

INSPECTION REPORT

WARD GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

WorsbroughBarnsley

LEA area: Barnsley

Unique reference number: 106578

Headteacher: Mrs Alison Wilks

Lead inspector: Mr Gordon Alston

Dates of inspection: 22nd - 24th March 2004

Inspection number: 258301

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior, infant and nursery
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 396

School address: Vernon Road
Worsbrough Bridge
Barnsley
South Yorkshire

Postcode: S70 5HJ

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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr B Clegg

Date of previous inspection: 12th July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Ward Green is a primary school that caters for pupils between the ages of three and eleven. It has two sites and lies in the heart of Worsbrough, an old mining community on the outskirts of Barnsley. The school is larger than average, with 396 pupils on the roll of the main school: 190 boys and 206 girls. It has its own nursery unit that caters for 26 children who attend on a part-time basis either in the morning or afternoon. Children arrive at school with the full range of ability levels. Overall, based on the school's own testing of children, the attainment in language and number on entry to the nursery is well below the expected level for children of this age. Pupils are organised into 13 classes; no class has mixed age groups. The pupils come from an area that has signs of deprivation and high levels of unemployment. Housing is mainly terraced and semi-detached dwellings. It is an area of average mobility; for example, whilst 22 pupils entered the school in the last year, eight left. The majority of pupils are white, although a small number come from Asian or from other mixed backgrounds. Four pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. This figure is similar to that found in most schools. There are 20 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, which as a percentage is about average. Fourteen per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs; the majority have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties, and six pupils have a statement of special educational needs. These figures are about average. In 2003 the school gained an Activemark Award for sport and in 2002 a school's Achievement Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20794	Mr G Alston	Lead inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs English as an additional language
19740	Mr A Smith	Lay inspector	
28200	Mr P Stevens	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History
15236	Mrs M Thorpe	Team inspector	Science Physical education Foundation Stage curriculum
18370	Mr K Johnson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Music Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

A Year 6 pupil enthused, 'Ward Green school is well good'. He was right! Ward Green Primary school is a very good school that provides a very good standard of education. Pupils achieve very well because year after year they are fortunate enough to receive very good teaching. They enjoy all that their school offers, have very good attitudes to work and behave very well. The headteacher, strongly supported by enthusiastic senior managers, staff and governors provides excellent leadership. The management is excellent. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve very well because they receive very good teaching.
- Pupils are very happy at school and get on very well with each other and their teachers.
- Everyone who works at the school tries very hard to encourage pupils' all-round development.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, are valued and supported very effectively.
- A dedicated headteacher provides excellent leadership and manages the school exceptionally well.
- There are not enough books or good-quality reading material for pupils to use.
- The procedures and systems in place for checking on and evaluating how well the school is doing, used by conscientious senior managers and the governors, are excellent.
- A very wide range of interesting activities, including many out-of-school clubs and very good links with parents and with the community, enrich learning.
- The libraries are small and inadequate.

The arrival of a new headteacher after the last inspection in 1999 has been central to the significant improvements made in the school since that time. The key area for improvement - raising standards in information and communication technology (ICT) - has been tackled very successfully. Standards have risen to be above expectations at the ages of seven and eleven. The quality of teaching has improved as a consequence of all teachers being regularly observed and professional discussion following. Very good progress has been made on other issues highlighted in the last inspection related to better provision for young children, more-focused school-development planning and more effective co-ordinators. There have also been great strides made in providing rich learning experiences for pupils and in checking on their learning. The strengths identified in the last report have been maintained.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 6.*

Overall, pupil achievement is very good. The school's own testing procedures show that children enter the Nursery with levels of ability well below the expected level for their age in language and number. Very good achievement in the Foundation Stage ensures that nearly all children reach the expected level by the time they enter Year 1. They continue to achieve very well and, at the ages of seven and eleven, standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards at seven are above national expectations in ICT and higher than the level expected by the

locally agreed syllabus in religious education (RE). Standards were above the expected level in lessons seen in art and design, history, design and technology, and physical education.

Results of national tests at the age of eleven show an improvement over the past three years. Standards at eleven in ICT and RE are above the expected level as were standards seen in lessons in design and technology and history. Pupils with special educational needs, those pupils for whom English is not their first language and higher-attaining pupils achieve very well compared to their prior learning.

The development of pupils' personal qualities is very good. The school provides a very good range of experiences for their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. As a result, relationships are very warm and caring, and the pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils enjoy their school, and attendance and punctuality are better than in most schools.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good education. Teaching is very good throughout. Pupils learn effectively and make very good progress because very good relationships, interesting activities and attention to making lessons fun underpin their learning. English and mathematics, are taught very well and pupils develop good basic skills. In lessons other than English and mathematics teachers ensure that pupils make further use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. The range of learning experiences is exciting and interesting for pupils. A range of short-term projects, lots of visits and visitors and very good links with the community significantly enhance the work planned in lessons. Parents support the school well. Links with other schools are very good. The accommodation and resources have a positive effect on learning. However, the libraries are inadequate and there are not enough books or reading materials in school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are excellent. The leadership provided by the headteacher is excellent. She encourages and supports staff very well and leads a very strong and united team very successfully. The management of the school is excellent. It has firmly established clear management systems in order to check effectively not only how well the school is performing but also the impact of any action plans which have been implemented to bring about identified improvements. The governing body is excellent, especially in its role as a 'critical friend' and in supporting the school. Governors use their expertise very well in shaping and checking on the development of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. They are very pleased with the progress their children are making, the quality of teaching, the caring atmosphere and teachers' expectation of hard work. **The pupils enjoy school very much,** like their teachers a lot and feel that their lessons are always very interesting with plenty of exciting things to do.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Increase the range and number of reading books and reading material available for pupils.
- Improve the current library provision.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement overall is very good. It is very good in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average at the ages of seven and eleven. The standards pupils attain in ICT are also above the expected level at the ages of seven and eleven.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get a very good start in the Foundation Stage and make very good progress in their learning.
- Children enter Nursery with skills that are well below the expected level, but, by the time they enter Year 1, most will reach the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning.
- Throughout their time in Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make very good progress and, by the age of seven, standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT.
- Throughout their time in Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is very good and, by the age of eleven, standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT.

