

INSPECTION REPORT

WHITEHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Halifax

LEA area: Calderdale

Unique reference number: 107496

Headteacher: Mr R Hepplestone

Lead inspector: Mr A J Dobell

Dates of inspection: 21st - 24th June 2004

Inspection number: 258410

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:	466
School address:	Occupation Lane Illingworth Halifax
Postcode:	HX2 9RL
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Mitchell
Date of previous inspection:	16 th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This very large primary school serves its local community, which has a mixed pattern of housing. Whilst the socio-economic circumstances of the pupils cover a wide range, the community experiences high levels of social deprivation overall. Children's levels of attainment and learning skills again cover a wide range but are well below average overall when they enter the Nursery. Almost all pupils come from white Western European backgrounds and no pupils speak English as an additional language.

At the time of the inspection, there were 466 pupils on roll. Of these, 44 attend the Nursery part time and a further 57 are in the Reception classes, making a total of 101 children in the Foundation Stage. Some 15 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and this proportion is broadly average. Nine pupils have statements of special educational needs and, at two per cent, this proportion, too, is average. The nature of special educational needs ranges from moderate and severe learning difficulties and social and emotional difficulties to visual and hearing impairment and physical disability. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (29 per cent) is above average. The school has received a number of awards in recent years, including the Activemark Gold, the Artsmark Gold, the Healthy Schools Award and a School Curriculum Award. There is considerable community use of the school and there are strong links with the local education authority's Pupil Referral Unit, which is housed in the school premises.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10373	Mr A J Dobell	Lead inspector	Music Physical education
8937	Mr H Allen	Lay inspector	
22452	Mrs M Farman	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Design and technology
22113	Mrs A King	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology Geography History
28686	Mrs E Walker	Team inspector	English Religious education Personal, social and health education and citizenship

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school giving very good value for money. Children enter the Nursery with standards that cover a wide range but are well below average overall. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average and pupils make very good progress and achieve very well. The quality of teaching is very good with particular strengths in the Foundation Stage. The headteacher, very ably supported by his deputy and all his colleagues, is providing excellent leadership. The school is fully committed to continuing improvement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's excellent leadership means that the school has an excellent ethos.
- Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well because the quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to plan and manage their own work and so to develop skills as independent learners.
- Pupils behave very well overall and have very good attitudes to learning: their personal development is very good.
- The school provides its pupils with a curriculum of very good quality.
- Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are very well cared for and benefit from very good support, advice and guidance.
- Library books are not catalogued clearly and consistently and pupils do not have enough opportunities to work independently.
- The school has very good links with parents, the community and other schools.

The school has improved very well since its last inspection. In particular, the Foundation Stage, the provision for information and communication technology, the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils and systems for assessing pupils' progress have all improved markedly. However, whilst the quality and quantity of books in the school's libraries have improved, they are not catalogued consistently. Overall, the issues from the last inspection have been addressed well.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is very good overall. Standards have been variable at the end of Year 2, and declined markedly in 2003. The school has identified reasons for this and test results are likely to improve in 2004. Standards are average at the end of Year 2. However, this represents good achievement. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6 with mathematics

being the most consistently successful subject. Standards are average or above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 in the other subjects of the curriculum: above average in information and communication technology and well above average in religious education. Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to exceed the levels expected in personal, social and emotional development and creative development, reach the levels expected in knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development and not reach the expected level in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good overall. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good** and attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good.

Teaching and learning are **very good** overall. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school with examples of excellent teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 4 and 6. Stimulating and imaginative teaching coupled with a highly creative learning environment mean that pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners who co-operate very well with each other and adults. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have particular gifts or talents are very well provided for. Pupils respond very well to their teachers' high expectations.

The quality of the curriculum is very good throughout the school and there are very good opportunities for enriching experiences out of class. There is very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and they are given very good early experiences of citizenship through the work of the school council. The school makes excellent efforts to be innovative in the curriculum that it provides for its pupils. The quality of care for pupils is very good and their involvement in contributing ideas for the school's future development is excellent.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is very good overall. The headteacher is providing excellent leadership. He has a very clear commitment to continuing improvement and his vision for the future of the school is reflected throughout its work. The headteacher receives very good support from his deputy and all adults in the school. The quality of management is very good. The school has very good systems for evaluating its performance and identifying areas for development. Finance is managed well. Governance is good. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and potential for development and play an appropriate role in the school's strategic planning. Governors ensure that the school meets its statutory obligations.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. A minority express concerns about bullying, but inspectors agree with them that the school treats this issue seriously and handles any instances of bullying well. Parents feel that their children enjoy school and become more mature and independent. They appreciate the quality of teaching and care that their children receive and feel well involved and informed.

Pupils have very positive views of the school and the inspection team fully agree with these views. A minority are concerned about the behaviour of other pupils, but inspectors found that pupils behave very well overall.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Create more opportunities for pupils to plan and manage their own work and to engage in independent research.
- Catalogue the books in the school's libraries consistently and clearly so that pupils have ready access to them.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve very well overall regardless of levels of attainment, gender or special educational need. Standards of work seen in lessons are above average in English, science and information and communication technology and well above average in mathematics by the end of Year 6. This is a good improvement since the school's previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieved above average standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003.
- Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2 were well below average in 2003.
- Children make very good progress and achieve very well in the Foundation Stage: they continue to achieve very well overall in Years 1 to 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in relation to their previous attainment.

Commentary

1. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003, standards were above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. This group of pupils achieved very well in the school. In all three subjects, a higher proportion of pupils attained the higher than expected Level 5 than was the case nationally. Since pupils enter the school with levels of understanding and learning skills which are well below average overall, these results are evidence of very good progress in the school. The school's predictions for 2004 are that pupils will achieve at least average results in English and science and above average results in mathematics. Inspection findings support these predictions. Standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science, information and communication technology and religious education at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and science, and well above average in mathematics. Pupils generally are more

successful in mathematics because this subject requires less linguistic skill than English or science. Pupils make very good progress in literacy from a very low base but still lack the degree of flair to be well above average in English or to interpret the finer points of questions in science. Nevertheless, standards at the end of Year 6 have improved very well over the last three years and have improved well since the last inspection. This represents very good achievement.

- By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in information and communication technology. This is a marked improvement on the previous inspection when they were below average. Standards are also above average in the other subjects of the National Curriculum and well above average in religious education. This, too, is a significant improvement on the previous inspection. It is the result of very good teaching and very good management of learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (27.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.5 (27.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.4 (29.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Since the previous inspection, standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have generally been average overall and above average in mathematics. In 2003, standards declined significantly and were well below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This year group was affected by above average staff absence and retirements, which disrupted learning. Even so, the school regarded this level of performance as unacceptable. There has been rigorous analysis of possible causes so that the school could avoid a repetition. The school's predictions for the national tests in 2004 are that pupils will achieve below average standards in writing and mathematics and average standards in reading in the national tests. Inspection evidence supports this. This would be a good improvement on 2003 and these pupils, who entered the Nursery with standards which were well below average, have made good progress and achieved well. Standards in the other subjects of the curriculum are average in geography and history and above average in other subjects, including science, information and communication technology and religious education. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.9 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.5 (14.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.9 (17.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Children enter the Nursery with levels of understanding and learning skills which cover a wide range but are well below average overall. Personal and social skills and standards in language and mathematics are particularly low. During their two years in the Foundation Stage, children make very good progress and achieve very well. As a result, children in the Reception classes are likely to exceed the standards expected nationally

in the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development and creative development. They are likely to reach these standards in knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, but not reach them in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. This is a very good level of achievement even though standards are below average overall. This is a marked improvement on the previous inspection, when the curriculum in the Foundation Stage was identified as a concern. The improvement is the result of very good teaching which is based on excellent teamwork. All adults working in the Nursery and Reception classes have a very clear understanding of how young children learn and present them with imaginative and stimulating learning activities within a secure but challenging environment. The Foundation Stage is now very well led and managed, and rigorous leadership is resulting in very effective learning.

