

INSPECTION REPORT

THE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rotherham

LEA area: Barnsley

Unique reference number: 106572

Headteacher: Mr D Williamson

Lead inspector: Andrew Clark

Dates of inspection: 26 – 28 April 2004

Inspection number: 258130

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:	413
School address:	Tudor Street Thurnscoe Rotherham South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S63 0DS
Telephone number:	01709 892145
Fax number:	01709 880811
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Evans

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Hill Primary School is larger than average for schools of its type. There are 372 pupils aged between five and eleven, with a balance of girls and boys. A further 83 children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Almost all the pupils are from white British backgrounds and the percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is very low. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well above average at 43 per cent. The school is in a former mining community. There is high unemployment and significant social and economic deprivation within the area. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is 31 per cent which is well above average. This includes 2.9 per cent who have statements of special educational needs, which is above the national average. Pupils' special educational needs are mainly in speech and communication, social and emotional difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and physical disabilities. The majority of pupils are from the local community and the percentage of pupils who start or leave school other than in reception is about average overall. However, a significant proportion of pupils do not start until Years 5 and 6 and a significant number of families move between schools in the neighbourhood to return later. Children start in the nursery with standards, which are well below typical levels. The school is part of an Education Action Zone that aims to raise attainment and attendance in the area and improve parenting skills. Several organisations make use of the school for adult education and for its sports facilities. The school successfully achieved the Investors in People award in April 2004. The school received an achievement award in 2000 and an Artsmark Award (Silver). The school is an accredited centre for the European Community Driving Licence for ICT. A unit for pupils with social and emotional needs uses the school's premises, although it is run and managed by the Local Education Authority. This facility was not inspected.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21596	A Clark	Lead inspector	Physical education Religious education
19344	D Jones	Lay inspector	
4926	T Aspin	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Art and design
22578	G Jones	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology
31175	A Allison	Team inspector	English Geography Music Special educational needs
14842	S Cook	Team inspector	Science History English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school. It has many good features. The purposeful and rigorous leadership of the headteacher and key staff has raised the quality of teaching and learning to a good level and built very good pastoral care so that standards are now rising throughout the school. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides energetic, knowledgeable and imaginative leadership, which has steadily and systematically driven up the quality of provision. The senior staff and governing body provide constructive support.
- Standards of speaking and comprehension are still too low and pupils do not use their mathematical knowledge effectively enough.
- Good teaching in most classes is raising achievement across the school.
- Pupils' learning and enthusiasm for school are significantly enhanced by their work in the creative arts. Standards in art and design are very high.
- The pupils' personal development and behaviour are very good. Links with the community and the very good use of accommodation make a good contribution to this. The care and support given to pupils is very good.
- Attendance is below average overall, and the poor attendance of a minority of pupils adversely affects their achievement.
- The contribution a significant proportion of parents make to their children's learning declines as pupils get older. The work of the learning mentors is beginning to impact well on this and on pupils' attendance.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in 1998. The quality of teaching and learning has improved through effective monitoring and good improvements to planning and assessment. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is improving well, although this is not yet evident in the end of year tests. Improvements to standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology are good. The pastoral care is now very good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. It is good through the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) and Years 1 and 2. By Year 2 standards in reading and writing are below average and average in mathematics. This is above standards in similar schools. These standards are now being built on in Years 3 to 6. The work of the current Year 6 pupils is below average and better than the very low standards, in the bottom 5 per cent in the country, seen in previous test results. There is a steadily increasing proportion of pupils whose attainment in English and mathematics is above average. The overall trend of improvement in test results is similar to that nationally. The school is successfully addressing many of the barriers to pupils' achievement and is in a good position to raise standards further. The standard of pupils' speaking skills is too low and pupils do not make enough use of mathematical knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve

effectively because of early identification and generally good support. There is no significant difference in achievement over time between the boys and girls because the school provides a curriculum which interests all. Pupils' achieve very well in art and design. **Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** Attitudes to work are good and behaviour is very good. Relationships are very good. Attendance is improving, but many young children are absent owing to common illnesses. A significant proportion of pupils take holidays during term time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning and the use of assessment are good. Improved quality is raising standards in Years 3 to 6. In the best lessons, teachers use a good range of teaching strategies based on their good knowledge of how pupils learn. Basic skills are taught well and teachers use probing questions to encourage thinking and understanding. As a result pupils are eager to work in lessons and try hard. Good use is made of a wide range of tests and assessments to set pupils targets for their learning. Teaching assistants provide good support and they are well placed to support pupils at the early stages of learning. The curriculum is good with many good opportunities for enriching pupils' lives. Provision for SEN is good. The school provides very good care and support to the many pupils from unsettled backgrounds. It reaches out to parents through a very good range of information and guidance, although many pupils receive limited support for learning at home after Year 2. Very good improvements to the quality of the accommodation through grants from many sources have created an exciting learning situation.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and staff have a high commitment to raising standards and very good use has been made of systematic monitoring and extensive training to improve teaching and learning. The school successfully seeks grants and sponsorship to improve the curriculum. The good governing body holds the school to account well and fulfils its statutory requirements. Administrative support is very good and ensures the school runs smoothly.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents have very positive opinions of the school's work. They feel the teaching is good and their children are cared for well.

Pupils love their school. They feel involved and safe and enjoy their lessons. A small percentage of pupils feel they are sometimes harassed in the playground but that teachers handle this well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve pupils' speaking and comprehension skills to raise standards in English.
- Improve the pupils' mathematical vocabulary and their ability to apply mathematical knowledge, in order to raise standards in mathematics.
- Improve attendance.
- Build on the good relationships with parents to help them support their children's learning in Years 3 to 6.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. Standards of work seen are below expected levels by Year 6. Achievement is good in the foundation stage and Years 1 and 2. It is generally satisfactory in Years 3 to 5 and good in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall because of weaknesses in speaking, comprehension and aspects of mathematics, which limit the progress they make.
- The children make a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage.
- Standards in art and design are very good.
- Achievement in ICT is good.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.2 (15.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.2 (13.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.6 (16.6)	15.3 (16.5)

There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.2 (23.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	22.8 (23.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.1 (24.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 81 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Raising standards in English and mathematics is a key feature of the school's planning. Test results show that standards have risen at a similar rate to national standards in Years 2 and 6. The school has worked particularly hard to improve achievement in Years 3 to 6, where standards have been well below average. In particular, the school identified weaknesses in teaching in Years 3 and 4 that led to a drop in standards after Year 2. The improvements made to teaching and learning now ensure that this does not occur and achievement is now more consistent. The pupils achieve well through Years 1 and 2 to attain standards which are above those of similar schools. The work seen in the rest of the school shows that these standards are now being built upon satisfactorily. In Year 6, the good quality of teaching is ensuring that more pupils are working at higher levels than previously in English and mathematics. The standards of work seen in English and mathematics were below average rather than well below. In particular, the pupils' write with more imagination and better sentence construction. The numeracy skills of pupils are improving. The few pupils with English as an additional language achieve at least as well as their peers.

