

INSPECTION REPORT

WESTERN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Harrogate

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121399

Headteacher: Mrs C Smith

Acting headteacher at the time of the inspection:

Mr T Broad

Lead inspector: Mrs M Ward

Dates of inspection: 14th - 17th June 2004

Inspection number: 258371

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 -11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 395

School address: Cold Bath Road
Harrogate
North Yorkshire

Postcode: HG2 0NA

Telephone number: (01423) 502 737
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs T Brooke

Date of previous inspection: 18th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Western Primary School is larger than average and caters for pupils aged three to 11 years who mostly live in the Harlow Moor or West Central areas of Harrogate. Many houses are owner-occupied, but there are small pockets of disadvantage. The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background is a bit higher than in most schools, but all speak English with confidence and understanding. The proportion of pupils on the special needs register, at 7.3 per cent, is well below the national average. At 1.2 per cent the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The proportion entitled to a free school meal, at six per cent, is below the national average. The proportion of pupils entering and leaving the school during the course of each year is slightly above average. There are 353 pupils, and 42 nursery children who attend part-time. The attainment of children coming into the school is above average, but the full range is represented. The school gained the Healthy Schools award and the ECO Schools award in 2001, in 2002 Investors in People was achieved and in 2004 the Basic Skill Quality Mark was renewed. At the time of the inspection the headteacher was absent owing to personal sickness. However, she was available to contribute to discussions and to provide information prior to the inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21118	Mrs M Ward	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Personal, social and health education
19720	Ms D Granville-Hastings	Lay inspector	
30724	Mrs D Hiscock	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs
20288	Ms S Morton	Team inspector	English History Geography Religious education
32397	Mr J Sturt	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Physical education Music

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	8 - 14
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14 - 15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	16 - 27
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with many very good features. Teaching is consistently good and all pupils achieve well. The headteacher, senior staff and governors lead the school very effectively. A very positive school ethos has been created in which all pupils feel truly valued, and all are included in activities. The school provides good value for money.

THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- Standards are well above average and all pupils achieve well.
- The headteacher, governors and key staff work closely and provide very effective leadership.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage and for science and music is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes and social and moral development are very good and they are very happy to come to school.
- Care for individuals is central to the very good ethos of the school and ensures that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life.
- Links with parents are very strong and they are very satisfied with the school.
- The development of writing skills is insufficiently systematic in Years 1 to 4.
- Assessment, although satisfactory, could be improved, and pupils and their parents are not always made sufficiently aware of the progress they are making.

The school was last inspected in 1998 and has made good progress in the intervening period. The recommendations for improvement have been effectively addressed. The proportion of teaching that is good or very good has increased. The school has greatly improved the provision for ICT and DT, and consequently pupils now achieve well. Curriculum planning has been developed. The school has continued to review the organisation of classes to effectively accommodate the changing numbers on roll. It has handled well the significant turnover in staff, including the appointment of a new headteacher. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively embraced, leading to higher standards in reading, speaking, listening and mathematics. Satisfactory progress has been made in improving marking and presentation. Pupils' attitudes have further improved and are now very good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	B	D
mathematics	B	B	A	C
science	A	A	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 2.

Overall, the achievement of all pupils is good. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and most reach or exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement is good and standards are **well above average** in reading and mathematics, **above average** in science and **average** in writing. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and standards are **above average** in English, but writing remains the weakest aspect. Standards are **well above average** in mathematics and science. English results in the National Curriculum tests in 2003 were below the average for similar schools, mainly because the large number of boys

in the cohort performed less well than the girls. However, during the inspection there was no evidence of boys underachieving. Standards in information and communication technology and design and technology have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now **above expectations** and **well above expectations** respectively.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. They have very positive attitudes to school and are very confident learners. Their behaviour is very good in class and around the school. Their personal qualities, such as relationships and concern for others, are very good. They are open, friendly, confident and thoughtful of others. The rate of attendance is high, and most pupils arrive promptly for school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Overall, teaching is good and in the Foundation Stage and in a third of lessons in Years 1 to 6, it is very good. Pupils come to lessons with a mature and eager approach to learning. Very good relationships are evident throughout the school. Lessons are well planned to include a good range of teaching and learning methods. Teachers and support staff skilfully develop pupils' language skills. However, in Years 1 to 4 the teaching of writing is not sufficiently systematic or reinforced well enough in other subjects. The school provides a good curriculum that pupils find interesting and relevant. Good care is taken of pupils on a daily basis. They are supported well and are involved very effectively in school life. The school has a very good relationship with parents and good links with the community and other schools. These strong partnerships and effective provision support and develop pupils' learning and experiences well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership is very good and the school is managed well. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a very clear vision for the future of the school. Very effective leadership by other senior staff has enabled the school to establish strategies that are having a positive impact on standards. The school is well managed and this ensures that its day-to-day running is smooth and efficient. Procedures and policies are firmly established and the work of the school is monitored closely. The governors are fully involved in shaping its strategic direction and considering the progress made towards their goals. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school and the strong partnerships support and develop pupils' learning and experiences well. However, a few feel that they do not get sufficient formal information on their children's progress and this is supported by inspection evidence. Some concern was expressed about mixed-aged classes and the number of teachers that have taught some children, but there was no evidence of these issues impacting on pupils' learning. Various comments were made about the new arrangements in the Foundation Stage and at lunchtime. Evidence suggests that these are contributing very positively to pupils' personal development. They are very happy with their school and are particularly positive about the staff. They feel safe, secure and well looked after. They enjoy learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE ARE:

- Create a more systematic approach to the development of writing skills across the curriculum in Years 1 to 4.
- Further develop teachers' skills in the use of curricular targets, improve the accuracy of their judgements and ensure that pupils and their parents are aware of the progress they are making and the next steps expected of them.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

Pupils' achievement is consistently **good** throughout the school. Overall, standards are above average by the end of Year 2, but by the end of Year 6 they have improved to be well above average, which is much the same as in schools similar to Western.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards in the basic skills of reading, speaking, listening and mathematics are well developed and well above average in Years 1 to 6.
- By Year 6, standards are also well above average in science and well above expectations in design and technology, and music.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well in their personal, social and creative skills;
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Standards of writing in Years 1 and 2 are average and in Years 3 to 6 they are above average, but in relation to other areas of literacy they need to improve.

COMMENTARY

1. Attainment on entry to the school is above average, but the full range is represented. The high quality of teaching and the very good curriculum offered in the Foundation Stage ensure that all children achieve well. Most reach or exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the reception year, which is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection.