5. Pupils continue to achieve very well overall in Years 1 to 6. The headteacher's management of learning is excellent and is rooted in his vision for the school to enable all pupils to achieve their potential. Subjects are led and managed very effectively by his colleagues and the co-ordinators for Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 lead their teams of staff very well to ensure that pupils' progress and achievement are monitored effectively. The school's good assessment procedures are being refined further to support this process. Children are now making better progress in the Foundation Stage and this is putting the school in a stronger position to raise standards and improve achievement further in Years 1 and 2.
6. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. As a result, they achieve very well. Their needs are identified early and assessed carefully. Individual education plans are then written with clear short term objectives, and used effectively to ensure that these pupils make progress in line with other pupils. These pupils receive very good support in class. For example, there is very good and well-targeted support to develop pupils' skills in literacy in Years 3 to 6. Very good teaching ensures that learning is broken down into short, achievable targets. As a result, pupils can see that they are learning successfully and are encouraged to make further efforts. The management of the learning of pupils with special educational needs is very good and careful organisation underpins their very good achievement.
7. Pupils who have been recognised as having particular gifts or talents are recorded on a register. The school then provides opportunities for them to develop their particular skills in and out of class. For example, pupils with a talent in music are encouraged to join the choir, which performs to a high level. Similarly, those with a sporting flair are involved in physical activities in school. There is a very good range of activities outside class and these give pupils opportunities to enhance their talents in different ways. Overall, these pupils achieve at the same rate as others.
8. Parents acknowledge that their children make good progress and achieve well. They appreciate that this is because they are very well taught in a school which successfully develops very positive attitudes to learning. It is the school's excellent ethos which enables pupils to benefit from the very good teaching available to them and to achieve very well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development are all very good. Levels of attendance are improving and are now good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and at break times.
- Pupils have very positive attitude to learning.
- Relationships between pupils are very good.
- Pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Recently introduced procedures to ensure good attendance are very good.

Commentary

9. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are even better than the high standards reported at the previous inspection. Pupils respond well to the positive school ethos, which is fully inclusive and attempts to acknowledge the good work done by every pupil. The aim, 'At Whitehill we want to catch children being good!', is embraced by all staff, and pupils appreciate the many stickers and words of encouragement that they receive. Pupils agree that they love coming to school and this can be clearly seen to be the case whether they are supporting each other in the classroom or happily playing together at breaks and lunchtimes. This positive attitude is reflected in the classroom, where pupils try their hardest and are eager to do well. During the inspection, at wet playtimes, many pupils could be seen in the classroom enjoying reading, doing sums, drawing and some would even 'pretend to be teacher'. Such activities were all free choice and, clearly, thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. Their very good behaviour is not restricted to the classroom; around school at breaks and lunchtimes and on trips out of school, it is also consistently very good. Pupils are aware of what is expected of them and consider any sanctions imposed on the few pupils who have difficulties to be fair. The blue, yellow and red card system is understood by pupils and they consider that the systems in place ensure that the few incidents of poor behaviour that do occur are dealt with fairly. The school uses exclusions only as a last resort, but appropriately, where there is a clear risk to other pupils or staff.
10. Throughout the school, relationships are very good and pupils agree that they are free from bullying and other forms of harassment. As a result, pupils' personal development has improved further, and is now above the high standards seen at the previous inspection. The willingness of pupils from the Foundation Stage upwards to undertake duties in the classroom and around the school is very impressive. Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to exceed the standards expected in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Reception Year. This represents very good progress. Register monitors, table monitors, water bottle monitors, tuck shop monitors and junior 'super troopers', who act as play leaders for pupils in Years 1 and 2, are just a few of the examples of the responsibilities that pupils undertake. They also routinely get out and put away their own work, get resources for other pupils and clear away after events such as assemblies. This all has a very positive effect on pupils' confidence and, as a result, nearly all pupils are able to work independently with little supervision. The few pupils who sometimes have difficulty interacting with others are given opportunities to work with their peers in groups and are encouraged to meet and talk to other children and adults wherever possible. The recent addition of a learning mentor to the school's staff has had a very positive impact on the personal development of this group of pupils.

11. Since the previous inspection, the school has managed to improve even further on the high standards in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school ethos, based on mutual respect, enables pupils to flourish in their personal development and the way in which they relate to others. Pupils are very respectful and tolerant of others and, from an early age, develop a set of values which enable them to understand the impact of their actions on others. For example, the few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are fully included in all the school's activities and achieve at the same rate as other pupils. Pupils have a very clear understanding of right from wrong and confidently explain their views on issues such as bullying and racism. They are very socially aware and are very proud of their school and the community that they live in, and this is reflected in the way they look after the school, which is clean and tidy and free from any litter or graffiti. Pupils also look after each other well. They try hard to ensure no one is excluded and look after each other when someone is not feeling well or has been hurt. They have an excellent understanding of how to live successfully in a community. Pupils have many rich cultural experiences. The school's cultural values are represented well by the many vibrant displays around the school and particularly the illuminated paintings symbolising many faiths and cultures. Their cultural awareness is very good.
12. The level of pupils' attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now above average. Most pupils arrive promptly for school and the attendance of nearly all pupils is at least good. The school's learning mentor has responsibility for ensuring that pupils attend regularly and new procedures, including contacting the parents of pupils who fail to arrive at school when expected, are having a significant positive impact. Most parents and carers support the school in ensuring that their children attend unless they are unwell.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.0
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

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	358	1	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides its pupils with an education of very good quality. Very good teaching enables all pupils to make very good gains in their learning and to achieve very well.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. There are good systems for assessing pupils' standards and progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have excellent strategies to engage the interest of pupils and to encourage them to work hard.
- Very high expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour and demanding levels of work ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well overall.
- Children get a very good start to their education in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' educational experiences are enhanced by an excellent learning environment.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop skills as independent learners.
- There are good systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
- Teaching assistants give teachers very good support and make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 54 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
5 (9%)	24 (45%)	21 (39%)	4 (7%)	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.

- Throughout the school, teachers have excellent skills in engaging the attention of pupils by providing them with interesting and stimulating learning activities. Because their interest is so thoroughly engaged, pupils work with sustained concentration and put a

great deal of effort into their work. For example, in an excellent lesson in a Reception class concerned with floating and sinking, a very wide range of learning activities resulted in children working with impressive creativity. Excellent classroom management and relationships enabled pupils to learn very effectively. Similarly, in an excellent mathematics lesson in Year 4, the teacher's superb use of questions and very effective use of the computer-driven whiteboard engaged the interest of lower attaining pupils. The teacher used pupils very effectively to reinforce learning and this ensured that they concentrated very well. There was a very smooth transition to independent work and highly effective class management ensured that time was used very effectively.

14. Teachers have very high expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour. Very good relationships mean that pupils respond very well to these expectations. Teachers are very skilled at providing appropriate levels of challenge for pupils at different stages of learning. Setting by ability in English and mathematics from Year 2 to Year 6 helps this and contributes very effectively to pupils' achievement. Similar setting in science in Years 2 and 6 has had a positive effect on standards, and the school plans to expand this to other year groups. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very effective. Their learning is managed thoroughly and sensitively. They receive carefully targeted support and, where appropriate, are taught separately for the whole or part of the lesson. As a result of this well thought out management of their learning, they make very good progress and achieve very well. Pupils who have particular gifts or talents are identified and the school ensures that they are able to pursue these and make further progress, not only in class, but also in the very wide ranging and high quality opportunities that are provided outside class to enrich pupils' learning. Higher attaining pupils are challenged very well and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection.
15. Children get a very good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. They enter the Nursery with levels of understanding and learning which are well below average overall. Their learning is very carefully and sensitively managed so that they quickly gain in confidence and settle into the Nursery routines. Teachers and other adults have a very clear appreciation of how young children learn and provide them with imaginative and well-structured learning activities. These enable them to make rapid progress so that they achieve very well. This very well-structured, creative and vibrant provision is a marked improvement on the previous inspection when teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage were issues for concern.
16. Throughout the school, pupils' learning is enhanced by an excellent learning environment. This stems largely from the creative flair of the school's former headteacher, who retired in December 2003. Under his leadership, teachers have created highly imaginative and stimulating displays throughout the school. For example, corridor walls are decorated in a colourful and attractive way so that pupils' imaginations are constantly stimulated. Year libraries are housed in a range of thought provoking structures which include Hansel and Gretel's house in Year 1, a Viking longboat in Year 3, and a Victorian railway carriage in Year 6. The school's art specialist has created a number of glass tableaux which illustrate different aspects of the curriculum. These highly imaginative and creative features combine to create a learning environment of quite unusual richness.
17. While the school's year libraries are attractively housed, the books in them have not been catalogued in a clear and consistent way. As a result, pupils cannot access them quickly and easily. There are instances of pupils engaging in research, for example, in geography and history in Year 6, but, overall, pupils' work is tightly managed by their

teachers and they do not have sufficient opportunities to plan and organise their own work. As a result, they do not develop skills as independent learners. The school has good information and communication technology facilities and pupils' standards in information and communication technology are above average. Even so, they do not routinely use the Internet as a source of information to enable them to research independently.

