

INSPECTION REPORT

THANET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kingston-upon-Hull

LEA area: Kingston-upon-Hull

Unique reference number: 117820

Headteacher: Mrs E A Butler

Lead inspector: Mr K Bardon

Dates of inspection: 22 – 24 March 2004

Inspection number: 258100

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	433
School address:	Tedworth Road Bilton Grange Estate Kingston-upon-Hull
Postcode:	HU9 4AY
Telephone number:	01482 796193
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Smith
Date of previous inspection:	1 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Thanet is a large primary school to the east of the city of Hull. There are 381 full time pupils in the 4 to 11 age range and a further 51 children attend the nursery, mainly on a part-time basis. The school draws most of its pupils from two estates of council-built properties, although about one in eight pupils live in private housing close to the school. This area around the school has a significant degree of social deprivation and the number of pupils eligible for free schools meals is above average. Three pupils are in public care. Eighty-two pupils and two nursery children have special educational needs, mainly for moderate learning or behaviour difficulties. Although this is a broadly average number, the difficulties many experience are quite marked and seven pupils and the two nursery children have statements of special educational needs. Almost all pupils are of white ethnic origin and all speak English as their first language. There are equal numbers of boys and girls in the younger classes, up to and including Year 3, but boys predominate in the older classes, particularly in Year 6. A relatively high number of pupils of all ages move to and from the school throughout the year. Many children lack basic skills when they first enter the school and their attainment at this point is well below average for their age. The school is involved in the Sure Start programme and the Intensifying Support Project (ISP), and has received the Basic Skills Quality Mark, a Healthy Schools award and the Investors in People award. New intake procedures are being trialled with some children entering Reception in September and the rest after Christmas. This is a change from the three intakes per year used previously. The school provides full day care and out-of-school care for 26 children and a breakfast club for 26. A mathematics class linked to family numeracy is provided for adults. Forty per cent of the teaching staff have changed in the last two years and the school has a significant number of teachers who are new to the profession. During the inspection, two classes were taught by temporary teachers covering for the long term absences of experienced members of staff.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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12060	Patricia Peaker	Team inspector	English French Art and design Religious education Special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Thanet Primary is a good school. Standards are around the national average and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Teachers are competent and enthusiastic, and pupils are keen to learn because they enjoy their lessons. Pupils and staff get on well, and this creates a pleasant atmosphere in which lively discussion and the sharing of ideas takes place frequently and in good spirit. Well focused leadership and effective management ensure that the school runs smoothly and that pupils' needs are met. The school spends a broadly average amount on each pupil's education and the gains pupils make represent **good value** for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By Year 6, pupils have reached standards in English and science that are better than those attained by pupils in similar schools, although achievement in writing is not as good as in reading.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 but not well enough in Years 3 to 6.
- The school successfully provides all its pupils with equal opportunities to learn.
- The good provision made for Nursery and Reception children ensures that they make a secure start to school life.
- Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the effective support they are given and make good progress.
- Strong leadership provides the school with a very clear sense of purpose and direction.
- Pupils develop very positive attitudes to learning and standards of behaviour are high.

When it was last inspected in 1998 the school had a large number of weaknesses. Since that time it has made good progress and has become a stronger school that is continuing to improve. The provision for pupils' education has developed well, thanks primarily to better quality teaching and more effective management. However, there are some shortcomings in writing and in mathematics in the junior classes that have yet to be addressed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage although, by the end of Reception, they are still some way short of the learning targets for their age because many have poor basic skills when they start in the Nursery. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is generally good. Standards in Year 2 are broadly average, but not as good in writing as they are in reading and mathematics.

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

*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.*

The grades given in the table above do not accurately reflect the positive gains that many pupils make during their time at the school. A number of factors distort the statistics, in particular the high number of pupils of various ages who leave or join the school part way through their primary education, and the significant proportion of pupils who find learning difficult because they have special educational needs. By Year 6, standards are around the national average in English and science, and compare favourably with those of pupils in similar schools to Thanet. This represents good achievement although, as with the younger pupils, writing lags behind other aspects of

English. Many pupils struggle to lay out their number work neatly and systematically, and this adversely affects achievement in mathematics. Pupils' achievement in other aspects of mathematics, such as using and applying and handling data, is good. Pupils' with special educational needs make good progress because they are given work that is appropriate and are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils behave very well and show a healthy interest in learning. They get on well with each other and with adults, and the atmosphere in school is calm and pleasant. Levels of attendance are good. Most pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning is good and, in the Nursery, it is very good. Lessons are lively and interesting and pupils readily participate in the well-planned activities the teachers provide. Teachers and teaching assistants work together very well to support all pupils. The school provides a well balanced curriculum in which all subjects receive an appropriate amount of time. Much of the work pupils are asked to do has a practical base which is well suited to the way they learn best. Pupils receive a very good level of care and welfare and their development is monitored closely. The school has a constructive partnership with parents and the local community, which has a positive effect on pupils' learning and their attitudes to education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher leads by example, purposefully moving the school forward and continually challenging staff and pupils to do their absolute best. The school is managed well by a committed team of senior staff, who work hard to ensure that it functions effectively and meets its stated aims. Governance is good. Governors are fully involved in the life and development of the school and statutory requirements are met well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the education the school provides and with the quality of teaching their children receive. Pupils enjoy school. They find their lessons interesting and regard their teachers as friendly and helpful.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do now are:

- Raise standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6 and improve pupils' performance in the national tests.
- Raise standards in writing throughout the school so that pupils achieve at least as well as they do in other aspects of English.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is **good** in the Nursery and Reception classes and in Years 1 to 6. By Year 6, with the exception of mathematics, standards generally match the national average and are often better than those attained by pupils in similar schools to Thanet.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes, many do not reach the targets for their age by the time they move into Year 1.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement is good in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science and, by Year 2 standards are at the expected levels.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well in science but not well enough in mathematics.
- Although pupils of all ages generally achieve well in English, they do not make as much progress in writing as they do in other aspects of the subject.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Test results and national assessment statistics do not provide an accurate picture of attainment and achievement in this school. Many complex factors are interacting, such as the falling attainment on entry, the core of pupils in every class who have significant special educational needs and the high level of pupil mobility. These factors make test data difficult to interpret and the evaluation of results less reliable. What is clear from pupils' work and observing them in lessons is that, overall, pupils of all ages and abilities are achieving well and making clear gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Commentary

1. In the 2003 national reading and writing tests, the results attained by Year 2 pupils' were well below the national average. In comparison with schools similar to Thanet, these results were broadly average in reading but a little below average in writing. Results in mathematics were much better. Pupils' attainment was around the national average and well above that of pupils in similar schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.2 (14.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.7 (12.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.1 (16.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Over the five-year period up to and including 2003, the pattern of test results of Year 2 pupils has been below the trend in national standards. This is a reflection of the falling attainment on entry the school is experiencing, with a far higher proportion of children joining the Nursery with poorly developed communication and social skills. It is, therefore, taking the school longer to teach pupils the basic language skills than it has in the past.
3. The positive impact of the work the school has done to raise standards in English is evident in pupils' reading and in their speaking and listening. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in these two aspects of English and, by Year 2, are attaining standards that now meet national expectations for their age. Achievement in writing for this age group is satisfactory but

standards are below average because the school still has work to do to make the teaching of writing as effective as it is for reading and speaking and listening. Standards in mathematics meet national expectations and pupils achieve well in all of the different areas of the subject. Pupils' achievement in science in Years 1 and 2 is good and standards are around the level expected, particularly in respect of pupils' enquiry skills.

