

INSPECTION REPORT

TEMPLARS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tile Hill, Coventry, West Midlands

LEA area: Coventry

Unique reference number: 103692

Headteacher: Mr W G Hedges

Lead inspector: Mr F Carruthers

Dates of inspection: 12 – 14 January 2004

Inspection number: 258088

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	521
School address:	Templar Avenue Tile Hill Coventry West Midlands
Postcode:	CV4 9DA
Telephone number:	024 7646 6337
Fax number:	024 7642 1217
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Bailey
Date of previous inspection:	23 March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large primary school caters for pupils aged three to 11 and has 521 pupils on roll, including 59 children who attend part-time in the nursery. The school has fewer pupils than at the time of the last inspection. The pupils are drawn from an area with above average levels of social deprivation, as reflected in a number of socio-economic indicators and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (currently about 25 per cent). Pupil mobility¹ is above the average of most primary schools and has most impact on standards in older age groups. The great majority of pupils are white British. There are few pupils with English as an additional language, most of whom are Korean speaking and are children of students studying for one or two years at the nearby university. Newly arrived pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is about 16 per cent and this is broadly in line with the average for primary schools nationally. None has a statement of special educational need. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties; some have autism or behavioural difficulties. There is the full range of attainment among the children on entry to nursery. Overall it is typical of most three-year olds. The school has been awarded the *Healthy Schools Gold Award*.

¹ The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than at the start of the reception year or end of Year 6.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21285	Mr F Carruthers	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language
9970	Mr J Acaster	Lay inspector	
21893	Mrs V Brittain	Team inspector	Science Music
12060	Mrs P Peaker	Team inspector	English Special educational needs
32159	Mrs B Remond	Team inspector	Geography Religious education Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage
11810	Mr G Logan	Team inspector	Mathematics History Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
 Anglia House
 Carrs Road
 Cheadle
 Stockport
 SK8 2LA

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. This judgement reflects the fact that the school has significant strengths and some areas for improvement. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall during their time in the school. In national test results in 2003, standards at the end of Year 6, when compared to similar schools, were above average in English, average in science and well below average in mathematics. Younger pupils achieve well. In national test results at the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science were well above the average of similar schools. The upward trend in standards in recent years has been better than that found in the infant classes of most primary schools. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The teaching of English is good and leads to pupils making good progress, especially in the younger classes.
- Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6 are not high enough. In science, there are too few of the more able pupils doing well in national tests in Year 6.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes make a good start in their education and pupils continue to make good progress in infant classes.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Support for pupils' social development is very good. It leads to pupils having good attitudes to school and very good relationships with staff and each other.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils make good progress towards targets in their individual education plans.
- The curriculum is enriched through partnerships with agencies, schools and other institutions, so that pupils enjoy a good range of sporting and arts activities.
- However, the leadership and management of the curriculum as a whole have weaknesses. The time allocated to subjects other than English and mathematics is not sufficient for teaching the whole curriculum well.
- Links with parents are good.

The school was last inspected in March 1998. Since then, improvement overall has been satisfactory. Standards have risen well in national tests and assessments at the end of Year 2. In relation to the key issues arising from the last inspection, the school has made good progress in improving teaching and learning, and managing the behaviour of pupils with behavioural difficulties. There has been good improvement in provision and standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and in the quality of teaching and learning in the nursery classes. Planning for the school's development has improved and is now satisfactory with good features. Improvement in design and technology has been satisfactory. However, leadership and management of the curriculum still have shortcomings. Standards in mathematics have not improved enough.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Children make good progress in the nursery and reception classes and this continues in Years 1 and 2. **Overall, pupil progress is satisfactory.** The impact of rising standards by the end of Year 2 is beginning to be seen in the standard of work evident in the current Years 3 and 4. Standards in the current Years 5 and 6 show that pupils are making the progress expected of them, when compared to what they achieved in tests and assessments at the end of Year 2. The challenge for the school now is to improve the rate of progress that pupils make, especially in mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and the very few at the early stages of learning English as an additional language make rapid progress, thanks to the school's ethos of welcome and support. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.** Their attitudes and behaviour are good. Relationships with staff and one another are very good. Levels of attendance are below the national average but compare satisfactorily to those found in schools in similar contexts. The school's actions to promote attendance are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. There is a balance of strengths and areas for development. **Teaching and learning are generally good across all age groups.** Particular strengths are the strategies that teachers use to motivate pupils to behave well and take a full part in lessons. Teachers have a good command of subjects they teach but expectations of what older pupils can achieve in mathematics and science are not high enough. The curriculum is satisfactory but there are weaknesses. Links with agencies, schools and other institutions, such as *Partnership Centres* contribute well to the pupils' learning experiences. One of the school's major strengths is the care it provides for the pupils' health and welfare. Partnerships with parents are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. This judgement reflects a balance of strengths and weaknesses. For instance, the commitment of the leadership team to provide well for all pupils, whatever their need or background, and include them in the opportunities that the school provides is strong. There are weaknesses in how the overall curriculum is led and managed. The work of the governing body is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Both parents and pupils have positive views of the school and the school makes a good effort to consult them and involve them in decision-making. A few parents expressed concern about the behaviour of a minority of pupils but inspectors consider that the school is effective in responding to parental concerns and dealing with problems.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 and improve opportunities to develop writing in subjects other than English.
- Develop greater rigour in the leadership and management of the curriculum.
- Improve the balance of time given to teaching subjects other than English and mathematics.

A minor issue is to develop procedures for checking the progress of pupils in science, ICT and foundation subjects².

² Foundation subjects are art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage and by the end of the reception year, many are working beyond the early learning goals that are expected of them. Pupils continue to achieve well in infant classes, so that standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003, when compared to similar schools, were well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Progress is satisfactory overall in junior classes and standards in national test results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were above average in English, well below average in mathematics and average in science when compared to similar schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is clear evidence of rising standards and sustained improvement in achievement in infant classes, leading to better standards in Years 3 and 4.
- Children do well in the Foundation Stage.
- Standards are rising in English across the school but extending skills of writing in other subjects is under developed.
- More able pupils in older classes are not doing as well as they could in mathematics and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.