2. However, important weaknesses in the pupils' standards in English and mathematics restrict their learning. Firstly, pupils' vocabulary and comprehension skills are weak. Many pupils do not use a rich or varied language in their normal conversations and they often have trouble recalling technical words from subjects. The teachers plan key words to develop in different subjects and model them well. However, they do not consistently ensure that pupils use them in speech and writing, and opportunities are missed to display subject words and phrases meaningfully, especially in Years 3 to 6. Pupils largely enjoy reading but a significant proportion of less able pupils do not understanding the deeper meaning in their texts. Probing questions by teachers and support staff challenge them to think about their reading, but this is not done frequently or regularly enough to overcome difficulties. Pupils with special educational needs receiving regular classroom support make good progress. However, in some of the classes for older pupils support is limited to English lessons and this restricts the development of a full and useful vocabulary.
3. In mathematics, the pupils have satisfactory skills of numeracy but their ability to apply their knowledge and solve word problems is limited in Years 3 to 6.
4. Standards in ICT are in line with expected levels by Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. The pupils' skills in combining text and pictures, including artwork, to create slide shows are particularly good, and they also make good use of the Internet for research and investigations. The improvement is a result of the very good use of grants to improve resources and to train teachers and support staff.
5. Achievement in art and design is very good as a result of high quality teaching and leadership. Pupils have very good skills working with two and three-dimensional materials and they are observant and imaginative.
6. The children make a good start to their education in the nursery and reception classes. They achieve well in all areas of learning, although standards are well below typical levels because of the very low standards on starting school. The teaching and support staff work very effectively together to promote the children's personal and social development so that they are confident and eager to learn. In Years 1 and 2, good and sometimes very good teaching and the skilful setting of targets for pupils help to maintain the good achievement. Parents support learning at home at this stage and this helps to reinforce the good learning at school. This does not continue through the older years.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

This is **very good** overall. The pupils' attitude to their school is good. Their behaviour and personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, are very good, whilst cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of relationships is strong.
- The school's behaviour management strategies are very good.
- The school promotes the development of personal values and responsibility well.
- Levels of attendance are below average.

Commentary

7. The pupils enjoy coming to school, where they benefit from a stimulating and supportive learning environment. They respond well to high expectations for behaviour that is managed through a strong pastoral commitment of care. Their self-esteem and confidence also benefit and they respond with respect to the care, encouragement and example given by staff.

8. The behaviour of pupils in lessons and about the school is very good. This is despite the fact that many attend school from an environment that does not support development of their social skills or personal values. The pupils thrive in an environment where their achievements are celebrated and their self-worth and contributions are valued. They are friendly, sociable children who are eager to seek contact with visitors and exchange views. There is very little bullying and pupils are confident of teachers' support should it occur. They enjoy responsibility and a number are eager and thoughtful participants on the school council, where they debate and resolve issues for improving school life. No pupil was excluded in the last school year.
9. Although the school's attendance is below average, it is achieved against a background of considerable apathy from a number of parents and a significant level of social deprivation. For example attendance figures for Nursery pupils are often as low as 50 per cent and remain generally in the 70 per cent range. Poor health and hygiene affects attendance for this group. The school is diligent and innovative in monitoring and promoting good attendance and in its strategies to engage with parents and support them.
10. The school's ethos is committed to raising pupils' self-esteem. This is evident in the broad and stimulating curriculum and the relationships and values that are apparent throughout the school. The pupils celebrated their pleasure for the arts during an arts exhibition week, when they performed dance and comedy sketches and displayed their work in sculpture, drawings and paintings. The pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and recognise the benefits and value of a calm and orderly environment. They are willing to take on responsibility, which they carry out sensibly. They gain significant insight into aspects of their own culture and traditions through visits to venues such as Brodsworth Hall and the Bradford Museum of industry, and they are currently working with the local history group researching a local industry. Through religious education and history, they gain insight into wider aspects of their own culture and of the faiths and beliefs of people around the world.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.9	School data	1.0
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching, learning and the use of assessment are good. There is a good curriculum and very good enrichment. The care and support given to pupils is very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is used well to raise standards overall. Teaching is particularly good in Year 2 and often in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Highly motivating strategies in the best lessons capture and hold pupils' imagination and desire to learn.
- Teachers question pupils well to improve their understanding.
- Literacy and numeracy lessons are good because they are relevant and interesting to pupils. They use the national strategies flexibly.
- The teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning.
- A few lessons are not exciting enough and so pupils are not fully challenged.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 62 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (3%)	15 (24%)	30 (49%)	15 (24%)	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.