4. In 2003, Year 6 pupils attained results that were below the national average in English and science but well above those of pupils in schools with a similar social and economic profile. In comparison with the results they attained when they sat the national tests as seven year olds, pupils' attainment was below average. However, only about two-thirds of the pupils who sat the tests had benefited fully from the education the school provides, and many had joined part-way through their primary education. Over the last five years English results have fluctuated considerably but showed a good improvement in 2003. Results in science have been a little up and down but have been close to the national average on three out of the five years. Results in mathematics in the Year 6 tests over the same period have been less positive and the gap between the school's performance and the national picture has widened. In 2003, results were well below the national average and weak in comparison with the results pupils attained when they were in Year 2.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.2 (25.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.7 (24.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.2 (28.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. For the reasons given earlier, there are some discrepancies between test results and pupils' actual achievement and attainment. The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 in the different aspects of English follows a similar pattern to that of younger pupils, good in reading and in speaking and listening, and satisfactory in writing. On the strength of the reading and speaking and listening, standards in English are around the national average overall, but below average in writing. Pupils achieve well in science in Years 3 to 6 and, by Year 6, standards are around the nationally expected level, with pupils' enquiry skills again showing through as a strength. Pupils achieve well in most aspects of mathematics but, in the key area of number, standards are below average and achievement barely satisfactory. Pupils' mental skills are generally sound but there are weaknesses in the way pupils record the methods they use and build up knowledge of effective calculation strategies. This is an important deficit and makes standards in mathematics below average overall.

Other aspects of standards and achievement

6. In 2003, Year 6 pupils' test results met the targets the school had set for attainment in English at both the nationally expected level and the higher level. However, results in mathematics were well short of the target for the nationally expected level, although the higher level target was met. The 2004 targets have been set at a level above last year's results and offer an appropriate level of challenge, most significantly in mathematics. Currently, pupils are still some way short of the targets but the school has strategies in place to give the intensive support that many need prior to the tests.
7. When they first enter the school, many children lack the basic skills they need to learn effectively. During their time in the Foundation Stage classes, children achieve well in all areas of learning but they have a considerable amount of ground to make up. Consequently, despite the good provision made for their learning, a significant proportion of pupils are unlikely to attain the Early Learning Goals (the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception) before they move into Year 1.

8. Standards in information and communication technology are around those expected of primary age pupils, and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement in religious education is also satisfactory and the attainment of most infant and junior pupils meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in art and design, music, geography and history meet national expectations in both Year 2 and Year 6 and, throughout the school, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. It is not possible from the small number of lessons seen in design and technology and physical education to make secure judgements of the standards pupils' attain. However, the lessons seen, pupils' work and displays around the school left a favourable impression of pupils' achievements in these subjects.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the support they receive is structured well and they are set appropriate but challenging targets for their learning. In both Year 2 and Year 6, girls have tended to do better than boys in the National Curriculum English tests by a margin that is much the same as that which occurs in many schools. However, the work that girls and boys complete during lessons is of a similar quality which suggests that the gender differences arise because girls apply themselves better in the tests than boys. Although the school gives due consideration to pupils who may be gifted or talented, to date it has been unable to identify any that fall into either of these two categories.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships with others are **very good**. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils make clear and sustained progress in their personal development because the school makes good provision overall for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave very well in all areas of the school, as a result of the high expectations and warm and caring relationships that exist between all members of the school family.
- The school is a happy place. Consequently, pupils enjoy learning and have very positive attitudes to their work.
- Attendance has improved in response to the school's positive initiatives. Pupils arrive in plenty of time for the start of the school day.
- There is very significant development of pupils' social skills during their time at the school and they leave as thoughtful and perceptive individuals.

Commentary

10. Throughout the school day pupils show very positive attitudes towards their learning and a real enjoyment in being at school. The pleasant atmosphere that prevails stems from the healthy relationships that are formed between staff and pupils, and between the pupils themselves. Pupils respond very well to the challenge that lessons provide because teachers use a variety of teaching styles and stimuli to ensure that pupils are involved, interested and motivated. Pupils' enthusiasm is a clear indication that they very much want to do their best and, with very few exceptions, they work very hard towards the targets the teachers have set. The majority of pupils of all ages cooperate very well in pairs and groups, sharing ideas and helping each other. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the adults that support them and try very hard to do their best.
11. Good behaviour is given very high priority in the school and, with few exceptions, pupils conform to the high standards expected. When consulted before the inspection, parents and pupils expressed some concerns relating to the behaviour of a small minority of pupils. Staff help these pupils to understand that they have to behave well in order to be able to participate fully in school life. The mutual trust and respect between pupils and teachers, backed up by caring and firm help, ensures that incidents of disruptive behaviour are rare and are quickly

resolved. Although the school has a number of pupils whose behaviour has the potential to adversely affect the learning of others, this does not occur and the school is calm and orderly.

Exclusions

12. There were a number of fixed term exclusions during the last year but these concerned a relatively small number of pupils who had difficulty adhering to the school's well established code of conduct. Many of these pupils have since left the school and the number of exclusions this year is much reduced.

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	370	38	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

13. Pupils' personal development is good overall. Many children arrive in the Nursery with very weak social skills and with little understanding of how to communicate others. Teachers and teaching assistants in the Foundation Stage classes give the development of these personal skills a high priority. Children gradually become more aware of others and learn how to relate to them. The provision the school makes for pupils' social development is of a particularly high standard. Throughout their time in the school, pupils are encouraged to do things together and to take full account of how their actions affect those around them. During well managed class discussions, pupils are able to share views and discuss matters that may divide them, in a constructive and positive way. As a result, they become socially aware individuals who get on well and who have respect for the rights of others.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 94.4%

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	School data	0.7
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.

14. Attendance is good and improving as result of the success the school is having in motivating its pupils. All pupils are aware of the school target for their attendance and make great efforts not to let down the staff or their classmates by their absence, even when they are genuinely ill! There is very little lateness amongst pupils and the majority of parents ensure their children arrive on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides its pupils with a **good** quality of education. Effective teaching is combined with a well structured curriculum, high quality care and welfare and constructive links between home and school.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6. Teachers make regular assessments of pupils' work and use the information well when planning lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships between teachers and pupils make for lively, interactive lessons. Teachers manage classrooms well and generate an atmosphere that is conducive to effective learning.
- Very good teaching in the nursery provides the children with a stimulating start to school but poor manipulative skills often slow their learning.
- Teachers have good knowledge of most subjects, although there are some weaknesses in the teaching of writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- Lessons are planned thoroughly with due thought given to the needs of all pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team, and provide good support for pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.
- Pupils readily play an active part in lessons and are prepared to think for themselves.
- Teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly but there are some inconsistencies in the quality of marking across teachers and subjects.

Commentary

15. Across the school as a whole there has been good improvement in the teaching and learning since the last inspection. This is particularly evident in the Reception and Year 1 classes. Parents regard the quality of teaching their children receive as good, and with justification.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	11 (22%)	27 (54%)	11 (22%)	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.

16. Very good teaching in the Nursery ensures that, from the outset, children encounter a stimulating learning environment which motivates them to learn and puts them on the path to acquiring the basic skills that so many of them lack. Adult support from nursery nurses, teaching assistants and adult volunteers is extremely well organised, ensuring that children have continuous help for their learning. The teaching in the Reception class is good, but not quite as effective as in Nursery because the teacher is relatively new to the profession and is still working towards achieving the high quality of practice of her more experienced colleague. Despite teachers' best efforts, in both classes children's ability to handle basic tools such as pencils, paint brushes and small pieces of equipment is weak, and this adversely affects many aspects of their learning.
17. The teaching and learning continues in this positive vein throughout the rest of the school. Teachers are enthusiastic and have a good understanding of how to motivate the pupils. They talk to them in a pleasant manner and receive good response in return. This produces a positive atmosphere in lessons that encourages pupils to pay close attention to what is being said by teachers or other pupils, and to involve themselves fully in the activities. Because they

are interested, pupils concentrate well and are fully prepared to put forward ideas, make suggestions and try to work things out for themselves. In subjects such as science this is helping pupils develop a level of independence as investigators that will hold them in good stead in their future learning.