Commentary

1. Children get off to a good start in the nursery and continue to make good progress in the reception classes. This is the result of sustained improvements in provision, so that there is a stimulating learning environment, a well-managed curriculum and good teaching. The children achieve particularly well in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards achieved in creative and physical development are satisfactory. By the end of the reception year, many are exceeding the early learning goals expected of children at this stage of their development.
2. This good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. In last year's national tests at the end of Year 2, pupils attained standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science that were above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. Both boys and girls achieved scores that were above the national average. Improvement since the time of the last inspection has been sustained very well, which is the result of improved teaching of national strategies in English and mathematics, and grouping pupils by prior attainment in these subjects so that teaching and learning can be well pitched at the levels that pupils are reaching. In addition, systems to assess pupils' progress and track how well they are doing have improved, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. Encouragement of pupils to talk and listen to one another is having a good impact on standards in writing. There is a good focus now on basic skills of numeracy, which is underpinning the rising standards in mathematics.

3. Higher levels of attainment are evident now in Years 3 and 4 as a result of improved achievement when pupils are younger. This trend is set to continue. Pupils in the upper age groups make satisfactory progress when compared to how well they achieved in national tests at the end of Year 2. As a result of new national tracking procedures, it is possible to compare the performance over time of pupils in last year's Year 6 classes against pupils in all schools and those in similar schools. These show that the pupils' progress was average. Standards in English have been rising well because of the impact of actions taken, including well-planned sessions of group reading, support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, and a school-wide focus on writing. The role of other subjects, however, in providing opportunities for extended writing is less well developed. Standards are not as strong in mathematics. This is mainly because higher attaining pupils are not fully realising their potential, as not enough are likely to achieve the higher Level 5. This is mainly because there are large numbers of pupils in the above average teaching groups, making it difficult for the teacher to focus on the needs of the more able pupils. Standards in the current Year 6 are better than was evident in last year's national test results, however, and more pupils are on course to reach the nationally expected Level 4. Standards in science at the end of Year 6 show that pupils make satisfactory progress in the junior years. Skills of investigation, interpretation and prediction are under-developed, however, and mean too few pupils attain the higher Level 5 in tests. Standards in Year 6 in information and communication technology (ICT) are significantly better than at the time of the last inspection and this is the result of concerted effort to tackle weaknesses evident then.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.9 (25.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.1 (25.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.0 (27.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 66 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Most make particularly good progress in English and mathematics where setting arrangements and the good support provided by teachers and assistants help them to learn important basic skills. They make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. Pupils who arrive at school at the early stages of learning English as an additional language make rapid progress. This is because they are well supported by staff, settle in quickly and are often partnered with pupils whose first language is the same. This means that they enjoy school and gain confidence. Sometimes bilingual support from teaching assistants is available. Many pupils stay at the school for only a year or so, because their parents attend the nearby university. In that short time, their progress is good and often very good. For instance, pupils frequently are members of upper groups in English and mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good overall. They reflect the school's high expectations regarding behaviour and its very good work to promote harmonious relationships. Levels of attendance are below the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Nursery and reception-aged children settle smoothly into school routines, behave well, and are keen to learn.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, creating a positive climate for learning. The ethos of the school is a strength.
- Pupils' social and moral development is promoted well. Pupils' personal development is good overall. Relationships are very good.
- Effective strategies help to promote steadily improving attendance, with good support from the education welfare service.
- Some pupils are compliant rather than proactive learners.

Commentary

5. Attendance levels, though still below the national average, have improved. The school has good, effective procedures for monitoring and promoting better attendance. Pupils like school and are seldom absent without good cause. The rate of unauthorised absence is about the national average. Improving attendance enhances pupils' achievements and progress in all areas of school life.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

6. Pupils' attitudes and values are good and make a positive contribution to pupils' achievements. Children do not necessarily set out with high aspirations and enthusiasm for learning. Some of them have limited self-esteem. However, the school very successfully develops their personal qualities in co-operation with parents, support services and the local community. Pupils respond favourably to the school's positive ethos, to teachers' high expectations and to good teaching, though not all are proactive learners, particularly in the upper part of the school. Many strategies have been implemented to promote pupils' social development. In general, lessons are interesting and challenging, and promote good attitudes. The majority of pupils enjoy learning and are prepared to work hard, and as a result many make good progress, particularly the younger pupils. The school has some pupils who display immature attitudes. However, teachers usually manage them very skilfully. Pupils are keen to be involved in extra-curricular activities.
7. Pupils behave well, though a minority of pupils have difficulty in managing their behaviour. The school has very good procedures for raising standards of behaviour and promoting pupils' moral development. Members of staff are good role models. They use the school's system of discipline fairly and consistently to define the boundaries of acceptable behaviour and to teach pupils the difference between right and wrong. The majority of pupils respond well to their high expectations. Bullying and oppressive behaviour are rare and there has only been one exclusion in the past year. This is a significant improvement on the situation described at the last inspection.

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	372	1	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	8	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	5	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	90	0	0

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

8. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. Its programme of personal, social and health education is very effective and encourages pupils to show consideration for the beliefs and feelings of other people, and develops their ability to work collaboratively. The school council gives pupils good opportunities to use their initiative and to serve their community. Pupils become increasingly mature and responsible. Although some individuals find working in teams difficult, pupils generally work well together in lessons. They feel happy at school and have very good relationships with one another and with adults. This promotes an environment in which all pupils feel respected and valued.
9. The school successfully promotes spiritual and cultural development. Pupils get some opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs and feelings in assemblies and in personal, social, and health education lessons. Pupils have an understanding of, and show respect for other faiths and cultures, though this is not as fully developed as are other elements. They learn about different beliefs and values through religious education lessons, visits to places of worship and through visitors to school. Satisfactory links with local churches ensure that pupils are made aware of their own spiritual and cultural heritage.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. Strong features include the quality of teaching, pastoral care for pupils and links with other institutions. However, the curriculum and procedures to assess pupils' progress, though satisfactory overall, have weaknesses.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is good and this leads to effective learning. Procedures to assess pupils' progress are good in the Foundation Stage, in English and in mathematics. They are insufficient in most other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour.

- Good relationships are evident between teachers and pupils, which set a firm foundation for learning. Pupils respond well and work hard, showing good levels of concentration.
- Support staff make an effective contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessment procedures are good in English and mathematics but insufficient in science, ICT and foundation subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 61 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	4 (6%)	32 (53%)	23 (38%)	2 (3%)	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.