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

Subject	School results	National results
reading	17.8 (17.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.5 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.1 (18.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 49 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In the 2003 national reading and mathematics tests, Year 2 pupils attained results that were well above the national average and were much better than those attained by pupils in schools similar to Western. In writing they attained standards that were above the national average and in line with those in similar schools. Unconfirmed results for 2004 suggest a similar pattern.
3. These results broadly reflect the standards seen during the inspection and the good achievement enjoyed by all pupils. Their speaking and listening skills are very good and they read very well, but writing skills, although representing satisfactory achievement, are less well developed, as a result of pupils not being given sufficiently systematic opportunities to rehearse them in other subjects. The school is aware of this discrepancy, has highlighted writing as an area in need of development and has plans to adopt a more systematic approach to it in different subjects. In mathematics, standards have improved since the last inspection and are now well above average. Learning in this subject is supported particularly well by the teachers' high expectations and attention to the development of pupils' thinking skills and problem-solving strategies. In science, evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils achieve above expected standards by

Year 2, although this is not reflected in the teachers' assessments, which are sometimes too stringent. Work sampled in other subjects is at least of the expected standard at the end of Year 2, and in design and technology and information and communication technology it has improved since the last inspection and is now above the expected level.

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

Subject	School results	National results
English	28.3 (29.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.9 (27.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.0 (30.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. The results of the national tests in 2003 for pupils in Year 6 were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. These broadly reflect the standards seen during the inspection, and in the unconfirmed 2004 test results, except that results in English have improved with all pupils reaching the average level and a high proportion exceeding this. Reading remains stronger than writing and substantially fewer pupils reach the higher levels in writing. Pupils' performance was broadly in line with the average for similar schools; it was well above average in science, average in mathematics and below average in English. Standards have been sustained in English and improved in mathematics since the last inspection. Standards in science have remained consistently well above the national average over several years and are a testament to the very good leadership provided by the co-ordinator and the skilled teaching of the subject. All pupils achieve well. However, achievement in writing is better in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4. This is because the older pupils' skills are developed more systematically in all aspects of their work and they more readily transfer what they have learned in English lessons to their work in other subjects. Standards in reading, speaking and listening are well above average. Pupils enjoy reading a wide range of texts and are confident and articulate when talking about their work or holding a conversation. Standards in design and technology and information and communication technology have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now well above expectations and above expectations respectively. Standards in music have also improved and are also well above expectations. The sampling of other subjects indicates that standards in these subjects are at least in line with and sometimes above nationally expected levels.

5. As they move through the school, most pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their own targets and achieve well. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the standards of some of these pupils are below average, although many, as a result of the support they receive, achieve the expected levels. The very small population of ethnic minority pupils and pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve well throughout the school. Higher-attaining pupils are usually well challenged and achieve well. Most parents are very happy with the progress their children make in school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** and results in their having very good attitudes to school and learning. Behaviour around school and in lessons is very good. Attendance is also very good and pupils arrive on time.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils' personal development, particularly their social and moral development, is very good.
- Pupils enjoy being at school and tackle the lessons and activities prepared for them with interest and enthusiasm.
- The school has high expectations of attitudes and behaviour, to which pupils respond very well.
- Relationships are very good, creating a happy and productive atmosphere in which pupils learn well and are confident and relaxed.
- Pupils take on responsibility very well and make a real contribution to the daily life of school.
- Attendance is consistently very good.

COMMENTARY

6. The importance of pupils' personal development is at the heart of everything the school does. It has successfully created a supportive and caring atmosphere in which pupils grow and flourish. The children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority within the Foundation Stage, and by the end of the reception year they all meet and most exceed the goals set for them. From the nursery onwards, pupils are valued as individuals and for their contribution to school life, and there is a feeling of harmony throughout the school.
7. In particular, pupils' social and moral development is very good. The school day is based on the values of tolerance and respect, which results in very good relationships between teachers and pupils. This has a positive impact on pupils' response and attitudes in lessons and to school in general. Often their positive attitudes, questions and suggestions contribute to the progress and direction of the lesson. Pupils enjoy being at school, joining in with the activities prepared for them with gusto. They are loyal towards and proud of their school.
8. Pupils grow spiritually and culturally because there are many occasions for them to think about themselves, others and the world at large. Assemblies play an important part in the school day and are a genuine coming together of pupils and staff to listen, reflect on and sing about a particular theme.
9. Pupils go through the school day happily and enjoy having visitors to talk to. They are friendly, polite and keen to talk about themselves and their school. From an early age they are taught to listen to one another. They show concern and compassion, and a respect for others' needs. At lunchtime pupils sit in 'social' groups where older ones look after younger ones. After lunch and at breaks many older pupils choose to spend time with the younger ones, playing with and caring for them in a genuine and practical manner.
10. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is very good and exclusions are rare. Indeed, a strength is the way in which pupils live and work together. Breaks and lunchtimes are relaxed and comfortable, with pupils playing easily together. They have a clear understanding of the high standards expected of them and respond accordingly. In lessons, pupils' behaviour ensures that learning takes place at a good rate, contributing to the high standards they achieve.

11. Pupils take a keen interest in how their school works. They enjoy being part of such things as the school council, where they have a genuine voice in what happens in the school. Their opinions played an important part in establishing the code of conduct that is now displayed all around the school. Their confidence and self-esteem improve greatly when they are given such responsibilities and they gain a real sense of belonging to and taking pride in their own community. On leaving school, most pupils are confident, well-rounded people, ready for the next stage of their education.
12. Attendance is very good, being consistently higher than the national average. Unauthorised absence is nil because of conscientious monitoring and the very good relationship between the school and parents.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**, and has improved in many aspects since the previous inspection. Teaching and learning are **good**; the curriculum is **well conceived**, **good** care is taken of pupils, **very good** relationships are developed with parents and **good** links are made with the community.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning are **good** overall, and often **very good**. They are very good overall in the nursery and reception classes and in about a third of lessons in Years 1 to 6. The school has sound procedures for assessment. The quality of teaching is better than at the time of the previous inspection.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils come to lessons with a mature and eager approach to learning.
- The quality of learning in the nursery and reception classes is consistently very good.
- Very good relationships are evident throughout the school.
- Lessons are well planned to include a good range of teaching and learning methods.
- Teachers and support staff skilfully develop pupils' language skills.
- The teaching of writing skills is not sufficiently systematic in Years 1 to 4.
- The assessments made by some teachers are not accurate; targets sometimes lack precision and are not always clearly understood by pupils or their parents.

COMMENTARY

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 52 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	18 (35%)	23 (44%)	10 (19%)	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.

13. The school rightly views learning as central to school improvement. Teachers have a strong commitment to the school and their pupils. They have worked very hard over the last few years to adapt to new practices to improve the quality of provision and have been very successful in doing so.
14. Teaching is very good in the nursery and reception classes in all of the six areas of learning. This enables children to make very good progress so that almost all meet or

exceed the nationally expected 'Early Learning Goals' by the time they move to Year 1. Relationships are very good, and a very positive climate is created where children settle quickly and grow in confidence. Expectations are high and the quality of support enables children to meet these expectations. They are provided with a very good range of interesting activities with clear learning goals through which they can extend their knowledge and develop their understanding.

15. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 to 6, and often very good; it is particularly good for older pupils. This has ensured that they all achieve well and standards have continued to rise. Very good relationships underpin all lessons, and pupils are eager to learn. Overall, teaching is good in English, mathematics, ICT and design and technology. The teaching of science is very good in Years 3 to 6 because practical activities are used very effectively to extend understanding and develop investigative approaches. The teaching of music in Years 3 to 6 is also very good. Although the teaching of English is generally good, the development of pupils' writing skills is not sufficiently systematic in Years 1 to 4 and this inhibits the pupils' ability to write at length. Opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills progressively through work in other subjects are missed and too little emphasis is given to accuracy in the lower school.
16. Where teaching is best, expectations are high and teachers provide interesting and stimulating activities that pupils relish. In an excellent Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, described below, it was the very high challenge that captivated the pupils and promoted such good learning. Teachers constantly reinforce and model technical vocabulary and help pupils to articulate their thinking, giving time for thought and opportunities for discussion. Consequently, even the younger pupils are able to communicate their ideas very clearly, such as in a very good Year 1 English lesson, when pupils described different characters from a story, using words such as "exterminate", "cheeky", "scary" and "naughty".

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent Year 6 lesson on interpreting and devising graphs using algebraic formula, showing the value of skilled questioning and regular feedback for pupils.

Pupils working in small groups clearly understood what was expected of them. Highly skilled questioning built on each small step of understanding, close assessment enabling the teacher to lever up the pace and challenge, making everyone think really hard. Pupils showed a huge amount of determination to deal with the mathematical ideas. Each learned rapidly through every part of the lesson. The teacher intervened at exactly the right point to prompt and nudge those who had stopped short of making it to the end, whilst fuelling the higher-attaining mathematical thinkers with more questions. Instant feedback spurred them on and reinforced the methods needed to examine what would happen should there be some inaccuracies in their line graphs. The classroom was buzzing when the end of the lesson was signalled. Pupils did not want to finish and said so. Reluctant to stop, they quizzed the teacher about what would come next. They were surprised that they could tackle the complexities presented. There was a sense of triumph. As one boy noted, "The grid looked like something from Einstein.... The best lesson ever!"

17. There is a good range of teaching methods in use across the school and pupils appreciate how these help them to learn. For example, pupils in Year 6 recall with enthusiasm their role-play of Greek myths and comment on how visualizing this helps them to remember. Individual whiteboards are often used very effectively for pupils to prepare their work before showing the teacher. Paired and group discussions are common features in many lessons and this helps to extend pupils' understanding and to shape their thoughts and ideas. The most effective lessons seen involved pupils in practical activities and generated interest and excitement. For example, a Year 5-6

music lesson in which pupils rehearsed and performed a piece from a musical score using a variety of instruments was much enjoyed by all the class.

18. A few parents expressed concerns about the number of teachers teaching their children and the fact that they are taught in mixed-age classes. More-established teachers have been very effective in helping new colleagues to settle into the school's way of working and there is no evidence of pupils achieving less well in the mixed-aged classes. Assessment information is used appropriately to identify the learning needs of different groups of pupils, and lessons are well planned to take account of this. However, occasionally assessments are not accurate or lack sufficient detail to ensure that the targets set for individuals precisely define their needs, and it is not always clear to pupils or their parents what they need to learn to achieve the level expected of them.
19. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Support assistants skillfully reinforce instructions, rephrase questions and model answers for pupils. Teachers modify activities and questions to meet their needs, but some targets are not sharp enough in individual education plans (IEPs), but as teachers know their pupils needs well this does not detract from their learning.

THE CURRICULUM

The school provides a **good** range of learning opportunities within a broad and balanced curriculum, which are enhanced by extra-curricular activities and educational visits. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory and resources are **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The range and quality of learning experiences in the Foundation Stage are very good.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve well.
- The planned links between subjects for Years 5 and 6 improve the coherence of the curriculum and significantly enhance learning.
- The school prepares pupils well for the next stage of education.
- Accommodation, although satisfactory, limits the scope of physical activities on the site, as there is no sports field.

COMMENTARY

20. Overall, the quality of the curriculum throughout the school is good and statutory requirements are met, ensuring that pupils enjoy their learning. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used effectively to teach English and mathematics. Provision for science, design and technology and music is very good. In science due weight is given to investigation and practical activity. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have very good opportunities in music to extend their experiences, through learning to play a range of instruments and performing in the very good school choir. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and supports the pupils' personal development well. Care is taken to prepare pupils well for each step on their journey through the school and beyond as they move to secondary school.
21. The curriculum for children in nursery and reception (Foundation Stage) is very good. At the heart of the Foundation Stage curriculum there are hugely exciting ways for children to

learn for themselves. In nursery and both reception classes they benefit from the rich experiences that are planned for them to explore, investigate and create through play. Equally, the school's aim for children to master their own environment is fulfilled. Activities are remarkably well organised around topics that link up the six areas of learning so that children can follow new ideas from their own experience. The recent overhaul of provision by the team of staff and the new headteacher has enhanced the quality of activities and safeguarded an even pathway towards and beyond the Early Learning Goals.

22. The school is making increasing use of links between subjects to make the curriculum meaningful to pupils and allow knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in one subject to be applied and consolidated in another. For example, in Years 5 and 6 the science unit of work about earth and space links science with composing music, the writing of space poems and the creation of a 'space' dance in physical education. Although links are made in the lower school, there is a less systematic approach to the development of pupils' writing skills through other subjects. There is increasingly good use of information and communication technology across the curriculum to support work in other subjects.
23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they generally make good progress. They have equal access to the curriculum and the opportunity to succeed. The co-ordinator for special educational needs oversees the provision well, ensuring that parents, teachers, classroom-support assistants and outside agencies work together to meet pupils' needs.
24. Good use is made of expertise within the school community. Parents, grandparents and visitors regularly contribute. There are many educational visits to places of interest, and pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 enjoy residential visits. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities to support its work, but it is mainly pupils from Years 5 and 6 who participate in these activities.
25. The school is well resourced. Teachers have a good level of expertise and experience. Classroom assistants are deployed well to support the work of teachers and pupils. The school has worked very hard to improve the quality and appearance of the accommodation. Recent improvements to the playground, the mezzanine floor above the hall that houses the library and the converted basement for the computer suite all enhance the curriculum. The school has developed a high-quality outdoor area with very ordinary materials for children in the Foundation Stage. Imaginative everyday objects and media complement the good variety of resources. Staff and governors have been very creative in making the best possible use of a cramped building. Despite the absence of a field, pupils play Outdoor Invasion and ball-striking games in the playground. However, the hard surface and lack of space restrict the level of performance of the most able.

CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The school provides **good** care for its pupils on a daily basis. They are supported well and are involved very effectively in school life.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- An atmosphere of trust and respect pervades the school.
- Very good relationships between staff and pupils increase pupils' confidence.

- Well-informed teachers know pupils and families well and provide good support for individual needs.
- Clear targets are not used sufficiently well to support and improve individual pupils' achievement and learning.
- Pupils are involved very well in the daily life of school and know that their views are important.
- Children settle into the nursery and reception classes very well.
- Procedures for looking after pupils on a daily basis are very good, but formal risk assessments of activities within school are not yet done.