18. The school has good systems for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress. Regular assessments guide the setting of targets for individual pupils at the end of each year. Information from assessments is passed from one teacher to the next as pupils move through the year groups and is used to guide the formation of sets and the targeting of extra support. The results of national tests are analysed so that areas of weakness can be identified and teachers can address them in their planning of pupils' learning. Assessment is used well to respond to pupils' individual needs and, overall, sensitive and constructive marking ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how they can improve further. The school has plans in place to improve its assessment procedures further for the next school year, for example, by making better use of information and communication technology to track pupils' progress.
19. Throughout the school, teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support learning. They support generally, support pupils with particular needs or take small groups withdrawn from the class for a particular reason. They are involved well in planning, have a clear understanding of their role in each class, and are accepted as key members of the teaching team. They appreciate the support that they get from their teacher colleagues and from the special educational needs co-ordinator. The school appreciates the important contributions that they make to pupils' achievement and plans to deploy them still more effectively during the next school year.
20. The quality of teaching has improved well since the school was inspected previously. As a result, standards, by the end of Year 6, have improved well and pupils achieve very well because of the careful and thorough way in which teachers plan and manage their learning.

The curriculum

The school provides its pupils with very good learning opportunities matched to their needs and ensuring progression. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is very good. There are very good opportunities for enrichment out of class. Accommodation and resources for learning are of very good quality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership and management ensure that the curriculum is very well matched to individual needs throughout the school.
- The school places equal value on all subjects and there are very strong links between them.
- The programme for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is of very good quality.
- The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with particular gifts and talents enables them to achieve very well.

- The school has very good strategies to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum, including all out of school activities.
- Inconsistencies in book classification mean that pupils do not have enough opportunities to carry out independent research.
- The stimulating accommodation and learning resources make children and pupils want to learn.
- There is outstandingly good curricular enrichment through participation in sport and cultural activities, visits and visitors to the school.

Commentary

21. The quality of the curriculum has improved very significantly since the previous inspection and is now very good. This is having a very marked effect on children's achievement in the Foundation Stage and pupils' achievement throughout the school.
22. Very good leadership and management in the Foundation Stage ensure that all work builds on children's earlier experiences in the Nursery and Reception classes. All members of staff provide interesting work that gives children a rich and very stimulating curriculum. This has a very good balance across the six areas of learning and is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection. Arrangements for transition to Year 1 are very good. Children are very well prepared for work in the National Curriculum and know their receiving teachers well.
23. The curriculum provided for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very good. Policies and detailed schemes of work provide support for learning in all areas. The use of information and communication technology has been very well developed since the previous inspection. Very good leadership and management mean that planning consistently builds on prior learning to prepare pupils for the next stages in their education.
24. The curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is also very good. Planning consistently outlines ways for pupils to extend their key literacy and numeracy skills across the whole curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 particularly use their well developed information and communication technology skills effectively across a wide range of subjects. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection. Improvements to the curriculum are a direct result of very strong and clear-sighted leadership which ensures that all subjects have equal value within the timetable. Links between subjects are very carefully planned so that pupils have a good understanding of why they are studying a particular topic and how it links to their learning elsewhere.
25. The school uses the best practices of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to create exceptionally rich and innovative practices in other subjects. It very successfully maintains the very high levels of achievement in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills by developing them creatively across other areas. The use of other subjects to support the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy contributes very well to their achievement.
26. The curriculum has very good inclusive qualities. Very effective work in personal, social and health education helps pupils to become mature, responsible and sensible members of the school community. For example, Year 5 pupils support and care for children in the Foundation Stage on a regular basis. The support for pupils with special educational needs and those pupils with statements of special educational needs is very good. This includes the use of very well qualified teaching assistants, who enable these pupils to participate fully in all aspects of the curriculum. These include physical education and out

of school activities. The school's provision for gifted and talented pupils is well defined and these pupils are very well supported. Pupils who have talents in the arts and sport receive very good support outside the day-to-day curriculum. Teachers challenge gifted pupils in lessons to produce high quality work. They have opportunities to take part in 'master classes' within the local education authority.

27. There are still inconsistencies in the classification system for library books in the different year libraries. This does not help pupils to become independent in finding and using books for personal research purposes and restricts their development of independent research skills.
28. The development of the curriculum throughout the school is considerably aided by its very good accommodation, grounds and learning resources. These provide very high levels of stimulation for children and pupils. As a result, they are enthusiastic about coming to school and eager to learn. The additional provision for information and communication technology since the previous inspection has improved standards in this subject markedly.
29. An extensive extra-curricular programme in art and design, music and different sports is well supported by pupils and extends learning considerably. There are strong links and partnerships in all these areas with other local schools, external organisations and visitors. These further contribute to the learning process. For example, the range of work developed as a result of a 'Viking day' in history, art and design and drama illustrated links between these subjects very well. The school has an impressive range of curriculum awards and is currently extending its contacts with schools outside England through the Comenius project, a project fostering links with schools throughout Europe. This is making a very positive contribution to pupils' awareness and understanding of other cultures.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' wellbeing, health and safety is very good. There is now very effective support and guidance for all pupils. The school has excellent arrangements to consult pupils and to involve them in its life and work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very good arrangements to support pupils' care and welfare.
- Arrangements for seeking, valuing and acting upon pupils' views are excellent.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported.
- Very good support for children in the Foundation Stage means that they settle quickly into the school and make very good progress.

Commentary

30. The overall responsibility for child protection is well managed and all procedures are very secure. The school deals very sensitively with these issues. All appropriate testing, inspection and risk assessment procedures relating to health and safety ensure that the school is a very safe place. Daily maintenance is to a very high standard and the site manager and his team ensure that pupils work in a clean, safe and attractive learning environment.
31. All pupils have good support in their academic work. Comprehensive records are maintained by class teachers, allowing them to monitor pupils' academic development closely so that

appropriate support can be given to pupils where it is needed. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported throughout the school and they are able to make very good progress because their work is very closely matched to their particular needs. All pupils are very well known to staff and there are regular opportunities to monitor pupils' personal development and to give them appropriate support. This aspect of support is very good. Relationships between pupils, teachers and other adults are very good. Pupils are very confident when seeking advice about their work, they trust all adults to support them in their endeavours and are not reluctant to ask for help when appropriate. The headteacher is well known to all pupils, he is well respected and his advice and counsel are freely sought by pupils and parents when they have major concerns.

32. The school values and respects the opinions of its pupils. It involves them through the work of the school council and welcomes their ideas and suggestions. The consultative process is excellent and pupils have a direct input into major decisions which affect their work and play. The school council meets on a regular basis and, as a result, pupils feel confident and involved in their school. This contributes greatly to their self-esteem and promotes moral awareness. They have an excellent awareness of what it means to live in a community.
33. Children in the Foundation Stage are very well supported and cared for. There are very good induction arrangements offered by the school to parents and children who are entering the Nursery with regular meetings at convenient times for all parents and for children to familiarise themselves with staff and buildings. This very good care is enhanced by very good staff relationships between the Nursery and Reception classes so that children move through the Foundation Stage and into Year 1 with a good degree of confidence. Young children feel very well supported on entry to the school and this very good support is developed well throughout the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and other schools are all very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the work of the school.
- An 'open door' ethos makes the headteacher and teachers very accessible to parents and carers.
- The school tries hard to help parents to support their children's learning at home.
- Very good efforts are made to consult with parents about the future direction of the school.
- Pupils in Year 6 are very well prepared for moving to secondary school.
- The school is recognised as a focal point for the community.

Commentary

34. The strong links with parents and the community reported in the previous inspection have been maintained and improved upon. Parents are very supportive of the school and are confident that their children are well looked after and receive a very good standard of education. Responses in the parents' questionnaires and the discussion in the parents'

meeting show that they hold the school in very high regard. The only issue raised by parents concerned bullying, but they acknowledge that the school takes rare instances of bullying seriously and handles them well.