10. The proportion of good and better teaching is in line with the average for primary schools nationally and the overall quality has improved since the last inspection and there are fewer instances of unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching is good across the Foundation Stage, infant and junior classes and is leading to improved standards by the end of Year 2 and as the pupils progress into the junior classes.
11. Teachers generally have high expectations of behaviour and attainment. They expect pupils to maintain concentration and lessons proceed at a good pace. In only one lesson was management of pupils' behaviour less than satisfactory and as a result, pupils' learning was unsatisfactory. Teachers make good use of questioning to develop pupils' understanding and they give clear explanations. Group work is organised well to enable some pupils to work independently and this gives the teacher the opportunity to give more intensive support to others. Teachers establish good relationships with their pupils and treat them with respect. Where teaching is most effective it builds on previous learning, work is introduced in a lively and stimulating way and tasks are provided to meet the differing needs of pupils. As a result, they make good progress. Teachers make effective use of review sessions towards the end of lessons to reinforce and evaluate learning and understanding. This good quality teaching has had a positive impact on raising the standards of attainment above those seen at the last inspection.
12. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Grouping by prior attainment for lessons in English and mathematics works well for these pupils. Teaching is clearly focused on pupils' needs and the targets on their individual education plans are clear and realistic. Trained teaching assistants help pupils through the small steps of learning that these pupils require. Consequently, their learning is good. The impact of good teaching is evident in the interest that the pupils show in their work and in their behaviour. The class teachers and teaching assistants also ensure that the very few pupils with English as an additional language are helped well and make good progress.
13. The school is making greater use of a widening range of assessment information, particularly identifying where pupils' learning and achievement risk falling behind their potential. The school has become increasingly aware of the diverse range of needs amongst its pupils as a result of its analysis of data. Identified pupils are helped in small-group or even individual sessions to talk through areas of learning which they find difficult. In this way, the school hopes to build up the confidence and self-esteem of these vulnerable pupils and help them to achieve.

14. The good improvement in assessment in the nursery, reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 has contributed to the improvement in pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. The statutory test results in Years 2 and 6 are very thoroughly analysed so that teachers have a clear picture of pupils' attainment. Although the school has analysed extensively the information on pupils' attainment in English and mathematics, in most other subjects information on individual pupils' performance is not sufficiently detailed. As a result, teachers do not have a clear picture of what pupils know and understand and of the skills they have in these subjects. This reduces the security for teachers in planning the next stage of learning by building on the work that pupils have learned in previous lessons. The school is aware of the need to relate pupils' attainment more closely to the descriptors of the National Curriculum levels in science, ICT and the foundation subjects. This would enable teachers to see clearly the progress which pupils are making and to communicate this to them.

The curriculum

The curriculum overall is satisfactory and there is a balance of strengths and weaknesses. There are good opportunities to enhance the curriculum. The accommodation and levels of resources for learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal, social and health education is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school provides many activities to enrich the basic curriculum for all pupils.
- Curricular opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are good.
- The use of time in the school day impacts adversely on achievement in foundation subjects.
- There are insufficient opportunities to develop literacy in other subjects.

Commentary

15. Since the last inspection, there have been good improvements in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage and in the provision for ICT throughout the school. Planning has been improved in all subjects to ensure that learning builds on earlier experiences. The role of subject leaders has been extended to include the monitoring of the curriculum and all have received relevant training to support this. However, this is still an area for development identified by the school. At present some subject leaders have insufficient impact on the quality of provision and the standards achieved.
16. There has necessarily been a major focus on English in recent years in order to raise standards but this has had an adverse effect on the amount of time given to foundation subjects. At present, a significant amount of time is spent in afternoon sessions on English, as well as the daily Literacy hour in the morning, thus reducing time allocation for subjects other than English and mathematics. The senior management team has identified curriculum balance as a priority to address. The school is looking at ways to maximise time by, for example, the use of historical texts in literacy lessons. During the inspection, pupils' achievement in several lessons was reduced because of lack of time, often caused by other lessons 'running over.' There is some time slippage during the morning, which suggests that a review of timetables is likely to identify the potential for additional teaching time. Curricular initiatives have begun to look at ways of improving the overall provision and increasing the enjoyment of pupils. Older pupils have been consulted and strategies are being tried in Years 1 and 2 but it is too early to measure their success.

17. The school's strong commitment to ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils is achieved through catch up programmes such as the additional literacy strategy, grouping by prior attainment in English and mathematics, and the good support provided by teachers and trained teaching assistants. All pupils on the special educational needs list have individual education plans highlighting their needs. These are regularly reviewed to ensure that targets reflect the progress made. All pupils with special educational needs have access to the same curriculum as their peers.
18. Pupils are given a wide range of experiences outside the basic curriculum and these particularly promote the interest of higher attaining and talented pupils in the creative and performing arts and in sport. For example, since September there have been numerous visits from theatre groups and music ensembles. An artist has been working with pupils to create ceramics, which will be used to enhance the outdoor environment. There are annual residential visits for older pupils which offer opportunities for outdoor pursuits.
19. The accommodation is spacious, clean and attractive, and displays reflect the welcoming ethos of the school and the emphasis on pupils' personal and social development. The use of heavy curtaining between teaching bays for older pupils has significantly reduced noise intrusion, although this can still be a problem in Years 1 and 2. Levels of resources for learning are good. The library is well stocked but is currently not comfortable enough to encourage pupils to browse. The outdoor environment has been imaginatively developed. The nature trail and pond are excellent resources for environmental work. The *Trimtrack* and other facilities encourage pupils to be active during break times.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares for, guides and supports its pupils well. It values their opinions and acts on them when possible.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has effective strategies for promoting consistently very good relationships and good personal development for all pupils.
- Pupils are encouraged and supported well towards helping to improve school life, and they have pioneered several valuable initiatives.
- The school's systematic and committed approach towards welfare, health and safety is very effective in promoting a healthy and secure environment.

Commentary

20. Most pupils very much enjoy their school life and their responses to the inspectors' questionnaire indicate that they feel secure and well supported. Many say they feel trusted. They like the kindness of the teachers. Pupils comment, *They help you with problems in or out of school*, and they often remark on teachers' fairness. While pupils tend to be critical of the behaviour of other pupils, there is much to suggest that the school has improved greatly in this respect since the last inspection. A wide range of behavioural strategies to manage and support good behaviour is now consistently applied. Pupils' special educational needs are identified and addressed well. Pupils who are learning in English as an additional language are also well supported. Induction into the school is handled sensitively. Staff are alert to

matters of including everyone. Consequently, by its attitude and systems, the school has successfully established a favourable climate for learning.