Commentary

1. Overall standards have risen in national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 since the last inspection, particularly in Year 6, where the improvement has been better than the national trend.
2. The table below shows that in 2003, standards in Year 2 were below the national average in reading and mathematics, and above in writing. When compared to those in similar schools they are well above average in writing and below in reading and mathematics. Standards fell dramatically in 2003. This is very much related to the cohort of pupils in Year 2; there were higher than normal proportions of pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils, and lower proportions of higher-attaining pupils. But there is every indication that standards will rise again to be above average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2004 tests.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.4 (16.7)	15.9 (15.7)
writing	15.4 (16.4)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	16.1 (17.3)	16.5 (16.5)

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

3. The table below shows that in 2003, standards in Year 6 tests were above the national average in mathematics and well above in English and science. In 2003, standards continued to rise as they have done since 2001. The school has achieved this effectively through in-service work with consultants aimed at identifying specific areas for improvement. It is also ensuring a stronger focus on problem-solving and handwriting, purchasing new resources and providing pupils with more time for writing across all subjects. This has impacted well on standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.8 (27.8)	27.1 (27)
mathematics	27.8 (27.1)	27.1 (26.7)
science	30.9 (30.6)	28.9 (28.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. When children start school in the Nursery class, test data show that their knowledge, skills and understanding are very variable. For the last few years the overall profile has been below the level expected for children of this age in all areas of learning. Children have particular difficulties in the areas of communication, language and literacy, which are well below the expected level for significant numbers. They get a very good start in the Foundation Stage classes that helps them to achieve very well. As a result, by the time they reach Year 1, the attainment of the vast majority is likely to reach the national expectation in all areas of their learning.
5. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve very well because of the very good provision made for all areas of their development. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, who are especially well supported by teaching assistants. Higher-attaining pupils also do well and respond well to challenges they are set.
6. A knowledgeable team leader monitors the key stage well, ensuring there is continuity in practice and a high quality is maintained. The very good achievement is also linked to very good teaching. Well-planned lessons with interesting tasks that take account of pupils of all abilities are the secret. The very good relationships between staff and pupils makes pupils feel valued and cared for. As a result, they try very hard with all the tasks they are set and show great interest in all activities. This has produced standards at present that are above national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards are above national expectations in ICT and higher than the level expected of the locally-agreed syllabus in religious education (RE). Standards were also close to the expected level in lessons seen in other subjects and above them in art and design, history, design and technology, and physical education.
7. Pupil achievement is very good in Years 3 to 6. This is closely linked to the monitoring and evaluation of individual pupils through target-setting and effective leadership by the key stage leader and senior managers. Staff support each other and plan well together, ensuring that all pupils are suitably challenged, including those with special educational needs, pupils whose first language is not English and those from minority ethnic groups. Pupils receive high-quality teaching from enthusiastic teachers. Their lessons are made interesting and lively, and build well on past learning. The pupils respond with great enthusiasm, concentrate well on tasks and produce lots of work of very good quality. Humour is used well to develop warm relationships that create an effective working environment. This has led to standards that are above average in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Pupils achieve higher than the level expected by the locally-agreed syllabus in RE. Standards were also close to the expected level in the few lessons seen in other subjects and above them in design and technology and history.
8. The rich curriculum impacts positively on pupils' achievement. Whenever possible, the school links subjects to create interesting topics. Pupils apply their literacy skills well in other areas of the curriculum. The skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are taught appropriately in literacy lessons, and pupils apply these skills to their written work. Achievement is also affected positively by a strong focus on developing pupils' reading, mathematics and ICT skills in all subjects.
9. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve very well. Class teachers assess their needs and progress, and discuss them with the co-ordinator for special educational needs, who draws up and monitors the individual educational plans. This close co-operation and frequent reviews of their targets contribute significantly to the very good progress made by

these pupils. A small number of pupils do not have English as their first language and a handful of these pupils are new to the English language. The school's strategies for assessing and identifying targeted support are beginning to have an impact on the progress pupils make towards their targets. Overall, the progress of pupils who are at an early stage of English language acquisition is very good throughout the school. This is mainly because teachers are clear about what pupils know and understand, and plan their lessons well to consolidate and extend their learning. Teaching assistants provide strong support, and other pupils are always happy to help. Gifted and talented pupils' needs are met through the challenging tasks that are provided in lessons and the good opportunities which they and other pupils have to take part in out-of-school clubs, particularly in sport and music. Throughout the school, girls and boys perform similarly. Higher-attaining boys and girls do equally well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance is much better than in most schools. This is an overall improvement since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' positive approach to learning results in high levels of interest and participation in lessons.
- The very strong relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to work hard.
- A very high standard of pupil behaviour makes learning more effective.
- Pupils enjoy school and attendance is in the top ten per cent nationally.

Commentary

10. Pupils' very good attitudes make a considerable contribution to their attainment and levels of achievement. They settle very quickly into classes and are especially keen to be included in all learning activities throughout the whole school. They confidently share their ideas. All responses made by pupils are highly valued by staff, which in turn promotes pupils' self-esteem. This is consistent across the whole school, including all pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils delight in the challenging tasks put before them. For example:
 - Year 2 pupils became extremely absorbed in creating their impressions of 'The Great Fire of London' during a very stimulating role-play lesson.
 - Year 4 pupils worked extremely well together in pairs, showing high levels of concentration as they designed and made a box to contain a set number of sweets.
11. Throughout the school, pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong. They show a mature regard for the property of others and the environment, respecting school resources very well. Pupils react very well to school rules and are well aware of the consequences of their behaviour. Their understanding of what constitutes appropriate behaviour makes a major contribution to this very orderly community and the high quality of learning. The school places a high priority on moral development. There have been five temporary exclusions for unacceptable behaviour.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White - British	384	5	0
White - any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed - White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed - any other mixed background	5	0	0
Black or Black British - African	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

12. Relationships within the school are very good and enable all pupils to learn and achieve very effectively. They are typified by the mutual respect evident between pupils and the adults who work with them. Members of staff provide excellent role-models in demonstrating how relationships are initiated and sustained. They show sensitivity and concern for feelings and values of others, for instance when sharing their work in plenary sessions. Pupils also relate very well to unfamiliar visitors, showing natural and genuine courtesy. No incidents of racism or bullying were seen during the inspection. Pupils of all ages accept and enjoy responsibility, for example when they are given the opportunity to help with school routines and practices. They have an active involvement in school improvement through their School Council.
13. Attendance rates are well above those found in most schools. The school rigorously monitors attendance and punctuality, and makes parents and pupils fully aware of the importance of full attendance and punctuality. The strong family ethos of the school gives support to pupils so that they are very happy to come to school and work very hard.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.1	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

14. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Teachers make very good use of assemblies and religious discussion to help pupils reflect on how best they can contribute to the community. Issues such as kindness to others or the injustice of bullying and dishonesty feature in class and school discussion. There is a very strong drive by all staff to promote pupils' self-esteem. Pupils are valued as individuals; their achievements are recognised and recorded. They are encouraged by this and strive always to do their best. They recognise and value what others do.
15. Social and moral development is promoted very well. There is a clear code of conduct that is understood by all. Class rules, to which pupils contribute, are displayed in classrooms. Pupils have a very clear understanding of what is right and wrong and are encouraged in the principles of teamwork and fair play. Relationships between pupils are very good, reflecting the excellent role-models presented by all staff. The School Council provides a very good opportunity for pupils to make their feelings known.
16. Provision for cultural development is very good. It is rooted in the school's ethos and sets out clearly the expectation that all people are to be treated with dignity and respect. The school challenges racism and provides many opportunities for pupils to learn about and appreciate the cultural values of others.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. Strengths include the very good care shown to pupils and the consistently good teaching in nearly all classes. Lots of interesting visits and visitors enrich class projects, helping to bring the curriculum alive for the pupils, and there are very good links with the community. Overall, staff make best use of the satisfactory accommodation and good resources to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, a lack of books and other reading material, and the inadequate libraries quell pupils' enthusiasm for reading and limit their knowledge of books.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. A further strength is the good procedures in place for checking on what pupils know, understand or can do.