COMMENTARY

26. The school is a very caring place where pupils feel safe and confident. The very good relationships are the basis upon which much of the personal support is built and this contributes to pupils' ability to get the most out of every day. The school is a very happy place and pupils, staff and visitors enjoy being there. Development of pupils' social and personal skills are intrinsic in school life and pervades the whole day. All staff in the school – teaching and support staff – work well together, which ensures that pupils always encounter the same approach, standards and philosophy.
27. Staff have an in-depth knowledge of all their pupils and a genuine concern for and interest in their welfare and progress. They know a lot about individual families and are quick to spot and respond to pupils' needs. The Quiet Room is used very effectively to help those pupils who need extra help to get the most out of their learning in the classroom. This support is sensitive and appropriate. Throughout the school, praise and rewards are used successfully to encourage pupils to try their best and work hard. There are many opportunities for them to show what they can do and they enjoy sharing their work. The Gold Award assemblies are always enjoyed by everyone and the certificates are a coveted award proudly received.
28. The assessment procedures help teachers know what pupils can do, but are not translated into clearly defined, specific, curricular targets which relate to National Curriculum levels and then shared with pupils. This limits the scope for pupils to assess their work or evaluate their progress.
29. The school values pupils' opinions highly, seeing them as an integral part of school life. In many lessons, pupils are expected to make decisions and often evaluate their own and each other's work. As a result, they are independent learners, which helps them to achieve well.
30. Young children settle into the nursery and reception classes quickly and easily because of the school's sensitive approach. Staff visit families at home before children start Nursery to enable them to recognise a friendly face. Classroom routines are soon familiar and even the youngest children are confident and relaxed. Communication between staff is very good and information is shared freely.
31. The school pays good attention to the daily care of its pupils. Sickness and accidents are dealt with in a sensitive way to minimise the upset for young children, and the school liaises closely with parents at all times. Procedures for child protection are clear and known to all staff. Management of health and safety is improving and there is now a structured approach to monitoring and addressing issues. Risk assessments are in the very early stages and have yet to be formalised into a natural part of health-and-safety management. However, staff consider safety in lessons, and safe practice was observed during the inspection.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

The school has a **very good** relationship with parents and **good** links with the community and other schools. These strong partnerships support and develop pupils' learning and experiences well.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the work and attitude of staff.
- Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in school and their children's learning.
- Links with other schools and institutions are good.
- Good use is made of the local community to supplement the curriculum.
- Annual reports do not give sufficient information on progress and standards attained.

COMMENTARY

32. Overall, parents have very positive views about the school and the experience their children have. They have trust and confidence in the staff and feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions and problems. Some parents expressed a concern about the large and mixed-aged classes in some year groups. Evidence during the inspection found that, whilst some teaching groups are large, they are managed well and pupils learn and achieve well. The school works effectively within the restrictions it has.
33. Parents are actively encouraged in many ways to be part of school life. They receive plenty of very good information on school life, activities, events and learning in a variety of formats. The website is maintained by a parent and provides useful links to many sources of information to help parents help their children. Booklets such as the numeracy targets give very helpful, practical suggestions on activities parents can do with their children at home to support their learning. Parents are often seen around school. Many responded to a recent plea for some voluntary helpers at lunchtime, and the Friends and Family Association constantly organises events to help and support the school in many ways. Parents' views are sought regularly and their concerns are responded to quickly and appropriately.
34. Relationships between staff and parents are very good and form a very good basis for genuine dialogue. However, some parents feel they do not get sufficient formal information on their children's progress and this is supported by inspection evidence. Few comments in the annual reports indicate to parents the rate at which their children are progressing or the standard at which they are working. Neither do they say whether previous targets have successfully been achieved. Some parents would prefer more formal occasions to meet staff to discuss progress as not all are invited to meetings in the spring and summer terms. Some concern was expressed about mixed-aged classes and the number of teachers that have taught some children, but there was no evidence of these issues affecting pupils' learning. Various comments were made about the new arrangements in the Foundation Stage and at lunchtime. Evidence suggests that these are contributing very positively to children's personal development.
35. There are effective links with other schools in the area, which directly benefit pupils in many ways. Through good partnerships with two local secondary schools, pupils have access to resources and specialist teaching in French and science. Secondary schools willingly offer their help and support with sports day and school concerts, productions and assemblies. Sporting, drama and musical events involve pupils from a number of

primary schools working together. The transition from primary to secondary school is managed well and Year 6 pupils are looking forward to September.

36. The school uses its local community well to broaden its curriculum, enhance lessons and offer pupils new experiences. Visits to a variety of places are planned for all ages, including residential trips for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. These do much to develop their confidence and independence, and contribute greatly to their personal development. The school enjoys good relationships with its neighbours and is well thought of in the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The head teacher provides **very good** leadership. Senior staff and others with responsibilities fulfil their roles **very well**. The school is **well** managed and governance is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES:

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the future of the school.
- The deputy headteacher and other senior leaders provide good role models for others and make a very positive contribution to the leadership of the school.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provide pertinent advice and support.
- The school improvement plan sets clear and appropriate priorities for action.
- Arrangements to promote the continuous professional development of all staff are good.
- The day-to-day running of the school is smooth and efficient.

COMMENTARY

37. At the time of the previous inspection the school benefited from the very clear leadership of the headteacher, governors and senior staff. Since September 2003 the newly appointed headteacher has worked very well with governors and senior staff to maintain this position and secure the confidence of pupils and their parents. During the time of the inspection the headteacher was absent owing to ill health. However, from an earlier interview with her and other inspection evidence, it is apparent that she has a clear vision for the school, high aspirations and a strong sense of purpose based upon her firm commitment to continuous school improvement. She has involved staff and governors in the development of the current School Improvement Plan, which is linked to the budget and is securely founded upon a detailed analysis of the school's performance. Where actions have been taken they have been well founded and in many instances can be seen to be having a positive impact; for example, recent developments in the Foundation Stage.
38. Overall, the work of other key staff is very good. The acting headteacher is managing the school well in the headteacher's absence and has the confidence of staff, governors and parents. The leadership of mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology, and music is very good, and the leadership of English and SEN is good. More-recently appointed subject leaders are at an early stage of development and are making satisfactory progress. The school's practice of pairing subject leaders is effective in securing continuity within each area and helping pupils to

achieve well across the school. School leaders provide a very good climate for learning and, working with the governors, promote a very inclusive atmosphere.