21. The school is committed to involving pupils in the improvement of school life. Since the last inspection, an effective school council has been established. It is well supported, meets fortnightly, and includes two representatives from all classes in Years 3-6, as well as two on behalf of younger pupils. Initiatives introduced through this include an important system of *playground pals*, extending across all year groups, to befriend those who may need support at playtimes. Older pupils have also instituted, and sensibly administer, a box through which instances of unkind behaviour can be reported anonymously. The school council has its own notice board and budget.
22. The school has very effective systems for ensuring pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. A committee reporting to the governing body oversees the premises and health and safety matters on a termly basis. It oversees cyclical maintenance and regular risk assessment, and the site service officer promptly tackles deficiencies. Security has been much improved since the last inspection.
23. Child protection procedures are well established and training is systematic. There are many first aiders. The school obtains the assistance of a wide range of specialist agencies, such as support for pupils with autism. It gives pupils access to the advice of a *Relate* counsellor when necessary to assist them through domestic crises. Work in winning a *Healthy schools* award has raised pupils' awareness of the importance of a good diet. The school has also made available wider support for pupils through its Breakfast club and after-school arrangements.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school works well in partnership with its parents. It has good links with the community and with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are very friendly, so parents feel comfortable about approaching the school, and all are pleased with the progress their children are making.
- The school has many community and educational links which widen and support pupils' experience and development.
- The provision of information is generally good, and parents' views are regularly sought and valued, but some communications could be more sharply focused and user-friendly.

Commentary

24. Parents are, with very few exceptions, pleased with what the school provides, and twice as many responded to the questionnaire at this inspection compared to the last. They praise the dedicated attitudes of staff on behalf of their children and approve the way the school is organised. Some parents appropriately make the point that arrangements for monitoring the return of homework could be improved.
25. The school keeps parents informed by frequent friendly newsletters. Teachers are readily accessible on a daily basis. Parents consider the general atmosphere to be happy and supportive, with particular attention given to those children who might have difficulties

settling in or learning consistently. The school provides parents with opportunities for meeting their child's teacher every term, and most parents are satisfied with the level of information concerning progress which they receive. Written academic reports are generally of a good standard. Appropriate consultation and liaison are made with parents of pupils with special educational needs. The school's literature, such as its prospectus and governors' annual report, varies widely in style. Promotion of the aims of the school, for instance, and the importance of very good attendance are among messages that could usefully be included.

26. The school is concerned to forge good relationships with its parents for the benefit of their children. Staff make home visits to those entering the school, for example, and every year conduct a survey to check on the quality of induction procedures. Formal consultations are occasionally made, such as that on out-of-school provision, and informal feedback is often obtained via the *Parent-teacher Association*. The school is responsive to these and as a result, has improved its reporting arrangements, for instance. Parents are invited to come to curriculum workshops, which are moderately well attended. Most parents support their children effectively and give such help to the school as they can.
27. The school has well-established links in the wider community that benefit pupils well. For example, they visit the local Anglican church several times each year. A range of other religious leaders come to speak. Pupils receive lessons from many visitors, including the Fire Service. A local bank is providing staff to hear pupils read. Charities are promoted and the school council assists in this way through its linked school in Ghana. Pupil visits include those to local *Partnership Centres* providing additional experiences, such as in art and design and technology. The school has appropriate liaison with secondary schools, including some curriculum support. Schemes of co-operation are on going with other schools. Pupils often benefit from working with students from further and higher education establishments. The school is also active in its partnership with schemes such as *Sure Start* and the Breakfast Club, which provide effective support for pupils and the community beyond its mainstream activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory. There is a balance of strengths and weaknesses.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's commitment to the promotion of equality and concern for the needs of the individual is good.
- Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good.
- Staff benefit from a good programme of continuing professional development.
- The school contributes well to initial teacher training.
- The structure of middle managers is not effective enough in bringing about school improvement.
- Leadership of the curriculum does not have a sufficient impact on the raising of standards.

Commentary

28. The governing body with its chair and committees structure is supportive and committed to the programme of improvement set out in the school development plan. Progress towards the planned targets is evaluated at each full governing body meeting. The committee structure is satisfactory. Overall, procedures for reviewing the performance of teachers operates

satisfactorily and support staff are planned to be included in the cycle. The analysis of information about how well the school is performing by the governing body helps it in its monitoring of school work. There is a good working relationship between governors and senior staff. The governing body meets its statutory obligations and has clear aims and policies that reflect the individual character of the school.

29. The headteacher's leadership of the school is satisfactory. He has successfully established an ethos that provides all the pupils with a caring and stable environment in which they are encouraged to behave well. Equality of opportunity and meeting the needs of the individual are priorities for the headteacher. As a result, the school has created a basis upon which standards can be raised. This is a strength of the headteacher's leadership.
30. Although the headteacher has high aspirations for the school, strategic planning is not as effective as it might be and restricts the school's ability to identify the most productive lines of development and avoid the less important matters. The school monitors its performance satisfactorily, analysing its strengths and weaknesses but there is a lack of focus, rigour and consistency when implementing and evaluating change. All staff are aware of the school's priorities and have been involved in their formation and implementation. The school development plan is detailed, with costs, staff and time identified but monitoring procedures and success criteria are not specified.
31. The professional development of all staff is good and linked to whole-school targets as well as their personal and professional development. Monitoring the performance of teachers, however, has not taken place during the autumn term because of staffing difficulties. The headteacher successfully develops the leadership skills of both senior managers and pupils and he has created strong teams amongst the staff. The school effectively supports new staff and students from other institutions. The middle management structure, however, is not as effective as it might be in bringing about school improvement, particularly in some of the foundation subjects.
32. An efficient administrative team and caretaker assist in the effective day-to-day running of the school. There is a commitment by the management to self-evaluate but not all the systems in place can be seen to be shaping the direction of the school. There have been improvements in some areas since the last inspection, for example, in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and bringing about improvements. However, leadership and management of the curriculum have not improved enough.

