

INSPECTION REPORT

NEWLAITHES JUNIOR SCHOOL

Carlisle

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112224

Headteacher: Mr C Barnfield

Reporting inspector: Mr F. Carruthers
21285

Dates of inspection: 23 – 26 June 2003

Inspection number: 259419

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Community Primary school

School category: Junior

Age range of pupils: 7 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Langrigg Road
Carlisle

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs C Robinson

Date of previous inspection: Sept 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21285	Mr F. Carruthers	Registered inspector	Science Modern Foreign Languages Physical education Religious education Special educational needs Educational inclusion English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9334	Mrs J Mynett	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
32377	Mr D Courtney	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology History	How well is the school led and managed?
4926	Mrs T Aspin	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This community junior school has 240 pupils on roll aged from seven to 11 and is located in the suburbs of Carlisle, south west of the town centre. It shares a large site with its associated infant school. There are slightly more girls than boys on roll. The school population is relatively stable with low pupil mobility.¹ There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils' families, as measured by a number of statistical indicators, cover a wide range and are broadly the average for the country as a whole. However, the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (currently seven per cent) is below average, and this is not an accurate reflection of the social circumstances of the pupils. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, at 18 per cent, is about the average of schools nationally. Their needs include moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems and visual impairment. There are three pupils with statements of special educational need. The attainment of the pupils as they transfer from the infant school varies with different year groups from average to above average, and is above average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education overall, with strengths in pupils' achievements in mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), French and music. However, standards in English could be higher. The quality of teaching is good and the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, but monitoring the quality of teaching has not been effective enough to eliminate weaknesses. The cost of educating a pupil at the school is below the average for primary schools, however, and as a result, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Because of the good quality of teaching, pupils achieve well in mathematics and science and very well in ICT. Standards are well above average in mathematics and above average in science and ICT.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well because of the good provision for the pupils' personal development.
- There is a rich curriculum for the pupils, which includes learning a modern foreign language, and opportunities to learn to play musical instruments and to take part in many visits, both locally and abroad.
- Parents have positive views of the school and make a good contribution to the pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- Standards in English.
- The monitoring of teaching in order to eliminate unsatisfactory teaching and variations between classes in the quality of learning.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the time of the previous inspection in September 1997. Very good progress has been made on the key issue to raise standards in ICT, and satisfactory progress has been made on improving strategic planning and various health and safety issues. Standards have continued to rise well in mathematics and science but in English they fell year on year from 2000 to 2002. Beneficial changes to the building include a new computer suite and alterations to the dining arrangements, as well as teaching areas outside classrooms on the first floor.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	C	C	D	D	well above average A above average B
Mathematics	B	D	B	B	Average C below average D
Science	C	C	B	B	well below average E

For the purposes of this report, inspectors have changed the benchmark category, which compares schools with like schools, to benchmark 2. This category reflects the broadly average social background of the pupils' families, as described at the start of this summary.

Standards in recent years have been better in mathematics and science than in English. The school sets challenging targets for pupils to achieve and is more successful in reaching them in mathematics than in English. In the current Year 6, standards in English are average overall and show an improvement on last year's test results. This is because of the school's action to address the recent decline in standards. Nevertheless, more needs to be done if standards are to match those in mathematics, where currently they are well above average, as a result of very good teaching in Year 6, and in science, where they are above average. Attainment is also above average by the end of Year 6 in ICT, French and music, because of good and often very good specialist teaching. Pupils generally achieve satisfactorily in English and there is a good number of higher attainers achieving well in reading. Pupils achieve well in mathematics, science, French and music. They achieve very well in ICT in relation to their prior attainment. Attainment by the end of Year 6 in all other subjects, such as art and design, geography and religious education, is the average expected.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to school and enjoy the activities offered.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Generally good, though a minority of pupils are more difficult to manage. The school has good systems to improve behaviour and there have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good and pupils willingly undertake roles of responsibility in school. Relationships with staff and amongst pupils are good and help to create a positive climate for learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

¹ The number of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than the usual times

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	N/A	N/A	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Overall the quality of teaching is good and about one third of lessons are very good. Teaching is satisfactory in English and good in mathematics. Teaching is strongest in the two Year 6 classes but there is some unsatisfactory teaching in one of the Year 5 classes. Key qualities of the teaching are the effective use made of teachers' specialist interests, for instance in the teaching of ICT, French and music, and the teachers' good skills of managing the pupils. Skills of numeracy are taught very well and there are many good opportunities to use these skills in other subjects, such as science. Skills of literacy are taught satisfactorily overall but there are weaknesses in how well pupils develop their ability to write at length. Teachers' expectations of pupils in English are not high enough and there is an over reliance on worksheets in younger-aged classes, especially in subjects such as science, history and religious education. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There are good opportunities for these pupils to improve their computer skills in extra classes. For those with a statement of special educational needs, teaching is good. Talented pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills in a modern foreign language, computers, mathematics and music by the good teaching available. Most pupils put in a good amount of effort and concentrate well in class. Learning is generally brisk and lessons have good pace.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is enriched by the teaching of French and by a very good variety of activities outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. There is good provision for pupils who have a statement of special educational need.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. All elements help the pupils' personal development well. Key features include opportunities to be involved in group and team activities, and to learn about issues such as racism and care of the environment through lessons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures to ensure pupils' welfare and good behaviour. Procedures to monitor attendance are satisfactory. Procedures to assess how well pupils are achieving in subjects of the curriculum are good.