35. Parents appreciate the school's 'open door' policy and this is reflected in the very good atmosphere at the start and end of the school day when many parents and carers take the opportunity to chat with class teachers and the headteacher. They appreciate the opportunity to air any minor concerns and get them dealt with quickly.
36. The school tries hard to ensure that any documents sent home are attractive and enjoyable to read. The prospectus and regular newsletters are very readable with attractive illustrations and an element of humour. Parents and carers feel well informed about the progress their children make at school. However, a significant number consider that the annual reports that they receive are too general. Inspection findings support this view. The school has identified the need to do more to inform parents about progress on a day-to-day basis and is taking steps to address this by introducing a 'Whole School Link Book' at the beginning of the next school year. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very effectively involved in supporting their children's learning.
37. Parents support the work of the school very well. There is an attractive parents' room where they can meet and some provide valuable help in lessons and activities. During the inspection, for example, four parents ably supervised a group of Reception children who were taking part in a 'kerb craft' road safety lesson. Many parents attend courses such as 'Closing the Gap in ICT'. They are also involved in the parent teacher association which, as well as organising social activities, raises important funds for resources such as adventure play equipment. Parents appreciate the school's efforts to involve them as partners in their children's learning.
38. The school provides parents with opportunities to influence school policy. As well as parental questionnaires, the school also holds regular 'coffee morning clinics' where parents can raise issues or put forward suggestions. These are valued and will be discussed and incorporated into future planning where possible.
39. The school rightly is proud of its reputation as a community school. The recent consultation to discuss resolving problems of road safety around the school illustrates well the importance placed on community relationships. The speed with which the school made the decision to increase on-site car parking for staff to address the concerns of local residents about staff parking in local streets, was impressive. There is a thriving 'Out of School Club' adjoining the school and the school building is used in the evenings by groups such as the Challengers, Boys Brigade, Girls Brigade and for information and communication technology courses. There are very good links with other schools in the area and funding from the 'Excellence Cluster' is used effectively to support joint initiatives. Links with local secondary schools supporting the transfer of pupils from Year 6 are also very good, and pupils confirm that they feel very well prepared for making the next step up to secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher is providing excellent leadership and the leadership of other key staff is very good. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school's future and has a commitment to continuing improvement: his excellent leadership is enabling all adults to contribute very effectively to learning.
- Senior staff create effective teams and are highly effective in motivating others.
- The school has a very clear commitment to inclusion to enable all in the school to reach their potential.
- Staff and resources are deployed very well to support learning.
- The Foundation Stage and special educational needs are led and managed very well.
- Governors have a good appreciation of the school's strengths and potential for development.

Commentary

40. The headteacher took up his post in January 2004. He acknowledges that he took over a very effective school as a result of his predecessor's long and successful headship. Nevertheless, in a few months, the headteacher has moved the school forward even further. As one parent wrote, 'the new headteacher has injected a modern edge to an already well managed school'. At the parents' meeting, parents acknowledged that there was considerable concern that the long-serving headteacher and his deputy were leaving together. They agreed that they were very relieved that the transition to a new management team was so smooth and that the school's many strengths are being maintained and built on.
41. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school. Essentially, this is to enable all pupils to reach their potential both personally and academically. He is ambitious for the school and committed to continuing improvement. He understands clearly that pupils who join the school with levels of attainment which are well below average need to develop confidence and a positive self image if they are to flourish and achieve well. Under his excellent leadership, all adults in the school carefully nurture pupils from the time that they join the Nursery so that they feel valued and able to play a full part in the life of the school. Very effective teaching and an excellent learning environment then motivate them very effectively so that they achieve very well. A major contributing factor to this is that the headteacher is a regular and reassuring presence around the school. Pupils know him and his clear concern for all of them gives them confidence.
42. All adults in the school share the headteacher's vision. There is an impressive unity of purpose throughout the school with teachers and other adults feeling able to contribute to learning both in and out of class. For example, the site manager runs soccer in the school. There is effective delegation so that subjects are led and managed very well and learning is planned systematically and methodically. Very supportive staff teams exist in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6, so that there is highly effective co-operation and management of learning and pupils' progress. The professional development of staff is given a high priority and the school has a good record of seeing its teachers promoted into more senior positions. The fact that all adults in the school feel valued means that all are motivated to contribute as effectively as they can to pupils' education and personal development.
43. The headteacher and his colleagues have a very clear commitment to inclusion. They want all – pupils and adults – to be fully involved and have full access to all that the school

offers. The school carefully evaluates its procedures and their impact on learning and then uses this information to plan future developments. The school improvement plan, for example, emerges from an evaluation of progress made during the previous year and follows wide ranging discussions. It has both a long-term perspective and shorter-term objectives so that the school's development is rooted in a clear vision for the future. This encompasses a wide range of aspirations for the school. For example, the school is linked to another local school with a broad ethnic mix of pupils so that pupils can gain a better understanding of the culturally diverse nature of society. Allied to this, the school is part of the Comenius project and plans are in place for links to be made with schools in five European countries, including Finland and Poland, during the next school year. Pupils will be able to communicate with pupils in these schools by e-mail and the school expects to host visits from them. The co-ordinator of the Halifax Excellence Cluster (formerly an education action zone) acknowledges that the school participates eagerly in initiatives and so derives considerable benefit from them. For example, the school is financing its recently appointed learning mentor from this initiative. She is already having a very positive effect on the attendance and achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

44. The school deploys its staff and resources very effectively to support learning. The headteacher has identified that time could be used more effectively. Plans are in place for an improved use of time to give better coverage of the curriculum during the next school year. Similarly, there are plans to develop teaching assistants more effectively next year. The deputy headteacher and a colleague have plans to refine assessment procedures to make them still more effective. These are examples of the ways in which the school seeks to build on existing practice so that its provisions for its pupils are improved further. In order to achieve this, the school has to manage its finances well. Its income per pupil is below average and so it has to plan its expenditure carefully to achieve its objectives. It does this well and the principles of best value are applied well. A recent audit report identified a number of ways in which the school's financial procedures were not being observed. The school quickly created a new business plan in order to ensure that these discrepancies were eliminated and could not recur.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,134,382
Total expenditure	1,143,554
Expenditure per pupil	2,634

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	44,526
Balance carried forward to the next year	35,354

45. Children get a very good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes because the Foundation Stage is led and managed very well. This is a significant improvement since the school's previous inspection. The leader of the Foundation Stage and her team have established a curriculum and system of care which enable children to settle quickly into the school and to go on to achieve very well. They are given a very secure preparation for their work on the National Curriculum. Similarly, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is led and managed very well. Pupils' individual needs are identified early and their individual education plans are written carefully to address these needs. Their learning is then supported in the light of their needs and their progress is carefully monitored so that the provisions for them can be adapted as need

arises. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has recently reviewed the school's provision and has very clear views on how it can be developed further.

46. Governors play an important part in the strategic management of the school because they have a secure understanding of its strengths and potential for development. They are proud that the school is a central element in its local community and wish to build up its community role. Governors ensure that the school complies with its legal obligations. This is an effective governing body.
47. Parents are very appreciative of the school's leadership and management. The parents' questionnaires included a number of positive comments. These included 'this is an excellent school', 'a stimulating and exciting environment: warm and friendly, a breath of fresh air', and 'nothing but praise for the school'. In the questionnaires, 95 per cent of those who responded agreed or strongly agreed that the school was well led and managed. Parents acknowledge that very good leadership and management enable their children to achieve very well. Given this, the very good quality of teaching and care that pupils receive, the very good curricular provision and the school's below average unit costs, the school is giving very good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48. The provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is **very good** and is a strength of the school. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection. Most children enter the Nursery with standards of attainment and learning skills that are well below expectations for their age in all aspects of their development. They achieve very well as they move through the Foundation Stage because teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together to identify, support and develop individual needs. Children with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good and sensitive support that they receive. A very good balance of provision across each area of learning ensures that children benefit from very interesting and stimulating work. All children are fully included in learning and are given equal chances to develop in their personal and academic skills. The quality of teaching is very good overall and this makes a very positive contribution to children's learning and achievement. Teaching is consistently at least good and has some excellent features. The strong features include the very good level of teamwork, very positive relationships, high expectations and very thorough assessment of children's achievement. Very strong and effective leadership and management have created a cohesive Foundation Stage unit that tracks children's development comprehensively and very effectively.

Example of outstanding practice

Outstanding teaching of creative development in the Foundation Stage.

Children walk very quietly into the hall for music and gather round the teacher in eager anticipation. They are not disappointed. The enthusiastic and lively start to the lesson has them tapping and copying rhythmic patterns immediately. They become totally engrossed in this activity and follow the very clear instructions accurately and enthusiastically. The class teacher has very high expectations of each child. She works at an impressively brisk pace as she gives instructions, watches responses, encourages children to work harder and identifies improvements for children to share with each other. Not a second is wasted and children expect to listen, play their instruments and then practise to improve their performance. Her constant references to the importance of listening and playing instruments correctly quickly increases children's understanding of how to play together and in sequence. The very smooth flow between changes in tempo and dynamics increases children's awareness of how to compose music and stimulates them to learn and achieve very well. They end the lesson flushed with success and glowing with pride because of their achievement and the praise from their teacher. Their understanding of the way in which music 'works' has improved markedly.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because very strong teamwork encourages them to be responsible for their own actions from entry to the Nursery.
- Adults quickly build trusting relationships that enable children to relate very well to adults and each other.
- Very good assessment of personal development ensures that the majority of children exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year.

Commentary.