Financial information

Financial procedures are controlled in a satisfactory manner, approaches to financial management are linked to the school's educational priorities and the school has satisfactory procedures to ensure that best value for money is obtained when purchasing resources and services.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,238,703	Balance from previous year	21,957
Total expenditure	1,213,049	Balance carried forward to the next	47,611
Expenditure per pupil	2,430		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good for all areas except for creative and physical development where it is satisfactory. The Foundation Stage curriculum is fully in place. The accommodation, both internal and external, provides a good learning environment for the children. Improvement since the last inspection has been good in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and satisfactory in creative and physical development. From the time the children enter the nursery, they are exposed to a stimulating learning environment. The quality of teaching is mainly good. Some of the teaching is very good. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed. Teachers and support staff have a satisfactory and often good understanding of how very young children learn and activities are carefully planned to develop children's learning in an enjoyable way. They work closely together, ensuring good continuity for the children. Through appropriate praise of good work and behaviour, they nurture good attitudes, and children demonstrate confidence and a good level of independence. Assessment is detailed and constructive to ensure children make good progress. The children are assessed within two months of starting in the nursery. Children with special educational needs are identified early and supported sensitively, as are children for whom English is an additional language. The new phase leader provides good leadership and management and has created an effective team.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good** and leads to standards that are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children know what is expected of them and feel secure and valued because of the consistent approach by all adults.
- Children are provided with effective opportunities to develop their confidence and this leads them to develop a good level of personal independence.
- Children need more opportunities to interact with adults, to develop their learning during continuous play activities.

Commentary

33. Teaching in this area is consistently good. All adults promote good relationships and have created close working partnerships between themselves and parents. They ensure that children work and play well together and cooperative skills are evident in the reception classes. All members of staff give children much encouragement to work independently and they feel secure and settled in their base rooms. This builds effectively on the good quality support and care they receive in the nursery. The majority of children are on target to exceed the requirements of the early learning goals expected of children in this area, by the time they leave the reception year. Given more opportunities to interact with adults during their continuous play activities, children would make even greater progress.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff's expertise is used effectively.
- Teacher's planning is well matched to children's level of attainment and their achievements are carefully recorded.
- Children make good progress and are enthusiastic to learn.
- Further opportunities need to be created to develop children's speaking skills.

Commentary

34. In both nursery and reception classes, teaching is mainly good with lessons being well planned and meeting the needs of individual children. Children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with each other and adults. The expertise of staff in this area has had a positive impact on standards. Children respond well to questions when interacting with an adult but there are some missed opportunities. Children do not use language readily in their play. Most children in the reception classes are recognising the links between sounds and letters, some using their knowledge to attempt more complex words. The teacher uses the correct terminology such as *phoneme* and *diagraph* when referring to different sounds. Nearly all children in the reception classes attempt to write a sentence even if they only write the initial letters instead of whole words. They are using their phonic knowledge to write, for example, *H shrd hs scl*s, (He shared his scales). By the time they leave the reception year most are likely to have reached the early learning goals and some will have exceeded them. Children whose first language is not English are helped well and they achieve at a good rate.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in the nursery and the reception classes with all adults contributing to their learning.
- Teachers use a good range of interesting practical activities that stimulate the children but there is insufficient modelling of mathematical language.
- Teachers take good opportunities to develop children's mathematical skills in other areas of learning.
- Most children make good progress but the more able children are not sufficiently challenged.

Commentary

Some children in the nursery can count to ten by linking one item to a number. Many children in the reception classes can already recite and have an understanding of numbers to ten. Some children go beyond that to fifteen. There is insufficient challenge for the more able children, however, and insufficient use of mathematical vocabulary to allow them to compare numbers and carry out simple, practical addition and subtraction activities. Teachers use support staff well during these sessions to develop children's learning. For example, children in reception classes are able to create and repeat patterns twice, using regular shapes. They demonstrate a good degree of independence and high levels of concentration. They are able to name the flat shapes, circle, triangle and square. The majority are on course to attain the early learning goals and some are likely to exceed them.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a good range of activities that, for the most part, help children to achieve well and develop their experiences.
- Children are confident in exploring and using materials.
- Children develop very good skills using computers.
- The outdoor learning area, whilst much improved, does not give enough opportunities to develop children's learning in this area of learning.
- There was an example during the inspection of matters of health and safety not being considered appropriately.

Commentary

35. Teachers plan a good range of activities that usually ensure children achieve well and develop their experiences. On one occasion, however, risk assessments were not carried out, leading to unsatisfactory teaching and learning. Children are able to explain the names of the sea creatures in the water tray. One child on finding the octopus correctly counted the number of tentacles. In the nursery, children make sandwiches, selecting their own filling. The teacher ensures all the children carry out basic procedures of food hygiene. Appropriate assistance by the teacher enables all children to successfully engage in the activity. Some children demonstrate a high degree of competence and confidence as they show other children how to cut the sandwiches. They only do this when they see another child having difficulty. Outdoor play facilities have the potential to offer children a rich learning environment but there is insufficient planning to ensure that this takes place on a regular basis. Children in the reception classes use class-based computers with increasing confidence, extending their skills well. Very good planning and knowledge of the subject by the teacher allow children to use the print button as part of their art and design activity.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievements are satisfactory.
- Children demonstrate enthusiasm and behave well.
- Planned outdoor play lacks sufficient challenge.

Commentary

36. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in this area of learning, as is progress. There is a good range of equipment. Children, aided by large apparatus outside, are able to run, jump, balance, climb and crawl. When using the wheeled toys outside and travelling around the hall during a lesson, children demonstrated a good awareness of the space around them and were able to steer clear of other children. The range of activities develops children's learning but there is insufficient planned stimulation outside to challenge and excite them to develop further their curiosity and knowledge about the world around them. Activities such as threading and cutting develop good levels of coordination, whilst a range of tools for writing and painting provide experiences in manipulating small objects. The children are aware of the effect of exercise on the body and they learn to get changed for physical education. Most children are on course to meet the early learning goals in this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and most children are on course to meet the early learning goals.
- Good cross-curricular links are made.
- There is an inadequate amount of adult intervention to help children extend their play and develop their ideas.

Commentary

37. Children use factual books to gain ideas about the different sizes and shapes of fish, prior to drawing and cutting out their own fish. This is a good example of the children using simple research skills to find out information and of purposeful cross-curricular links. The children explore colour and line, making paint lines across their fish and considering variations in the thickness of lines made by the paint-covered marbles. Some resources for role-play are looking tired and lack imagination, limiting the opportunities for the children to develop their own play. There is insufficient intervention by staff in the children's play to allow learning to move forward and to help them form new understandings. No lessons in music or dance were seen, so a judgement on these aspects cannot be made.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards are improving.
- The quality of planning, teaching and assessment is having a positive effect on standards.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language is good.
- Opportunities for extended writing in other areas of the curriculum are not as frequent as they could be.
- There is a lack of consistency in the approach to marking.