18. Joint planning by teachers in parallel classes helps ensure good quality lessons with activities that build progressively on what pupils have learned previously. In most subjects, teachers' knowledge is good and the tasks pupils are set are well focused and productive. There are some weaknesses in writing particularly in the way pupils are taught to structure their written work, and in the teaching of spelling. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught effective mental strategies for making mathematical calculations but they are not taught how to structure and lay out written answers well enough.
19. Teachers use effective procedures to maintain class discipline, which are based mainly on the strength of the relationships they have built up with pupils. When a more stringent approach is needed, teachers and teaching assistants apply the school's behaviour policy well and disruptions to pupils' learning are minimal. This allows lessons to flow and pupils to make the best use of the time available. The effective partnerships and practices that are firmly established between teachers and teaching assistants act as good role models for pupils. Pupils know that if they need help it is readily available and accessible, and this encourages them to put themselves forward and become actively involved. Teachers give due consideration to the needs of all pupils when structuring their lessons, helping to ensure their full inclusion and giving equality of opportunity. All adults have clear roles to play and lesson plans show clearly what each group of pupils are expected to learn.
20. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teaching is well focused on pupils' needs and the targets on individual learning plans are clear and realistic. Teachers make good use of these targets when planning lessons, which take full account of the levels of need. The success in the teaching lies in the way teachers present new work, carefully getting over the concept, reinforcing the idea through practice and then giving pupils the chance to apply their new learning in group work. Grouping by attainment for literacy works well for these pupils. The careful planning of lessons ensures that pupils are set appropriate challenges. Knowledgeable teaching assistants support them well in their work. In lessons, they explain to pupils in their group what they have to do and often support them through the small steps of learning that these pupils require. Consequently, their learning is good.
21. There has been good improvement in the quality of assessment since the last inspection. Teachers evaluate pupils' learning regularly and thoroughly, and use the information to guide their lesson planning. As a result, work is well matched to what pupils need to learn next and builds progressively on the gains that have been made so far. Assessment procedures in the Nursery and Reception classes are very good and produce a clear record of each child's achievements in the different areas of learning, as well as providing information to guide the planning of appropriate activities.
22. In most subjects, the marking of pupils' work is constructive, with the best examples balancing praise with pointers to further improvement. The marking of mathematics in the older classes often lacks these important directions, mainly because it is not always easy from the way pupils lay out their work for teachers to spot just where they are making mistakes. Occasionally, work in different subjects is not marked closely enough and, in some cases, not at all. However, this is almost entirely confined to the times when classes have been taught by temporary teachers employed on a short term basis.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum that is enriched by a range of additional activities. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The quality and quantity of resources contribute well to the demands of the curriculum and the accommodation is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is planned very well and has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection.
- The curriculum is well rounded and has substance because subjects are linked together well.
- Weaknesses in the mathematics curriculum in Years 3 to 6 adversely affect pupils' attainment
- Support staff make a very positive contribution to the learning opportunities provided.
- The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to and benefit fully from the curriculum it provides.

Commentary

23. The school's emphasis on promoting pupils' personal, social and health education and on teaching the importance of working and living together has a powerful impact on the learning culture in the school. Pupils have regular, planned opportunities to develop greater self-awareness and confidence by talking over a wide range of issues, including those that they face as part of everyday life. The notes in the suggestion box to the school council show how sensible and mature pupils are becoming as a result of the importance placed on this area of learning by the school.
24. A strength of the curriculum lies in the way the school links the work planned across subjects to enhance pupils' learning over a wide range of skills and knowledge. Pupils in Year 4 had been studying a village in India as part of their work in geography. As the topic came to an end the teacher introduced work on multi-media presentations to link the geography with ICT. Links between science and art and design brought to life the forces Year 1 has learned about in science as they set about the task of shaping clay into square tiles. Work done in subjects such as science, design and technology, history and geography provides good opportunities for pupils to write in a meaningful and purposeful way. The school is continuing to seek ways in which the curriculum can become more innovative for its pupils. The interesting curriculum is regularly enhanced with additional activities, visits and visitors. The school introduces pupils to modern foreign languages by providing all those in Years 1 to 6 with a weekly French lesson. These are well organised and much enjoyed by the pupils.
25. At the time of the last inspection the school had a Nursery and a Reception class but, for the most part, the two worked as separate units. The introduction of national guidelines for the Foundation Stage of learning meant that changes had to be implemented to bring the two into a position where they worked closely together. Through the skill and hard work of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator this has been achieved very successfully and marks a significant improvement for the school since the time of the last inspection. Joint planning has been introduced that is effective in delivering a vibrant and challenging curriculum for the children.
26. Although the curriculum for mental work in mathematics is effective there are no consistent procedures for pupils to adopt for recording calculations in their books. It is, therefore, difficult to see how they have worked out answers, and it is equally difficult for the pupils, particularly those in the Years 3 to 6, to learn and use consistently a method for answering questions. When pupils take tests they are at a disadvantage because they have no ready point of reference to the methods they used in class. There is a lack of a whole school approach to how to carry out and record mathematical operations so that the pupils can organise work appropriately and check their results.

27. The school is fortunate in having a large number of high quality support staff. Their contribution to pupils' learning is considerable and enables many pupils, who would otherwise have been falling behind, to benefit fully from what is taught in the school. Not only do they contribute by supporting pupils in lessons but they also provide ideas, with a number of them join in the planning for parts of the curriculum. The good relationship between support staff and pupils shows that the pupils very much appreciate their help and guidance.
28. The school has recently undergone extensive improvement to the interior and now provides an attractive environment for both staff and pupil's. This, along with an exciting external playing area, creates a learning environment that is welcoming and stimulating. It is further enhanced by high quality displays and resources. The school is maintained to a high standard both internally and externally.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **very good** provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and **good** provision for their support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils in the life of the school through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school places considerable importance on the health, safety and protection of the children in its care and all the necessary procedures are in place.
- Pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses are well understood by the staff and information from assessment is used to offer well-targeted academic support for pupils of all abilities.
- Pupils feel safe and cared for in the knowledge that they can approach adults with any difficulties they may have and that they will always receive sensitive help.
- The support of teaching assistants adds considerable depth to the school's ability to provide pupils with effective academic and pastoral support.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in their learning and personal development.
- There are a number of constructive strategies in place to ensure pupils are able to make a positive contribution to the development of the school.

Commentary

29. The environment in the school is clean, warm and secure as a result of the actions taken to ensure pupils safety and comfort. Every effort is made through risk assessments to ensure hazards are minimised or eliminated altogether. The school is keen to promote healthy living and works hard to establish this as a key element of school life. The arrangements for child protection are fully in place and the school works very effectively with the agencies involved.
30. Staff have very good relationships with pupils and this, allied to the well planned and managed assessment procedures, ensures that they are knowledgeable about pupils' achievement and development. The numerous initiatives undertaken by the school to help support pupils and improve their progress successfully ensures that, whatever pupils' abilities or needs, they are individually provided for by the school. This applies equally to pastoral care, where the school works hard to lessen some of the unfavourable conditions present in the lives of many pupils to ensure they are fully included in everything the school has to offer.
31. The teaching assistants, in partnership with teachers, ensure that all pupils have constant access to someone with whom they can discuss any difficulties, be they problems with learning or of a more personal nature. The support teaching assistants provide is sensitive and confident, and enables pupils, including those with behaviour problems, to be as fully involved as possible in all aspects of school life.

32. The care and support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and teaching assistants know well the pupils they work with. The school's values are closely reflected in the way that pupils with special educational needs are given opportunities to take part in all school activities. Their contributions are valued highly and their achievements recognised. The teacher with responsibility for managing provision for special educational needs keeps good records of pupils' progress as they move through the school.
33. Pupils feel confident that their opinions are valued, and having their views listened to does much for their self-esteem. Staff, through the school council, are made aware of the concerns pupils periodically raise about aspects of school life and, in partnership, they are able to tackle them in a positive and corporate way. Similarly, many of the more contentious issues, such as bullying, are regularly and deliberately raised during class discussion time, so that pupils can discuss their concerns and be aware of the measures in place to combat any problems.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school works well in partnership with parents and the local community. Links with other schools and colleges are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good levels of formal communication with parents about children's learning and the day-to-day life of the school. However, informal contact between the parents of pupils in Years 1 to 6 and the school is somewhat limited.
- The school encourages parents to become involved and play a full part in their children's learning, especially with reading.
- The school provides constructive family learning for parents and children in literacy and numeracy.
- There is considerable involvement with the wider community through the curriculum and as part of pupils' personal development.