11. The quality of teaching and learning has improved well since the last inspection, especially in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have high expectations for pupils to work hard and behave well and this results in good levels of concentration and a pride in their work. Standards of presentation are good. Children make a good start in nursery and reception because of the skilled teamwork of teachers and teaching assistants.
12. The best lessons are imaginative and generate excitement and a strong desire to learn in the pupils. Teachers often use role-play to capture imagination. For example, in Year 2, the pupils became suffragettes, calling for 'votes for women', waving banners and wearing sashes. In a religious education lesson, pupils moved through a mosque in the hall as worshippers. On such occasions, teachers' very good subject knowledge and their good use of resources mean that pupils recall facts well and develop a deeper understanding. In art and design, teachers' high level of expertise means that pupils become skilled in many different aspects of the subject and work to high levels of precision, often with imagination. Teachers recognise that pupils need to be taught to learn and think. They teach them strategies for holding ideas in their heads and for recalling facts and information. They use quick-paced, 'brain gym' activities to challenge the pupils to think and concentrate. Teachers are increasingly using computers in their teaching to present work in ways that engage the pupils. They make presentations, sometimes with animations, which help the pupils to understand and relate different parts of their learning.
13. The teachers and teaching assistants question pupils skilfully. They do not let pupils give a simple answer but guide them towards a deeper understanding. Teaching assistants work hard and successfully in nursery and reception to engage pupils in discussions and to encourage better speaking skills. Support assistants with pupils with SEN and less able pupils do not accept simple, one-word answers but encourage them to express their ideas more fully. Sometimes, particularly in Years 3 to 6, there are not enough adults in the classroom to do this fully. Whilst teachers often model good speaking skills, they do not consistently expect pupils to give sufficiently full and detailed answers to help them retain the information and improve their speech. This is a focus for school development and, for example, good opportunities are created in physical education for pupils to talk about their work.
14. Teachers are very well trained in the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. They adjust the techniques to suit the nature of the pupils in their classes and make lessons relevant. In this way they regularly link learning in English to other subjects such as science, and ensure that different parts of the lessons interrelate and make sense to the pupils. Good use is made of assessment to match work, to challenge pupils and provide support. The quality of marking is often good and teachers' comments guide pupils to improve their work. This is particularly so in English and mathematics. In science the teachers often point out pupils' misunderstanding of scientific principles and this helps them develop their understanding. However, some aspects of assessment in science are not yet in place.
15. In a few lessons, the teaching does not provide the high level of challenge now commonly seen. There is no consistent pattern, but most satisfactory work, as opposed to good work, is seen in Years 3 to 5. At these times the teachers do not inject enough urgency into the lesson and often spend too long on introductions. Questioning is stilted and resources, such as the

texts used in literacy, do not engage the pupils. However, there has been a good improvement in this aspect since the last inspection, especially in English.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good**. It is very good for the youngest children. It is very well enhanced by many initiatives in the creative arts and sport. The quality of resources and accommodation overall are very good and support learning well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is good and much improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' experiences of the world about them are extended very well through the use of many initiatives, involving high quality resources, visits and visitors and specialist classrooms.
- Personal, social and emotional development is central to the work of the school.
- There are not enough classroom assistants to support the large numbers of pupils with special educational needs in some classes.

Commentary

16. The curriculum throughout the school meets statutory requirements.
17. In the Foundation Stage there is a good balance between activities directed by teachers, those selected by teachers that give children the opportunity for explorations, and those chosen by children themselves, based carefully on the age and maturity of children in each class. There is rightly a strong emphasis on the development of personal and social skills and verbal communication. All the areas of learning are covered well and linked together to make good use of time.
18. Curricular planning throughout the school is good. It has improved since the previous inspection, with good schemes of work in place in all the required subjects. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship, including sex education and education against the misuse of drugs is very good. There are two key strengths to this provision. One is the welcoming and well-cared-for haven provided by the school, where everyone is valued and pupils are taught to respect and value each other and the resources that surround them. The second is the lengths the head teacher and staff go to extend pupils' awareness of the world beyond their immediate home community by seeking and getting additional sponsorship to support a variety of initiatives. These extend the curriculum and provide the first-hand experiences that many pupils would otherwise lack.
19. The Creative Partnerships project makes an excellent contribution to learning across a wide range of subjects. The budget is used imaginatively and well to extend learning, for example in art, music, science, information and communication technology, literature, drama and dance. In sport many opportunities are taken to involve professionals or experts, for example in golf tuition. Pupils are encouraged to enter any and every competition they can in all areas of learning with increasing success, in order that they develop an identity with the school, team spirit and confidence in their own ability to improve and succeed.
20. To the school every pupil is special. It identifies those pupils who may have special educational needs and makes good provision for them. In lessons, tasks are planned to match pupils' prior attainment. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are structured well and enable teachers and learning support assistants to provide good help for these pupils. All pupils with special educational needs benefit from a full and rich curriculum.
21. Although there are more than average numbers of classroom assistants and nursery nurses in the school, the majority of whom have very good expertise, in some classes there are too few

additional helpers to cater for the large numbers of less able pupils. The accommodation is very good, due to constant extension and modification. It includes specialist subject areas that are used very well. A minor weakness in accommodation for reception children only occurs during the period when the numbers are particularly high and is being addressed very well. Access for pupils with physical difficulties is managed well.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **very good** provision for pupils' care, guidance and welfare. The school seeks and acts upon the views of pupils well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school ensures that pupils develop a trusting relationship with a responsible adult.
- Procedures to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are very good.
- The school provides pupils with good opportunities to express their opinions.

Commentary

22. The pupils feel very comfortable to turn to staff for help, support and guidance. This is because of the good working relationships and regular contact established through lessons, breaktimes and clubs and societies. The headteacher leads by example and pupils hold him in high regard. All staff are very aware of the need to respect the pupils and treat their concerns seriously.
23. The school has thorough and well-established procedures to ensure pupils' safety and welfare. The governing body systematically reviews such policies and has a strong awareness of the significant issues that face pupils from their social and economic circumstances. Child protection procedures are very well managed so that all staff are well trained and informed. Governors ensure that risk assessments and other health and safety procedures are regularly and thoroughly carried out.
24. The school regularly seeks the views of pupils and acts upon them. Staff are trained to listen to pupils and identify significant concerns. They regularly discuss with the pupils the progress they are making and guide them through marking and assessment, which is also shared with parents. The school council provides a very good opportunity for pupils to make changes to their working environment and contribute to the life of the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has made **very good** provision to inform and involve parents and for its links with other schools. The quality of community links is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress.
- There are excellent links with the community that have a very good affect on pupils' learning.
- Parents give too little support for pupils' learning in Years 3 to 5.