39. There are good links between subject leaders and governors. Subject leaders report to governors regularly and governors are able to ask questions knowledgeably. The governors receive a good level of information and this allows them to evaluate the impact of agreed actions on the quality of teaching and learning and on standards. Their various committees are effectively involved in moving the school forward.
40. The chair of governors has a very good overview and a thorough working knowledge of the work of the school. She and her fellow governors have a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and play a key role in its strategic direction. Many governors are directly involved in the life of the school and together they ensure that it meets all statutory responsibilities; they share the commitment of the staff to maintaining and developing the inclusive nature of the school, raising standards and improving pupils' achievement, are fully involved in the development and monitoring of the school improvement plan, and monitor the financial management of the school.
41. Performance management procedures are good and are linked to school improvement priorities. The school's clear commitment to staff training and development and the policy for the induction of new staff ensures that Newly Qualified Teachers, students and teachers new to the school or moving to a new key stage are well supported. Consequently, they are enabled to make an effective contribution to the school's development, and the potentially disruptive effects of the high staff turnover are negated. The school's finances are managed very effectively and resources are deployed effectively in order to meet the school's priorities. In view of the school's low basic income and good provision, it provides good value for money.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,002,993
Total expenditure	1,008,768
Expenditure per pupil	2,697

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	67,280
Balance carried forward to the next year	61,505

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **very good** for children in the Foundation Stage.

There are currently 42 children in the two sessions of nursery and 46 children in the two reception classes. The team includes three teachers and two teaching assistants, with other part-time adults supporting the provision. Children have a particularly good start to their education, and the school has made good progress in developing Foundation Stage provision since the last inspection.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- All the children achieve well, including those who have additional needs.
- At the start of Year 1 most children exceed the Early Learning Goals for their age.
- Very good methods of teaching and learning bring a breadth to children's knowledge and a joy to their play.
- Children are expected to think for themselves and to talk about their experiences.
- There is an excitement and energy in activities that breed spontaneity and curiosity.
- Very strong links between nursery and reception enrich children's learning.
- The outdoor area for learning is an exciting place to be.
- The refreshing variety of day-to-day objects and materials inspires children.

COMMENTARY

42. When children enter the nursery their skills and knowledge in most areas of learning are above those typical for their age. The full range of ability levels is represented and all children get off to a very good start. The challenges set help them to quickly learn what is expected and share with others their experience of the world.
43. Joint planning with reception staff ensures that children move from nursery to reception with ease. The transition is seamless and, pleasingly, the links with Year 1 ensure that children move on well. They are all very keen to learn and they play with others particularly well. There is a very good balance between activities guided by adults and those where children choose for themselves. Both are very well linked with topics across the six areas of learning so that children can follow ideas that captivate their attention. In many activities children get a powerful flavour of the subjects that older children study in the National Curriculum. This represents very good teaching in both the nursery and reception classes. Children are expected to talk about their activities and in some cases are starting to appraise what they have made and what they have discovered. Their speaking and listening skills are well beyond the goals for their age. This is a strength of the Foundation Stage.
44. Provision in the Foundation Stage has been very successfully adapted to accommodate the Foundation Stage curriculum, introduced since the last inspection, and the quality of teaching has improved. Improvement in the outdoor area, with a minimal budget, has given a rich dimension to the curriculum that brings variety and depth to children's learning. Significant changes in organisation and planning this academic year have streamlined and improved the quality of provision. Nevertheless, children continue to

exceed the levels typically seen among those starting Year 1. The quality of leadership and management is very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Adults develop children's trust and confidence.
- Children mature quickly into enthusiastic learners.
- They listen very well, care about others and develop an increasing mastery of their small world.
- Adults have high expectations of how children will learn.

COMMENTARY

45. Learning is at the heart of each classroom and children achieve well. In the nursery, adults are focused on building children's skills of independence. Purposeful routines and familiar routes around the indoor and outdoor areas form the skeleton of each day. In the very well-designed outdoor area children feel snug and are free to encounter a huge range of activities in all weathers. Imaginative ways for even the very youngest children to learn lead them towards independence each day, so much so that the very few children for whom English is an additional language make rapid gains in their early acquisition of and use of language. They join in all the activities and trust the adults around them. Children have a sense of well-being.
46. Children in the reception classes build on these strengths. They learn to handle more choices in their relationships, make decisions and manage themselves very well. Thoughtful signs support their understanding of the order of the day and these merge into the background as children quickly know what is expected of them and how to access help when they need it. Increasing demands by adults for knowledge and skill are matched by children's maturity and very positive attitudes to others. When they transfer to Year 1 most children are well above the expectations set out in the goals for this area of learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Children communicate and use the language of thinking to a high level.
- In the nursery, adults use language very skilfully to enrich children's understanding.
- Adults follow and pursue children's ideas very well to deepen learning.
- In reception, children use their knowledge of letter sounds, sentences and questions when they read and write.
- Children know that there are many reasons to write so they do so with purpose and intent.
- Children with additional learning needs do well.

COMMENTARY

47. There is detail and thoroughness to the teaching plans that help each child to progress well along the stepping-stones in their communication, language, reading and writing.

Activities are exciting. The high level of teachers' joint knowledge in nursery and reception means that the adult team works skilfully to build quickly on the good qualities of language that most children bring with them into the nursery. Teaching here provides a rich model for the children to hear and use. They are expected to describe their experiences. They do this with panache; many use long phrases and sentences when they relate the significant features of the day.

48. Reception children build an increasing knowledge of letter sounds to read and write. They know a lot about books and can re-tell stories better than most. They can read simple sounds such as 'ch', 'sh', 'oo', and 'oy', and spell simple three-letter words fairly accurately. They use familiar words and the full range of strategies to determine what is happening in the stories they share. More-able children can devise and write questions when they explore the characters in stories such as "The Princess and the Pea". Some of them can place themselves in the princess's shoes and compose written questions. Teachers introduce discrete early skills for writing as needed and at a stage in children's development that readily accelerates the length and quality of writing. Children have a high level of understanding of the purposes of writing before they have the skills. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that this works well. Adults keep a close eye on the progress that children make from their previous attainment. The very few children with additional needs in learning benefit from the rich quality of communication. They too achieve well. Systems to track progress are new and help teachers to improve the accuracy of their assessment. Most children attain well beyond the goals in their communication skills and use of language.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- All children achieve well in their understanding of number.
- Teachers expect children to describe how they do simple addition and subtraction.
- The rich breadth of mathematical experiences is woven into many activities, including those planned for outdoors.

COMMENTARY

49. Mathematical ideas permeate each topic and pupils achieve well. Children use their knowledge of counting as they play in the nursery during lots of different activities. They benefit from the huge variety of mathematical ideas around them. For example, when children make simple boats they gauge the length of a piece of straw to make a mast. Very good teaching prompts them to consider which ones tipped over and why this should happen. So they begin to see emerging mathematical and scientific ideas in practice.
50. Most reception children can combine numbers such as eight and two to make ten, and those children with a computational thirst see wonder in the pattern of numbers and love to count at speed in two's, five's and ten's. Some can combine two numbers in their head. They all love to sing number rhymes. Teachers expect children to reflect on their ideas and describe how they came to an answer so that they develop an early understanding of mathematical reasoning. They start to record their mathematical

experiences in numbers purposefully and without stress. On entry to Year 1 most children exceed the goals for this age.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for the children's development of a knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Most children exceed well beyond what is expected in the nursery and reception.
- Their understanding of the world is hugely enriched by the quality of activities.
- Children's achievements are celebrated very well and used to check what they understand.
- Adults make children think.