Commentary

38. Since the time of the last inspection, there has been good improvement and standards have been rising in line with the national upward trend at the end of Year 6 and above it at the end of Year 2. Indeed in the most recent test results, all pupils at the end of Year 2 attained scores above those of boys and girls nationally. Although their achievement is good, pupils' overall standards by the end of Year 6 are below the national average. Work seen during the inspection shows that standards continue to improve. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils punctuate their work accurately and respond well to a range of writing tasks. Their handwriting is consistent in form and size. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to be given opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. In the best lessons, teachers challenge pupils well and most are motivated by this approach and achieve well. Basic skills are well taught throughout the school and there is a strong emphasis on spelling strategies with the emphasis

in Year 6 on fun ways to learn them.

39. Throughout the school, pupils generally listen carefully when others are speaking. Effective strategies, such as learning partners with whom they sometimes discuss issues before coming to a decision, give them good opportunities to express themselves. The emphasis on well-planned guided reading lessons is encouraging pupils to read for enjoyment and information. By Year 6, pupils understand that there is a variety of reading skills and know when each is of relevance. They demonstrate good attitudes to their reading by declaring personal preferences for writers and types of text.
40. A number of factors contribute to the improvements in pupils' achievements. Since the last inspection, the school has planned lessons well in the framework of the National Literacy Strategy. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The organisation of groups for English by the pupils' prior attainment is helping teachers to match work to pupils' needs at an appropriate level. They use a variety of good assessment procedures that help them to plan thoroughly for the differing levels of ability. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored. This has a positive effect on not only the attainment of pupils with special educational needs but also their confidence when teaching assistants support their learning. As a result, they learn well. Examples of good and very good teaching were seen. It is in these lessons where skilled questioning helps pupils to reason things out and look for explanations or make deductions. As a result, pupils show a good level of understanding, which is reflected in the quality of their subsequent written work.
41. Most marking is careful but this is not consistent across all teachers. Some do not contribute quality comments so that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve in the next piece of work. There is insufficient emphasis given to these comments so that pupils appreciate they are important signposts in their learning and are to be read and heeded.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

42. Pupils have some valuable opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects but in general this aspect of their learning is under-developed. The weekly lessons in developing pupils' writing currently do not provide time for pupils to write imaginatively or factually on topics which arise from other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen in Years 1 and 2 and pupils are achieving well.
- Teaching is good overall, though more variable in Years 3 to 6.
- Current setting arrangements, whereby pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment, do not enable more able pupils to be extended as effectively as they might.
- Information and communication technology is not used consistently enough to support learning in mathematics.

Commentary

43. Standards are average in the current Year 2 and below average in the current Year 6. Younger pupils now achieve well in mathematics. From entry to the school, the progress they make is good. The teaching of the younger pupils is a strength at present and there is consistency of practice and expectation. In 2003, a well above average proportion of pupils achieved the challenging Level 3 in Year 2. However, the proportion is likely to be lower in the current year because of the nature of the year group. In Year 6, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 or the higher Level 5 in 2003 was well below average. Predictions for the current Year 6 suggest that their performance will be significantly higher, though still below the national average, and with too few pupils achieving at the higher level. Pupils with special educational needs achieve similarly to their peers, making good progress overall in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory progress elsewhere. Often pupils learning English as an additional language are among the highest attaining pupils. Boys performed better than girls in both Years 2 and 6 in 2003. However, there was no indication during the inspection that this was a significant factor in the current year.
44. The school implemented setting by pupils' prior attainment as part of their strategy to raise standards. Over time, this has underpinned improvement in Years 1 and 2, but to a much lesser extent for the older pupils, where overall standards are little changed over an extended period. The key weakness for the older pupils, apart from some variability in the teaching and a significant level of staff mobility, is the balance of numbers within the teaching groups. There are large numbers of pupils in the above average groups and this does not facilitate sufficient focus on the needs of the more able pupils. As a result, too few pupils are able to perform at a sufficiently high level.
45. There is a good focus on securing basic numeracy skills throughout the school, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and there is evidence of thorough work to reinforce basic understanding. Good opportunities are provided for independent recording by Year 2. Overall, the level of challenge is good, supporting the good achievement seen. In the later years, the pace of learning is more uneven. Skills in mental mathematics are not fully secure in the upper school and there are continuing weaknesses in solving problems. Curriculum coverage is satisfactory. However, on the evidence of their recent work, many pupils in Year 5 are as far advanced as their counterparts in Year 6, having already covered a thorough body of work, including fractions, decimals, percentages and ratio. Some pupils in Year 6 are still grappling with basic concepts in multiplication, hampered by weak knowledge of their tables. Limited use is made of investigative work to secure pupils' understanding of key mathematical concepts.
46. Teaching is good overall. Common strengths include the careful planning of lessons and the accurate match of work to pupils' needs, within the teaching groups. However, in some groups, this is more evident in current planning than in pupils' work from earlier in the year. Generally, pupils are challenged to succeed and expectations are high. Good knowledge and understanding support the rigorous approach of many staff. In the lower groups, pupils receive good support from well-prepared support staff. Teachers use language well and question pupils carefully to ensure that they understand, though the response they receive is sometimes limited. Pupils are often reluctant to engage as fully as they might. In this respect, teachers' expectations could be higher. In one unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher did not manage the behaviour of the pupils well enough, and as a result, pupils' learning suffered. Most staff emphasise the methodical recording of work to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of the stages of working involved in a calculation. However, there are variations between groups. There is limited use of computers to support learning in the subject. The school recognises that this is an area for improvement.

47. Most teachers use assessment well to guide their planning of future work. The school has identified targets for each year group and, in most classes, pupils record what it is they are to learn that day in their books. Individual target setting, with short-term, achievable targets, is the next step. Marking is thorough in most classes, with clear guidance as to how pupils can improve their performance, though there are some variations in practice.
48. The subject leader is relatively new and, with the support of a leading mathematics teacher, has set in place an agenda for improvement. He has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and knows what still needs to be improved. However, further support from the senior management team is necessary to ensure that already available staff are deployed in order to help drive through the improvement needed in this area of the school's work. Resources, other than in ICT software, are good. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall, with further work to do.