Commentary

25. Parents are very pleased with the school and have very few concerns. This is very evident in the positive responses to pre-inspection questionnaires. The main reason is the openness of the headteacher and staff and the good range of informative letters and newsletters. Annual progress reports are thorough and detailed. There are regular meetings for parents that are well attended. Targets for pupils' learning are shared with parents and guidance is provided on

helping their children achieve them. Although the meetings are well attended, it is clear that a significant proportion of parents do not place sufficient importance on learning in Years 3 to 6 such as offering support to homework or regular reading tasks.

26. Arrangements for induction to nursery and transfer to secondary school are good. The school actively seeks to inform parents about the school's activities and to obtain their views. The school has made excellent provision to involve the community and this has a significant effect on pupils' learning. Examples include the 'Creative Partnership' through which pupils have opportunities to work in school with specialists such as a potter, landscape gardener, musicians and artists, dancers and textile designers. There are good links with a local history and memorial group to research local issues. Projects have been completed with the Groundwork Trust and the Thurnscoe environment group, and the school has donated to the local community a piece of land that is now used as a park. It has close links with both local churches and the school band gives performances both in church and in the local area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **good**. Standards of governance are good. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher leads with clarity of vision, high aspirations and sustained energy.
- The senior management team evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and use the outcomes to make effective improvements.
- The governors ensure good use of funding and the school makes every effort to acquire grants and additional funding.

Commentary

27. The headteacher has worked consistently hard since the last inspection to raise the quality of provision and improve standards. He establishes a very clear drive towards improving the quality of teaching and learning and ensuring pupils go out equipped for future education. He has significant skills and experience in teacher training and school management to draw on. However, it has still taken a lot of time to raise the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 from satisfactory to good, and the headteacher has had to take firm, and sometimes difficult, steps to do this. The headteacher and two assistant headteachers have systematically and thoroughly monitored the quality of teaching and learning, and subject coordinators have been supported well in developing their leadership skills. As a result the school makes good use of all available funds and successfully seeks additional grants. The headteacher is very knowledgeable about educational initiatives both local and national and is a driving force within the Education Action Zone.
28. The senior management work closely together, but with very high expectations of each other. They rigorously evaluate the standards attained and relate those well to the quality of provision. As a result, the use and quality of resources and accommodation are good. The majority of subject leaders feel empowered to fulfil their role and relationships between staff are very professional and demanding. There are many initiatives across the curriculum and these are closely monitored and regularly discussed at all levels. It is very evident when talking to members of staff that they all feel their contribution is valued and professional development is good. Many of the initiatives started over the last few years are now beginning to make a difference and this is evident in the very positive views expressed by a high proportion of parents as well as in the good teaching seen and sound achievement through the school.
29. The governors take strong steps to make certain the school uses its finances well. They are well informed on school standards through regular meetings and presentations. They know where the strengths and weaknesses of the school lie because of the good information

provided by subject leaders, the headteacher and evaluations of national and local data. They actively support the headteacher and staff in successfully seeking significant grants and financial support from many sources. They question the school's priorities and use of funding robustly in order to improve teaching and learning. The governors make sure the school promotes racial equality effectively. Staff are quick to address any harassment over racial issues and teach an appropriate understanding of the multi cultural nature of contemporary Britain. The administrative staff make a very good contribution to the smooth running of the school and efficient financial management. The income for pupils is below the national average. However, the carry forward for the last two years has been above the recommended 5 per cent. This is largely because of the way funding has been received and is fully accountable. The current contingency funding is about 40,000 pounds which is below recommendation. The headteacher and governors monitor expenditure very closely.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,159,456
Total expenditure	1,188,861
Expenditure per pupil	2,476

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	102,133
Balance carried forward to the next	98,492

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children enter the Nursery part-time in the term following their third birthday. They move into Reception at the beginning of the term in which they are five. Reception arrangements are flexible, depending on numbers in any one term. In the term of the inspection there were two classes, with the oldest children working in a room next to Year 1. There is a very good induction programme for parents of children entering the Foundation Stage. This includes good pre-assessment of individual needs and identification of any external support and guidance that may help children with physical, social, medical or educational need settle more quickly into Nursery.

There is a wide range of ability but, on the basis both of assessments carried out by staff prior to entry and of observation of the youngest children, attainment is low, with the vast majority of children having standards well below those expected for their age. Standards among boys and girls are similar. All the children, including those with all types of special educational need and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. However, because of the low standards on entry, few are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals in any area of learning by the time they transfer to Year 1, despite good teaching and organisation and very good management of Foundation provision.

Teachers, nursery nurses and support assistants are knowledgeable about children's stages of development, their individual needs and how best to help them learn. The nursery nurses and support assistants make a very good contribution to learning and constantly take very good initiatives. Because of the physical immaturity of the children, they are frequently involved in cleaning those who have had toileting mishaps, and they are suitably prepared. There are regular team meetings to review planning and individual needs and assessment procedures are good. The curriculum provided is very good. There is a clear progression between classes in the amount of time allocated to teacher directed activities, targeted activities and those the children select for themselves. This progression is clearly based on the maturity of the children in each class. Staff create a stimulating and secure environment where children and parents are welcome. Valuable structured activities are provided for parents, carers and children as they enter the classrooms to show how children can be helped at home, though not all parents and carers take advantage of this. Ongoing links with parents are good, and much work is done to involve parents and support them, particularly when any difficulties in their children's learning or other needs are identified.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children make very good progress because teaching is very good.
- Staff model ways to behave well and encourage children to be independent.
- The teaching and support staff understand individual children's needs and promote self-esteem and independence.

Commentary

30. Teaching is very good and children achieve well in all aspects of this area. By the time they leave Reception, they do not reach all the early learning goals, but make considerable progress in their ability to relate to others and respect their views and opinions. They understand class routines and the behaviour expected of them in and around school, and they learn good manners from the example set for them. Although there is rightly a strong emphasis placed on the development of confidence and self-esteem, and of trust between staff and children, a high

proportion of children are reluctant to demonstrate activities to others and are still withdrawn by the time they leave the Reception class.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well because teaching is good.
- Staff constantly work hard to develop children's receptive and spoken vocabulary.
- Children are given opportunities to talk about what they have been doing, but are not always given the opportunity to talk about their learning.