The overall quality of teaching is very good and the needs of all pupils are very well met. In all of the 40 lessons seen, the teaching was at least satisfactory, and it was very good or better in 53 per cent. Indeed, in 15 per cent of lessons, the teaching was judged to be excellent. The quality of teaching is consistent across the school and seven out of eight lessons are good or better. As a result, pupils achieve very well throughout the school. What they know, understand and can do is checked thoroughly in all subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are clearly planned and members of the support staff are closely involved, contributing well to the very good learning of the pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language.
- Very good relationships are evident between staff, and pupils are given a firm foundation for learning.
- Assessment information is used effectively to move pupils of all abilities forward.
- All teachers have an enthusiastic and imaginative approach and classrooms are well organised.
- Teachers react well to pupils' answers, often supporting or challenging well with questions, and have carefully-targeted work ready to provide.
- Hands-on practical activities and the use of resources are good, and pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are used well to support learning.
- The libraries are inadequate and there is a shortage in the number and range of good-quality books and reading material.

Commentary

17. The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen across the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
6 (15%)	15 (38%)	12 (30%)	7 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

18. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, when the majority of lessons were satisfactory and ten per cent were not good enough. Most of the particular weaknesses, for example control of behaviour, have been addressed very well. Records show that the improvement has been closely associated with feedback given from the headteacher's

monitoring, whether to individuals or as a stimulus for discussion in staff meetings. There is now an appropriate agreed statement about what constitutes good teaching and learning. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils like and trust their teachers and teaching assistants, and this helps them to tackle work with confidence. They agree strongly that they learn new things in lessons and that they have to work hard, and all find lessons very interesting and fun.

19. Lessons are planned clearly and pupils are told what they are going to learn, which involves them well. Teaching assistants are well aware of the aims of lessons and the activities which will take place. Throughout the school, support staff are active and use their time wisely, for example, making notes on Year 1 pupils' progress and responses while they were sitting listening to the teacher. They take a small group of pupils during lessons or work with individual pupils to support them. Small-group sessions for pupils in need of extra support were effective whether taught by teachers or support staff. In one very well-taught small-group lesson for Year 6, the key strength was in the questioning that encouraged the pupils to work out for themselves how to improve. This was highly motivating for them and raised their self-esteem. The school made a decision to maintain comparatively high levels of support staff, and they make a very effective contribution to pupils' achievement.
20. Classrooms are very well organised, with equipment and books neatly stored so that they are easily accessible to pupils. This encourages pupils to move quickly onto the tasks they have been set and no time is lost. Resources are used well, and particularly well in an excellent Year 1 lesson of ICT, which took place in the network room. In the Foundation Stage, practical activities stimulate the children and support their learning well. In science, too, the emphasis on well-devised practical activities helps pupils to keep their interest and concentration and take an active part in the lesson. In a history lesson, Year 2 pupils were effectively used as a resource, pretending to be eyewitnesses to the Fire of London and taking questions from the others. There was a moment of magic as pupils quietly crept into the hall and discovered Samuel Pepys writing his diary. However, there is a lack of adequate libraries and a shortage of books and other reading material as a resource in the classrooms to support work on an ongoing basis in other subjects. This has an impact on pupils' enthusiasm for reading and knowledge of different book styles. Few pupils have preferred authors and many have a very limited knowledge of different authors.
21. There is a strong belief in ensuring that the needs of all pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and higher- and lower-attaining pupils, are given the support that they need. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in class in small groups from teaching assistants to enable them to understand and complete the tasks set, and make very good progress. Teachers set tasks to match their needs in literacy and numeracy lessons, and individual targets on individual action plans are precise. The teaching of pupils for whom English is not their first language is effective because there is a strong emphasis on developing their speaking and listening skills. The very good relationships teachers have with their pupils give those who are new to English language the confidence to join in the class activities. Pupils are provided with opportunities to work alongside their monolingual peers; modelling of language by other pupils helps pupils to transfer the knowledge they already have about the structure of their home languages into English.
22. In the best lessons, interesting activities and a lively approach grip pupils and help them to progress quickly. Very good questioning enables them to think carefully and develop understanding. Pupils are encouraged by all teachers to explain their responses further when they are not clear. This helps develop language and encourages pupils to express their ideas clearly and confidently to others. There is a fully inclusive approach, which means that all pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and higher- and lower-attaining pupils, are given the support that they need.
23. An example of outstanding practice was seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson; pupils achieved very well in an area of which they had little knowledge at the start of the lesson.

Example of outstanding practice

In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, a teacher aims to establish an understanding of tallies.

A very enjoyable song consolidates understanding of the five-times table and leads to a lively question-and-answer session where all pupils are included. A very engaging manner and detailed explanation enable pupils to work out for themselves why tallies are grouped. There are very high expectations of pupils' reasoning and that they should speak at length to explain their conclusions. Very well-differentiated tasks enable pupils with special educational needs to contribute data from a class survey about favourite colours. In the plenary, it is collated on one tally chart. Once again, the teacher shows high expectations by asking all pupils to contribute to its interpretation.

24. Where teaching is less effective in a small number of lessons, there is a tendency to over-direct pupils, or the introduction lasts too long. In one lesson, as pupils worked on the tasks they had been given, there was not a clear focus by the teacher on one particular group. This results in missed opportunities to make individual teaching points. As a result, in these lessons, pupils are often not fully stretched and are unaware of how they can improve their work.
25. Assessment procedures are good and have improved since the last inspection, when they were an area for improvement. In English and mathematics, teachers assess their pupils well in all activities to highlight any areas of strength or difficulty. This information is then used well to plan work to meet the pupils' needs. Pupils are tested frequently in English and mathematics. This information is also used as a means of checking their learning. Tracking systems are in place and show the progress that pupils are making towards the targets they have been set and whether this is good enough. These targets are reviewed to identify pupils who are not doing as well as they should. Reasons why these pupils are underachieving and ways forward for them are then discussed. This ensures that they all do as well as they should. This good practice is also in evidence in other subjects and helps staff plan lessons that build well on past learning. All staff give pupils good verbal feedback on their work, and the marking of work is always helpful. It gives pupils a clear picture of whether they have learnt what was intended.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **very good** and there have been many outstanding developments since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent vision and aspirations of the headteacher, allied to her philosophy that only the best is good enough for all pupils, are strongly reflected in all aspects of the curriculum and the quality of accommodation.
- The curriculum now meets statutory requirements. Inspirational planning has ensured that the links between subjects enable pupils to learn many skills from one activity.
- The very good systems in place for monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum ensure that the very good planning is maintained throughout the school.
- The curriculum is one of the many contributory factors to the very good achievement and motivation of all pupils.
- The library is too small and there are insufficient books and reading material for all pupils.

Commentary

26. The school provides a very broad, balanced and enriching curriculum that caters for the interests, abilities and particular needs of all pupils. It successfully ensures progression in their learning. All subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education, and personal, health, citizenship and social education, are included. Pupils who have special gifts or talents are very

well challenged and achieve very well. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are very well established and adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. The success of the curriculum is seen in the high standards achieved and pupils' enthusiasm for school.