Mathematics across the curriculum

49. Pupils regularly use mathematics to support their work in other subjects and there is evidence of this in science and in geography. They use graphs and tables to record data in science and practise their skills in measuring when they undertake practical tasks in design and technology. Data handling continues to improve as access to good quality ICT provision increases, though it is not yet a significant strength.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards for younger pupils are higher than the national average.
- The quality of teaching overall is good.
- Teachers' assessments are not used well enough to enable higher attaining pupils to be challenged sufficiently.
- Investigational skills are not being systematically developed for older pupils.

Commentary

50. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the teaching for younger pupils, resulting in a rise in standards with almost all pupils working at the expected level or better by the end of Year 2. They achieve well. Standards for pupils in the current Year 6 reflect the results of the 2003 national test results when the number of pupils reaching the expected level was just below the average but for those achieving the higher level were well below. Satisfactory teaching in Years 5 and 6 does not sufficiently challenge higher attaining pupils and there is inconsistency in the development of science skills between these classes. Achievement for these pupils since Year 2 is satisfactory overall. No significant differences were noted between the achievement of boys and girls, those with special educational needs or pupils from minority ethnic groups.
51. In the lessons seen, teaching varied between satisfactory and very good. Overall, teaching and learning were good in Years 1 to 4 and satisfactory in Year 5 / 6 classes. Lessons were generally well planned with clear objectives to build on earlier experiences. Most teachers

provided interesting activities so that pupils want to learn. They encourage the use of correct scientific terminology and older pupils show a good understanding of words such as *insulator* and *forces*. Where teaching is good, skilful questioning challenges pupils' thinking and extends their understanding. When teaching was only satisfactory, there was too much exposition by the teacher, which did not engage all pupils. In one lesson, higher attaining pupils who had completed tasks were allowed to colour diagrams instead of being challenged further. An analysis of pupils' work in Year 6 shows inconsistency in the way that pupils record their work. Often, pupils are not given opportunities to explain their predictions or to interpret data. There is no evidence that older pupils plan and carry out their own investigations. This does not build on the good development of skills seen in Years 3 and 4.

52. There has been good improvement in the role of the subject leader since the last inspection. Monitoring of teaching and learning now takes place and useful feedback is given to staff. Through this, the co-ordinator has identified the weaknesses in provision. Staff have received training to help them to develop pupils' skills in the subject but need more support and guidance to enable them to do this systematically. She recognises the need for further work on the use of assessment if standards are to rise for pupils at the end of Year 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources have been developed well since the time of the last inspection.
- Teachers' confidence and expertise have improved and are never less than satisfactory.
- Pupils make good progress across all elements of the subject.
- The subject is well led and managed by the subject leader but more opportunities are needed for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

Commentary

53. Improvement since the last inspection, when the subject was judged to be unsatisfactory, has been good. A very clear action plan was put in place and funding provided to develop hardware, software and teachers' expertise. As a result, resources are plentiful and of a good standard. Teachers' confidence has risen as a result of the high priority given to the subject in recent years, which has led to training and in-school support. Technical back-up is provided by the subject leader and a technician who makes weekly visits to school to iron out problems.
54. Because of these improvements, standards are rising. By the end of Year 6, pupils' capabilities are at least average and some pupils have very good expertise to handle data, use spreadsheets, word process and combine pictures and text. They are particularly confident using search engines on the Internet. Higher attaining pupils are encouraged to join the weekly computer club and extend their skills into web design and multi media presentations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and build on earlier learning well. Very little direct teaching was observed in infant classes, so it has not been possible to judge standards by the end of Year 2. Ongoing work indicates that the pupils continue the good progress they make in the Foundation Stage and confidently log on, open and close programs and files, and move the mouse accurately around the screen.
55. The quality of teaching is good overall. In one lesson involving pupils in Years 5 and 6, it was clear that pupils have developed a good cross-section of skills and are confident working independently or in pairs. They follow instructions well and so get on quickly at the workstations. Because staff insist on high standards of behaviour, the pupils are sensible and complete activities, such as interrogating a database, efficiently and without fuss. If one pupil hits a snag, another offers help. The timetables for using the workstations are well organised by staff, so that computers are available during English and mathematics lessons, when groups of pupils can use the machines and teaching assistants can make a contribution to learning. Further time is also set aside for teaching specific skills of ICT.
56. Leadership and management by the subject leader are good. The current subject development plan clearly focuses on improving planning for computer skills in other subjects, as well as on funding new initiatives. However, the subject leader does not yet have a clear overview of planning across subjects and has not had opportunities to monitor standards and teaching in age phases other than the one he currently teaches in. Procedures to assess pupils' progress are at an early stage of development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57. The subject is used well in English, when there are good opportunities for pupils to use their skills of word processing. Much software is available for younger pupils to complete activities connected with skills of reading, writing and number. However, links with mathematics and science are generally under-developed. Subject leaders, including those managing foundation subjects, are currently reviewing planning for skills of ICT.

HUMANITIES

These subjects were sampled during the inspection. No lessons were observed in **geography**. As a result, there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on teaching, learning and achievement. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that standards are average by the end of Year 6 and coverage of the national curriculum requirements is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, pupils are involved in local environmental issues such as water pollution, and communicating with pupils in San Diego, United States of America and Bolgalauga, Ghana. Pupils' learning is enhanced by a residential visit to North Wales. The subject leader provides satisfactory leadership. The school has a rolling programme of topics, but there is no planned development of skills in these plans. The subject leader monitors teaching and learning through lesson observations, a review of teachers' planning and a scrutiny of pupils' work. There is limited evidence showing the impact this has on pupils' learning. The assessment of geography is carried out informally, on an ongoing basis, but this does not address what a pupil knows, understands and can do. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

Only two lessons were observed in **history**, both in Years 3 to 6. There was very little work available for scrutiny. It is not therefore possible to form an overall judgement about provision, standards or achievement. A limited amount of history has been covered so far in the current year, with most pupils beginning a new unit of work during the week of the inspection. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, currently looking at a range of social changes in the period since World War Two, had previously covered work on wartime experiences. This gave rise to some recorded work, though this petered out in mid-November and it was unclear whether the planned coverage had been fully completed. There is virtually no work available to provide information as to work covered in Years 1 to 4. A portfolio, logging work in the previous three years, suggests that, in most years, work was recorded with some thoroughness, with good use made of timelines and some evidence of visits out, and visitors to school, to support pupils' understanding. Subject management is satisfactory at present. Pupils' literacy skills are not, at present, strongly supported by the work seen in history. However, there is some support for the development of research skills. Teachers indicate that there are constraints on the time given to the subject and that this is to be reviewed.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The policy for religious education has been re-written in the light of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Teaching in mixed-aged classes is insufficiently challenging for the older pupils.
- The assessments of pupils' competence have too little influence on the planning for developing their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- There is a new subject leader and new systems and processes have not yet been fully introduced.