Commentary

31. Many children enter the Nursery with low standards of receptive language and a very limited vocabulary. The main focus in this area of learning is therefore to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and extend their vocabulary, although letter recognition, appreciation of books and writing are also developed. Teachers and classroom assistants constantly talk to children to gain their confidence and encourage them to speak. Very good use is made of time. Children quickly learn to listen and learn some vocabulary from singing and rhyming games. Many role-play activities are provided, to encourage children to communicate or make marks on paper. Staff are noticeably patient when they ask questions and respect the amount of time it takes for some children to find the courage and words to answer. In the Reception classes children develop greater appreciation of the written word. The Literacy Strategy is used well and suitably modified to take into account the maturity of children. Many children still find it difficult to answer questions in sentences and few will achieve or exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Some opportunities are missed to get children to explain their learning and respond to questions such as 'how do you know?' and 'why?'.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and leads to good achievement.
- The children's limited vocabulary impedes progress in areas other than number.
- Children have good opportunities to solve practical problems, to develop spatial awareness, and to recognise sameness.

Commentary

32. All children achieve well, but the majority are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Although basic counting skills are broadly at the level expected, the great majority of children do not have all the vocabulary associated with position, place and size expected for their age, nor do they have the vocabulary of comparison. Teaching is good and there are many teacher-led and child initiated activities for children to explore shape and space, to match and sort objects and pictures, and to solve practical problems. In the Reception classes the National Numeracy Strategy is adapted appropriately to the maturity and ability of the children. There are occasionally lost opportunities for children to explain their reasoning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and achievement are good.
- A wide range of experiences is provided, both indoors and outdoors, to expand children's understanding of the world around them, and develop a spirit of enquiry.

Commentary

33. Children are given many opportunities to expand their experience of life beyond their homes and immediate surroundings, and they take part in many sensory experiences. For example, when children visit a farm, they handle and touch animals that many are unfamiliar with. They are taught to look carefully at pictures and draw conclusions, for example about differences between the past and present, and enjoy experimenting with equipment used in the past for washing clothes. They learn about their own village and what they can find in it. Children learn about different types of food and their benefits. They begin to appreciate that there are different beliefs, cultures and customs. They develop confidence in using computer programs and using scissors and glue. Teachers ensure that children understand those aspects of hygiene and health and safety relevant to their needs. Few children attain all the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1, despite the good provision.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children achieve well.
- There are good opportunities for children to extend their physical skills.
- The children use tools and equipment carefully with developing physical skills.
- Children are not always given the right resources to help them to develop writing skills.

Commentary

34. In both Nursery and Reception classes, children have many opportunities to play outside using a range of equipment to develop their coordination and balance. They learn the vocabulary associated with their activities. In addition older children have formal lessons to develop specific skills. Children are also given support where necessary in toilet training in both Nursery and Reception classes. This is extended to support for parents. Children learn to be aware of their own space and safety when moving at different speeds. They learn to control a paintbrush and manipulate a variety of small-world and construction equipment well. They have the physical skills to control the computer cursor by using a mouse. Many still have limited control over a pencil and are not always provided with the correct equipment to develop writing skills. The majority of children attain some of the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1 but overall attainment remains below that expected for their age.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well because of good teaching.
- There are good opportunities for role-play to stimulate children's imagination.
- A good range of materials is available for children to explore colour, texture and shape.
- The use of external specialists contributes very well to children's learning.

Commentary

35. Many different, well-resourced activities are provided to enable children to work imaginatively. The Nursery children, for example, enjoy working with battery operated 'tools', pretending to drill holes or pretending to build a decked area, after watching their own area being created. A specialist musician makes an excellent contribution to learning by helping children enjoy and act out rhymes and songs. Children have good access to small-world equipment, paint, collage and other materials with which they can work imaginatively. Few are likely to achieve the Early Learning goals by the time they enter Year 1 but most children learn to observe carefully and express themselves well in paintings.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The attainment of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 is below the standards expected nationally. Speaking skills are well below those expected.
- Teaching is good overall and enables pupils to achieve well by the end of Year 2 and satisfactorily by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers use assessment well for tracking the progress of pupils and setting targets for the school, for different groups of pupils and for individual pupils.

Commentary

36. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected nationally. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 make good gains in their learning and achieve well. Good teaching is leading to standards being maintained through Years 3 to 6, although this has not yet had an impact on national test results.
37. Speaking skills are well below and listening skills are similar to those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There are good, planned opportunities for pupils to further their speaking and listening skills in English lessons and in other subjects. However, when answering questions pupils use a limited range of vocabulary and sentence construction. The school places a high priority on developing this.
38. Pupils make good progress in their reading by the end of Year 2 and standards are similar to those expected nationally. Those higher-attaining pupils who will reach a higher standard balance the percentage of lower-attaining pupils who do not reach the expected level. Pupils do not make the same progress in Year 3 to Year 6 and standards are below those expected nationally overall. The majority of pupils read fluently but do not always understand the deeper meaning of the text. This is because, despite good teaching, pupils do not have the necessary comprehension skills because of their limited vocabulary. Pupils also have poor recall of key words and sections of text. These shortcomings restrict the progress of all pupils, and parents do not provide the level of support to reading that they do for younger pupils.

39. Attainment in writing is below average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Handwriting and the presentation of work in books are satisfactory and often good. The carefully planned but flexible use of the National Literacy Strategy ensures that pupils have good opportunities to practise writing in a range of styles. A key feature is the way teachers plan writing tasks to engage and motivate the pupils. Writing tasks in the literacy lessons often foster learning in other subjects and aspects of their personal development. Pupils learn to structure sentences and paragraphs successfully. The rich curriculum motivates pupils and encourages them to think about many subjects, but writing often lacks imagination and sophistication. Both boys and girls settle quickly to writing tasks and apply themselves well. Pupils do not always check their work thoroughly.
40. Well-trained teachers and learning support assistants give good support to lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in English lessons. As a result pupils with special educational needs progress well in most lessons. Careful assessment of their progress leads to effective individual education plans. However, in some lessons for older pupils, progress is limited because there are fewer support staff.
41. Teaching is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection as a result of good leadership and management. Some teaching in Years 1 and 2 is very good. Teaching is good because all teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and implement this flexibly to good effect. Planning is good. Effective use is made of the good resources and tasks match the prior attainment of pupils and are challenging. This is because there are good procedures in place for tracking the progress of pupils through national and other tests, as well as by questioning pupils and marking their work. All teachers expect high standards of work and behaviour. As a result pupils take a pride in their work and presentation is neat. Behaviour is very good and this helps pupils to make progress in their learning. In the best lessons more imaginative approaches are used to engage the interest of the pupils from the start of the lesson. Pace is brisk throughout and the expectations of the teachers are very high. Consequently, all pupils make very good gains in their learning in these lessons and achieve very well. Teachers also, make good use of ICT to support learning, particularly through the use of word-processing. A significant feature of the use of information and communication technology is the computerised library system and this makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of the uses of ICT.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