49. Most children in the Reception Year already exceed the expectations of the early learning goals in this area of learning. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Throughout the Foundation Stage, all adults set clear standards of behaviour and ensure that the children understand them. This gives children a very firm base for increasing their ability to become responsible for their own actions. Children in the Nursery quickly learn to work happily with each other and are eager to share their work with adults. Very good teamwork ensures that they become independent and take responsibility for tidying up after themselves. The Reception class teachers build very effectively on this very good start, and the children quickly learn to understand and appreciate the needs of others within the group. Support from Year 5 pupils helps children to increase their awareness of the meaning of care and responsibility.
50. The quality of teaching is very good. Teaching teams, throughout the Foundation Stage, are consistently fair in their dealings with each other and children. This assists the children in building trusting relationships with each other and adults. They respond very well to their work, show much interest in what they are doing, concentrate very well and are eager to learn. This is a result of the consistent praise and encouragement which staff give to the children. All staff have a very good understanding of the particular needs of each child. They ensure that the individual support that they give matches children's needs very carefully and careful assessment means that all children are given a level of support which matches their needs. Confident children have extra responsibilities and more timid children receive gentle persuasion to try new tasks. This sensitive support ensures that all children achieve very well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because all staff encourage them to speak clearly and audibly.
- Very thorough and systematic teaching of writing skills ensures that all children achieve very well from a low base.
- The attractive and stimulating library helps children to take an interest in books.

Commentary

51. Most children enter the Foundation Stage with speaking and listening skills that are well below the expectation for their age. The Nursery team gives children a wide range of very carefully planned opportunities to listen attentively, speak clearly and put words into sentences. All adults build very effectively on these early experiences as children move into their Reception Year. For example, when children were discussing their achievements in making boats, the teacher insisted on questions being answered clearly and audibly. Children achieve very well and standards already meet those expected for some children of their age. However, for most children, standards are below average because they entered the Nursery with language skills which were well below average.
52. The quality of teaching is very good. Throughout the Foundation Stage, adults give children many opportunities to increase their writing skills. By the time that they leave the

Reception classes, all children know that writing conveys meaning. Some children already sequence two or three sentences to make simple stories. Most, however, have difficulty in using pencils and do not write consistently well-formed letters.

53. Staff encourage children's interest in books and reading very effectively. All children use the vibrant and well-organised library to choose and look at books. Children enjoy this and recognise and read many words. The majority of children are unlikely to meet the early learning goals in this area of learning by the time that they leave the Reception classes. However, improvement since the previous inspection is very good because of the children's very good achievement, very good class management, and very well developed listening skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All members of staff provide a carefully planned range of practical activities to increase children's understanding of number and shape.
- The Nursery and Reception classes organise support staff very effectively to extend children's learning.

Commentary

54. The quality of teaching is very good. Consistently high quality of teaching ensures that children in the Nursery and Reception classes have many practical opportunities to explore and investigate number and shape. This is a very significant improvement to the unsatisfactory teaching identified at the previous inspection. Many children enter the Nursery with low skills in counting and recognising numbers. The Nursery team extends children's experiences to increase their mathematical awareness and understanding. For example, they use positional language in physical education sessions and talk about shapes as they use construction materials.
55. The Reception team continues to develop and extend this learning. Skilful teaching helps children to recognise and make number patterns and identify simple symmetry. All adults give children plenty of practical work to test their theories when they are learning to estimate. This gives them a very secure base for future learning. Children find learning fun and enjoy reinforcing their learning when they chant and sing number rhymes and songs. Members of staff encourage children to use computers to support their learning. This increases their understanding of shape and pattern as well as their keyboard and mouse control. Although achievement is very good, most children are still working below the expectations in the early learning goals for the end of the Reception Year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because all adults ensure they have many opportunities to investigate and ask questions.
- Pupils develop good computer skills and a good early understanding of computers and aspects of science, history and geography.

Commentary

56. Standards in this area of learning are significantly lower than those expected for most children when they start Nursery education. The Nursery team gives children plenty of opportunities to ask questions and increase their awareness of the world around them. This ensures that children achieve very well in understanding how change happens when plants and animals grow. Carefully planned activities such as baking enable children to understand that some changes are irreversible.
57. This very good rate of achievement continues as children move into the Reception classes. All children achieve very well in using and controlling movement on the screen when they use computers. They do this confidently and without adult support. The Reception team provides very good quality opportunities for children to improve their knowledge and understanding. For example, the floating and sinking activities give children an insight into why some boats sink whilst others float. Children became very excited and engrossed in using puddles to try out their boats. All members of staff encourage children to ask questions and give them chances to investigate natural and manufactured objects. This increases children's awareness of everyday objects around them. The use of stories helps children to become aware of other cultures, such as Japanese, and of religions other than Christianity. This makes a positive contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. Most children are likely to meet the early learning goals by the time they leave the Reception classes because teaching is consistently very good. Standards in this area of learning have improved markedly since the school's previous inspection.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The exciting and stimulating indoor and outdoor provision encourages children to move skilfully and safely.
- Members of staff encourage children to evaluate their own and others' work and to work hard.
- Many children have difficulty in using tools such as pencils carefully.

Commentary

58. The Foundation Stage team plans carefully to ensure that there is very good support for children's physical development in the Nursery and Reception classes. All adults give children very good opportunities to increase their awareness of space by using the stimulating indoor and outdoor provision. Very good and skilful teaching enables children to increase their awareness of how to move safely and of the benefits of exercise. All teachers encourage children to talk about their own and each other's achievement and suggest how they could improve it. Children move carefully and safely around each other both indoors and outside, and develop above average skills in movement control. Achievement is very good.

59. Teachers use questions well to enable children to discover and explain the effect of exercise on their bodies. They keep detailed records of children's achievement which give a clear picture of progress and standards. All adults use these records to plan work that builds on children's previous skills. The exciting outdoor learning area is in the process of further development to provide even more stimulating learning opportunities. Children have plenty of opportunities to use large construction equipment, to increase their skills in shaping materials and to use tools such as pencils, scissors and brushes. Their skills in manipulating tools and materials are not as good as their movement skills. However, most children are likely to meet the early learning goals in their physical development. There has been a very good improvement in planning, provision and the development of movement skills since the previous inspection.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to develop and use their imagination.
- Children achieve very well in developing their musical skills because of the very effective teaching.

Commentary

60. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes increase the use of their imagination very effectively. Members of staff ensure that children have plenty of interesting and stimulating activities that help them to explore imaginary situations. For example, children in the Reception classes think about what it might be like to live under the sea.
61. All children clearly enjoy making music and achieve standards in playing instruments that exceed those expected for most children of Reception age. The outstandingly good teaching of how to vary rhythm increased children's understanding of the use of instruments and of language such as 'tempo' and 'dynamics' very effectively. They achieved exceptionally well in this element of their creative development. Work in the classrooms shows above average standards in drawing and painting and children are clearly interested in their work. Most are likely to exceed the requirements of the early learning goals by the time they leave the Reception classes. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection: standards are similar but there are improvements to the quality of teaching, planning and provision.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 2 are below average, and there have been considerable differences in the standards of recent year groups taking the national tests.
- Pupils' standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is very good overall: as a result, pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- Very good opportunities are created for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Pupils' writing is interesting and is of a very high quality.
- Very good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The use of the library is underdeveloped.

Commentary

62. The overall attainment of pupils is above average and they achieve very well and make very good progress. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' standards in English were judged to be average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are now above the national average at the end of Year 6 but are below at the end of Year 2. This is a good improvement by the time that pupils leave the school. The results in the national tests in recent years for different groups of Year 2 pupils have varied from well above to well below average in writing, and in reading have declined from average to below average. However, by the end of Year 6, standards have shown a consistent upward trend in recent years from below average to above average. Pupils' achievement overall is very good and they make very good progress with speaking and listening and writing skills throughout the school. Reading skills by the end of Year 2 are improving with the recent focus on teaching reading at specific times and using reading materials in a clear and structured manner. The good use of additional teacher support is helping to raise standards in reading. Pupils throughout the rest of the school use their reading skills well to access the texts used in lessons. However, the use of non-fiction material to research information for use in other subjects is underdeveloped by the limited use of the libraries around the school. The book stock is fragmented and pupils do not use their reading skills sufficiently to identify books or materials independently in order to support learning in other areas of the curriculum.
63. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a good awareness of letter sounds but are not yet sufficiently confident to use these in their spelling and writing with any degree of conviction. They use their good phonic knowledge to help them to read unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 use other strategies such as picture or word clues and are able to summarise a story and make sensible predictions about future events. By Year 6, most pupils are fluent readers and enjoy sharing books with each other. They make very good comparisons about the settings and characterisations of different books. They talk knowledgeably about characterisation, plot and setting within 'Kensuke's Kingdom' and 'The Suitcase Kid', for example. Pupils enjoy empathising with and understanding the different characters and identifying particular character traits and the reasons for their feelings. These discussions are very well led with very good teaching enabling pupils to articulate their feelings about whether they are 'literally or emotionally stranded'.
64. Pupils in Year 6 have a good awareness of a range of modern authors like Jacqueline Wilson but equally understand the complexities of Shakespeare's Macbeth. A good feature of their writing is their understanding of how an author works. For example, pupils in Year 6 know that conveying meaning through using a wide range of adverbs and adjectives is important in writing stories to engage the interest of their readers. Writing is of a very high quality and develops and improves throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged in every lesson to explore ideas and issues through speaking and by listening to others. These opportunities are well promoted in every lesson by the very good use of open questions and the gentle encouragement to expand reasons and comments so that pupils articulate their ideas with clarity and purpose. By the end of

Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how to construct a piece of writing using complex vocabulary in a grammatically correct way.