Commentary

34. Parents feel well informed about what their children are learning in the classroom. These are similar findings to those reported at the time of the last inspection. Parents are given a range of opportunities to attend meetings about the curriculum, their children's involvement in the National Curriculum tests and progress in their learning. In addition, regular newsletters give a range of interesting and useful information about the school and provide the headteacher with the opportunity to put forward any concerns and elicit the help of parents. However, parents feel they have little opportunity to talk informally to staff, and this is especially so for some of the parents who work part time. They appreciate that staff are very busy but are reluctant to make an appointment as this makes the meeting formal and, for some parents, very difficult to contemplate. That said, parents feel that staff are friendly and that, if they had a burning issue they needed to discuss they would have no hesitation in approaching the school.
35. The school encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning in a number of ways, including a Reading Challenge that encourages parents to read with their children on a daily basis. This is proving successful with over half the parents, but the school is having difficulty in recruiting the remainder and involving them in this very worthwhile project. The Family Learning Initiative has proved successful for some parents and has provided the school with a number of talented support staff who have a good knowledge and understanding of the local community.
36. Parents of pupils with special educational needs receive regular information about their children's progress from class teachers and the teacher with responsibility for managing this

area of provision. Parents and teachers come together twice a year to review pupils' individual education plans and to identify the next steps in their learning. This partnership ensures that all those with a vested interest in the pupils' education are involved and informed.

37. Pupils are encouraged to take part in as many of the community events and as much of the additional provision the school makes as possible. These events and activities provide a valuable extension to the sporting curriculum and increase the confidence of pupils when appearing in front of a large audience. The local community makes use of the school premises and is very supportive of the fund-raising initiatives taking place in the school. The Breakfast and After-School Clubs extend well the school's community provision, particularly as these continue into the school holiday periods and become the local Holiday Club.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of the leadership and management is **good overall**. The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good. Governance is good. The whole school team is committed to the smooth running of the school and to addressing its needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides the school with very clear and purposeful leadership.
- The conscientious governing body makes an important contribution to strategic decision-making.
- There is good team spirit and shared commitment to improvement from all staff.
- The provision for special educational needs is organised and managed well.
- Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good.
- Staff changes have had a negative impact on the continuity of curriculum monitoring and evaluation in some subjects.
- The school's finances are managed efficiently.

Commentary

38. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and ensures that the school's work reflects its aims and values and has clear direction. Since the last inspection the headteacher, with the support of governors and senior staff, has made many positive changes to the school that have increased its effectiveness. Her drive and commitment have encouraged the school community to aim high. Parents know that any concerns they may have will be dealt with fairly and promptly, and that the headteacher will represent the school to the highest standard at every opportunity. Major initiatives have been adopted to bring about school improvement through rigorous self-evaluation. The headteacher's belief in strong supportive teams and clear, functional systems ensures that staff and pupils feel valued and work together to raise standards. There has been good improvement in leadership and management since the last inspection.
39. Governors are fully involved in the school and have a good understanding of their role in monitoring its work and planning for improvement. The information they receive from the headteacher is extremely comprehensive and gives an honest reflection of the schools' achievements. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They carry out their responsibilities diligently and are actively involved in the determining the strategic direction of the school. The governing body benefits from the expertise of its key members and uses this well to inform staffing, training and financial decisions.
40. The management of special educational needs is good. The schools' strong ethos of valuing its members ensures that care is taken to meet the needs of all pupils, including the large number who arrive at various stages in their primary education, often with very specific learning needs. School leadership is highly committed to inclusion for all pupils and promotes equality of opportunity very effectively through all aspects of the school's work. The Investor in

People status the school enjoys is reflected clearly in the way members of staff receive support for their professional development. The training provided for teaching assistants has made a good contribution to their knowledge and understanding, and this is reflected in the effective way in which they support the pupils.

41. Senior managers make good use of their expertise to support and develop effective teams. New and recently qualified teachers are supported well. The deputy headteacher has been absent for some considerable time but other senior members of staff, particularly the assistant headteacher, have taken on additional responsibilities and carried them out well, so that the impact on the school has been kept to a minimum. Subject leadership is good in some subjects where staff are experienced and satisfactory in the others, where teachers are relatively new to their roles. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very effective. The provision made for children's learning in the Nursery and Reception classes is extremely well organised and makes maximum use of the adult help available. There have been frequent changes in the leadership of mathematics, which has had an adverse effect on monitoring and evaluation of the subject and the standards attained. Consequently, the school is less sure of what is needed to bring about improvement than it is in many other subjects. Performance management procedures are firmly established and linked to key areas of school improvement. Continuous professional development is encouraged and organised strategically according to school and staff needs. Staff clearly know they have an important role to play in school improvement.
42. Senior staff carry out frequent evaluations of the school's performance. Data is analysed thoroughly and teacher's planning and performance in lessons is monitored regularly. Some analysis of pupils' work to identify progress and standards achieved is carried out but this is not organised as well as other evaluation strategies. Consequently the information gained is less useful than that from other sources because the implications are not as clear. The school improvement plan, which was judged to be weak at the last inspection is now good and serves as a useful tool in focussing the direction of the school. The Intensifying Support Project in which the school is involved, and raising achievement plan, have given the school several targets to achieve this year, some of which have not been set directly by the school. Next year the headteacher is keen to collate a single overall plan with separately defined actions that are more manageable and do not overlap. This is a sound decision which will provide a sharper focus for improvement. A strength of the school is the positive manner in which staff embrace and are involved in change, following whole-school and governor discussions. Pupils are aware of the drive to improve the school and gain much from the good role models that staff provide.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1017139	Balance from previous year	18670
Total expenditure	1009821	Balance carried forward to the next year	25988
Expenditure per pupil	2596		

43. Financial management is good. Governors work closely with the headteacher to ensure the principles of best value are applied in all decisions. More recently, funds have been allocated to developing the learning environment to help raise standards and provide a quality, working environment for pupils and staff. This has been highly successful and pupils are highly appreciative of the pleasant surroundings in which they work. The school's clear priorities for development are securely linked to funding. The school receives valuable financial support from a local authority bursar and financial records are kept in good order. The headteacher and governors are determined that pupils have high quality provision. Resources are used

well. The headteacher is enterprising in applying for funding or support through bid applications. This helped the school set up additional beneficial facilities for pupils and families such as the Breakfast Club.

44. The high degree of pupil mobility, very low attainment on entry and significant proportion of pupils who have special educational needs provides the school with a constant challenge in its efforts to raise standards. A major asset for the school is the very good support from teaching assistants. Governors made a decision to increase spending for non-teaching staff, to support targeted pupils in classes. The appropriateness and effectiveness of this decision is reflected clearly in pupils' good achievements.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

When children first enter the Nursery the majority have skills that are well below those often found at this age in all the areas of learning. Children have particularly poor speech. They lack self-confidence, have very low self-esteem and find co-operating with other children difficult. Their understanding of the world in which they live is weak and a high proportion find physical skills, such as holding a pencil or a pair of scissors, very difficult. The provision made for children in the Nursery is **very good** and in the Reception class it is **good**. By the time they leave the Reception class, despite having made good progress, a significant number will not have achieved all the early learning goals. Children with special educational needs make good progress, which matches that of other children.