27. The headteacher and senior staff have addressed the key issues from the previous inspection very effectively by developing an exceedingly rich curriculum. Links between subjects are securely yet creatively developed to give pupils more opportunities for investigations and the creative and physical aspects of learning. An exceedingly wide range of visits and visitors further enhances pupils' learning. Alongside this, yet supporting it, are the key skills of literacy, numeracy, ICT and science. The many successes of the curriculum are reflected in the joy of learning and the ways in which pupils begin lessons with very high expectations of the teaching and learning. Boys and girls achieve high standards in writing because this has a purpose that they understand and value.
28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school puts a high priority on providing well for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and minority ethnic pupils. Teachers and all support staff are dedicated to the well-being and best interests of the pupils with special educational needs, and teaching has improved. Pupils receive a very good curriculum, which is skilfully adapted by the special educational needs co-ordinator and all staff to meet particular needs. Pupils now have improved individual education plans and, along with the introduction of clear, relevant and achievable targets, they make very good progress towards achieving them. Although their standards are below the national expectation, they achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment, as do the gifted and talented pupils, because of highly effective support.
29. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a very enriching and well-developed curriculum which is securely rooted in the Early Learning Goals and 'Stepping Stones' for learning. The co-ordinator and staff have very successfully addressed the weaknesses identified during the previous inspection. The curriculum is planned very effectively to meet the needs of all children, and the issue raised by the previous inspection about some children not being adequately accommodated has now been fully addressed.
30. The accommodation is satisfactory and has many attractive features, but also limitations. The excellent building improvements and care by the maintenance officer and staff have given pupils pride in their school and a desire to learn. The school has the disadvantage of having a split site which inhibits continuous access to all resources. The libraries are too small for the number of pupils in school and do not have a sufficiently wide range of books or reading materials. This has not affected standards in reading because of very good teaching but, as the school is situated a long way from the local library, children do not have access to the range of books or other reading material that they should. This is an area which the headteacher and staff have already identified as a priority and have made financial provision to improve. Pupils benefit from the well-resourced computer suite and computers in their classrooms. They have acquired skills so well that they incorporate ICT into a wide range of subjects independently and successfully.
31. There is a good level of teachers and teaching assistants in the school. Resources are good overall. They are used very effectively to promote investigation, enhance learning and improve standards. Storage space is at a premium, but teachers use their initiative and make very effective use of the available provision.
32. Pupils benefit from very constructive links with the local and distant community. A very wide range of visitors and visits that stimulate pupils' knowledge and interest in many subjects enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils visit the local church and Sikh and Hindu temples. These experiences enhance their knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and cultures in multi-faith and multi-cultural Britain. They visit science parks, a mining museum and local museums. All visits are very well planned to enhance achievement, interest and

learning. There is a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, especially in physical education.

33. The headteacher and staff plan many effective strategies to ensure very close links between home, school and the local community. These give pupils many opportunities for participating in a wide range of activities with schools. There are very constructive arrangements for the induction of children into the Nursery class, and their transition to the Reception class prepares them very well for their learning in Year 1. Parents are very closely involved in their children's learning; they listen to them read at home but are not sufficiently well involved in their reading diaries.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' health and safety are **very good**. They receive very good support and guidance. Pupils' views are highly valued and they make a very good contribution to the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' academic progress and personal development are very well supported by the school's systems.
- Pupils' views are taken into account.
- Pupils settle in very well when they start school and are very well prepared for the next stages of their education.
- Pupils work in a very safe and healthy environment.

Commentary

34. All staff place a very high priority on pupils' welfare and well-being. Academic progress is monitored effectively, especially in literacy and numeracy. Assessment data is analysed rigorously and used to set individual targets for attainment. Where there is potential underachievement, extra help is given in the form of additional teaching to boost basic skills. Pupils' personal development is supported very well. Where necessary, personal targets are set for pupils, and teachers record progress towards them. These targets and ways of achieving them are shared with parents during open evenings. Pupils form trusting relationships with staff and feel very well looked after.
35. Pupils feel valued because their views are accepted and acted upon. The School Council represents the feelings and ideas of others very effectively, and its negotiations have led to considerable improvements in the quality of the environment.
36. Children's introduction to school is very well planned and includes the support of parents, carers and nursery staff. Children quickly settle into routines, enabling staff to begin to assess their individual needs.
37. Very close attention is paid to health and safety, frequently using the advice of governors and local authority experts. Provision for personal safety when representatives of the police and other emergency services talk to pupils. First-aid provision is very good. Designated first-aiders are named each day so that pupils and staff know where to seek necessary help.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with its parents is **very good**. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are **very good**, and have all improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views about the school and support their children well.
- Information for parents is very good and keeps them aware of how well pupils are doing.
- There is a Friends Association that supports the school well, providing valuable resources.
- Links with community and other schools enrich pupils' learning experiences and enhance opportunities for social development.

Commentary

38. Parents hold the school in very high regard. They describe it as a very happy place in which strong relationships exist between pupils, teachers and parents. There is nothing that significantly displeases them. They believe that the school is very fair to all and that all children are encouraged to be considerate and develop a mature viewpoint. The inspection team agree with these judgements and these areas are strengths of the school.
39. The school has worked hard and improved the quality of the information it provides for parents and this is having a good effect on keeping standards high. There are regular and informative newsletters that keep them aware of the day-to-day procedures, expectations and events of the school. They are given good information about the progress that their children are making. Pupils' annual reports are sufficiently detailed and consistent across the classes. There has been consultation with parents about the presentation of these progress reports. As a result, they have been amended. Where there is a concern, the school is quick to consult parents. At termly consultative meetings there are opportunities for parents to discuss individual pupils' plans for learning and the progress they are making towards achieving their targets. Good information on what is to be taught in each subject is provided for parents at the start of each term, which is valuable for those who wish to assist with their children's learning at home.
40. Parents support the school very well. They clearly know the school routines and expectations, including those for attendance, punctuality and behaviour. Significant numbers of parents attend the events the school provides to assist them in their knowledge of its teaching methods. The Friends Association raises valuable funds that are suitably targeted and used beneficially to support pupils' learning.
41. There are very good links with other schools in the area, especially with the local high school to which most pupils transfer. Links with the community and a wide range of visitors provide very good enrichment for the curriculum. These links also support pupils' personal and social development as well as widening their experiences and giving them opportunities to learn about the needs of others. The school has strong links with the local church through events such as Harvest Festivals. The clergy visits regularly and leads whole-school assemblies focused on celebrations. There are good links with business and industry in the area which provide further rich experiences for pupils and extra funds for resources.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are **excellent**. The leadership of the headteacher and senior managers is excellent, and the leadership of other key staff is **very good**. Governance is **excellent** and has significantly improved.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governors know the school very well and are central in helping in its development.
- The leadership of the headteacher and senior managers ensures the school is focused on improvement.
- The leadership shown by co-ordinators is developing their subjects well.

- The management of the school is totally committed to ensuring all pupils receive the education to which they are entitled.