42. This is good. There are now good, planned opportunities for all pupils to use their writing skill to support learning in other subjects, as when pupils in Year 3 write instructions for making a photograph frame in design and technology, or when, in geography, pupils in Year 5 compare schools in Thrunscoe with a school in a village in India. This geography topic also enables pupils to practise their research skills both from books and from web sites on the Internet. There is a growing focus on fostering speaking and listening skills through all subjects. These opportunities consolidate the progress pupils make in English lessons and enable all pupils to achieve well by the end of Year 2 and satisfactorily by the end of Year 6.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Year 2 and make very good progress.
- There is a strong and successful focus on developing pupils' computational skills.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- Pupils do not use and apply their mathematical knowledge well.
- The subject is well managed.

Commentary

43. Standards seen in mathematics are below average by Year 2 and Year 6. There is very good achievement through Year 1 and 2 and satisfactory achievement by Year 6. The evidence in lessons and pupils' work shows that pupils are working at a higher standard than previous test results. It is also clear that a previous drop in achievement at Year 3 and 4 has now been addressed and pupils continue to build on standards reached at Year 2. The improvements have come about through good teaching and curriculum planning and support for pupils with special educational needs.
44. The subject coordinator rigorously analyses the quality of teaching and attainment and provides a good example for other teachers to follow. The school has made successful improvements to pupils' calculation skills as a result. There is a strong drive to raise the pupils' ability to use their skills independently and most lessons have a significant problem-solving element. However, a significant proportion of pupils have difficulty with this. There is a steadily growing trend of high achieving pupils showing successful learning in all aspects of mathematics.
45. Overall, teaching is good and has improved over the last two years. Some of the improvement has not yet had an impact on test results but standards through the school are rising. Teachers make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy, which they adapt to suit the needs of the pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach basic skills well. Where good teaching was seen, for example in a Year 2 lesson, the sheer pace of the lesson carried pupils along. In the other Year 2 class, the teacher's use of a counting stick made the lesson fun and very visual. In a Year 4/5 lesson the teacher's use of the interactive white board motivated pupils well and they were anxious to join in and make progress. Work is matched closely to pupils needs so that all abilities are challenged well. This is evident in the progress pupils make in their books and the pride they take in their work. In the best lessons, teachers encourage pupils to explain the strategies they use to solve problems to the rest of the class. This helps them recall facts and contributes to the development of speaking and listening skills. There are some displays of pupils' mathematics work, which are aligned to questions using a key mathematical vocabulary, and this provides further support to pupils' learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

46. Pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in other subjects. They make tables and charts in their science work. They look at graphs and charts in geography when looking at climates. They measure accurately in several topics of design and technology and use computer programs to create databases and graphs. Through the richness of the curriculum the school is addressing the weakness in the pupils' ability to apply their mathematical knowledge.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a positive and enthusiastic attitude to science.
- Teaching is good.
- Assessment is underdeveloped.

Commentary

47. Standards are average by the end of Year 2. This represents good achievement from their attainment on entry to school. Current standards are similar to those found at the last inspection and those assessed by teachers in last year's national assessment tests. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 because of the good emphasis on oral and investigative work. Pupils carry out a range of investigations that clearly interest and motivate them. For example, the pupils were given the challenge of finding out which containers made the best 'telephones' to conduct sound. Pupils made predictions, carried out fair tests and explained what they found.
48. Standards were low at the end of Year 6 in the 2003 national assessment tests. Few pupils attained the higher Level 5. Standards are improving, with the current Year 6 attaining below average standards, which is the same as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily in science, but there is scope for a higher proportion to reach the higher than expected levels at the end of Year 6. This seems to be a euphemistic way of saying that the more able pupils are not yet achieving well enough. Pupils' lack of basic English skills hampers their learning in science. For example, only the more able pupils are able to record a good account of their investigations. Pupils' vocabulary is limited and their ability to express their thoughts and explain their ideas coherently is below what would be expected. Although there is a fair coverage and balance of the science curriculum there is not enough emphasis on pupils posing their own questions and test their own theories.
49. Pupils say that they enjoy learning about science because their teachers make lessons interesting. They particularly like thinking about and carrying out investigations and would like to set up more of their own experiments. Older pupils report they enjoy researching for information and working on the computer.
50. Teaching is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they use a variety of teaching methods to sustain pupils' interest and motivation. Work is usually sufficiently challenging and well matched to pupils' abilities and teachers make good use of exciting resources. For example, pupils' learning was enhanced in two lessons by the use of a model of a human skeleton so pupils could see exactly the size and shapes of the bones. Teachers' focus on providing pupils with key vocabulary of technical words in each lesson is significantly helping to increase pupils' vocabulary. At the end of lessons, teachers refer to the objective of the lesson and this helps pupils understand what they have learnt and provides the teacher with a good assessment of pupils' achievement. Teachers' marking is often good, picking up on pupils' misconceptions and asking questions of pupils to help them understand their work. However, this good practice is not evident in all classes and pupils do not have targets to aspire to.
51. The co-ordinator has written a good scheme of work for the subject; has monitored lessons and pupils' work, and has talked to pupils about their work. This has given him a good insight into what further improvements need to be made. He has quite rightly identified assessment procedures as being in need of development. The school analyses test results and use this information to chart the progress of pupils and in Year 6 to identify those pupils who need extra support. These analyses also provide teachers with a good knowledge of where the gaps are in their teaching and what topics pupils need to revisit. However, although teachers' make assessments in lessons about what pupils have learnt, there is no formal system to record this information.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been significant improvement since the last inspection.
- Standards are in line with national expectations at Year 2 and Year 6, with some work being above that level in Year 6.
- Teaching is good overall.
- The subject is very well led and the school is keen to take on new initiatives and challenges.
- Pupils are not aware enough of their own achievement in ICT.