Leadership in the Foundation Stage is **excellent**. Staff work as a united team and share the same aims, the very best provision for every child. Skilful organisation and staff management mean that children receive consistently good support for their learning, with parent helpers making a valuable contribution. The overall quality of teaching is **good** with significant strengths in personal and social development. In the Nursery, the teaching is often very good. Strengths of the Foundation Stage include the high quality assessment procedures and the use that staff make of this information. Teachers and the high quality support staff monitor and assess the work of the children continually. They use the information from their assessments very well to plan activities that meet the needs of the children and make constructive links between the areas of learning.

A very strong aspect of the work of the Foundation Stage is the close relationship that is forged with parents. Staff make every effort to involve parents in the learning process and to provide them with good quality information and the help they need. As parents arrive to bring or collect their children there is an obvious feeling of confidence and trust in the teachers and support staff. The provision made for children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school and very good improvement has been made since the time of the last report.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers promote pupils' learning in this area in all aspects of their work.
- Relationships between children and adults are very good and help children develop confidence and self-esteem.
- Children respond well and try to work in a mature and sensible manner at all times.
- Routines are well established and children know and understand them.

Commentary

45. The promotion of children's personal development is very good. It is given a high priority by staff from the moment the children enter the Nursery, and this is continued through Reception. Children are taught what is expected of them consistently and sensitively. Routines are established in all the areas of learning and the children try hard to adhere to them. In their day-to-day activities the children are quite independent and will organise themselves for activities. They work together in a sensible and supportive manner. During an outdoor play activity one girl asked another girl, in a very polite manner, could she have a go on the bike? All the adults are very good role models for the children. They join in activities with them, encouraging them to take turns and to play together. They use praise and encouragement

well, which helps to raise children's self esteem and confidence with adults. Teaching and learning are both very good and children achieve well, but they are coming from a low starting point and a significant minority will still be a little short of the early learning goals when they move into Year 1.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop a keen interest in books and stories.
- Listening skills improve considerably.
- The pronunciation of words and clarity of speech continues to be a problem for many.

Commentary

46. In this area of learning children achieve well, although a significant number are not likely to reach all the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Teaching and learning are very good in the Nursery and good in the Reception class. Activities are carefully planned to meet the needs of the children and to develop a love of the language of stories. The story of the *Magic Locket* fascinated them and well-timed questions from the teacher engaged them in thinking about what is going to happen next. They all sat in awe as the teacher produced the locket from inside the book and engaged them in an activity in which they passed the locket around and said what they would wish for. By the time they are in the Reception class many children enjoy curling up on a chair in the reading area and becoming absorbed in a book. Throughout the Foundation Stage the children are taught to listen carefully, both to the adults and to each other, and develop into good listeners who can follow instruction and get on with the required task. This is a considerable step forward from the time they enter the Nursery, when they find listening very difficult and have a very short concentration span. Levels of speech are very poor when children first arrive. Responses to questions are usually met by a finger pointing at the answer. Children asked what they would like to put on their biscuit responded by pointing to the grapes or the tomatoes, and it was difficult for the teacher to get an oral response. Although children achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage, many still have weaknesses in this area and a lack of confidence in speaking. Many pronounce words wrongly, and this has an adverse effect on their spelling when they come to write. Poor manipulative skills also make the formation of letters difficult.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use a good range of very practical activities that capture the interest of pupils.
- Children have a good knowledge of numbers up to ten.
- The children's restricted range of language inhibits their ability to solve practical problems.

Commentary

47. Although a significant number of children are not likely to reach all the early learning goals, achievement in this area of learning is good. The good teaching is based on children learning in a wide range of practical ways. In the Nursery the teacher uses ladybirds and puts spots onto the wings. The children can then count the spots and show the number on the ladybird number line. In Reception, children produce collage pictures to show things that are full, half

full and empty. Throughout the Foundation Stage, teachers seize every opportunity to develop children's skills in counting. During the warm-up session of a physical development lesson the children moved with great enjoyment to a piece of music and, as they performed each movement they counted the number of times they performed it, so becoming very confident in counting up to ten. In the Reception class, the staff continue to re-enforce counting so that the children become familiar and confident with numbers. By the end of the Reception year, many of the children still have a limited vocabulary and lack confidence in speaking. It is, therefore, not easy for them to be able to explain how they have got an answer or how they would set about solving a particular mathematical problem.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan an interesting range of activities to help the children to understand more about the world around them.
- Children show a keen interest in investigating features of living things.
- Many children lack a secure knowledge of their own environment and the area in which they live.

Commentary

48. Although there are still limitations on the amount of knowledge and understanding children have when they leave the reception class, they achieve well in this area due to the practical way in which the learning is presented and the good quality of the teaching. In the Nursery, the children have been growing a sunflower, pumpkin seeds, beans and cress. Many of them have never tasted cress so teachers provide spread and crackers to give them this experience and to help children establish links between things that grow and what they eat. In the Reception class, the children listen to the story of *One Snowy Night* and this leads to learning about nocturnal animals and the relationship between day and night. In the Nursery, children display a real sense of awe and wonder as they dig with their fingers into the mound of soil looking for worms. They are fascinated as they let the worms crawl over their fingers, and then study the worms with a microscope. This kind of activity also provides rich opportunities to introduce new words to the children and to encourage them to find ways to describe how the worms feel and how they move. Although the Foundation Stage is rich in experiences in this area of learning, the children begin with such limited knowledge and understanding that there are still areas for development, particularly in extending how much children know about their own culture and beliefs and those of other people.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy all aspects of their physical development.
- Although they make good progress children still find controlling small tools and implements difficult by the end of the Reception year.

Commentary

49. Children achieve well in this area due to the good quality of the teaching. Children thoroughly enjoy the opportunities provided in the outside play area. There they have the opportunity to become skilled in riding wheeled toys along pathways and controlling them around the corners. At all times the teaching assistants support the children in their learning, engaging them in conversation and developing their ideas with advice and suggestions. In the school hall the Nursery children are fearless when using the large apparatus and carry out many different manoeuvres with confidence. They take great delight in demonstrating to the rest of the class what they have been doing. On entering school the majority of children have very poor manipulative skills and activities are regularly planned to help them to improve. For example, children who find holding scissors and cutting difficult are given tasks in which this is a key element. In spite of all the hard work put in by the teachers and the support staff, as they move into Year 1 there are still a significant number of children who find controlling equipment, such as pencils, quite a challenge.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make regular and effective use of role play to develop children's imagination.
- There are good links between creative work and other areas of learning.
- Poor manipulative skills adversely affect pupils' progress.

Commentary

50. In both the Nursery and the Reception classes the role-play areas are a prominent feature, much enjoyed by the children. In the Nursery there is the garden centre with an adjoining florist's shop, and in the Reception class the area is a well equipped laboratory where the children wear protective masks and carry out experiments. Although the areas themselves are an attractive feature for children the success of this provision lies in the frequency and quality of the adult intervention. In the florist's shop a support teacher answers the telephone and tells the little girl, who is the shop assistant, that they have to make a bouquet by lunchtime, and the lady wants only red and white flowers. From the huge number of flowers in the shop the girl then has to select those that are red or white. By intervening in this way role-play becomes a means of counting money, learning new words and acquiring new skills. Much of the creative work the children do is linked to other aspects of their learning and makes a good contribution to their understanding. After reading the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk* the children make lively paintings of the characters and, as part of their study of insects, they use re-cycled materials to create wonderful creatures that hang down from the classroom ceiling. Achievement in this area of learning is good, as is the quality of teaching. However, as with the other areas of learning, significant weaknesses in children's basic skills adversely affects their attainment, and a significant proportion of children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of Reception.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school, pupils' achievement in reading and speaking and listening is good.
- Attainment in writing by Year 2 and Year 6 is below average and, while achievement is generally satisfactory, there is scope for further improvement.
- The quality of planning, teaching and assessment is having a positive effect on standards and achievement.
- Leadership and management is focused and informed.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and pupils apply themselves well.