Commentary

42. The governors' work with the headteacher and staff to establish a clear vision and direction for the school is outstanding. Rigorous monitoring enables them to have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They supportively challenge senior managers in order to ensure that improvements meet pupils' needs and that statutory requirements are met. Governors have a very high regard for the headteacher, whose openness enables them to play a full part in formulating the school's development plans. Their knowledge of the curriculum, for example, enables them to propose improvements as well as understand the school's ideas. They are very active beyond carrying out their expected duties, for example, they suggest ways to celebrate cultural diversity. They also have established business links to extend the headteacher's in-service training. More importantly, they contribute their breadth of knowledge and expertise to the management of the school.
43. The headteacher's approach to school improvement is excellent. She enables all members of the teaching and support staff to employ their own knowledge, talents and skills in realising a joint vision. This establishes an ethos for teamwork totally focused on what benefits pupils' learning. Consequently, the school development plan is an excellent concise document that states clear relevant objectives and how they will be achieved. These objectives stem from rigorous evaluation of the school by staff, governors, parents and pupils. Consideration is given to any idea which may bring about further improvement. It is also based on very detailed analysis of how individual pupils are performing. Excellent school finance administration helps to secure best value for money. Moreover, the senior management team (SMT) echoes the headteacher's style by presenting initiatives for the teaching staff to discuss before any decisions are made, such as the further development of extra-curricular activities. The headteacher and SMT thoroughly oversee co-ordinators', teachers' and other staff's organisation and practice as well as the curriculum and pupils' work. Moreover, they celebrate everyone's effort and success. All staff are excellent role-models. Co-ordinators lead their subjects very well. Some are new to their subject but are already showing a clear understanding of, and enthusiasm for, the role of co-ordinator.
44. The governors, headteacher and SMT provide excellent management of the school. The management is totally committed to all pupils having equal opportunity in their learning and to the professional development of all staff, especially where there are individual needs. The school invests a great deal in developing and retaining high-quality staff, which yields considerable benefits for pupils. Equally, governors and managers have been very successful in improving the learning environment and its resources. However, they face two barriers. First, there is the split site. Secondly, in spite of the efficient and effective use of funds, it has so far not been possible to provide pupils with enough books and reading material or adequate libraries to further develop their independent learning and enthusiasm for reading.
45. The local authority uses the school as an example of excellence, and the headteacher as a consultant/adviser. Equally, the school visits other institutions in order to learn further ways to improve. It also co-operates with other local schools in developing strengths for example the work it has been involved in developing the curriculum. Leadership and management have made an excellent improvement since the last inspection.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	954,810.13
Total expenditure	939,471.13
Expenditure per pupil	1,335

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	33,454
Balance carried forward to the next	15,339

46. This is an example of **outstanding practice** in leadership and management which ensures that the school is working at its optimum level in all areas.

Example of outstanding practice

The headteacher's approach to leadership and management is to enable staff and pupils to reach their full potential in serving one another's needs.

Supported by a very challenging governing body and excellent administrators, she secures continuous school improvement both through a thorough programme of professional development and by involving everyone in decision-making, including the pupils. The headteacher and the school make a major contribution to other local schools' improvement, but are also open to ideas from a variety of sources. Everyone, including pupils, works tirelessly to remove barriers to learning, such as deficiencies in accommodation and resources. The celebration by everyone of pupils' success is a major foundation for their motivation to learn.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

47. Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good. Although there is a wide range of ability, the majority of children enter the Nursery with attainment that is well below the level expected for their age, especially in communication, language, literacy and number. Children achieve very well as a result of very well-planned teaching and very effective support. Staff ensure that the precise learning needs of all children are identified early through good testing systems and very effective links with families. Consequently, all children, including higher-attaining children, those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, receive very good support and achieve very well. However, even with this very good provision, children enter the Reception class with levels of attainment that remain below the level expected. They continue to achieve well during their time in Reception classes and by the time they enter Year 1, most of the children will have reached the expected level in all areas of learning.
48. There have been very good improvements since the last inspection:
- The Nursery is purpose-built and is a very attractive learning environment, and there is a secure area for children in the Foundation Stage.
 - The curriculum, which did not meet statutory requirements, has now been completely reviewed and is securely based on the six areas of learning.
 - Provision for children with special educational needs and for those for whom English is not their first language is very good and they are very well included in all activities.
 - Checking on children's learning, monitoring and tracking is well established and activities are well matched to their prior attainment.
 - The outdoor area has been greatly improved.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very well-planned activities and resources increase children's independence and their ability to work in groups.
- Very good teamwork ensures strong support for those who need direction.

Commentary

49. The staff work as a very effective team, and children are introduced sensitively but thoroughly to good behaviour and good manners, including classroom routines. All staff have a very good knowledge of the needs of young children. They take time to talk to them and use praise very effectively to raise their self-esteem. They give sensitive reminders in order to develop good standards of behaviour. Relationships between staff and children are very good. The nursery nurse and teaching assistants support pupils and make very good contributions to all aspects of their development in this area. In the Reception class, children build on their previous knowledge of class routines and take on more responsibility for their learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and successfully develop children's speaking and listening skills in all areas of the curriculum.
- There is good provision for the teaching of writing and reading skills in the Reception class and children achieve well.
- There are not enough good-quality books for children in both classes, although this is an area which the headteacher and staff have identified as an area for development.

Commentary

50. In the Nursery, children learn to settle quietly and listen attentively to stories and instructions for each activity. With encouragement, they quickly develop from making few responses and responding with actions to answering in one word and then in short phrases.
51. The Reception class teacher introduces a modified literacy hour, and children have good opportunities for reading and writing. In group work, teaching assistants are very effective in planning and assessing children's levels of response and interaction in question-and-answer sessions. There is a very good balance between teacher-talk and opportunities for children to respond. Higher-attaining children read fluently and accurately with very good levels of understanding. Average-attaining children read familiar text well and benefit from the repetition of vocabulary and picture clues. Lower-attaining children recognise familiar words and phrases, and match the text to the illustration and read familiar words that they have practised. There are limited numbers of good-quality books in the Foundation Stage. As a result, the children's enthusiasm for reading is not as strong as their enthusiasm in other areas of learning, and very few were observed looking at books or sharing them in the group activities. Although parents listen to their children reading at home, they do not have the opportunity to comment or complete the reading records.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good; teachers know individual children's levels of attainment and rates of progress because of very good assessment and monitoring procedures.
- The National Numeracy Strategy is very well adapted to the needs of children in the Reception class and therefore they achieve very well.
- Children have many opportunities for applying numeracy skills to other areas of learning.

Commentary

52. Children develop mathematical skills in a wide variety of practical activities in both classes. During the inspection, children in the Nursery identified circles, squares and triangles and matched and ordered shapes. In the Reception class, most children count from zero to ten; the higher-attaining children extend this to 100 and some understand numbers to 1000. The majority of children recognise a wide range of two- and three-dimensional shapes, straight and curved edges and a wide range of measures. All activities are very well matched to children's abilities. ICT is used very effectively to enhance children's understanding of mathematics.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very rich range of opportunities is provided to extend children's experiences.
- Teachers use displays and practical activities very skilfully to motivate children and reinforce learning.
- The very good relationships between adults and children develop their confidence and increase their motivation.

Commentary

53. Pupils benefit from a very wide range of rich and exciting opportunities within each class and the creative use of the school grounds and the local environment. Throughout each day, children are involved in many activities, and their learning is very well developed by the investigative approach to learning about the environment and themselves. Work on display, photographic evidence and the curricular planning show that children have many opportunities for learning across all areas. Children in the Nursery learned how to care for the class guinea pig and learned the characteristics of living things. Those in the Reception class identified the external parts of a flowering plant and the human body.
54. Children's learning is very well developed by the wide range of planned investigations. They know that switches control a wide range of machines, for example computers, CD players and washing machines. They have many opportunities for making models from construction equipment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching by the class teacher in the Reception class is very good.
- Very effective use of the outdoor area and the sports hall gives children many opportunities for developing a wide range of skills.
- The very good range of opportunities for all aspects of artwork and some writing develop children's fine motor skills.

