality of pupils' learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. The use made of computers to support and enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum is satisfactory, but is not yet as integrated as it could be in some lessons. Opportunities are missed to research using computers or to present information and findings in different formats. However, some good examples of cross-curricular use are evident. Year 6 pupils used computers to publish Tales from the Bay, a collection of their poems, and younger pupils in Key Stage 2 presented information in graph form. Pupils in Key Stage 1 use laptops regularly to apply spelling skills in literacy and to produce artistic work in the style of famous artists.

HUMANITIES

72. Work was sampled in **history** and **geography** although insufficient teaching was available to be observed to make a secure judgement on the overall quality of provision.
73. Evidence indicates that standards in **history** are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and achievement is satisfactory. Discussion with pupils indicated that they have acquired a satisfactory historical knowledge about the periods of history they have studied. Pupils in Year 2 had a good knowledge of well-known historical figures, such as Florence Nightingale, and could talk about her work. Their knowledge of chronology, however, is less well developed. Older pupils recognise some of the changes that have taken place over time, such as the differences between Victorian schools and their own, have a satisfactory awareness of chronology and of the fact that there are primary and secondary sources of evidence. Pupils' knowledge of the Tudors, Victorians and Egyptians is satisfactory. Pupils realise the differences between fact and

opinion when examining historical evidence and show a satisfactory awareness of the fact that different people may interpret different events in history differently. However, pupils' skills of enquiry are insufficiently developed, as is their ability to work independently. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Pupils' work is sampled regularly and satisfactory assessment procedures have been recently introduced.

74. Standards in **geography**, based on scrutiny of pupils' work, are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and achievement for all pupils is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of their local area and identify features and landmarks in their locality. For example, they distinguish between different types of dwellings and plot their way to school on a large-scale plan. Discussions with Year 6 pupils and scrutiny of pupils' work and of teachers' planning indicate that over the course of the year pupils are taught all elements of the subject. There is a satisfactory emphasis given to the development of pupils' mapping skills as well as acquiring a secure base of geographical knowledge. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of different places in the world and compare and contrast them in a satisfactory manner to their own locality. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of how to locate different places on maps using co-ordinates. In discussion with the co-ordinator, leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Guidelines have been established for monitoring the subject, and pupils' work is regularly sampled and evaluated. Assessment procedures have been established and are satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. Due to timetable and timetable constraints little work was seen in **design and technology** and **physical education**, so although these subjects were sampled, there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the overall quality of provision.
76. Discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work indicate that standards in **design and technology** are at an average level. Pupils in Year 2 have made moving pictures that are of a satisfactory standard and have made puppets that show a good degree of imagination and creativity. By the time that pupils leave school, pupils have had the opportunity to work with a wide range of materials when making musical instruments, moving toys, money containers and fridge magnets. Finished products are at least of a satisfactory standard and at times better. Throughout the school, pupils are introduced to the importance of the designing and evaluating processes as well as the making aspect. Planning documentation shows that the skills such as cutting and joining are taught in a direct manner and pupils state that this helps them to make better quality finished products. There are some good links with literacy where pupils have to write instructions of how to make a musical instrument. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory with adequate procedures in place for monitoring teaching and learning. Satisfactory assessment procedures have recently been put in place and are beginning to generate useful information relating to pupils' progress and attainment.
77. Discussions with teachers and pupils and scrutiny of teachers' planning and other documentation indicate that standards in **physical education** are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Key Stage 1 move around the hall well showing a satisfactory awareness of space and the needs of others. Pupils can change direction well and throw and catch with a reasonable degree of accuracy. In Key Stage 2, pupils put together a sequence of movements in a satisfactory manner and show satisfactory balancing and jumping skills. Pupils evaluate their own performance and that of classmates and are confident at acting upon these evaluations to help improve their performance. Planning indicates that over the course of the year,

pupils take part in all aspects of the curriculum and curriculum coverage is good. Older pupils attend swimming lessons and most pupils leave school being able to swim 25 metres. Many pupils swim well beyond this distance. In the small number of lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory. Lessons always have an appropriate warm-up and cool-down sessions, specific skills are taught in a direct manner and tasks are differentiated for pupils of differing ability. Teaching usually improves pupils' performance over the course of the lesson. The weaker element is class management strategies. Noise levels are too high, some pupils do not listen attentively, show a lack of self-discipline and do not return apparatus in a disciplined and organised manner. These factors mean that advances in learning could be better, as the actual content of what is being taught is often good. The good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, residential visits and inter-school competitions adds much to pupils' personal development as well as enhancing their physical skills. Leadership and management of the subject and assessment are all satisfactory.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provides a good range of learning opportunities.
- Pupils develop good observational art skills and a good knowledge of famous artists.