Commentary

51. Standards in English are improving due to the close attention the school gives to the subject. When comparisons are made with similar schools, the attainment of Year 6 pupils in the national tests is good. Considering the poor communication and language skills many children possess when they first join the school, and the difficulties a significant proportion have with learning, the standards attained by pupils in Year 6 represent good achievement overall and are the outcome of effective teaching. Throughout the school, the strengths of pupils' English are in their ability to read accurately and with understanding and the skills they acquire in speaking and listening.
52. In Years 1 and 2, there has been careful targeting of strategies to improve pupils' reading. Weak areas have been identified and addressed through daily phonics lessons, pupils' individual targets, organised groups and additional support from teaching assistants. Pupils in Year 2 are now reading at a in line with national expectations. All have good attitudes to reading and are very eager to share books with an adult. Pupils are clear about the strategies they need to use to work out how to read unfamiliar words and long sentences. They know how to use books for information and show familiarity with contents pages, a glossary and an index. By Year 6, many pupils are fluently reading texts of their own choice. They demonstrate good attitudes to their reading and declare personal preferences for particular writers and types of text. The majority of pupils understand how to locate information in the library. The school has established an initiative called 'Reading Challenge' to improve levels of achievement in literacy and to encourage reading at home. Parents have been made aware of the challenge and a constructive partnership between school and home has been established.
53. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are broadly average and achievement is good. Throughout the school, pupils generally listen carefully when others are speaking. They are eager to make their own contributions in discussions and response to questions. Effective strategies such as *talking partners* and planning in groups for a presentation or a science investigation promote pupils' skills, and their confidence as speakers is enhanced when they present their findings to the class. Teachers work hard to help pupils extend their vocabulary by repeating and explaining unfamiliar words, highlighting specific vocabulary and giving them regular opportunities to debate issues relevant to the school in a lively and enjoyable way.
54. Current standards in writing in Year 2 and in Year 6 are below those expected nationally, mainly because pupils do not spell well enough, and older pupils often forget to structure their work correctly, for example by dividing long pieces of text into paragraphs. Although in Years 1 and 2 key words are made available when pupils are writing, pupils are not always directed to using them. The practice of using support and reference to ensure spelling is accurate is not yet embedded in pupils' work. In the older classes, and particularly in Year 6, teachers

use effective strategies to help pupils develop a better and more creative style of writing. However, on occasions, insufficient reference is made to the importance of layout and format, an element that is crucial if pupils are to attain higher grades.

55. In the lessons seen, most pupils were achieving well in response to the careful provision teachers made for their learning. Teaching is good and, on occasions, very good throughout the school. Lesson planning is detailed, thorough and carefully structured to meet the needs of the pupils. This is of particular importance to the significant number in each class who have special educational needs, often because they have difficulties with literacy. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning, especially to that of pupils with special educational needs, who they often support. As a result of the efforts of teachers and teaching assistants and the application they themselves show, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond positively by showing very good attitudes to their learning. They take a pride in being able to read and communicate effectively and readily use these skills whenever they are needed.
56. Management of the subject is good. The curriculum co-ordinator has a clear understanding of pupils' needs. Good planning for development results from thorough analysis and evaluation of the current strengths and weaknesses in the provision. This, together with the good marking and high quality assessment procedures, allows teachers to build on and extend what pupils have already learned. Thus, there is a strong and effective focus on improvement throughout the school, which is having a positive impact on achievement and standards. Resources to support pupils' learning are good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. The use and application of literacy in other subjects is good. The school is committed to developing literacy skills in a wide range of contexts and is successful in doing this. Examples of literacy skills being utilised and developed can be found in most subjects, and teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to plan, record or evaluate their work using their own words. In science, for example, pupils construct written plans of how they will carry out an investigation and, in design and technology, they write thoughtful evaluations of what they have constructed and note carefully how improvements could be made.

Modern foreign languages - French

58. The teaching of French is an established feature of the school's curriculum. It is led by a well-qualified and enthusiastic teacher. All pupils have some contact with this language development but, during the inspection, it was possible to observe only two lessons. No overall judgements are, therefore, possible. In the Year 6 lesson, pupils gave an impressive display of their ability to converse in French and the teacher took care to ensure that all pupils participated. Key teaching points were made in English but pupils then had many opportunities to practise speaking in French in a variety of situations, including role play. Pupils demonstrated both their understanding and their ability to convey meaning. They clearly enjoyed their learning, and the provision enriches and enhances their school life. Displays in classrooms and corridors are motivating, instructional and interactive.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards pupils attained in lessons are better than test results indicate.
- The teaching of mental mathematics is often good but the setting out and organising of written calculations does not help pupils to improve or correct their misconceptions.
- Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
- Pace in lessons is good and lesson plans are adapted fully to meet pupils' needs.
- The marking and assessment of pupils' recorded work does not provide them with sufficient understanding of how to improve.

Commentary

59. By Year 2, pupils attain standards that are broadly average in all aspects of mathematics, and their achievements are good. Standards by Year 6 are below average because of weaknesses in pupils' number work. However, pupils' attainment is generally better than test results would suggest because the majority can use a satisfactory range of mental strategies and have a solid understanding of how to use and apply what they know. Pupils' attainment in shape work, measurement and data handling is around the level expected and, in these elements, achievement is good. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is often good because teachers introduce mathematical ideas clearly and in context.
60. Although there has been satisfactory improvement in most aspects of mathematics, particularly in pupils' mental skills, this subject has not developed as well as many others and there are weaknesses that require attention. The school has focused on developing pupils' mental capacity, and encouraging them to verbalise their methods of making calculations. As a result, the majority of pupils of all ages are now using sound methods when calculating in their heads. Pupils confidently describe how they have reached their answers or how they might begin to solve a problem. It is then something of a puzzle to the school when Year 6 pupils do not perform well in the national mathematics tests. A scrutiny of workbooks highlights that the decision to give pupils jotters to record their calculations is adversely affecting pupils' understanding of how to organise their ideas and methods. This does not adversely affect attainment in Years 1 and 2, where there is less recording, but hinders pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 because there is little of substance to which teachers and pupils can refer. Routines for setting out work in an organised format are not taught well enough in the older classes and there is not enough insistence on pupils producing high quality work through the consistent use of techniques such as using a ruler to draw lines precisely for measuring or when drawing shapes.
61. This weakness is counter balanced by positive attributes in teaching and learning. Teachers often relate mathematical problems to real-life situations. This inspires pupils and helps them understand the use of mathematics in the every day world. The pace of lessons is generally good and teachers make full use of the time available. Lesson plans follow the guidelines in the National Numeracy Strategy and are adapted according to pupils' needs. This ensures that the work pupils are asked to do is appropriate and builds on what they have learned previously. Consequently, pupils rarely get bogged down with work that is too difficult or get bored because it is too easy. Teachers provide appropriate challenge for the more able pupils and provide different activities for those who need more practice and help. Thoughtfully structured support programmes have a positive impact on the attainment of targeted pupils, who make clear progress as a result of the focused teaching they receive. In general, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but are better in Years 1 and 2 than in the older classes. The teacher's positive relationship with pupils helps to motivate those who find mathematics difficult. Pupils always try to do their best, to improve their skills. Standards of behaviour in lessons are good and lessons are well managed.
62. Although teachers' assessment of pupils' progress over time is satisfactory there are weaknesses in marking, and the school's marking policy is not followed closely enough. The positive and constructive comments that teachers make when marking subjects such as

science occur too infrequently in mathematics. Work that is completed when a temporary supply teacher leads the class is often not marked. This is unsatisfactory and does not help identify progress or give pupils the opportunity to rectify mistakes. Pupils are set individual targets for their learning, but too often, and particularly in the older classes, they do not have secure understanding of what they need to do to improve.