Commentary

58. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Standards in religious education, as seen in samples of pupils' work, are unsatisfactory in Year 6 and satisfactory in Year 5. Standards overall have been maintained since the last inspection.
59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Teaching takes account of pupils' prior knowledge and experiences. Questioning, tailored to pupils' ability, is effective in developing a deeper understanding of the thoughts and beliefs of others. Planning is based on the schemes of work but does not always reflect the needs of the pupils. There is no on-going, assessment of pupils' work to inform future planning, enabling pupils to build on what they know, understand and can do.
60. The management of the subject is in a period of change, a new subject leader having taken over responsibility during this academic year. The school is in the middle of the review and the subject leader is managing this satisfactorily, demonstrating sound leadership and management. A portfolio of pupils' work has been collated and levelled. An audit of resources is not yet complete.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology and **music** were only sampled during the inspection. One lesson was seen in each subject, all involving junior-aged pupils. No overall judgement about provision in the subjects is possible.

It is clear from teachers' planning and a sample of photographs and portfolios of work that the full range of aspects in art and design, and design and technology is taught and the subjects meet statutory requirements. In **art and design**, pupils make good use of sketchbooks to record work in pastel, pencil and paint. They also work in three dimensions, using, for instance, waste materials and clay. Standards are broadly average but there were few examples of work based on famous artists in samples seen. Pupils in Year 6 could recall only the work of Van Gogh that they had explored and one pupil knew of the style *pointillism*, but could not recall the name of any artist. In **design and technology**, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were observed designing and making picture frames in card, which were of satisfactory quality. Work seen on display and in portfolios included well designed and produced musical instruments and slippers. Pupils also experience food technology when they make yoghurt and biscuits. Since the time of the last inspection, when design and technology was judged to be unsatisfactory, improvement in provision has been satisfactory. No judgement on standards is possible, however. Both subjects suffer from being squeezed in the time allocated to them and there is little time for the development of larger projects. There was little evidence of ICT being used to enhance these subjects.

Planning in **music** indicates that all elements of the National Curriculum are being taught. Pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm in assemblies. Teaching was satisfactory in a lesson for older pupils in which they were working in groups to compose their own short pieces. However, achievement was affected by the lack of time for them to rehearse, evaluate and improve their work. Pupils have the opportunity to receive instrumental tuition from visiting specialist teachers. Money is well spent on enriching the curriculum by numerous visits from musicians from different traditions, including classical and jazz. Since the last inspection, the role of the subject leader has been extended to include the monitoring of teaching and learning. This has enabled the co-ordinator to give relevant

support and guidance to staff. The music room provides an attractive learning environment and there is a good range of instruments in regular use throughout the school.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has good facilities for teaching the subject.
- There is a good programme of additional events and clubs.
- Pupils with special needs or behavioural difficulties are well supported and pupils with particular talents in sport are identified.
- Standards are adversely affected by unsatisfactory use of time in lessons and pupils have too few opportunities to evaluate their work.
- There are often long gaps between elements of the curriculum. This affects the development of pupils' skills.
- Too few pupils achieve the expected standard in swimming by Year 6.

Commentary

61. Only some elements of the curriculum were observed. However, planning indicates that all the elements are covered over time. Other than in swimming, pupils are on course to attain average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6, though too few pupils are working at a higher level. Residential visits and activity days provide access to challenging outdoor and adventurous pursuits.
62. Several factors constrain pupils' achievement at present. Current organisation of the timetable provides for around 30 minutes of lesson time in the hall for junior aged pupils. This can be further eroded by class management issues. The available working time is too short to develop lessons effectively and pupils' learning is affected as a result. There is limited time to rehearse and develop skills and in too few of the lessons observed was there sufficient time to allow pupils to evaluate their work. Lessons are often terminated before the planned material has been covered. The organisation of the overall curriculum framework does not consistently help continuity in pupils' learning. For example, most pupils who were involved in dance lessons during the inspection had not been taught dance for a full year. This does not provide a context which allows pupils to develop their dance skills progressively. Swimming is taught only for one term in Year 4. Not enough pupils (only around three-fifths) achieve the expected level (to swim 25 metres unaided) at that point and there is no opportunity to redress the situation later.
63. Teaching in individual lessons is often good in that teachers have good subject knowledge and manage pupils well. They have good relationships with pupils and high expectations of their behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs or behavioural difficulties are well supported by teachers. However, the overall impact of teaching is only satisfactory at best, because of the contextual factors indicated above. As a result, pupils achieve less well than they should. In some lessons, pupils are used well to demonstrate skills, but this is often rushed and evaluation is minimal. Greater rigour is needed to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of the school's expectations in correct dress for lessons.

64. There is a good programme of additional events and clubs to enrich the curriculum offered. There are good sports development links with the local high school and local sports clubs. The school identifies pupils with particular talent in physical education. The school has worked hard to improve the participation of pupils in after school clubs.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The curriculum is planned well and includes sessions of *Circle Time*, when pupils discuss issues of interest and concern to them.
- Links with outside agencies enhance the provision.

Commentary

65. The subject has been a priority in recent years and has had a positive effect on the attitudes and behaviour of pupils. The subject leader has been fully trained for her role and her expertise has been used well to provide training for all staff in school. The curriculum provided is good, including work on diet, health, sex education and drug awareness as well as personal development. Outside agencies support this work, for example, in sex education and drug awareness. 'Relate' counsellors visit school to work with pupils with emotional difficulties, who are often referred by parents. Time is allowed regularly for pupils to discuss and explore feelings and relationships and this is an important part of the school's positive approach to behaviour management. The school values the views of pupils. The well-run school council, attended and run by elected representatives from all year groups from Year 1, is a good opportunity to take part in the democratic process and a valid preparation for later life. The school was awarded the *Healthy Schools* Gold Award in July 2003 as a result of this comprehensive and successful programme.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
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	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
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	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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