Commentary

52. Standards in I.C.T. were unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Currently attainment by both Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations, and some aspects of the communication strand of the subject are above that level in Year 6. The subject co-ordinator has developed the scheme of work so that it now reflects all the requirements of the National Curriculum. The computer suite is very well utilised and as a result pupils reach national standards in all aspects of the work. Their work in creating PowerPoint presentations, on a number of subjects and sometimes in a very short period of time, is above the expected level.
53. Teaching overall is good, with one example of very good teaching seen in Year 6. Teachers are now confident in their own subject knowledge and have worked hard, with good support, to make best use of the computer suite, interactive white boards and a new set of laptops. All these are additions since the last inspection. This has been a key feature in raising standards. In the very good lesson seen, the teacher was very confident in her own ability. She delivered clear demonstrations and explanations that resulted in pupils being able to start work immediately and complete the tasks quickly at a good level. Pupils respond to good teaching and have positive attitudes to the subject. As a result, nearly all pupils achieve well against their earlier learning, including those with special educational needs.
54. Over the last two years the subject co-ordinator has led the school to take part in several initiatives, all of which have had a positive impact on standards and attitudes to work. These initiatives have included extra in-service work for the co-ordinator, links between I.C.T. and creative arts and links with the Education Action Zone. The assessment procedures are not used well enough to involve pupils sufficiently in evaluating their own achievement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

55. ICT is regularly used to support learning in literacy and numeracy in Years 1 and 2. Good use is made of PowerPoint presentations in Years 3 to 6 in subjects such as geography and religious education. The Internet is often used as a source of reference in history, for example, and pupils are efficient at refining their searches for the most applicable information. Pupils use data-handling programs and spreadsheets in mathematics and the use of design software is often of a high standard and complements other work in art and design.

HUMANITIES

Only one lesson was observed in geography and history so it is not possible to give an overall judgement on provision in those subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use role-play and ICT well to motivate and interest pupils.
- Pupils have a deeper understanding of prayer and worship than they did at the last inspection.
- Pupils' subject vocabulary is limited.

Commentary

56. Standards have improved since the last inspection and are at expected levels by Year 2 and Year 6, although the pupils do not use a good vocabulary to express their ideas.
57. Lessons involve imaginative strategies to motivate and inspire pupils. In Year 2, the use of role-play is particularly good in developing pupils' understanding of the Islamic and Christian faiths and the value of worship. The pupils also have good opportunities to handle religious artefacts and this develops their first-hand knowledge and interest in the subject. Pupils with special educational needs are motivated well by these practical activities. In Years 4 and 5 the teachers make good use of ICT. Pupils research Judaism through the Internet and are very proficient at finding the most appropriate information. In Year 4, they make PowerPoint presentations to explain their ideas on belonging and friendship and then email them to each other. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory because the opportunities for pupils to explore their ideas and reinforce their learning through a wide range of writing are not frequent or consistent enough.
58. At the last inspection pupils did not have a very deep sense of spirituality or understand the value of prayer. This has improved and teachers discuss the significance of prayer with pupils. They explore the role of God in different faiths and the relevance to life today. However, the pupils do find it hard to express their ideas because of their limited vocabulary. The teachers plan carefully to extend this in lessons, but do not always insist that pupils use the correct word in answering questions.
59. The subject is led well. The co-ordinator regularly monitors pupils' work and talks to pupils from different classes to ascertain standards. Since the last inspection the curriculum has been significantly revised and resources developed. The co-ordinator is introducing strategies to address the weaknesses of which she is well aware.

Geography

Only one lesson was seen in this subject so there is not enough evidence to make a firm overall judgement either about provision or about the standards attained by pupils. Discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils in Year 6, an analysis of pupils' work and displays of work confirmed that the principles of teaching the subject are in place, National Curriculum requirements are met, and topics such as 'A Village in India' foster pupils' cultural development well. Pupils in Year 6 talked with evident enjoyment about topics that had involved day or residential visits to places such as Scarborough and Llandudno, as well as about the on-going work on events and places in the world. These visits not only promote an understanding of other habitats within the British Isles but also foster pupils' personal and social development well. In the one lesson seen in Year 1, the teaching was satisfactory and the planned activities helped all pupils to gain an understanding of place. The whole-class introduction and the activities also helped to foster pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills effectively. The subject is led and managed well. The school has rectified the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection relating to the scheme of work, assessment and checking on teaching and learning. Greater use is being made of information and communication technology to support learning. A notable feature of this is the weather station that enables pupils to check on the local weather, as well as the weather in the places they are studying.

History

Too little work was seen in history to form overall judgements about the current quality of provision and standards. They achieve a broadly satisfactory standard of written work in the subject. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their studies and about researching for information using the computer, which is an improvement since the last inspection. They report that they would like more history lessons. Little work was in evidence this term, and discussions with Year 6 pupils showed their limited recollection of key concepts learned in previous work. The co-ordinator has monitored pupils' work and talked to pupils, and has good plans to observe lessons. She has organised an exciting local history project, involving local people and businesses, which is soon to start.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only games lessons were observed in physical education and it is not possible to give an overall judgement on provision. Evidence is drawn from the lessons seen, from discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator, and from a review of planning.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching is very good and leads to very good achievement.
- Art activities make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Resources and accommodation are very good and used well to stimulate learning.
- The Creative Partnerships project makes a very good contribution to pupils' achievement.