Commentary

55. Children in the Nursery develop very good hand and eye co-ordination as they handle a wide range of construction equipment, paintbrushes and scissors with very good levels of dexterity. They use a wide range of movements when they create sequences of different shapes. Children in the Reception class moved creatively, with very good awareness of space and very good hand and eye co-ordination. They worked well to develop intricate sequences of movements. The majority hold pencils with the correct grip and consequently their standards of handwriting have improved very well during the year. Children with special educational needs are given very good support and consequently achieve very well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use a very wide range of media that result in children learning in very attractive surroundings and developing confidence in a wide range of skills in the use of colour, texture and shape.
- The development of musical skills in the Reception class is very strong and consequently children achieve very well.

Commentary

56. As a result of very good curricular and resource planning, children develop confidence in using an increasingly wide range of resources. They use media including paint, crayons, fabric and three-dimensional shapes to create pictures, sculptures and models with a good feel for texture and shape. Their speaking and listening skills develop very well as they discuss the materials used and compare designs. Children's singing is of a very high standard; they sing in two parts with accurate pitch and a good feel for rhythm and dynamic range. They enjoyed singing the songs they had performed at the Christmas concert and were very proud of their ability to sing in French.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is very good and leads to very good pupil achievement.
- Standards at the ages of seven and eleven are above average.
- Speaking and listening play a central part in lessons.
- Pupils use their writing skills well in all subjects.
- The subject has been well monitored and pupil performance data, particularly in writing, is well analysed and used effectively to raise standards.
- There are not enough books or reading material in school, and the libraries are inadequate to effectively promote a genuine love of books and reading.

Commentary

57. Provision, standards and achievement are much improved since the last inspection. Results in 2003 tests (SATs) at age seven were below the national average in reading and above it in writing. Standards attained in Year 2 are better and are above average in reading and writing. Current pupils in Year 3 reflect the results in 2003; there are a higher proportion of lower ability pupils and pupils with special education needs than is normal for the school in the class.

58. By the age of seven, pupils listen, speak, read and write competently and confidently. There are no significant variations between the attainment of boys and girls or between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Given the below-expected levels on entry to Reception, achievement is very good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language. Pupils listen with growing attention and concentration, and sustain increasingly lengthy conversations. These involve explanations, enquiries, comparisons, the sharing of ideas and the justification of personal views. Pupils read accurately, fluently and with understanding. The majority are expressive when reading

aloud, but few talk with interest about their favourite book. Writing skills are progressing well and this has much to do with the very good standard of teachers' marking and the use of individual targets. This has been a particularly successful initiative that has improved results in national tests. Lower-attaining pupils are improving their basic skills of spelling and punctuation, and are increasing the length of their work.

59. By the age of eleven, pupils have continued to make very good progress in all aspects of this subject. Results in 2003 tests (SATs) at age eleven were well above the national average in reading and in writing. Results have been consistently above average. Standards attained in the current Year 6 class are above average. In lessons in all subjects, pupils are encouraged to talk, read and write about their learning, experiences and work. Consequently, achievement is very good for all pupils and there are no significant variations across ethnic groups. Most pupils talk competently to a group or wider audience, and the majority are fluent and confident. Pupils' good achievement owes much to the role-models provided by teachers and the opportunities they have to share their ideas and explain their thinking in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils' personal vocabulary is systematically developed and appropriate; sensitive intervention to directly teach techniques promotes good learning. Reading is accurate and fluent. Higher-attaining pupils show very good understanding of their books. All pupils are expressive when reading aloud and have sound knowledge of how to use the library. Basic writing skills are being developed well. This is due to:
- The good range of writing experiences that are challenging to all levels of attainment.
 - The good guidance from staff on re-drafting of work.
 - The good evaluation by pupils of their work that leads to improvements in their planning of work and thoughtful responses to challenging tasks.
60. Overall, the very good quality of teaching and learning owes much to:
- The very effective matching of work to pupils' levels of prior attainment.
 - The high expectations of all pupils. This is particularly true of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, who receive highly appropriate and competent support.
 - The very good management of challenging classes that ensures that there are no distractions. It also fosters very good attitudes to work among the pupils.
61. Pupils are clear about what they know and have a very clear picture of future developments needed because of the very effective marking, target-setting and guidance provided. Where the teaching is only satisfactory, the main reason is that the objective of the lesson is not sufficiently clear; for example, 'to construct sentences in different ways'. As a result, both the teacher and the pupils find it difficult to decide whether they have learnt what was intended. There are not enough books or other reading material in classrooms, and the libraries are inadequate for the school to effectively promote a genuine love of books and reading.
62. Leadership and management of the co-ordinator and senior managers are very good. There is a significant amount of work done in the annual written review of the subject, and the identified priorities are the right ones. For example, the co-ordinator has rightly identified the need to develop the libraries and improve reading resources. Teachers' planning, observation of teaching and analysis of pupils' work are good. Procedures and practices for the testing of pupils' levels of attainment are very effective; particularly useful is the comprehensive tracking of pupils for whom English is not their first language. A good analysis of test results indicates where further improvements can be made.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are developed well in other subjects, For example:

- In history, research and writing about the Victorians helped Year 6 pupils produce multimedia presentations.
- In science, writing about the skeleton in Year 2.
- In religious education, Year 5 pupils writing about Sikhism.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are above average because of the high standard of provision and pupils' very good attitudes.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good, which has improved standards.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good, so the quality of teaching and learning has improved.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, so they achieve very well.

Commentary

64. Pupils in Year 2 attain above average standards. They are confident with calculations involving numbers up to 100 and are beginning to know multiplication tables. They sequence number products successfully, including those in the 25-times table. Pupils correctly identify lines of symmetry and different two-dimensional shapes. They interpret bar charts effectively. The more able pupils find fractions of numbers and add money up to £3.00.
65. Pupils in Year 6 also attain above average standards. They all understand co-ordinates in four quadrants, rotational symmetry and probability. Pupils competently calculate complex fractions of amounts up to £10.00 and find equivalent fractions. They systematically add and subtract decimals involving hundredths. More able pupils round up decimals involving thousandths and work with long division confidently.
66. Standards have improved well since the last inspection. Very good teaching has both halted their recent decline and raised them even further. Results of national tests (SATs) in 2003 were above average at seven and at by eleven. Trends over the past three years show a rising picture. Every aspect of teaching is strong, with very good support for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language. For example, in a Year 6 lesson about co-ordinates, the booster teacher used a very imaginative visual resource, asking pupils to place planets in one of four quadrants. By the end of the session, their understanding was very good. Teaching is very effective in meeting the needs of all pupils. Consequently, they all achieve very well. The teaching in four out of five lessons is very good or better. Good planning ensures that the higher-attaining pupils learn by being consistently challenged. Where teaching is excellent, there are high expectations; for example, Year 2 pupils were asked to work out for themselves why tallies are grouped. This not only benefited their understanding, but also developed their speaking skills. The school's system for assessing pupils' progress is very thorough and used fully to plan to meet individual needs. Marking is supportive, but does not always indicate how pupils can learn to improve.
67. Very good leadership and management influence and support teaching. The co-ordinator generates close teamwork in order to focus on areas for improvement, and is open to the advice of outside experts. She is innovative in introducing projects such as 'Let's Think', which aims to improve pupils' mental calculations. She acts as a consultant for teachers in the local authority.
68. The quality of the curriculum is good. It not only covers the statutory programme of study, but also develops pupils' problem-solving and data-handling through much sophisticated use of

computers. There are opportunities to make investigations and record them in ways other than on the computer.