63. Subject leadership and management are developing following the return of the coordinator from secondment. During his absence there was some constructive leadership from the acting coordinator which has had a positive effect on pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2. Much of the schools' development has been directed by the Intensifying Support Project, which has had a satisfactory impact on standards of teaching and learning. Resources are good overall and there is plenty of equipment for group and individual activities. Whilst there has been a focus on teaching of mathematics through the support project, and test data is scrutinised carefully by senior management, the procedures used by the coordinator to monitor policy and practice lack rigour. The school has organised family numeracy sessions in the past, which help parents to develop their own skills and encourage them to support their children's learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Teachers use a satisfactory range of opportunities to enable pupils to practice and extend their mathematical skills in different subjects. Pupils regularly record their data in tables when carrying out science investigations and present the information in charts or graphs to aid evaluation. For example, pupils in Y2 record information numerically to show how seeds have grown over time. In geography, pupils log information in a survey to assess views about parking and vehicle use in the locality. Several opportunities in the multi-media suite allow pupils to replicate shapes using drawing programmes, and Y6 pupils use a spreadsheet to calculate the area and perimeter of selected shapes.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well.
- The stimulating, practical curriculum provides pupils of all ages with good opportunities to learn although only a small number of pupils acquire the higher level enquiry skills.
- All pupils have equal opportunities to learn.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject and thoroughly enjoy their lessons.
- Productive links are made with other subjects.

Commentary

65. There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection and pupils' enquiry skills are much stronger. Although the performance of Year 6 pupils in the national tests was a little below the national average in 2003, the school's results compared very favourably with schools in a similar context. Standards are currently around the national average in both Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils' achievements are good. This is a slightly higher evaluation than last year's results would indicate because it takes full account of pupils' ability to carry out scientific enquiry, which the tests do not.
66. Right across the school the strength of pupils' achievement is their understanding of how to carry out investigations and experiments, and their capacity for finding things out for themselves in a scientifically sound manner. This results from the well focused teaching that pupils of all ages receive, and the systematic and progressive way in which pupils' enquiry

skills are built as they grow older. Teachers strike a productive balance between instructing and facilitating. They input the information they feel the pupils need, but allow plenty of opportunities for the pupils to contribute their own ideas and suggestions. Because teachers have a clear understanding of what primary science is about there is consistency in the teaching across the different age groups. Pupils feel secure with the subject because they are being asked to apply the same approach, at increasing levels of complexity, as they grow older. For example, Year 6 pupils can recall how, from an early age, they have been required to think about how to make a test fair. Consequently, they now have a very secure understanding of how to do this and why it is key to ensuring that the data they are collecting is accurate and reliable.

67. Because they have obtained much of the information themselves, pupils' knowledge is secure and they show clear understanding of many of the key ideas of science. This is the reason why many Year 6 pupils attain the expected standard when they sit the national tests. It is with some of the more advanced skills that pupils often have difficulties. For example, most pupils interpret data from investigations correctly and can use the outcomes to answer the enquiry question that was set. However, when asked to draw a conclusion from their findings, few pupils understand how to use the knowledge they have acquired previously to explain in scientific terms why things have happened as they have.
68. Good quality teaching and a well-balanced and appropriate curriculum ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities learn well. Teachers stimulate pupils' interest with practical activities that often relate to pupils' everyday experiences, and develop their independence by requiring them to make decisions and work things out for themselves. Pupils respond well to the challenge this presents by trying hard to answer questions and readily putting forward their ideas and suggestions. They cooperate well when asked to work in groups, sensibly discussing what they will do and healthily arguing the pros and cons of different methods. Being able to do things for themselves does much for pupils' self esteem and, at all ages, they approach science lessons with considerable enthusiasm. Teaching assistants play an important role, often supporting pupils with special educational needs so that they are able to participate fully in all activities and have equal access to the curriculum to that enjoyed by all pupils. Although many of these pupils have difficulty attaining at the level expected for their age the progress they make is clear and sustained.
69. The subject coordinator is currently absent from school, but this positive report reflects the secure position the subject enjoys in the school curriculum and the productive development that has taken place in recent years. Science is utilised well to provide a basis for work in other subjects. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, for example, pupils' experience of testing toy cars was used as stimulus for work on sentence structure. As Year 1 pupils were being introduced to the medium of clay in an art and design lesson, they were asked to think about the forces they needed to use to shape it effectively. Such links are helping to give pupils an understanding of the nature of science and the part it plays in their lives.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The frequent use of ICT across the curriculum as a whole is helping pupils to acquire basic skills in the subject.
- The subject is led and managed well, and staff are committed to its development.
- Using computers helps to raise pupils' self esteem and motivates them to learn, although some pupils have difficulty maintaining concentration when they move from their classroom to the multi-media suite.
- ICT is generally used well as a resource in lessons, although teachers are not as confident in their use of interactive whiteboards as with other pieces of technology.

Commentary

70. The school has acted on the recommendations of the last inspection with determination and made good improvement since then. By Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations and, throughout the school, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most Year 2 pupils can log on, find programmes and manipulate images on the screen with some confidence. They use the computer mouse with a sense of purpose to locate texts and commands. Less able pupils can direct a Roamer floor robot with support, to move in a chosen direction. Other, more able pupils can plan a series of directions first on paper, and then input them on screen with some success. Pupils recognise the basic parts of a computer and can describe what they do.
71. By Year 6 pupils can find files, move text around the screen and can illustrate their work with clip art for a multi-media presentation. They can open up the Internet rapidly to seek information, and are justifiably proud of their research work and being able to find out things for themselves. From teachers' clear instructions, pupils learn how to input data into cells in a spreadsheet, using formulae. They use this facility to measure the area of rectangles and, later, more challenging triangle shapes. Teachers' provide regular opportunities for pupils to work cooperatively, to share ideas and to take turns. Pupils' respond positively and their attitudes to ICT work and interest in lessons is good. The coordinator organises a computer club at lunchtimes twice during the week, which is much enjoyed by those who attend.
72. Teachers establish positive relationships with their pupils and promote a high standard of behaviour, so that the optimum time is used for learning. The good pace of lessons ensures that pupils are challenged by the tasks they are given but also understand the computer skills to be developed. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to computers and to the learning opportunities provided. The resources are adapted for their needs and effective personal support is given. The able support provided by the teaching assistants enhances lessons for all pupils. Pupils know that classroom rules and expectations to do your best apply everywhere in the school. However, a minority of pupils with specific learning or behaviour difficulties can have their concentration disturbed by the walk from the classroom to the media suite, and take time to settle in the new environment. This slows their learning initially.
73. Good subject leadership is encouraging staff to use the schools' new and enhanced computer resources more effectively. All staff have accessed national and school training, which is raising their confidence and competence to teach the subject. Teachers are less confident with using the interactive whiteboards in lessons. This is recognised by the experienced coordinator, who organises additional training and advice informally and during staff meetings. An Internet safety policy in line with recommendations is in place and is agreed with parents before pupils can use the equipment. Parents support the development of ICT well by committing to resources a portion of the funds they raise at events. The coordinator is currently developing the school home page to give pupils the opportunity to access homework and information when they are outside school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. The use of ICT in other subjects is good. Teachers make regular use of the opportunities that arise to extend pupils' ICT skills, while at the same time promoting their learning in different subjects. For example, pupils in Year 4 use a digital camera well to record their finished boxes made in design technology. All classes use the multimedia suite to reinforce and extend concepts covered in literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic and motivated to learn through their ability to produce a quality image on screen or print a copy of their work. The most popular use of ICT is for research and this is where pupils are most confident. Pupils use search engines and the school home page easily and are able to find information about people and places. The ability to research for information in science helps to increase pupils' interest and extends their knowledge.

HUMANITIES

Only one lesson was seen in **history** and only two in **geography**. It is not, therefore, possible to make detailed judgements about provision or teaching and learning in these subjects. However, examination of the work produced by pupils and discussions with staff provided valuable information about standards and the range of work covered.