COMMENTARY

51. Achievement in this area of learning is good. Children in the nursery often squeal with delight as they share programs with each other on computers. They have a growing awareness of their use as a source of interesting and enjoyable information. The quality of children's language is supported by a wealth of adult questioning. Teaching is very skilful. Adults intervene only when needed, but children have to think, describe, listen and re-consider, and they do this with delight at the challenges set.
52. In reception the breadth of experiences opens up the world for children. For example, a session on electricity is very well planned to extend their ideas and on another occasion, they browse a slide presentation of seaside images and text for themselves. These are powerful tools for their early learning. There is a global dimension to the activities that serves this small international family very well. In one session observed, a five-year-old touched a wooden carved figure from Africa. "It's very powerful," he said. "You can feel the power running through you..."

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Children develop their manipulative skills very well.
- Adults make very good use of the indoor and outdoor space and the effective range of resources.
- Nursery and reception children have many opportunities to develop the full range of physical skills for strength, mobility, skill and stamina.

COMMENTARY

53. Children have plenty of opportunities to use small tools and materials. They show skills and control that are typical for their age when they handle pencils and manipulate small objects and materials. Outdoors nursery children use the large space and good range of trolleys, carts, trikes and seesaws to develop many of their physical skills and strengths. Children in reception have an equally rich variety of opportunities to develop the level of

stamina and the full range of physical skills for their age. They show a level of control, safety and skills above expectations when they manoeuvre, balance, pull and push with others, and all achieve well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Role-play is bursting with imaginative features.
- Nursery children break into song spontaneously.
- Resources for construction encourage very purposeful play in the nursery.
- Reception children design their models before building them.
- Children pursue creative ideas in their own play.

COMMENTARY

54. Evidence from children's drawings, their tabletop play with small world objects and their exciting role-play "aeroplane" shows the thrill that they get from the experiences provided and how well they achieve. There are lots of ideas for children to trawl and a rapid turnover of new situations for them to explore and investigate. In the nursery, children share songs and "row the boat" with great fun and energy even at the end of the day. On entry to Year 1 they have used a huge range of materials and tools for designing, creating and making. Reception children handle charcoal sticks to draw sensitive figures, using the inspiration from Kenyan batik fabric on a colour wash picture to produce some beautiful pieces of art. Their designs for trains and cars on a big board are examples of how they build and share ideas creatively to a higher level than most five-year-olds.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards in reading, speaking and listening are well above average across the school.
- The teaching of English is good and some lessons are very good.
- The school's emphasis on "learning to learn" develops high levels of speaking and listening.
- Pupils do not consistently and progressively develop their writing skills in other subjects.
- Sometimes too little attention is paid to the accuracy of pupils' writing in the lower school.

COMMENTARY

55. In the 2003 national tests, standards in reading at the end of Year 2 were well above the national average and were much better than those attained by pupils in schools similar to Western. In writing, standards were above the national average and in line with those in similar schools. Results for 2004 suggest a similar pattern. Overall, standards in the

current Year 2 are above average and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are achieving well. However, compared to the well-above-average standards in reading, speaking and listening, standards in writing are average and, although achievement is generally satisfactory, pupils do not achieve as well as in the other aspects of the subject. This is partly due to missed opportunities for them to consistently and progressively develop writing in other subjects. Pupils do not always appreciate the relevance and purpose of what they write and are not given sufficient encouragement to use what they know of grammar, punctuation and presentation when writing in contexts other than English lessons.

56. In the 2003 national tests, standards in English by the end of Year 6 were above average and broadly in line with similar schools. Unconfirmed results for 2004 show improvement, but writing remains a relative weakness. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve well and by Year 6 standards in lessons are above average. They are above average in writing and well above in reading, speaking and listening. Pupils benefit from the good and sometimes very good teaching of English. Teachers across the school have worked hard to establish a whole-school commitment to the provision of a vibrant, learning-centred curriculum based upon multi-sensory learning through speaking, listening and first-hand experiences. Consequently, all pupils respond very well, personal development is boosted and high standards of oracy are very successfully promoted. Standards have largely been maintained since the last inspection.
57. Teachers have already recognised the need to improve standards in writing and have identified appropriate strategies to do this within the School Improvement Plan. The recently appointed subject leaders are developing their role well, using the information gathered from a range of assessment and monitoring strategies effectively to focus improvement. The school has set itself challenging targets.

Speaking and listening

58. Standards of speaking and listening are very good throughout the school and the achievement of all groups of pupils is consistently good. Teachers and other staff provide the children with excellent examples of respectful behaviour that values the thoughts and opinions of individuals, employing different strategies to create time and opportunities for pupils to develop thinking through language. Teachers and other adults demonstrate high standards of language and “think aloud” themselves, experimenting with a rich variety of forms of language and clearly expressing their own enjoyment of it within a wide range of different texts. The development of cross-curricular links has provided enjoyable opportunities for all pupils to understand and use the language specific to other subjects, with the school’s dramatic productions being particularly enthusiastically reported by children of all ages.

Reading

59. Standards of reading are high as a result not only of the systematic good teaching of reading strategies within school, but also because of the extensive support from home. Diaries are used effectively to maintain a dialogue about reading with families, and teachers are quick to draw upon pupils’ out-of-school reading in order to develop their understanding of class-based work – thus giving home reading a high status and creating an environment where reading is valued and enjoyed. Journals are used well by older pupils to reflect upon their reading. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher invited pupils to identify other texts with a similar setting to the one in question so as to extend the range of adjectives and adjectival phrases available for their consideration. As a result, a pupil was able to share with the class his thoughts about the effect that the language of Jules Verne has on the reader and how that related to the text under discussion. Teachers have detailed subject knowledge and use questioning and discussion within pairs and groups very effectively to deepen the pupils’ understanding. A lunchtime club during the winter months and the frequent access provided for older pupils to the school’s library encourage all pupils to widen their reading experiences. All these strategies – and others – contribute to high reading standards and good achievement for all groups of pupils.

Writing

60. Standards of writing are generally satisfactory in Years 1 to 4 and good in Years 5 and 6, with a good number of pupils achieving the higher levels by the end of Year 6. Younger pupils’ handwriting, punctuation and use of grammar are appropriate for their age, but few write at length and some do not apply these skills in or transfer what they know of the structure of writing to their written work in other subjects. Older pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences through a very good range of planned opportunities. For example, they pen their own versions of Greek myths that are written with appropriate humour, a well-developed plot and figurative language and they prepare factual reports on visits to the mosque in a clear and informative way. Teachers model writing skilfully, conveying their own enthusiasm for writing, and they illustrate well different styles of writing through the use of carefully selected texts.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

61. The school's use of links between subjects to enhance learning results in a wide range of other contexts through which pupils enrich their understanding of language and literacy. Where this is particularly successful, in Years 5 and 6, opportunities for pupils to rehearse their skills, knowledge and understanding are planned for meticulously, requirements are made explicit, pupils are encouraged to be self critical and there are many opportunities for extended writing in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. Consequently they produce writing of good quality that closely matches the desired purpose and takes account of the audience at which the piece is targeted, speak with confidence and read with enthusiasm.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards are well above average and all pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good and pupils learn well in lessons.
- As pupils get older they show consistently high levels of concentration and application.
- The subject is very well led.
- Assessment arrangements and the tracking of what is learned are not sufficiently well developed to keep pupils and their parents well informed about the progress they are making.