Numeracy across the curriculum

69. Pupils' work with mathematics frequently involves learning in other subjects. Examples include the seasons in geography, dinosaurs in history, food in design and technology, and electric lights in science. Pupils both set up and interpret complex databases. They develop their speaking and listening skills when they are asked to explain how they work out their mental calculations.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the subject are very good and make a very positive impact on all aspects of provision.
- Teaching and, as a result, learning and achievement are very good and at times excellent.
- Standards achieved by pupils in Years 2 and 6 are above average, and higher-attaining pupils attain well above average standards because of very good teaching and curricular provision.
- The excellent opportunities for investigation rigorously planned for all aspects of the subject contribute to very high levels of achievement and secure understanding.
- Procedures for testing, tracking and using information to guide planning and project results are very good.

Commentary

70. Very good teaching enables all pupils to achieve very well and teachers ensure that they reach their full potential in all aspects of the subject. Results in national tests (SATs) in 2003 were well above average at age eleven. Teachers encourage pupils to think and behave as scientists, and to plan and carry out an exceedingly wide range of challenging experiments and investigations. Pupils of all levels of attainment get a fair deal as work is matched very closely to their previous learning. Those with special educational needs succeed because, besides having specially-tailored work, they are very well supported by skilled teaching and well-informed teaching assistants. In Year 6, a group of pupils was very well supported in the lesson observed. These pupils are unlikely to obtain the high levels achieved by the rest of the class, but they have made very good progress over the year. For this reason, it is likely that although many pupils in the class are on course to obtain levels above the national average, the standards are generally more likely to be above rather than well above average. Those pupils capable of working independently are provided with many opportunities to go beyond the levels of most pupils in the class and to discover for themselves the next step in the process being studied. This means that time is very well used and all pupils are encouraged to work to their capacity.
71. In Year 2, when comparing reversible and irreversible changes, pupils were confident when testing the effects of heat and cooling on chocolate. They applied their knowledge to practical applications very well. The teacher then extended their learning by allowing them to experience the effect of heat from the backs of their hands on small pieces of chocolate. They were enthralled and then able to apply previous learning to this new investigation.
72. The very good progression of investigations and independent learning was further exemplified in Year 6. Pupils planned an investigation to test which materials would be the most durable as an outfit for motorcycling. After being initially amused at seeing some of their friends in a wide range of 'gear', they meticulously and purposefully organised themselves in groups. They

examined a suitable range of resources and planned all aspects of the test, bearing in mind that there could be only one variable. This activity not only reinforced their skills of investigation and knowledge of materials but also their excellent collaborative and social skills.

73. During the inspection, pupils spoke with interest about many investigations, the importance of a healthy lifestyle, environmental issues and conservation. They have benefited from their involvement in visits to a science park and improving the school grounds.
74. The subject co-ordinator leads by example and has established very good systems for supporting colleagues and ensuring that the planning meets her high expectations. Time has been made available for her to develop her management role. When working alongside colleagues, her knowledge and support have been invaluable in developing the subject across the school. She has the ability to recognise patterns and solve small matters before they become issues.
75. Children's written work shows very methodical work, very good scientific reasoning and very good presentation. Science makes a very positive contribution to many aspects of personal, social, health and citizenship education. The curriculum is very broad, balanced and enriching, and one excellent feature is the cross-curricular planning. Particularly good examples were seen of pupils' studies of the human body and the skeleton. Their work included very high-quality pencil sketches, impeccable presentation and accurate use of scientific vocabulary and ICT.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision and standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection. As a result, pupils achieve very well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The subject is led and managed very well and there are clear plans for further developments.

Commentary

76. Standards in ICT are above expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The improved curriculum ensures good breadth to pupils' learning. The purposeful approach to teaching means that pupils apply their ICT skills very well across the range of subjects. Given their limited experience of ICT when they start school, all pupils achieve very well.
77. Since the last inspection, resources have improved significantly. There is a well-equipped ICT suite where pupils are taught skills. There is good-quality hardware in classrooms, so pupils can apply what they learn during other lessons. A rigorous programme of staff training has increased teachers' confidence and subject knowledge. This has a good impact on the pace of learning in the ICT suite. Because the improved curriculum makes learning objectives clearer, teachers are better able to assess and record pupils' achievements than they were previously.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Lessons are very well planned and linked to other subjects so that new skills are learned in a meaningful way. For example, pupils in Year 1 used their first-hand experiences of a visit to the local church to create a route map which showed a safe journey between church and school. They used the appropriate program menu skilfully to put in the roads and main buildings. There was a further challenge when they had to discuss the best places for zebra crossings. During the lesson, which was full of activity, all pupils improved their ICT and geographical skills, as well as their personal development, by

being more aware of road safety. A similarly purposeful lesson was seen in Year 4 when pupils used mathematical data to compare their own colour preferences with those of the whole school. The results were represented in comparative pie charts. In Year 6 pupils use different methods, including PowerPoint, to present the findings of scientific experiments, making good use of their skills. Very good relationships and high expectations are characteristic of all lessons. As a result, pupils behave very well and respond enthusiastically to new challenges, such as data-logging sensors to plot temperature graphs on screen.

79. The improvements seen in ICT result from the very good leadership and management. The co-ordinator has a very clear overview of standards. She has introduced further challenges such as a Key Skills examination and a project supported by the high school that tests skills across the whole curriculum in Year 6 which helps to further raise standards. Despite the improvements, there is a continued drive to improve both hardware and software to keep pace with new developments.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. ICT is used very effectively to support learning in other subjects. Good examples of work in science and mathematics, as well as researched and word-processed writing, are evident around the school. Computer programs are used to compose music, and pupils have opportunities to use other technical equipment such as tape-recorders and electronic keyboards.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

81. The inspection produced too little evidence to make secure judgements in relation to history and geography. However, pupils were interviewed and a scrutiny was made of their work. One history lesson was observed. It is evident that teachers provide an interesting range of learning experiences through these subjects. In addition, pupils make good use of their literacy skills to develop their learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote imaginatively about 'The Great Fire of London' as well as a letter as if from Florence Nightingale to her parents. Teachers encouraged pupils in Year 6 to develop opinions by looking at points for and against the exploitation of Antarctica. Pupils also devised the script for a play about Beowulf. Other subjects contribute well. For example, pupils use computers to communicate their learning with well-designed booklets, which include attention to layout and the use of digital photographs.
82. In **geography**, pupils in Year 2 were aware of differences in climates, countryside and people's lives. Pupils in Year 6 had the expected knowledge, but few either compared or contrasted localities or developed opinions about human effects on the environment. In history, pupils in Year 2 were beginning to compare different eras and to explain why people acted as they did. Pupils in Year 6 knew the relative value of different types of evidence and that history is largely based on interpretation. They also recognised the important characteristics of certain periods. Interesting visits, for example to the Beamish Museum and a residential visit to a contrasting locality, make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
83. The **history** lesson in Year 5 where pupils learned about conditions in Barnsley workhouse was very good. Another excellent English lesson in Year 2 enacted a drama about 'The Great Fire of London' which gave pupils insight into what happened.