Commentary

60. Standards in art and design are well above those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils of all abilities and ages achieve very well. There is some unusually high achievement. Pupils have very good skills in a wide range of media and learn to express their feelings and emotions through the subject. Much work is creative and imaginative and demonstrates a very good understanding of different styles and the work of a range of artists, past and present, local and from many different cultures. Pupils understand the importance of preliminary sketching, colour matching and detail drawings, and they keep suitable records to help them create finished designs.
61. Teaching is very good. Teachers have very good subject expertise and ensure that the correct and most effective resources are provided for each activity. Skills are carefully developed within creative activities. Pupils are taught to observe very carefully. Work often supports learning in other subjects such as geography and history, to make good use of time. Information and communication technology in many different forms is used well and frequently to develop pupils' understanding of art form.
62. Pupils enjoy their art lessons and are made to feel successful. Their behaviour in art lessons is consistently very good and they concentrate on their work throughout. They listen intently to the teachers and follow the advice given. Their work is valued in many carefully presented displays around the school, and in the annual art exhibition where everyone has a chance to 'sell' a piece of work. The subject makes a very good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
63. The subject is very well led and managed. The creative arts project gives pupils the opportunity to extend their understanding of different art forms such as sculpture, and to work

with professionals, such as potters, to improve their skills. Additional finances are very well managed and visits and visitors are carefully selected. This has a direct impact on the very good quality of well-finished work that all pupils produce. The new, very well resourced art studio is used effectively to help pupils take responsibility for their own learning, decision-making and caring for equipment.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the subject have improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils now complete evaluations of their work.
- Further work is needed in the planning and development of a range of skills in the subject.

Commentary

64. Standards of work seen in Year 1 and Year 5 were in line with national expectations. Standards of previous work, noted through photographs, saved work and through evidence of planning, suggest that standards in other year groups are equally in line with expectations. This shows an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were unsatisfactory.
65. A good range of topics, including elements of food technology, is provided for pupils from the nationally recommended scheme of work. Pupils in Year 3 design and make photograph frames. They list the materials they will use, write down step-by-step instructions and use a range of joining methods. They complete their work with an evaluation of how fit for the purpose their completed frame was. Evaluations were not completed well at the last inspection.
66. Pupils in Year 6 made shelters. The series of lessons started with a wide-ranging discussion on homes and shelters. Pupils then practised making square frames that acted as the basis of the structure. Accurate measurements showed sound links with mathematics, while writing about the process was a good example of pupils writing an instructional text to support their literacy skills.
67. Teaching is satisfactory. Although teachers are well prepared, opportunities are missed to support speaking and listening and too much time is spent on the lesson's introduction. In spite of this, pupils show good attitudes to their work and behaved well.
68. The scheme of work ensures pupils make generally sound progress in the subject. However, there is not enough guidance for the step-by-step development of individual skills such as design and evaluation.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of games skills is good.
- Pupils are eager to improve.
- Physical education lessons make a good contribution to developing speaking skills.

Commentary

69. Only games lessons were observed, although other aspects were covered during the period of inspection. Pupils' games skills are typical for their age by Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. They are eager to improve because of the good teaching of specific skills and the teachers' enthusiasm. Activities are well planned to systematically develop pupils' capability. Throughout the lesson pupils are kept active and challenged. For example, the most able pupils in Year 6 are expected to throw further and faster and to increase their level of accuracy. Pupils work in different groupings throughout their lessons and activities often have a scoring element so that pupils can improve their personal best. Teachers give the pupils clear teaching points so they can improve their stance when catching, for example.
70. The teachers place great importance on involving pupils in evaluating the quality of their work and making suggestions to improve. This has been planned to improve speaking skills, and does so effectively. The pupils are encouraged to use the correct vocabulary.
71. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory and developing. The school is benefiting from the significant improvements in accommodation through the community sport's grant and there are very exciting plans for further improvement to teaching and learning. The enhancement through after-school activities and inter-school competitions is good. The subject co-ordinator gets the pupils interested in unusual activities such as golf and bowling by providing taster sessions in their lessons before offering them as extra-curricular activities. In this way the curriculum offered is broad and interesting. Standards of swimming appear to be satisfactory.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements fully and is enriched very well by visitors and opportunities to learn instruments and to perform.
- Good teaching enables pupil to achieve well.
- Positive attitudes to the subject contribute well to learning.
- Good resources are used effectively to foster learning.

Commentary

72. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to nationally expected levels. Good teaching and learning leads to good achievement for pupils of all abilities. The best teaching is imaginative and dynamic, with challenging tasks using very well-chosen and effective resources. The teacher has high expectations for work and behaviour and uses questioning very effectively to check on learning throughout the lesson. A weakness in the occasional lesson is that pupils are not given enough opportunity to improve performance through practice. The singing of the Lord's Prayer in collective worship was very moving and made good contribution to the spiritual development of pupils. A talented singer on the teaching staff acts as a good example to the pupils encouraging both boys and girls to reach appropriate standards for their age.
73. The very good enrichment of the curricular provision also makes a strong contribution to the good attitudes of pupils, to their personal development and to their good achievement. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have good opportunities to learn keyboard, violin and brass instruments. All pupils in these year groups learn the recorder. A notable feature of the instrumental provision is the brass teaching and the school's brass band that links well with this former mining community's brass band heritage. Visiting musicians, including brass bands, drummers and singers, who run workshops and perform for pupils, further enrich the provision and provide

very good models for pupils to emulate. Additionally pupils have the opportunity to go to musical performances, as when all pupils in Years 3 to 6 went to see 'Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat'. Pupils also have many opportunities to perform for their peers and for parents in school, and for the community out of school, for example at the Town Hall and in the local carnival. All of these opportunities foster personal development well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good planning for healthy living, sex and drugs education.
- Teachers focus well on pupils' personal development.

Commentary

74. The science curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about how to live their lives in a healthy way, and planning for sex and drugs education is effective. Pupils learn about exercise and food types through a good range of practical, problem-solving activities. Visits and visitors, such as the school nurse who works with staff to support sex education lessons, enrich these experiences.
75. In many lessons, pupils learn more about the world around them and their role in it. For example, in religious education pupils consider the characteristics and emotions of famous people. They consider their place in society through lessons where they explore rules in society and the importance of tolerance and consideration. Activities often involve pupils in role-play, when they put themselves in the place of other people such as characters from history. All the staff set good examples to the pupils to support the importance of listening to others and being polite.
76. The pupils are expected to be independent and try for themselves. This is very evident in their confidence with ICT. Pupils also have good opportunities to show care and awareness through their gardening work and animal care in the aviaries and ponds. Through the school council they are making important decisions that affect their school experience.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
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	2
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).