COMMENTARY

62. Results in the 2003 national mathematics tests were well above average in both Year 2 and Year 6. In 2004, test results form a similar pattern. Standards are well above average across the school. Overall, the school does well for its pupils, with all groups achieving well. Many pupils are avid mathematicians and obviously enjoy their work. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.
63. The quality of teaching, which is good across the school, is a significant factor in helping pupils achieve well. Teachers display good subject knowledge and interact with pupils in a friendly, enthusiastic manner. Teachers confidently use the National Numeracy Strategy flexibly and plan work that is matched to the different ability groups within the class. They use visual materials very well and this helps pupils to understand the mathematical concepts more effectively. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils enjoyed ordering numbers to 20 using numbered shirts on a washing line. Teachers make very effective use of individual whiteboards during whole-class sessions to allow all pupils the opportunity to display their answers, whilst maintaining a good pace. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn different ways of calculating and, crucially, are given opportunities to describe, compare and use them. This is testing work which pupils relish. Their attitudes to work are very good, and they work with enthusiasm and purpose. Older pupils display striking levels of concentration and application, and this helps them achieve very well.
64. The subject is very well led. The co-ordinator acts as a very good role model for others and is well able to support and enthuse colleagues. In her monitoring of teaching, standards and planning she has gained a very good overview and identified the considerable strengths of the subject. She is aware that more needs to be done to involve pupils in their own learning through such areas as marking and individual target

setting, in order to give them the clearest indication of what they have to do to improve. ICT is used successfully to support learning in mathematics.

65. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory and the recent introduction of target-setting booklets has been a worthwhile innovation. The school is now well placed to further develop the close tracking of progress to involve pupils more fully in assessing themselves and to keep parents even better informed about their mathematical development.

NUMERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

66. Mathematics is used well in other subjects to their benefit. Pupils explained very well how they measure in design and technology and interpret numeric data in science. This fits well with the school's plans for the curriculum, which actively promote connections between different subjects and help to improve standards and pupils' achievement all round.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There is a very good emphasis on practical work and investigations.
- Teaching strategies are varied and ensure that very good learning takes place.
- Links made with other areas of the curriculum enhance learning.
- Subject leadership is very good and appropriately focuses on improving learning and raising standards.
- Some teachers' assessments are too stringent.
- Some pupils take insufficient care when writing up their experiments.

COMMENTARY

67. Standards are above average in Year 2 and well above in Year 6. Standards have improved since the last inspection and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the few for whom English is an additional language, achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and very well in Years 3 to 6. The proportion of pupils in Year 6 exceeding the expected level is high and much larger than in most primary schools. National test results in 2003 reflected this and so do the unconfirmed results for 2004.
68. By the end of Year 2, pupils approach practical tasks with considerable confidence, are able to work independently or collaboratively and are very articulate when explaining what they have learned, using accurate scientific vocabulary. By Year 6, pupils share ideas and have lively discussions with each other and their teachers. They confidently express their own ideas about how they can measure the gas created by yeast when it is added to a warm water and sugar solution. Pupils use their mathematical skills well in the subject as they tabulate information and interpret results. Good use is made of ICT to record results on laptop computers. The pupils are able to instantly create graphs from their results and then focus on the interpretation and analysis of these. The quality of

written work is very variable and some pupils do not take enough care when writing up experiments in their own words.

69. Teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Where teaching is very good, teachers plan work thoroughly with very clear lesson objectives that are made explicit to the pupils. They explain the work in a clear and interesting way. Resources are of a high quality and pupils are excited by the lessons. Teachers provide a good variety of stimulating and challenging investigations and experiments, leading to very good levels of attainment in scientific enquiry. For example, Year 2 pupils are able to describe a fair test when using ramps and seeing how far vehicles will travel on different surfaces. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 draw graphs on individual whiteboards to predict how yeast will rise over time and then graph the results using laptop computers. Where additional support is needed, adults are aware of pupils' learning needs, resulting in all pupils, whatever their level of attainment, having the same chance to do well.
70. The subject leader is very effective. She has had a very strong influence on the successful development of science across the school and has very clear priorities for improvement. Assessment is an area where existing systems are satisfactory, but some assessments are too harsh. The school works collaboratively with other primary schools and a local technology college on a successful science kits project. A good transition project helps with continuity of learning for pupils moving to the secondary schools.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards and provision have improved considerably since the last inspection.
- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- Teachers and pupils use ICT well to support teaching and learning in other subjects.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- In warm weather the ICT suite is too hot.

COMMENTARY

71. In the current Years 2 and 6, standards are above expectations and pupils are achieving well. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when standards were broadly in line in Year 2 and below expectations in Year 6, and children's achievement was unsatisfactory. Very good leadership, improved facilities and good teaching have brought about these improvements.
72. The quality of teaching is good overall, with examples of very good teaching in Year 1 and in Years 5 and 6. This is a substantial improvement since the last inspection, when some teachers lacked sufficient confidence or expertise to develop key aspects of the subject. Following the training received, teachers and support staff now have a secure command of ICT. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives identified. Teachers use the digital projector in the ICT suite very well to demonstrate skills and techniques to the class, such as the use of a music composition program with Years 5 and 6 and, for younger pupils in Year 1, how to use a calculator. Questioning is used well to check pupils' understanding before moving them on. They are given good opportunities to practice and develop skills. They work enthusiastically on their own or collaboratively with a partner.
73. The school takes considerable care to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met and that pupils have opportunities across all aspects of the subjects. The level of resources has improved greatly and this has had a positive impact on standards and on the pupils' now very positive attitudes towards the subject. However, owing to a shortage of space in the building, the ICT suite is located in the basement next to the boiler room and on a hot day the room is stifling. Although very well behaved, pupils tend to wilt and the pace of their learning is adversely affected. The recent acquisition of laptop computers and a range of software has significantly improved the opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills and understanding.
74. Leadership and management of the subject are very good, and the co-ordinator has a clear vision of how ICT will develop.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

75. The use of ICT in other subjects is good. As a result of the comprehensive curriculum they receive, pupils are equally happy word-processing written work, representing their designs using art programs or composing using a music program. In addition to the suite, all classrooms have computers that are networked and with broadband access and

this, along with the availability of laptops, make the use of ICT a natural part of many lessons.