Links with parents are good and help the pupils with their learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key	Satisfactory overall. There are strengths in the shared commitment of the staff to improve provision. The headteacher effectively leads an enthusiastic team of staff and the contribution of the deputy headteacher

staff	is particularly good.
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How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors carry out their duties well and are active in helping the school to develop further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall and a strong feature is how the school analyses information about performance. However, monitoring of teaching and learning is inconsistent and unsatisfactory overall.
The strategic use of resources	Specific funds, for instance to help those pupils with statements of special educational need, are directed appropriately to where need is greatest. The school compares costs and effectiveness of purchases and services satisfactorily.

There is a good match of teachers to subjects and some very good specialist teaching. Classroom assistants give good support. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, its strengths being the new computer suite and the school grounds. The quality and quantity of learning resources are satisfactory overall, with strengths in ICT and music.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most parents expressed positive views about the work of the school. • The majority are content with the standards being achieved. • They feel teaching is good and their children are expected to work hard and achieve their best. • They are very comfortable approaching the school with questions, concerns or issues and feel these are dealt with well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents felt that the school did not work closely with them, and they were not kept sufficiently well informed about the progress their children are making. • Some expressed concerns about the amount of homework given and the range of activities offered outside school.

Inspectors agree with the positive comments of parents:

- The inspection team considered the opportunities provided by the school for parents to find out about their children's progress are good. Parents are invited to two consultative meetings a year and receive very comprehensive reports and updates about their child's progress;
- Inspectors consider the use of homework to be satisfactory and about the same as found in most junior schools. The school is currently reviewing homework and acting on the findings of a questionnaire to parents;
- The range of activities outside lessons is very good, despite the loss of a very popular gymnastics club when a qualified coach left.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. For the purpose of this report, including Part A, inspectors have changed the categorisation by which the school is compared to similar schools, from below average levels of social deprivation (benchmark one) to average levels (benchmark two). This is a more accurate reflection of the school's catchment area and provides a more realistic basis for comparing the school's performance with similar schools.
2. Standards that the school has achieved in recent years in National Curriculum tests have risen in line with the national trend. Standards in English were reported to be above average in the last inspection report and improved until 1999 when they showed a decline to 2002. In the 2002 tests, results were below the national average and below the average of similar schools. The school began to put in measures, including a local project to improve pupils' writing skills, to raise the levels achieved by pupils, especially those capable of achieving the higher Level 5. The school has set challenging targets for pupils to achieve but has been more successful achieving them in mathematics than in English. Standards in English in the current Year 6 are average overall, showing improvement since last year. This is borne out by an initial analysis of the unconfirmed results of the 2003 test results that have been recently completed. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and a good number of higher attaining readers achieve well. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls.
3. By the end of Year 6, attainment in skills of speaking and listening are average overall. Most pupils listen attentively to their teacher and each other but overall listening skills are less well developed than speaking skills. Reading skills are average overall and most pupils read fluently. There is a good number of higher attaining pupils who are very confident and read with great fluency, expression and intonation. Attainment in writing is average. Higher attaining writers create interest and excitement in their writing, building up tension. They employ a wide vocabulary and structure their writing appropriately in paragraphs. The number of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment, however, is currently quite low compared with similar schools. This is partly due to teacher expectations for the quality and quantity of writing, which are not high enough throughout the school. These are areas for the school to improve.
4. Standards in mathematics and science were above average at the time of the last inspection, and have been maintained. Results in 2002 were above the average of those found in similar schools in both subjects. In the current Year 6, standards in mathematics have further improved and are well above average. This is confirmed by an initial analysis of the latest test results in 2003, which show that the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 has increased compared with the 2002 results. This is the result of the very good quality of teaching evident in many classes, especially in Year 6. Pupils achieve well in mathematics and science. An initial analysis of results in the 2003 tests shows that standards in science have improved further since last year. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls in either subject. Pupils achieve very well in information and communication technology (ICT) and well in French and music.
5. In mathematics by the end of Year 6, all pupils have very good mental arithmetic skills and a very broad base of knowledge and understanding in number. Even those with