65. The quality and presentation of handwriting skills are consistently good throughout the school. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a good joined style of handwriting by focusing on particular spellings and spelling strategies. Parents support their children well in learning spellings and encouraging them to practise their reading and spelling skills regularly. They build sentences with capital letters and use punctuation such as full stops and commas correctly. Higher attaining pupils use more complex sentences and punctuate speech accurately. Handwriting continues to improve in Years 3 to 6, and, by Year 6, most pupils' handwriting is legible, neat and consistent.
66. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve very well. They contribute well to discussions often through the well-focused support that they receive. Their needs are well met through the detailed planning of lessons so that their tasks are appropriate and they work with confidence alongside the rest of the group. Where it is appropriate, they work in individual or small groups with an adult so that their skills are extended and they achieve very well. Good use is made of drama and role-play to develop confidence and provide information in an enjoyable interactive manner so that all pupils can engage in the lesson.
67. The quality of teaching is very good overall. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection as all teaching is now consistently good or very good. Teachers' planning is good and they use additional support well to meet the needs of children with special educational needs. Teachers have high but realistic expectations and consistently challenge pupils to do their best.
68. The good use of the interactive whiteboards to engage children is a key element of many lessons. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the teacher used this facility to very good effect to identify the punctuation necessary in organising a list of instructions. Pupils made very good progress because they were able to respond quickly in identifying the appropriate punctuation, recognising patterns and completing the task accurately.
69. Teachers use targets skilfully so that pupils are aware of what they need to achieve to make further progress. Pupils' work is marked well throughout the school. Comments are constructive and pupils respond well to the guidance that they receive. However, there is not enough reference to these targets within lessons for either the teachers or pupils to be fully aware of the progress being made towards achieving these targets as a result of the content of each lesson.
70. Pupils behave very well, have extremely positive attitudes to learning and co-operate as a matter of course in the shared tasks that they are given to do. Pupils in Year 6 share very well with Year 10 pupils in a reading project which aims to improve their reading skills and prepare them for transition to the local high school. The emphasis on listening to each other and working within groups provides a positive collaborative climate for learning and sharing resources and information to good effect.
71. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader has an enthusiasm for the subject and is very aware of the need to maintain the progress that has occurred since the introduction of various national initiatives. She has had opportunities to monitor the teaching of English throughout the school and this has helped her to evaluate the standards achieved by pupils. The developing use of an in-depth tracking system to view the progress that pupils are making from one year to the next is a very good feature, providing the data for in-depth analysis and targeting resources to need.

72. All staff have responded well to training and professional development and the subject leader's enthusiasm. She has organised a very good range of additional resources in the form of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. Other enthusiastic members of staff support the management of the subject in order that additional training and new ideas to update skills are promoted throughout the school. Through her enthusiasm, and the support of the headteacher, the subject leader has ensured that the development of the teaching of reading and writing has been a priority for the school. She monitors and evaluates this aspect of the school's work very effectively and this makes a significant contribution to the high standards being achieved by the end of Year 6.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

73. There are too few opportunities for pupils to extend and use their reading and research skills in other subjects. There are examples of pupils using their writing skills in subjects like history and religious education to good effect in creating personal books and sharing pieces of historical writing and poetry in the very good displays throughout the school. The previous inspection report identified the use of the library and the promotion of independent research skills as an issue. This has not yet been sufficiently addressed through the use of the library areas to promote independent research skills. As a result, pupils are inhibited by a lack of opportunities to explore and use these skills across other subjects in the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain well above average standards by Year 6 and achieve very well throughout the school.
- Very effective use of investigation and problem solving improves pupils' understanding very well.
- Teaching consistently focuses on the use of key vocabulary to aid learning but there are occasions when pupils do not have enough time to reflect on what they have learned because teachers take too long to introduce topics.
- All teachers use assessment records consistently to challenge pupils at different stages of learning.
- Very good leadership and management provide pupils with a rich and stimulating curriculum.

Commentary

74. Standards are consistently well above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve very well overall. This is a very significant improvement from the satisfactory standards found at the previous inspection. Pupils respond very well to a wide range of problems set for them and use very good technical vocabulary in their reasoning when solving problems and questions. Results at the end of Year 2 are not as high because children enter the Nursery with standards which are well below average overall. Pupils' achievement is, however, good and pupils in the current Year 2 are on target to achieve improved results in the national tests this year. Teachers challenge pupils with tasks that move them beyond what they already know, but not enough pupils have made sufficient progress to reach above average levels. Evidence from the inspection is that standards are average for most pupils.

75. Standards of teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6 are very good, often with excellent features. The consistent focus on using key mathematical vocabulary is having a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Since the previous inspection, the school has concentrated on increasing opportunities for individual work and on giving pupils stimulating and interesting work. This has made a direct contribution to the improved standards being reached. An excellent feature of a Year 4 mathematics lesson, for example, was the constant probing questioning of pupils. This made them think very carefully and give logical reasons for their answers. The teacher's skilful explanations showed how to locate and set out the key information in problems. As a result, pupils gained an in-depth understanding of how to use and interpret frequency tables. This concentration on problem solving and investigating real life situations reinforced learning very effectively. This was a particularly significant achievement because the class contained several pupils with special educational needs. Further high quality challenges for higher attaining and gifted Year 6 mathematicians enabled them to extend their understanding and prepared them very well for work in Year 7.
76. The teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is of a very good standard overall. In recent years, there has been a significant increase of pupils who have special educational needs. The planning for lessons identifies their needs very carefully and involves support assistants who play a significant role in their learning. All pupils make very good progress in acquiring mathematical vocabulary and teachers place a strong focus on their discussions in groups and to the whole class. There are times, however, when pupils do not have enough time to think and talk about what they have learned. This is because teachers sometimes take too long to introduce topics.
77. All teachers use assessment very effectively to check pupils' standards and progress and to plan work that meets their identified needs. This makes a significant impact on their progress and achievement and is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection.
78. The subject is very well led and managed. Both subject leaders have very good procedures in place to track the progress that pupils make as they move through the school. This information also includes an analysis of regular testing. A recent audit of achievement has identified the need for further development of mathematical language within lessons. This was a strong feature of the work observed in lessons and in all books. Pupils' work is presented very well and gives clear evidence of logical thinking in all aspects of mathematics. Whole-school planning and teaching is based very effectively on the National Numeracy Strategy. This ensures that there is full coverage of all elements of the National Curriculum for mathematics. The school is making very good progress in developing the use of information and communication technology within the mathematics scheme of work. Assessment is used very effectively to form groups by ability to increase pupils' achievement and progress. The monitoring of progress has been very effective in establishing remedies for the decline in test results for Year 2 pupils in 2003. Throughout the school, pupils' knowledge of their learning is carefully developed by the marking in books, which gives clear information on the targets set to enable them to make further progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

79. Pupils make very good use of their numeracy skills in subjects such as science and design and technology. Their experimental skills develop well as they move through the school

and, as a result, their measuring and recording skills become more sophisticated. The emphasis placed on information and communication technology in the school is developing numeracy skills further, especially with the use of graphical representation and interpretation. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.

SCIENCE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Good teaching enables pupils to achieve very well.
- Very good leadership and management are developing learning very effectively.
- Some good use of information and communication technology and good resources are improving achievement, although this is inconsistent.