Religious education (RE)

Provision for religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the previous inspection.
- Subject leadership has improved. This has had a good impact on curriculum development.
- Learning is enriched very well through first-hand experiences.

Commentary

84. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above the expectation of the local-authority agreed syllabus. This shows an improvement on the standards which were at the expected level of the locally-agreed syllabus previously reported. Since the previous inspection, the adaptation of some national guidance and a broader coverage of world religions have enhanced the programme of study. This has resulted in a more challenging curriculum enriched also by many opportunities for pupils to find out at first hand about different beliefs and religious practices.
85. There is a strong focus throughout the school on Christianity. Alongside this, pupils learn in depth about Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. Topics are detailed and pupils answer important questions such as “Who?”, “Why?”, “How?” and “When?” as they relate to each faith. There is also a strong emphasis on how religious commitment guides people’s lives and of the significance of traditional stories such as those about Rama and Sita and Guru Gobind Singh. Pupils visit various places of worship, where they meet members of Christian, Sikh and Hindu communities and welcome visitors into school to broaden their religious knowledge and understanding.
86. The quality of teaching seen in lessons during the inspection was consistently good. Evidence of pupils’ work shows that some very good learning has taken place over time, resulting in very good achievement. Teachers’ subject knowledge has improved, resulting in well-planned lessons. Very good relationships in classes mean that pupils know that their contribution to discussions is valued. This gives them the confidence to express ideas and to comment on those of others. This was evident in their discussion about the ‘Five Ks’ of Sikhism, following their visit to a Gurdwara. Resources are used well to help pupils understanding, including the use of ICT PowerPoint displays.
87. The co-ordinator has initiated some good developments. Support for teaching and a revised curriculum have resulted in very good improvements and raised standards further. The co-ordinator monitors standards well by keeping samples of pupils’ work. The development plan is clear and focuses well on standards and achievement.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

88. Two lessons were seen in art and design, three in design and technology (DT) and two in music. Only three lessons were observed in physical education (PE). It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision in art and design, DT and PE.
89. Through **art and design**, pupils have experience of a wide range of materials and are taught basic skills well. Teachers use art in other subjects, which enhances pupils’ learnt skills. This was evident in the displays around the school. In the lessons seen, good attention to the development of observational skills was a feature of a lesson in Year 2, where pupils achieved well because of the teacher’s use of good resources. They worked in groups, using different materials to create different houses and showed a good appreciation of pattern and a good understanding of the texture of different materials.

90. In **design and technology** projects there is a strong focus on the three key areas of design, making and evaluation in the teaching and learning. A strength is the way that pupils are focused on design and technology in the everyday world at the beginning of a topic. In a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils focused on different rides at the fairground after their visit to Beamish. Their models included motors to power their rides, linked to their work in science. The teacher was very skilled in questioning pupils in order to develop the lesson and make clear teaching points. Pupils responded enthusiastically, and quickly organised themselves, choosing who would do what. Correct terminology was used and pupils achieved well, increasing their knowledge of gears, cams, supports and structures. After completing their observations on a topic, pupils were set a challenging task in Year 1. They had to design and make a house, and decide on the most effective materials and techniques to finish their models. In such activities, pupils use their new knowledge and skills, and achievement is good.
91. In **music**, the portfolio of work assembled by the co-ordinator indicates that significant improvements have taken place since the previous inspection. Curriculum planning, which follows national guidelines, is now effective in that pupils gain the full breadth of musical experiences by the time they leave the school. Pupils enjoy singing and show a good sense of rhythm as they move to music, play percussion instruments and sing. By Year 3, they are ready to learn how to sing songs in two parts. In Year 6, pupils are able to sing along to 'Zum Gali' with good volume, intonation and rhythm. Although this was challenging, they showed clear diction and musical phrasing as they sang in unison. This was followed by an enthusiastic session of simple composition, using advertising jingles that pupils had researched for their homework. These areas are fully developed in every class. Singing in assembly was good. There are opportunities for some pupils to learn to play instruments; currently they take lessons on the keyboard, violin, guitar and some woodwind instruments.
92. The co-ordinator has successfully raised the profile of music in the school. Opportunities for both instrumental and choral performances occur through productions such as "Cinderella" by Year 2 pupils and "Dick Whittington" by the pupils in Year 6. The school choir entertains community groups, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 have taken part in a Sheffield Music Festival. A popular activity is the weekly club to practise Kodaly singing. This is funded by the Council for Performing Arts and contributes very much towards the development of pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
93. From the activities observed in **physical education**, which focused on dance and movement, all aspects of teaching were judged to be strong and pupils achieved very well. Pupils worked very hard to perfect their routines in the extra-curricular dance club, where their learning was enhanced by the skills and enthusiasm of the teacher.
94. In the curricular planning, girls and boys of all abilities are given very good opportunities to participate in an extremely wide variety of activities, more varied than is found in most schools. The residential visits for pupils in Year 6 give them very good opportunities for participating in outdoor and energetic pursuits. The school has recently been awarded the ActiveMark in recognition of the very good curriculum offered to the pupils.
95. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has brought a wealth of new initiatives into school, and pupils are involved in many community activities, including links with local primary schools and the sports college. They also benefit from the services of a professional coach, who has identified needs in teaching and learning, and supported the staff in identifying priorities. As a team, the co-ordinator and staff have been very successful in addressing the provision for dance. The provision has improved to a very high level since the previous inspection. There is now a systematically developed scheme of work and guidance for all staff. Resources and accommodation are very good; the recently-completed sports hall is spacious and ideal for lessons, extra-curricular activities and community use.

96. The subject contributes very well to pupils' personal development, especially their understanding of a healthy lifestyle and all aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- These areas of learning are taught and assimilated very effectively because of very good curricular provision and teaching.
- Pupils have a very good understanding that this subject is a preparation for living.

Commentary

97. The provision is very effective in the many ways in which pupils' attitudes, achievements and self-esteem are valued and promoted. The very high quality of teaching and curricular enrichment contributes to pupils' knowledge and understanding of how many elements of the community, society and a democracy work. Aspects of a healthy lifestyle, including awareness of drugs and substances, health, safety and sex education, are very well promoted. Circle Time gives pupils opportunities for voicing their opinions and raising their concerns. The headteacher and staff have sought and acted on their opinions more successfully than found in most schools.
98. The headteacher has planned excellent provision for citizenship education. Having organised the election of School Councillors, she immediately involved them in a common area of concern: the quality of school meals. After initial discussions and rigorous canvassing of other pupils, they, accompanied by the headteacher, met members of the local education authority in the council chambers. They stated their concerns about the quality of meals, the narrow range of choices, and healthy eating. Following a further consultation process, they achieved a high level of success. Lunchtimes are now very sociable occasions where pupils have a wide choice and can select healthy options if they wish. Lunches are eaten in a very attractive and sociable setting. The pupils involved were thrilled at having been part of democracy in action and had made an impact on school life.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	1
The governance of the school	1
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	1

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