lower attainment have quick recall of tables and basic number facts. Pupils use their skills well when solving problems and investigating patterns in number. Their knowledge of shape and space is good. In science, the pupils have a very good understanding of concepts and they know how to carry out and draw conclusions from an investigation on topics such as photosynthesis, microorganisms, separation of materials and solutions.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. Those with a statement of special educational need make good progress because of the good quality of the support they receive from teachers and learning support assistants. This was evident in many lessons, and there are examples of assistants working with these pupils to help them to keep up during some lunchtimes. Those pupils on the school's list of pupils with special educational need, but who do not have statements, make as much progress as their classmates. Systems, as in mathematics, of grouping pupils by their level of attainment help the pupils to work at an appropriately challenging rate. In addition, there are extra classes that successfully promote these pupils' computer skills. Those pupils who are talented in specific areas make particularly good progress in mathematics, ICT, learning a modern foreign language, music, where there are very good opportunities to learn to play an instrument, and physical education, because of the range of activities outside lessons.
7. Standards in ICT have significantly improved since the time of the last inspection, when the subject was a key issue for action. Pupils display great confidence and skill in using computers in school, and are beginning to use the interactive whiteboards well. Attainment in music is above average and pupils become involved in a variety of concerts and events, playing in the orchestra, choir and ensembles to a high standard. Attainment in French is above average and pupils have a head start when they transfer to secondary school. In all three subjects, it is the quality of the specialist teaching that inspires this level of achievement. Attainment in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and religious education is average. It was not possible to judge attainment in all aspects of physical education from evidence collected during the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes to school and their learning are good. Parents feel that the school is working hard to promote good attitudes and values towards the school, the teachers and their work. They also feel their children *'know right from wrong'*. For the great majority of pupils this is having a positive impact. Pupils are enthusiastic and generally display good attitudes, both in lessons and around the school. The effective management skills of most teachers ensure a good working atmosphere is maintained in the classrooms and enable pupils to settle quickly to the tasks set for them. They are usually attentive, listen well to instructions and to each other and are keen to respond to questions. Pupils have positive views about their school. They think the school has *'good standards for learning'* and *'the teachers are nice and friendly'*. They are particularly enthusiastic about, *'the field and play areas... the new computer suite... and the loads of clubs'*. They value the fact that, *'they've got good friends'*, and that *'there are lots of activities to join in'*, and *'enjoy coming to Newlalthes because it's a nice place to be'*.
9. Behaviour is good, with the majority of pupils behaving well in their lessons. However, behaviour in the playground and around school is not always as good as in the classrooms. This was also noted during the last inspection. Pupils are well aware of and understand the school and class rules. The school has focused appropriately on

developing a climate for learning and implemented a behaviour management system to support this. Where this is consistently applied, most pupils respond well. However, there is a small minority of pupils with particularly challenging behaviour and their capacity for sustained concentration is sometimes limited. Where lessons are less well managed or where the pace drops, these pupils can become restless and distracted. In most cases, teachers effectively manage difficult pupils. Those pupils with emotional or behavioural problems, on the school's register for special education needs, have appropriate targets in their individual action plans. The school has not excluded any pupil and has been successful in retaining pupils excluded from other schools. Pupils value the reward system and feel it encourages them to work hard and behave well. There is also strong support for the house system, with pupils enthusiastic about collecting house points to support their team and the competitive element to sports day. Pupils are very friendly and polite, happy to open doors, talk about what they are doing and show their work to visitors. During discussions with pupils, they reported that the school was generally a safe and secure place. However, they said that there are *'a few pupils who are not very nice and can be violent... and there are some bullies'*. Others felt this was mostly *'play fighting'*, and that incidents of bullying *'mostly get sorted out'*.