Commentary

80. Standards in science are above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs, make very good progress. Achievement is very good, especially as pupils' skills on entry to school are well below what is normally expected in their knowledge and understanding of the world. This very good achievement is because pupils are given good opportunities to record their observations and use their developing skills in literacy. Work in all year groups covers the expected elements of the science curriculum and is broad and very well-balanced. Setting arrangements are gradually being introduced across the school and these are raising standards and improving achievement because pupils at different stages of learning are being challenged well. Work is also marked regularly, but there is some inconsistency in the level of evaluative comments made by staff to help pupils to improve their work.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with very good opportunities for pupils to make predictions and to use their previously learned knowledge and understanding to make deductions. In Year 5, for example, the good subject knowledge of staff meant that pupils made good progress. Lessons are generally well-organised, and there are examples of imaginative approaches to learning, such as using a short play to illustrate to pupils how insects pollinate plants. However, on occasions, there is not enough active participation by pupils and information and communication technology is not used enough to support pupils' learning. In Year 2, a practical lesson on different types of habitats for a range of small insects and other 'mini-beasts' was successful, because the staff were well-deployed and offered pupils good support in their learning. The school grounds were used well to give pupils good 'hands on' experience in discovering different types of habitats. However, there were missed opportunities to use information and communication technology to enhance pupils' learning, for example, to show them illustrations of a variety of insects. In Year 1, highly imaginative teaching enhanced learning very well and searching questioning resulted in pupils gaining good in-depth understanding about forces of pulling and pushing.
82. The leadership and management of science are very good. Test results and pupils' responses are carefully analysed to ensure any gaps in learning are identified and

addressed. The setting arrangements in Year 6 have proved to be of benefit to the standards that pupils achieve and it is intended to extend this practice across the school as much as possible. There are very clear expectations for what pupils and staff can achieve and very good strategic planning to achieve these goals. Targets are being met and the subject leaders are committed to seeking other means of ensuring continuing improvement.

83. Information and communication technology is being used effectively by pupils in some science lessons and it is intended to develop this aspect of the science curriculum further with the introduction of programs which allow pupils to observe 'virtual experiments'. Science is well resourced in the school. The outdoor areas are used well to promote learning and have been developed to provide 'wild life' areas for pupils to explore. Science has improved well since the previous inspection and standards have improved as a result.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information and communication technology has improved considerably since the previous inspection and standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching and learning are very good and the very good resources are used very well.
- The subject is led and managed very well.
- The Internet is not used consistently to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

84. Standards in information and communication technology are above average in both Year 6 and Year 2. Pupils achieve very well from when they first join the school and have very good attitudes to learning. Pupils identified as having special educational needs also make very good progress and achieve very well due to the very good support that they receive in lessons. Information and communication technology was identified as a key issue at the previous inspection, and the subject has improved markedly since then. The curriculum is now very good, being well balanced across the expected areas of study, and the provision is very good due to the very good level of resources which the school now has at its disposal.
85. Teaching and learning in information and communication technology are consistently very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and plan very well. The very good quality and quantity of resources are used very well and, because the subject is so well resourced, pupils do not have to share their time at computers and take turns. This very effective use of time means that pupils gain maximum benefit from lessons and have very good opportunities to practise their skills in their time in the computer suite. Teaching assistants, including the information and communication technology technician, support pupils very well in lessons and the technical skills available are also put to very good use, especially when, as sometimes happens, computers fail to operate as they should. Pupils learn very quickly as they have very good opportunities to develop their skills and help and reassurance are readily available when they need it. As a result, they grow in confidence in their abilities and achieve very well. The pace of lessons is very good,

relationships are secure and pupils respond very well, participating and concentrating very well at the tasks which are set for them. Information and communication technology is being used effectively to support work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 have used their skills to access the Internet to find and share information with each other, and have then used this information to create their own individual fact files on geography. They have also used a similar process to create multi-media, PowerPoint presentations in history on World War II. However, this independent research of this kind is not planned consistently throughout the school and information and communication technology is not always used in lessons to enhance learning, for example, by showing photographs to illustrate work in science.

86. The leadership and management of the subject are very good, and, as a result, information and communication technology has been improved considerably since the previous inspection. The provision has been very well resourced and there is a highly skilled member of staff to deal with the technical side of using computers in school. Teachers' knowledge and understanding have improved markedly. As a result of these carefully planned and managed developments, standards and achievement have improved very well since the previous inspection. The very well resourced computer suite is to be further updated with new computers, and the existing computers, which are still suitable for use, are to be used to create 'mini suites' in different areas of the school. Most classes have interactive whiteboards and there are plans to have these installed in the Foundation Stage when staff have had appropriate training. Parents and carers are made aware of the policy for safe access to the Internet.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

87. Information and communication technology is used effectively overall to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, in work in history and geography, pupils use their information and communication technology skills to record what they have discovered, for example, about Henry VIII. In Year 2, pupils have studied the Great Fire of London, and, in Year 6, work on World War II involved using information and communication technology to research and share information. However, pupils do not use the Internet routinely and consistently to support learning in other subjects. The school has a good website to keep parents and carers informed, and staff use information and communication technology well in planning and organising lessons.

HUMANITIES

Geography

The provision for geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are above average because the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- There is good use of the Internet in Year 6 to research work in geography.
- Subject leadership is good, although procedures for assessing pupils' progress are not formalised.

Commentary

88. Standards of work in geography are above average in Year 6 and average in Year 2. All pupils achieve very well, and pupils identified as having special educational needs make very good progress and have very good attitudes towards their learning.
89. Teaching and learning in geography are good. In Year 6, effective teaching motivated pupils effectively, so they made good progress and achieved well in a lesson observed during the inspection because they were interested in the activity to investigate mountain ranges. Information and communication technology is being used well to support work in geography. For example, in Year 6, pupils used their information and communication technology skills effectively to research mountain environments. Pupils are encouraged to record their findings independently and this enhances their skills in literacy. They also use the Internet to find out more about geography topics, for example, when pupils use the Internet in a study of Llandudno.
90. Geography is well led and managed within the school, and there is a satisfactory range of resources, although it is planned to improve those available for map work. Nationally recommended guidelines are used to plan teaching and learning in geography, which ensures that the National Curriculum is covered. However, assessment procedures, whilst satisfactory, are not applied consistently across the school. There is effective monitoring of pupils' progress and continuity of learning is managed successfully. Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

History

The provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of work in history in Year 6 is good.
- Good use of artefacts and other interesting experiences makes history meaningful and ensures effective teaching and learning.
- Assessment is not consistently uniform throughout the school.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

91. Pupils attain standards in history which are above the expected level for their age in Year 6 and are average in Year 2. Achievement is very good overall for all pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs. Pupils make good progress in lessons, because these are made interesting for them with a good range and variety of artefacts to make topics meaningful. This enables pupils to appreciate that history has relevance for them in their everyday lives and, as a result, they respond positively.
92. The quality of teaching and learning in history is good overall. In Year 5, for example, work on the Egyptians is supported by imaginative and challenging learning activities which engage pupils' interest well so that they put a good amount of effort into their work and achieve well as a result. Similarly, in Year 3, excellent resources, presented enthusiastically, have resulted in a good understanding of life in Viking times. During the inspection, a highly successful day of activities further developed this work, as pupils dressed in Viking costumes, and made games and clay pots reminiscent of the time.

Charismatic teaching in Year 1 resulted in a high level of concentration and enthusiasm, involving all pupils, which resulted in good development of understanding about everyday objects used in the past. An analysis of pupils' work in history shows that there is good coverage of the National Curriculum. However, the school plans to have history lessons each week in future years, and not as 'blocks' of study as at present. This will enable the school to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding more systematically. Pupils' work is marked regularly and staff write positive comments, but these are not always sufficiently evaluative to identify areas for improvement for individual pupils. Information and communication technology is being used well by pupils to support their work in history, particularly in Year 6.

93. The leadership and management of the subject are good overall. Work analysis is undertaken by the subject manager as part of whole school procedures to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning and she has had the opportunity to observe a few lessons in history. Resources are satisfactory, with a good range of interesting artifacts, and these are generally used well in lessons. The subject leader strives to offer pupils a wide range of learning experiences, including a range of visits, to make their learning in history meaningful. Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good overall with one example of excellent teaching.
- Pupils learn about and from religions very well and make very good progress.

Commentary

94. There has been good progress since the previous inspection report when standards in religious education were average. They are now well above average by the end of Year 6 and exceed those expected in the locally agreed syllabus for Calderdale. Lessons are interesting, teaching is very good, and pupils are keen to participate in their religious education lessons. They learn about Christianity and other religions with considerable interest and enthusiasm. Achievement is very good.
95. The subject is well planned using the guidance from the recently reviewed locally agreed syllabus. The school has addressed the different elements of learning about religions very successfully with an interesting focus on a comparison of the teachings of different religions. By the end of Year 6, pupils can successfully compare elements of Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism.
96. Pupils in Year 2 showed a very good level of interest when preparing for a visit to a local church. In lessons, the very good use of a variety of resources, including the good use of the interactive whiteboard, had familiarised pupils with the key features of a Christian building. They had already noted the purpose of different features of the church and named with some confidence the lectern and other items in the church and discussed what they were used for. Pupils were well focused and eagerly prepared for the visit by asking and considering how they should best use their time to extend their knowledge by constructing well focused questions. Overall, the quality of teaching is good.