Commentary

78. The curriculum provided for art and design across the school provides pupils with good opportunities to work with a wide range of media in both two- and three-dimensional formats. This results in pupils attaining at least average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 with some notable strengths. Achievement is satisfactory with some aspects being good. Improvement has been good since the time of the last inspection.
79. Teaching and learning are often good because pupils are provided with learning experiences where they work with paint, chalk, pastels, clay, inks, fabrics and pencil. They are directly taught specific skills such as drawing techniques, shading, perspective and colour blending which mean that standards in observational art by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Printing skills are taught well in Year 2 and pupils often produce work of a good standard in this aspect of the subject. A good emphasis is placed throughout the school on the work of famous artists, and by the time that pupils leave school they have a good knowledge of the work of famous artists such as Manet, Monet, Picasso and Seurat.
80. Teaching places a good emphasis on pupils being creative and imaginative in their work and this results in finished work having pupils' individual stamp on it rather than all looking the same. In a good lesson observed in Year 2 about the work of the painter Seurat, the enthusiastic manner in which the lesson was introduced and developed gave the pupils a clearer understanding of the technique of Pointillism. It also provided pupils with some fascinating insights into the life of the painter. The pupils could not wait to get started and produced imaginative work of a good standard. Examples were also observed of pupils using computers to produce work in the style of Mondrian. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and teaching and learning are monitored in an effective manner. Assessment procedures for tracking pupils' progress are satisfactory and the information is being increasingly used to plan the next steps in individual pupils' learning.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in singing are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Not all pupils behave well in some lessons.

Commentary

81. Standards in music are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although standards in singing are above average at the end of both key stages. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Improvement since the time of the last inspection has been satisfactory.
82. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of different instruments and recognise that different pieces of music can evoke different responses and feelings. The younger pupils in Key Stage 2 follow a repeated musical pattern with a satisfactory level of rhythm. By the time that pupils leave school they have a satisfactory knowledge of famous composers such as Beethoven, Mozart and Bach, and show a satisfactory ability to talk about how musical pieces may differ from one another. The pupils know the value of different notes and have developed a satisfactory awareness of rhythm and tempo. A strength across the school is the quality of singing. Pupils sing tunefully and with great gusto and enthusiasm. This is often helped by the good quality of piano playing by the music co-ordinator in assemblies and singing practices, which brings a real sense of occasion to the collective gatherings.
83. Within class lessons, teaching and learning vary from satisfactory to very good and are satisfactory overall. In a very good lesson for Year 6 pupils, the teacher used a wide variety of practical and visual teaching strategies to engage the pupils as he taught them the value of different notes and how this translated to tapping or stamping out different rhythms. The teacher insisted on the pupils using correct musical terminology. By the end of the lesson, pupils had made great advances in their learning and were tapping out complex rhythms confidently and with ease and had thoroughly enjoyed themselves. At times, some pupils in Key Stage 2 do not behave in a satisfactory manner and demonstrate a lack of self-discipline in practical music lessons. This is despite the content being satisfactory and the best efforts of the teacher. When this occurs, the learning of others is adversely affected. Teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that over the course of the year all elements of the subject are taught and covered in sufficient depth.
84. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Teachers' planning is monitored on a regular basis, and teaching and learning are observed whenever the subject is a prioritised area for development. Satisfactory assessment procedures have recently been introduced and provide adequate information relating to how pupils are doing in the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

On the basis of what was observed, provision in this area of the curriculum is **good**.

85. The school places a good emphasis on this aspect of the curriculum. The school ensures that aspects of sex education, health and drug awareness are covered well in the science curriculum and through other initiatives. Visitors to the school such as police officers, the school nurse and other community professionals add much to pupils' learning experiences in this aspect of the curriculum. Time is timetabled for pupils to discuss a wide range of social and moral issues and personal feelings and opinions about different aspects of life and the community in which they live. Pupils are expected to carry out a wide range of tasks around the school and they are happy to do so, showing good levels of maturity and responsibility. An important and well regarded feature of school life is the school council. Discussions with pupils show that they see the council as a forum where they know that their views will be listened to, respected and, if appropriate, acted upon, to help improve the life of the school as a community. Discussions with pupils also show that a good community spirit exists in the school and pupils are developing a good understanding of the concept and importance of citizenship.

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	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
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).