10. Overall, relationships are good, both between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves. The school works hard to promote tolerance, kindness and appreciation of others, to ensure pupils do not feel excluded. A system of buddies operates, with the Year 5 pupils going to meet the Year 2 pupils in the infants' school to help them to feel comfortable on transfer from the infant school in September. This harmonious atmosphere promotes a good working environment and makes a positive impact on learning. For instance, pupils were observed collaborating well during physical education lessons in playing a game of rounders and performing complex sequences of movements in gymnastics. The rehearsal for the end-of-term play clearly demonstrated the ability of pupils to work effectively as a team.
11. Opportunities to develop pupils' personal development and initiative are satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to develop their investigative skills and to evaluate their results. However, there are few opportunities to enable them to make choices and to take responsibility for their own learning. This is an area identified for action in the school development plan. Pupils' views are canvassed through questionnaires and their ideas have been encouraged. The older pupils spoke enthusiastically about project work they were given for homework, but this did not occur very often. Pupils willingly undertake roles of responsibility around the school, acting as class monitors or playground friends. However, pupils in Year 6 did not feel they were given significantly more responsibilities or treated any differently from other years. The school council has been very effective and helps to give pupils more of a role in the decision-making processes of the school.
12. The level of attendance is satisfactory. This year's figure of 94.6 per cent shows a slight fall on last year. Whilst this is in line with other schools, the level of unauthorised absences has increased and now broadly matches the national figures. The increased unauthorised absence figure relates to a small number of pupils who are being closely monitored and followed up by the educational welfare officer. However, the large number of parents who take their children on holiday in term time is having a negative impact on the overall levels of attendance. Punctuality in the morning is generally good, although there is a small number of parents who do not ensure that their children arrive at school on time each day. The registration period provides an orderly and purposeful start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is good. Approximately 70 per cent of lessons are good or better and one third of lessons are very good. These proportions are similar to those found in most primary schools. However, two lessons were unsatisfactory and these were both in one of the two Year 5 classes. Overall, the quality of teaching has been maintained since the time of the last inspection, but the monitoring of teaching has not eliminated unsatisfactory elements sufficiently well. Teaching is very good overall in Year 6 and this has significant benefits for the quality of learning in subjects such as English, mathematics, science, ICT, music and French. In the last two subjects, specialist teaching by part-time teachers is helping pupils to achieve well. There are examples of very good teaching in all four year groups and teaching is also strong in Year 4.
14. Key features of the teaching are the use of specialist staff, the management of pupils and the effective use of visits and first-hand experiences to help the pupils' learning. Specialist expertise of staff contributes to the high standards seen in mathematics, ICT, French and music. For instance, very good use is made of the computer skills of one teacher who takes all classes for ICT in the computer suite, so that the level of challenge of the work is high, making multi-media presentations, for example. Planning for this work is very detailed. In addition, this teacher helps classes in Years 3 and 6 with National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy lessons, taking groups in the suite to extend skills related to those subjects. Visits to places of interest associated with topics in geography and history, a residential visit to France and visitors to school all help to enliven the teaching.
15. Teaching of basic skills of speaking, literacy and numeracy is generally good and the level of challenge in the work set in English and mathematics is helped by grouping pupils in Year 6 by prior attainment for some of the year. However, expectations about pupils' writing are not high enough across all year groups. There is an over reliance on worksheets in subjects such as science, history and religious education, especially in younger age groups. As a result, the better quality teaching in Year 6 comes too late for pupils to achieve high standards. Opportunities to write at length are sometimes missed. Teaching is unsatisfactory in one of the Year 5 classes and this was evident both in lessons and in the sample of pupils' work in English and mathematics over the year. Expectations are not high enough in this class and pupils' learning overall is unsatisfactory.
16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. It is good for those with a statement of special educational need, who receive good teaching in well-planned lessons from their class teachers, ably helped by learning support assistants. Teamwork between staff helps these pupils' learning and they take a full part in lessons. A higher attaining pupil with visual impairment, for example, achieves highly in mathematics because of the good teaching arrangements. Pupils on the school's list of pupils for action receive good support from the part-time co-ordinator for special educational needs in small groups, withdrawn from classes once or twice per week for extra teaching in reading, spelling, writing and mathematics. This tuition is well planned and directly relates to the pupils' individual targets. In lessons, the pupils receive support from the class teachers, through, for example, the way they plan group work according to the attainment of the pupils. There is further help from classroom assistants but this is not available for all lessons. Gifted and talented pupils receive good teaching across a range of subjects, as a result of the specialist teaching described earlier.

17. There are examples of very good marking of pupils' work, especially in one of the Year 4 classes and in Year 6. In these models of good practice, marking is specific to the subject and not only a comment on presentation or effort, and there is good encouragement, with constructive advice, in how to improve. However, this is not uniform across classes and there are a few examples of poor marking. Monitoring of pupils' work has not identified this aspect as one for significant improvement, based on the very good practice at hand. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning and increases in amount as pupils get older. A recent questionnaire for parents on a cross-section of aspects on the subject has revealed that most parents are happy with the amount of homework set and its usefulness. They have made very pertinent comments on how it can be improved and the school is responding positively.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

18. The curriculum is good, and this is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. It covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also learn French. There has been very good improvement in the curriculum for ICT, which was a key issue at the last inspection.
19. Planning is good and is based on the most recent National Curriculum guidance. Where there are weaknesses in provision, it is where teachers do not follow the intended themes well enough or teach the skills expected according to the whole-school plans. Daily and weekly planning is also good. For most lessons it clearly identifies what pupils are expected to learn. The National Literacy Strategy is securely established. A range of writing skills is developed in other subjects, but this remains a weaker area of provision for English, and there is an overuse of worksheets in some classes requiring one-word answers. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established and leads to good achievement overall, and very good achievement in Year 6. Numeracy skills are developed well in many subjects, for example science. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to support learning in all subjects through lessons taught by a specialist teacher and the constant use of interactive whiteboards in classes for older pupils.
20. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good, although there is no secure scheme of work showing what should be taught in each year. Provision for education for the misuse of drugs, and sex education, are well thought out to meet the needs of the pupils, and make good use of specialist expertise.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Class teachers write individual education plans for the pupils in their classes and review their performance at regular intervals. Targets in these plans are relevant and specific. Teachers plan the work and make use of available classroom support to teach the pupils grouped by prior attainment with their classmates. Pupils with a statement of special educational need have well-targeted support from class teachers and learning support assistants.
22. A strong feature of the provision is the way the school includes pupils with a statement of special educational need in a range of activities, so that they have the opportunity to enjoy the good quality curriculum available to all. The school makes sure that all activities are open to pupils of either sex and looks for trends that suggest either may not be achieving their potential. On the other hand, on one or two occasions, routines that class teachers have introduced, for example in Year 3, mean

a few pupils miss their entitlement to parts of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. Monitoring of provision has not picked up these slight anomalies.