97. The essence of the good and sometimes excellent teaching in Years 3 to 6 is the promotion of pupils' thinking and reasoning skills. This clear focus enables pupils in Year 4, for example, to recognise the importance of a pilgrimage to all believers. Teachers used very well prepared resources to good effect to enable pupils to empathise with a Sikh making a pilgrimage to the River Ganges and to consider why this is so important to this religion. Pupils are able to expand the theme of pilgrimage with a good degree of confidence to believers in different religions and to empathise with the significance that this has in their lives.
98. There is a very good emphasis on pupils discussing issues and themes, and recognising the significance of sacred texts and the stories which lead to the teachings. The curriculum builds very well from the simple to the complex so that, by the time that pupils are in Year 6, they can conduct an informed discussion on the relevance of the Ten Commandments in the context of today's society. They used their knowledge well to ensure that their information was accurate and recognised the similarities and differences in the codes of behaviour featured in the different religions they have studied.
99. The impact of these discussions on pupils' written work is very good and they use their literacy skills effectively to present their work. Tasks are well prepared and teachers ensure that their relevance enables all pupils to make good progress. Written work is of a good quality throughout the school and is relevant to the themes being considered in the different year groups.
100. Opportunities for pupils' work to be assessed or for the quality of teaching to be monitored to any depth are limited. The subject leader has recognised these limitations within the subject action plan. She has used her knowledge and expertise well to encourage teachers to take opportunities to visit the Gudwara and the Mosque in order to improve teaching and learning, as well as arranging visits and visitors to involve pupils and generate continuing interest in the subject. At this stage, leadership and management are satisfactory overall.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

These subjects were sampled and no overall judgement is made on provision or the quality of teaching. However, it is clear that pupils benefit from rich curricular experiences in these areas.

Art and design

101. It was not possible to see enough lessons to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. Judgements, therefore, are based on the two lessons seen, pupils' sketchbooks, work displayed around the school and the Year 5 art club. These indicate that standards overall exceed those expected for most pupils by Year 2 and Year 6. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection. There has been a very significant improvement in pupils' abilities to evaluate and improve their work and in the development of knowledge and understanding. Evidence from teachers' planning shows that work is carefully planned to build on pupils' previous learning. This ensures that

pupils learn and use new skills and techniques systematically throughout the school. The use of non-European art as a stimulus for pupils' work has resulted in some exciting and vibrant examples of Islamic tiles, Indian collage and Japanese pastel flower drawings. These make a very positive contribution to pupils' cultural awareness. Work in sketchbooks shows that all teachers ensure that pupils increase and develop their skills in experimenting with different techniques systematically. A result of this was seen in the Year 5 art club where pupils used careful observation and developing skills to produce very effective self-portraits. Strong links with other subjects such as history increase pupils' understanding that art permeates all areas of life.

102. Pupils achieve above average standards in their three-dimensional work. For example, Year 1 pupils used natural materials very effectively to create transient sculptures based on Goldsworthy's work. By Year 6, pupils make very poignant figure models in the style of Giacometti. These show good empathy in their depiction of suffering. Pupils of all ages experiment with different media and use computers to produce different styles and techniques. They become very skilful in choosing the media that will suit their plans and know that different paper is necessary for work in charcoal, paint and pencil. The school encourages individual talents and further enriches pupils' experiences through visits and making use of the very talented artist on the school staff. The very good, knowledgeable and enthusiastic leadership and management of the subject make a very positive contribution to pupils' achievements.

Design and technology

103. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching because it was not possible to see enough lessons during the course of the inspection. Judgements, therefore, are based on work displayed around the school, the lessons seen, teachers' planning and pupils' design books. It is evident that there has been a very significant improvement since the previous inspection. Standards exceed expectations, planning and evaluation skills are developed consistently across the school and all resources are now very good. Pupils' evaluation skills were clearly demonstrated in their suggestions on how to improve their winding mechanisms in Year 2. They gave clear suggestions for how pupils could improve their own work and they showed that pupils take much pride over their finished product. Teachers ensure that pupils build on these skills as they move through the school. For example, some pupils in Year 4 identified possible difficulties in making money containers when 'cutting the wood to make a round shape'.
104. The collection of pupils' work shows that teachers build on pupils' previous learning as they move through the year groups. For example, pupils practise various joining methods and use these very effectively to make books with moving parts. Pupils' work on pneumatics, musical instruments and puppets make very effective links with other subjects. The very effective subject leader provides very strong leadership and ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to develop their design, making and evaluating skills. Her input has helped to increase teachers' expertise and confidence and has resulted in a significant improvement in standards.

Music

105. Whole school singing is good. There is a good concentration on rhythm and expression and pupils sing with enthusiasm. Pupils are able to clap rhythmically and singing is enhanced by piano accompaniment of high quality. In the lesson observed during the

inspection, standards were above average as a result of very good teaching from a member of staff with a high level of subject expertise. Pupils have opportunities for a wide range of musical experiences outside class. The school choir has a very good reputation locally and has benefited from coaching from an internationally renowned baritone, Sir Thomas Allen. Pupils have 'signed' the songs that they were singing and examples of this have featured on television. Workshops have included African drumming, and pupils have opportunities to hear live music from pupils at a local secondary school. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Years 3 to 6 were enthusiastically preparing for their end-of term production 'The Ballad of Buzzard Creek'. This had been written locally for performance in a secondary school and had been adapted for its first performance in a primary school. Good subject leadership and management ensure that the National Curriculum is covered and that pupils have rich and varied experiences in music. Strengths in music identified when the school was inspected previously have been maintained and developed further. The school was awarded the Artsmark Gold Standard in 2004, not least because of the quality of pupils' work in music. The strengths identified when the school was inspected previously have been maintained and built on.

Physical education

106. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of experiences in physical education. Standards in swimming are above average. The school enjoys considerable success in competitive games, as is illustrated by the fact that the school has held the Activemark Gold Award since 2002. A number of local clubs support the school by coaching in a range of games. Individual pupils reach very high levels. For example, during the inspection, a girl in Year 6 heard that she had been selected for the England cricket squad, and two boys in Year 6 play for Leeds United Juniors. The school benefits from its membership of the North Halifax Partnership of Schools, which organises a range of competitive activities. The subject is led by an experienced and enthusiastic teacher who ensures that the National Curriculum is covered and that the subject is well resourced. The school has good accommodation, including two halls, a good field and extensive hard play areas which are used well to provide wide opportunities in physical education. The good standards identified when the school was inspected previously have been maintained.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal development is strongly promoted throughout the school.
- The subject is a high priority in the school's curriculum.
- Pupils value the opportunities to contribute their thoughts and ideas to the lessons.

Commentary

107. Personal, social and health education and citizenship are an integral part of the school's curriculum and this is reflected in the positive and very good attitudes that pupils display towards school and in their very good behaviour. The very positive views that pupils hold and their obvious trust in adults throughout the school reflect the very good relationships which exist and the confidence that pupils develop because they feel very secure. Whole

school discussions are well managed; pupils concentrated well and debated in lessons with a good depth of maturity on the week's issue of whether a situation is fair or unfair. They considered carefully whether to respond and, when they did, it was with sensitivity and a concern for the feelings of others. Lessons are well planned, teaching is good, and a wide range of resources is available to support learning.

108. The scheme of work for this area of the curriculum is based on national guidelines and additional material from a new initiative is giving an extra dimension to the well-developed scheme which is already in place. Teachers' planning is good and embraces a good range of strategies to manage lessons. The school uses topics well in this area of learning and has developed a very good range of situations to involve the community to enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils from a number of local high schools answered questions that are concerning pupils in Year 6 about transfer to secondary school. The session was well managed and the pupils developed a positive view of the transfer process.
109. A full programme covering sex education and drugs and alcohol abuse is in place and issues are raised in a calm and sensitive manner. Because relationships are very good, discussions are thoughtful, provoking and result in mature responses to the issues being raised. Pupils feel valued and, as a result, express their views confidently and with an increasing ability to construct an argument.
110. The school council, at present, constituted for pupils from Years 3 to 6, is well managed. Members represent younger pupils and their views are canvassed before meetings take place. This is good early experience in citizenship. The council's recommendations have already improved facilities in the playground and the school now has very good playground equipment for all pupils. The 'friendship stop' and 'playground buddies' initiatives have enabled pupils to support each other and have been very useful to less confident pupils or those feeling isolated. Personal, social, health education and citizenship lessons give pupils good opportunities to offer thoughts and ideas and this makes a major contribution to their personal development. All adults help pupils to express themselves confidently and the learning mentor is being particularly effective with pupils who lack confidence or find it difficult to be effective in group situations, including those with special educational needs.

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	3
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	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
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	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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