Standards in history and geography are in line with those expected nationally for pupils of a similar age, and their achievement is satisfactory. Strengths of the teaching and learning in both subjects are the constructive links that are made with other areas of the curriculum, in particular literacy, art and ICT, and the way that the work, whenever possible, is linked to the pupils' own experiences. In a good Year 6 lesson looking at the effects of coastal erosion the teacher had chosen Spurn Point as the context. This is an area close to Hull and one that many pupils had visited. As the lesson progressed, a debate was organised between a *local farmer* whose land was being eroded and the *town's people* whose defence barriers were making the erosion worse. This linked directly with work the pupils had done in literacy and put it into a realistic, recognisable context. Pupils in Year 1, studying how weather varies around the world, receive an e-mail each morning to tell them what the weather is like in Australia so that they can compare it with the weather in Hull. Pupils in Year 5 use their ICT skills to study Greek theatres as part of the history topic on Greeks. They log onto the Internet and then search for and record the information they need. The co-ordinators for history and geography are keen to move the subjects forward by forging even closer cross-curricular links and involving different aspects of the curriculum in the topics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Weak skills in writing limit some pupils' achievement.
- The subject is managed well.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support for their learning.

Commentary

75. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The attainment of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and throughout the school achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teaching assistants. This enables them to participate fully and maintain a similar rate of progress to other pupils.

76. The amount of teaching it was possible to observe in Years 1 and 2 was very limited but, from talking to pupils and from their workbooks, it is clear that pupils have an understanding of the significance of different aspects of religion such as celebrations and symbols and an early appreciation of the main world faiths. Pupils' recorded work does not always reflect what they know and understand because it is hampered somewhat by the difficulties many have in writing down their ideas.
77. As a result of the satisfactory teaching they receive, pupils are able to assemble a range of ideas and opinions on people's lives in the past and in contemporary living, which steadily move their thinking forwards. Older pupils have the opportunity to revisit in more depth some of the earlier themes and bring an increasing amount of life experience to the subject. In Year 4, pupils carry out independent research on the origins of the Festivals of Light. Through this they develop an understanding of the relevance of religious symbolism. They have studied the theme of commitment and looked at the importance of promises in baptism, marriage and at some people's dedication to causes. Such themes are explored again in Year 5, when pupils study the lives of preachers and teachers such as St. Paul, Gandhi, Desmond Tutu and Martin Luther King. Through this broad approach to the subject, teachers help pupils to develop a deeper understanding of religion. Despite the problems some pupils have with writing, some good links are made with literacy, such as when pupils construct their own moving poems for peace.
78. There is good management of the subject by two teachers who share responsibility. Although they do not have the opportunity to monitor teaching directly, they examine planning and look at pupils' work to ensure the syllabus is providing appropriate learning for the pupils. Processes that enable standards to be systematically monitored have been put in place, although it is still too early to give a full evaluation of their effectiveness. There are plans to set up more formal assessment procedures to be carried out at the end of each topic.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only a small number of lessons were seen in art and design (2), design and technology (2), and physical education (3 – all games skills). It is, therefore, not possible to make detailed judgements about the provision in these subjects. Further information was gained from discussions with staff and pupils, and from observations of pupils' work and teachers' planning.

ART AND DESIGN

Although only a small number of **art and design** lessons were seen, the analysis of pupils' work on display and in their sketchbooks, and discussions with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, confirms that standards are in line with expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They have good attitudes to the subject, and most enjoy the wide variety of experiences teachers' provide. Pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 make good use of sketchbooks to record work in pastel, pencil and paint. They also work creatively in three dimensions, using clay and paper maché. Good links are made with other subjects. For example, following on from their study of the play 'Macbeth', pupils in Year 6 used paper maché to create masks of the characters. Such work contributes well to pupils' cultural development, in addition to developing their creativity and imagination. These findings are similar to those at the last inspection.

Insufficient **design and technology** (DT) lessons were seen to make an overall judgement of the quality of teaching and learning. However, the range of work in pupils' books and on display around the school indicates clearly that pupils of all ages are given regular, interesting opportunities to design and make, using a wide range of materials and techniques. As a result, pupils gain a secure understanding of all aspects of the subject, from initial research through to the final evaluation. The models and artefacts they produce are well made and functional. Younger pupils produce vehicles with freely turning wheels and pulleys that enable 'Incy Wincy Spider' to climb up and down the

spout with ease. Older pupils use nets to construct well-shaped boxes, use fabric to make attractive pencil cases and assemble electric circuits to drive their fairground models. Pupils take a pride in what they make and in discussions their sense of achievement is clearly evident. The enthusiastic coordinator ensures that the curriculum is up to date and appropriate for the pupils, and that teachers have easy access to the resources they need to teach their lessons effectively.

Teachers' planning and policy documents indicate that all elements of the National Curriculum for **physical education** receive regular attention. In the three games lessons observed it was apparent that the pupils enjoyed learning new skills. Pupils in Year 1 were eager to begin improving their catching and throwing and many of them showed a degree of skill that was higher than that normally seen in pupils of a similar age. Year 3 pupils clearly understood the need for progressive warm up and could say what effect they had on the body. Pupils behave well in lessons, follow instructions without fuss and co-operate well with each other. Year 5 pupils showed considerable initiative when set the challenging task of planning appropriate warm up exercises that would prepare them for a game of tennis. They shared ideas well and, when playing the game, responded thoughtfully to the teacher's questions about how they could improve their performance. When participating in competitive games pupils show a clear understanding of the need for fair play and what this involves. Work in physical education is enhanced by a satisfactory number of extra-curricular sports activities. These include coaching sessions by the local professional football club, baseball coaching and clubs for netball, football and baseball.

MUSIC

The provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy listening to and making music.
- Pupils benefit from the specialist support that enhances the extra-curriculum provision.
- The subject coordinator is relatively new to the post and management and assessment of music are not yet fully developed.

Commentary

79. Standards are similar to those found in most schools and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Pupils in Year 6 listen to music from other cultures and can identify the differences in tempo between African and Irish music. In Year 2, pupils contribute to the creation of a class composition and successfully follow a series of symbols that represent sounds. They confidently clap, click or use their body to represent images from a *scary castle* song.
80. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, although some teachers lack confidence in the subject and have difficulty adapting lessons to meet the pupils' particular needs in each class. The subject coordinator is a music specialist and has recently introduced a published music scheme to support teachers' lesson planning. It is too early to say just how effective this will prove, but the decision is well founded. On occasions, the pace of lessons is too slow because the teacher sticks rigidly to the scheme and does not have the knowledge or confidence to move away and adapt to make activities more appropriate and creative. There are examples of good practice. In an effective lesson in Year 4 the teacher provided additional resources and stimuli to help pupils recognise how mood and emotion can be illustrated in music. Real shells and beach photographs stimulated pupils' senses, enabling them to link sounds with textures and words in a seashore poem.
81. Extra-curricular activities are good and are often provided by specialist peripatetic support. An orchestra and violin tuition enhance the curriculum well for participating pupils. The choir is ably led by the coordinator and is planning to perform at the Hull City Hall. All pupils enjoy

taking part in seasonal productions. Year 6 pupils composed their own song for the last Christmas show. Resources are satisfactory, although some classes, particularly those upstairs in the main school building, are unable to offer a wide range of instruments in lessons because they have to be carried to the classroom. Curriculum leadership and management are satisfactory, and the new coordinator is starting to get to grips with the subject. She has reviewed the curriculum and is developing an assessment system to identify pupils' progress; but this has yet to impact fully on standards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Only two lessons were seen in this subject area and it is not possible to give secure judgements about standards or the quality of teaching across the school. However, the important part that personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) play in pupils' education is fully recognised by the school. Close consideration is given to curricular provision, and PSHCE underpins much of what happens in the school. Much of the work provided for pupils is based appropriately around the Healthy School initiative, which provides a broad and well-balanced PSHCE curriculum. The school is currently focusing on the subjects of sex and relationships, the issues around which are being raised sensitively but realistically. PSHCE forms a regular part of teaching and learning. The curriculum is effectively extended when the school holds focus weeks throughout the year for drugs, citizenship, child safety and sex education. This ensures that the school makes good use of outside trainers and organisations to enhance pupils' learning.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
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	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).