23. Regular visits to places of interest, including a residential experience for older pupils for adventurous activity and development of social skills, as well as visits from people with specialist knowledge, are all used well to improve pupils' understanding of the world around them. A visit to France is provided for pupils in Year 6 to give them the opportunity to use the French they have learned, find out more about the country's history and culture, as well as support learning in many other areas. A very good range of extra-curricular clubs, including many sports, music and ICT activities, supports learning well. Good links are maintained with other schools and with the community, and these are used effectively to improve the teachers' expertise and to extend pupils' experiences and so improve attainment. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. One very good link is the use of specialist teaching time that has become available since Easter to give a sequence of lessons in the computer suite to pupils in Year 2. This helps to improve their attainment in ICT before they enter Year 3, and familiarises the pupils with life in the junior school.
24. Provision for all four elements of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The overall quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection. Daily acts of worship make important contributions to pupils' learning about themselves. There are many opportunities for pupils to perform or celebrate other forms of achievement in front of others to give them pride in what they have done to and help others to respect their efforts. In special lessons, pupils think carefully about issues affecting themselves and others in their own and other communities.
25. Teachers and support staff set good examples in how to treat others with respect. Pupils are involved in setting their own system of rewards and sanctions through the school council. Keys to the good provision for moral development are the caring attitudes of the teachers and their high expectations of good behaviour in most classrooms. Often teachers explain why certain behaviour or attitudes is not acceptable. On occasions, however, insufficient attention is given to behaviour management at lunchtimes. Other moral issues such as care for the environment, racism and bullying are dealt with through different subjects, such as geography, or through special lessons. One very good lesson dealt with the effects of racism in South Africa and very successfully linked it to pupils' own experiences, although the area in which pupils live has very few people from different cultural groups.
26. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work together as a team in different age and ability groups through the successful extra-curricular activities. They learn, in music for example, that each member of the group has an important role to play. Special events such as *Health Week* cover both moral and social issues. Personal and social education lessons give pupils the opportunity to work out ways of improving situations. The least effective aspect of social development is the few opportunities given to pupils to take responsibility around the school and to show independence in lessons.
27. Provision for the development of cultural awareness of their own and world cultures comes through many subjects. Pupils study the works of many artists, for example Ando Hiroshige. In geography, they look at their own environment and link where someone lives and their type of employment to the need to travel. They also study the life of South American Indians in the Amazon basin. In history, they study Victorian architecture in their own town and the Victorians' way of life. They listen to music from across the world and sing a variety of songs directly linked to other nations or

cultures. Texts used to develop skills in English represent many cultures, for example that of a boy in Jamaica. In religious education, they learn about different world faiths and associated cultures and, through French lessons and a residential trip, they learn about the culture of another member state of the European Union. The school is addressing the aspect judged as the weakest, but not unsatisfactory, element of cultural development, which is preparing pupils for life in a multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. The school's provision for pupils' care, welfare and personal development is good. Teachers and their support staff provide a caring and supportive environment for pupils and they seek to ensure that pupils have equal opportunities to take part in all activities.
29. Parents value the ethos of the school and feel it promotes a positive atmosphere. They appreciate the way that their children are helped and supported. At the meeting for parents before the inspection, they spoke of the way staff act as good role models and of how this encourages their children to respect others and to treat each other with care and consideration. Parents feel teachers know their children well and pick up any concerns very quickly, providing targeted support where they see it is needed.
30. Procedures to monitor and promote positive behaviour are good, whilst those dealing with oppressive behaviour and bullying are satisfactory. The behaviour policy gives clear guidance on suitable rewards and sanctions and is respected and valued by most pupils. Pupils feel the commendations and rewards act as an incentive to work hard and behave well. The small numbers of pupils who demonstrate more challenging behaviour are well supported through effective teaching strategies, individual education plans and the well-defined and consistently applied behaviour management system. Procedures to monitor and eliminate oppressive behaviour or bullying are highlighted in the anti-bullying policy and addressed during assemblies, and through the personal, social and health education programme. Pupils know what to do and who to go to if an incident occurs. However, the school is not recording all reported incidents and a few parents and pupils do not feel that they always take their concerns seriously.
31. Satisfactory procedures are in place to monitor and promote prompt and regular attendance. Parents are regularly informed about their responsibilities and the need to ensure their children attend school regularly. Parents generally telephone the school on the first day their child is off sick. Appropriate links have been established with the education welfare officer.
32. Procedures for child protection have been revised since the last inspection and are now good. The school has an appropriate policy in place identifying the correct procedures and guidelines for child protection. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs and the headteacher are the designated members of staff with responsibility for child protection issues. They have been fully trained and made sure all other members of staff are aware of the necessary procedures and legislation relating to child protection issues. Well-established systems are in place to provide for the health and welfare of pupils. There is a sufficient number of staff who are qualified to provide first aid and to take care of pupils who may have accidents or fall ill during the day. The school has good links with the various support agencies and these specialists attend as necessary.

33. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy and effective guidelines in place to address the issues of safety and security of pupils in and around the school, or when out on visits. Procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils are sound. The headteacher, janitor and health and safety governor undertake regular checks and risk assessments, and review the security arrangements around the school. A number of health and safety issues were identified during the last inspection. These have now been addressed. However, the inspection team identified some other areas of concern and these were shared with the headteacher during the inspection. The school was aware of these concerns and was already seeking ways to address them.
34. Procedures for checking pupils' progress are good and staff make satisfactory use of them when they plan lessons. Assessments are used well in mathematics to group pupils in lessons according to their prior attainment, so that the work set is challenging. Assessments in English, which, as in mathematics, include optional testing at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5, are used satisfactorily to track the progress of pupils. Assessments in science involve tasks given at the end of units of work and there are good records kept of progress in ICT. Across other subjects, assessment is less consistent. There are regular assessments made, including standardised tests, to chart the progress of pupils with special educational needs. These are used to re-define the targets in pupils' individual education plans. The school makes satisfactory use of supporting agencies, such as the educational psychologist.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. The last inspection report highlighted the strong partnership between parents and the school. This has been maintained well since then.
36. Overall, parents expressed positive views about the work of the school, both in the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the meeting held for them before the inspection. The majority are content with the standards being achieved. They feel teaching is good and their children are expected to work hard and achieve their best. Most parents reported that they are very comfortable approaching the school with questions, concerns or issues and feel these are dealt with well.
37. However, the parents' questionnaires identified some concerns. Some parents felt that the school did not work closely with them, and they were not kept sufficiently well informed about the progress their children were making. The inspection team considered the opportunities provided by the school to be good. Parents are invited to two consultative meetings a year and receive very comprehensive reports and updates about their children's progress. The annual progress reports to parents clearly identify what their children know, understand and can do, how well they are doing in relation to what is expected for their age; and provide targets for improvement.
38. Some parents expressed concerns about the amount of homework given and the range of activities offered outside school. These comments may relate to the fact that the school needed to cancel some popular clubs, such as gymnastics club, because of lack of staff. The inspection team consider the use of homework to be satisfactory and the school's own questionnaire on homework indicated a high level of satisfaction as well as very valuable suggestions for improvement, which the school is taking on board. The inspectors' view is that the very good range of visits and extra-curricular activities currently available enhances the curriculum.

39. Information provided to parents is good. The school seeks to keep them suitably informed about the school and its various activities through the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents, with regular contact maintained through attractive newsletters. However, except in the prospectus, the school is currently not circulating information on the curriculum to parents for them to see what their children will be learning during the course of the year. Parental questionnaires are used effectively to consult with parents and to ascertain their views, for instance on homework. Occasional workshops keep parents up to date with curriculum developments and activities, and the school has made very effective use of combining an open afternoon with the governors' annual general meeting. This was very well attended, and gave parents ample opportunity to ask questions and be updated on school developments. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept appropriately informed on their child's progress, and attend review meetings.
40. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. A large number of parents provide financial support to enable their children to participate in the football coaching or go on outings and residential visits. The school actively encourages parents to become involved in their child's learning. They are invited to support the homework policy, and reading books go home regularly, with parents encouraged to spend time listening to their children read. This is having a significant impact on reading standards in the school. The school welcomes parents and grandparents who are able to volunteer to help in the school or on trips. A small number come into school on a regular basis and listen to reading or help with groups in the classroom or music tuition. Special events such as class assemblies, school performances, sports days, discos and the *Healthy Eating Week* are well attended. The parent, teacher and friends association is a very active organisation that runs a number of social and fund raising events over the course of the year. These events are well attended and generate significant amounts of money for the school. This is used very effectively to help subsidise visits and visitors, and to purchase additional equipment and resources. They have recently funded new computer equipment for the ICT suite, and activities and games for wet playtimes.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The quality of leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. Strengths include the shared commitment by everyone to improve and succeed, and effective financial planning. The governing body is knowledgeable and effective in carrying out its statutory duties and being involved in the development of the school. The induction arrangements for new staff are also good and the school is very effective in its use of new technology.
42. Areas for development are the monitoring of teaching and learning, and taking the necessary action to eliminate unsatisfactory practice. This includes developing the role of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, with a view to ensuring greater consistency across the school, the sharing of good practice and the raising of standards, particularly in English.
43. The headteacher effectively leads a team that is very enthusiastic and committed to the school. He is well supported by a very able deputy headteacher, some committed subject leaders, a good co-ordinator for special educational needs and an effective and well-informed governing body. All have a strong, enthusiastic commitment to the school. Teachers, support assistants, pupils and parents feel valued and, likewise, share a firm commitment to the school. The management of the school is aware of the need to raise standards achieved by pupils by the end of Year 6, especially in

English, and of the need to deal more effectively with unsatisfactory teaching. There is a commitment to do this and the school is well placed to succeed over time.