HUMANITIES

It was not possible to see sufficient lessons in history and geography for overall judgements to be made, but work was reviewed and discussions were held with pupils in Years 2 and 6 and with subject leaders. A brief comment is therefore made about each subject. Religious education is reported on in full.

76. In **geography**, standards of attainment are typical for pupils' age in Year 2 and in Year 6, which is the same as in the previous inspection report. Discussions with pupils in Years 5 and 6 show that they have a lively interest in the subject and are knowledgeable about all aspects of the National Curriculum requirements. Pupils develop an appreciation of their surroundings and an awareness of environmental issues, and are eager to talk about their visit to Harewood House and about their fieldwork to complete a river study. Pupils research information on the Internet to support their geographical work. The recently appointed subject leaders are developing their role satisfactorily and are keen to give more prominence to the subject.
77. In **history**, teachers plan interesting lessons that provide a broad experience of the subject. Standards are typical for pupils' age at the end of Year 2 and above expectations by the end of Year 6. This is a similar picture to that found during the previous inspection. In the two lessons observed in Years 3 and 4, pupils were enthusiastic, knowledgeable and engaged in lively discussion about Henry VIII. Theatre groups enhance history topics on the Tudors and the Romans, and cross-curricular links with other subjects make learning relevant and more interesting, as when pupils planned what is needed to make a World War II gas mask in design and technology. Younger pupils talk excitedly about Guy Fawkes and explain why the Fire of London took hold so easily. Older pupils recollect with great pleasure their role-play experience when studying the Greeks. ICT is used well; for instance, to research on the Internet or record findings. The newly appointed subject leaders have made a sound start in auditing the subject and identifying priorities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
- Good use is made of visits and visitors to deepen understanding.
- The presentation of some written work is untidy and some marking fails to provide sufficient guidance.

COMMENTARY

78. The school has sustained standards that are typical for pupils' ages in both Years 2 and 6 since the last inspection. The curriculum meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The work scrutiny, conversations with pupils and the few lessons observed show that teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.

The very good relationships and well developed speaking and listening that are a feature of the school support pupils' exploration of their own ideas about a range of religious beliefs. The school is fortunate in having a number of teachers with specific qualifications and interests in religious education, whose enthusiasm is shared with the pupils and results in them developing positive attitudes towards the subject. Educational visits are a feature of provision and lead to attractive displays that are used as learning prompts within lessons. The presentation of some written work seen during the inspection was not good enough and marking did not always indicate to pupils how to improve their work. The recently appointed subject leaders are developing their role and are clear that there is a need to improve resources further through the purchase of more religious artefacts. Religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

It was not possible to see sufficient lessons in art and design or physical education (PE) for overall judgements to be made. A brief comment is therefore made about these subjects. Music and design and technology (DT) are reported on in full.

79. Evidence from artwork displayed around the school and from discussions with pupils indicates that standards are typical of those expected nationally and similar to those reported at the last inspection. The work scrutinised covers an appropriate range, and achievement across the school is at least satisfactory. Pupils enjoy **art and design** and work carefully using a range of techniques; for example, Year 2 pupils use wax crayon, chalks and collage to produce pictures in the style of Monet and Matisse. These paintings greatly enhance the entrance to the school.
80. In **physical education**, teachers plan thoroughly and make best use of the limited space in the halls and on the playground. At the time of the last inspection, provision for physical education was satisfactory and this has been maintained. Standards remain broadly in line with national expectations, and pupils achieve appropriately. Subject leadership is sound and resources are well managed. In the small number of lessons observed, teaching and learning were good. There is a strong emphasis on health, fitness and well-being, with pupils exercising with vigour and control. The school enhances the curriculum with a good range of extra sporting activities, which are open to all pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school is soon to further develop provision as part of a new partnership with the local sports college.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision for design and technology is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards are above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and well above in Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy the subject and achieve very well.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The subject is expertly led and managed.

COMMENTARY

81. Standards are above those typical for pupils' age by the end of Year 2 and well above by the end of Year 6, and all pupils achieve very well. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when standards were unsatisfactory. This is due to the very good subject leadership, good teaching, improved resources and the linking of design and technology to other areas of the curriculum. In Year 2, pupils are able to carefully produce elaborate designs for Joseph's coat of many colours. They are able to translate their designs to an art program on the computer, showing good hand-eye co-ordination when using the mouse and a very good understanding of the way line and texture can be reproduced. By Year 6, pupils are able to design and make elaborate vehicles with a chassis of wood and bodywork of card, and powered by electric motors. These designs have been refined throughout the project, with very good care for detail and accuracy. Pupils are adept at assessing the models and considering improvements to the design. Design and technology is now a strength of the school.

MUSIC

Provision for music is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards are well above those typical for pupils' age by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6.
- The subject is expertly led and managed well.
- Opportunities for instrumental tuition and to take part in extra-curricular music enhance provision.

COMMENTARY

82. Music is a strength of the school. There was too little evidence to judge standards in Years 1 and 2, but by the end of Year 6, standards are well above those expected nationally and pupils achieve well. Class music is very well supplemented by specialist lessons provided by the subject leader and visiting musicians. Overall, teaching is very good. In a Year 3 and 4 singing lesson pupils were very responsive to instructions, sang with clear diction and good pitch, and were able to assess their performance and suggest improvements. When teaching the older pupils, the subject leader skilfully introduces a musical score for them to rehearse and perform. Class teachers confidently use information technology to enhance their lessons; for example, in Years 5 and 6 pupils use a music program to create 'mood' music to very good effect. In assemblies, pupils sing harmoniously and with enthusiasm. Their diction, phrasing and control of pitch and rhythm create a pleasing performance. A significant number of pupils benefit from the provision of instrumental lessons in which they can choose from a variety of instruments, including the violin, guitar, keyboard and drums. Extra-curricular activities, including recorder, choir and orchestra, have also enhanced the opportunities for pupils to develop their musical talents. Parents and pupils talk with pride about the musical performances in the end-of-term concerts. The subject leader exudes enthusiasm for the subject and very ably leads and manages it. She has contributed significantly to the improvement in standards since the last inspection by developing the curriculum and providing extra-curricular music.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The school council provides a worthwhile opportunity for pupils to influence the life of the school.
- The very caring ethos the school promotes pupils' personal development well.

COMMENTARY

83. PSHE and citizenship have a high profile in the curriculum and are an important part of the school's ethos. The programme includes work on diet, health, sex, drugs and personal safety, and helps the pupils to develop a safe and healthy lifestyle, gain confidence and interact with others. Time is allocated for talking together to promote all aspects of PSHE, and the subject

is taught well. Pupils are taught to respect each other and property. The new arrangements for 'picnic-style' lunches have provided good opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility and act as good role models for the younger pupils. This has contributed well to the personal and social development of all pupils. Citizenship is promoted through the work of the school council and recognised in the achievement of the Eco School Award. An inclusive and caring ethos is strongly promoted and has a significant effect on pupils' achievements.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	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	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3

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