44. The governing body has developed well since the previous inspection. Governors are knowledgeable and meet their statutory duties well. They provide good support to the teachers, linking well with subject leaders. Governors are well informed about the school and have a satisfactory understanding of its strengths and the specific areas for further development, which are the focus of the school improvement plan. However, some of the priorities in the school improvement plan have not been addressed sufficiently in the current year and this has resulted in some unsatisfactory teaching not being dealt with.
45. The main business of the governing body is done through committees. They meet each term and feedback at meetings of the full governing body. Governors linked to specific subjects visit school but there is no formal system for visits and no formal process for reporting on them. Financial planning, with the direct involvement of members of the finance committee, is sound and the school has a good understanding on the current financial situation, as well as projections for the following two years. The chair of governors is a frequent visitor to school but there is no regular pattern for these visits. During her visits, she spends some time in the staff room and feels this gives her a good understanding of issues and staff concerns.
46. Monitoring and evaluation of how well the school is performing are satisfactory overall, but the monitoring of teaching is unsatisfactory. Senior staff have put in place measures to help staff where teaching has been identified as unsatisfactory but they have not monitored the quality of teaching and learning systematically enough. Not all subject leaders have observed their colleagues teaching and this has resulted in variations in quality throughout the school. Examples of very good practice have not been shared with others and some unsatisfactory teaching has not been eliminated. The school is aware of these issues and is fully committed to implementing the requirements for improving teachers' performance. Recent objectives have been, as far as possible, linked to priorities in the school improvement plan as well as to the needs of individuals. This is good practice. There are very effective procedures in place to help new staff. Newly qualified teachers are assigned to a subject and they are encouraged to become involved in all aspects of the subject leader's work, enabling them to gain a good understanding of the role, as they familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures of the school.
47. There is a good level of expertise among the teaching staff to teach the subjects of the curriculum, and there are specialist teachers of ICT, French and music. Learning support and classroom assistants make a good contribution to the teaching. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The school now has a well-equipped computer suite, there are extra classrooms at one end of the building for small group work and there are spacious grounds. However, there is no central library, books are stored on shelving outside the classrooms upstairs and this limits the opportunities for independent research. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall and are best in ICT and music.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. The school should:

- (1) Pursue the existing plan to raise standards in English * by:

- Raising expectations of what pupils, especially the higher attainers, are capable of achieving in writing;
- Increasing opportunities for pupils to use and improve the quality of their writing in subjects other than English;
- Eliminating any unsatisfactory teaching;
- Improving skills of using a library for independent research.
(Paragraphs 3, 50 – 58, 64, 76, 81, 98)

(2) Improve the monitoring of teaching so that it has a greater impact on overall provision and eliminates areas of weakness through:

- A more systematic programme of observations of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning;
- Sampling pupils' work to confirm that standards are high and that there are no inconsistencies in standards, coverage and practice between parallel classes.
(Paragraphs 13, 22, 42, 46, 58, 68, 73, 79, 98, 101 – 2)

* Features in the current school development plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	18	18	15	2	0	0
Percentage	0	34	34	28	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents approximately two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	240
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	NA	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	NA	44

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	30	29	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	25	27
	Girls	24	24	26
	Total	43	49	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (81)	83 (66)	90 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	23	27
	Girls	25	23	25
	Total	48	46	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (84)	78 (69)	88 (95)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
240	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	30

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	86

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	NA
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Financial information

Financial year	2002 - 03
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	£
Total income	433,893
Total expenditure	422,147
Expenditure per pupil	1,774
Balance brought forward from previous year	37,523
Balance carried forward to next year	11,746

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	240
Number of questionnaires returned	112

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	50	4	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	37	55	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	53	10	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	57	18	1	0
The teaching is good.	42	48	9	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	45	24	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	46	7	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	48	2	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	40	26	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	25	54	14	5	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	46	13	3	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	46	12	6	4

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.

Other issues raised by parents

A few parents felt their concerns about intimidatory and bullying behaviour in school are not taken seriously enough.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

49. Standards in Year 6 are average in each element of the subject, speaking and listening, reading and writing. However, this was not reflected in the National Curriculum test results in 2002, when standards were below average. Progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall from the time of entry into Year 3, although it does vary in the different year groups and pupils are making good progress in Year 6. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Teaching overall is satisfactory, ranging from good to unsatisfactory. Since the time of the last inspection, when standards were above average, standards have not kept up with the national trend upward. However, an initial analysis of the 2003 test results indicates an improvement on last year with significantly more pupils achieving both the nationally expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5.
50. Strengths in the subject include management by the subject leader, the identification and use of learning objectives in lessons and the structure of most lessons. Teachers' use and range of questioning to aid learning are good, as is the use of ICT to support teaching and learning. The range of writing experiences for pupils, especially in Years 4 and 6, is good and the standard of reading of the higher attaining pupils is very good.
51. Areas for development include the raising of teachers' expectations and the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils, especially in writing. There is an urgent need to improve the quality of teaching in one Year 5 class.
52. Attainment in skills of speaking and listening are average overall. Most teachers use a very good range of questions during lessons, including questions requiring pupils to come up with the correct answer, and some probing questions that require them to think and explain or give their opinions. This is very effective in leading and developing pupils' understanding and learning. During question and answer sessions, pupils are required to listen and to consider what is being said before they respond and give their own answers. Pupils have a good variety of opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills, such as when they work in pairs or groups and when they report back at the end of lessons on what they have achieved and learnt. A very good example was seen during the final part of a Year 6 lesson, when one of the pupils was asked by the teacher to be in '*the hot seat*', become Beverley Naidoo, the author of the book the class is studying, and answer questions put to her by the other pupils. Most pupils listen attentively to the teachers, other adults and each other but, overall, listening skills are less well developed than speaking skills. A few pupils find it difficult to concentrate, particularly when the pace of the lesson slackens or the level of challenge is not totally appropriate for their ability, and so they contribute and learn less. Many pupils respond to questions with one or two word answers or incomplete sentences, and teachers often accept this. This does little for the development of pupils' language and does not contribute to the raising of standards in speaking skills.
53. Attainment in reading is average overall and most pupils read fluently, taking note of the punctuation. There is a good number of higher attaining pupils who are very confident and read with great fluency, expression and intonation. Pupils understand and are able to explain the purpose of the index, contents pages and glossary. Most are able to discuss different authors and give reasons why they prefer one particular

author rather than another. Most pupils feel that the range of books available in the school is too small and many of them have to go to the local library to find the kind of books they wish to read. They would like a greater range of authors and more books by particular writers. Pupils in different classes mentioned Jacqueline Wilson as their favourite writer, and most would like more *Harry Potter* books. There are regular silent reading periods in classes and pupils enjoy these. Their reading development is well supported in other subjects, such as history and religious education, where a good range of texts and the Internet is available for research. All pupils have access to a very limited range of fiction books. There is no school library at present and many of the fiction books and sets of encyclopaedia are stored on shelves on the first floor outside the Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms. However, the school subscribes to a library service and makes effective use of it for topic work. At present, there are few opportunities for pupils to develop the skills necessary for using a library and finding information and this is an area for development.

54. Attainment in writing at the end of Year 6 is average. Pupils throughout the school have regular opportunities to develop their writing. The basic skills with which they enter the school are now being developed more systematically and thoroughly. Many pupils' story writing is planned with a beginning, middle and end and shows appropriate structure and language. Pupils learn to use speech marks and to use them in their own writing. By the end of Year 6, pupils learn to write for a range of purposes. Higher attaining writers create interest and excitement in their writing, building up tension. They employ a wide vocabulary, use complex sentences and structure their writing appropriately in paragraphs. The number of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment is currently quite low, however, compared with similar schools. This is partly due to teacher expectations for the quality and quantity of writing, which are not high enough throughout the school. This is now being addressed with the school's involvement in a local writing project and there is evidence of standards improving as teachers implement some of the new strategies.
55. Most writers use some features such as varied sentence structures, but their use of punctuation and spelling is not secure. This prevents them from attaining the higher levels. Teachers' marking varies in quality. Where it is good, it provides pupils with information about how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve. Some particularly good examples of effective marking were seen in one of the Year 4 classes. The presentation and handwriting of many pupils are usually neat and joined but there is room for improvement, particularly in one of the Year 5 classes. Progress in this class is unsatisfactory. Pupils have opportunities to develop their range of writing in other subjects, for example in history, where they produce a book about Victorians from their research in Year 6. However, there is an over reliance on worksheets in some of the younger aged classes, for instance in science, history and religious education, and these impede pupils' progress in writing their own ideas.
56. During the inspection, the teaching of English was observed in all classes. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Most teachers plan well, with a good amount of detail. This includes the identification of appropriate learning objectives for each lesson and details of the content of the different parts of the lesson. This enables teachers to talk with pupils about the content and purpose of each lesson, ensuring that the pupils are clear about what they are learning and how it relates to other work they have done or are planning to do another day. Most teachers also write the learning objectives on a board or flip chart so that they are clearly visible throughout the lesson. This is good practice. The good planning also ensures that teachers have a clear understanding of the format of the lesson and this ensures that they have thought about each section in advance and are well prepared to teach it effectively. Most lessons are based on

the National Literacy Strategy and it is clear that the strategy is securely established in the school, providing a sound structure to the curriculum. Where planning is not thorough, as seen in one Year 5 class, unsatisfactory teaching results. Learning objectives are not identified or shared with pupils, the pace of the lesson is too leisurely and pupils are not appropriately challenged and became bored. This results in a number of them being off task. When asked about their work, they say it is too easy and they do not learn anything new. A lack of preparation also results in the teacher giving incorrect information to the class.

57. The use of ICT to support teaching and learning is good. A number of classes have interactive whiteboards and all have at least two computers. These are used imaginatively by teachers to create and store a range of materials for use during lessons, and to illustrate or demonstrate in a lively and interesting way particular approaches or techniques. This allows teachers to employ a greater range of strategies and to vary their teaching, thus making learning more interesting for pupils. Computers are also used well to enable individuals or pairs to undertake some of their work on computer or to research information related to the topic being studied.
58. The subject is well managed by the subject leader, who has a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject, and is actively involved in assessment, tracking pupils' progress and monitoring their work. She exhibits great enthusiasm for the subject and commitment to her role. Assisted by another teacher, she is currently involved in a local writing project and is leading the implementation of strategies aimed at raising standards. However, there are too few opportunities provided to observe teaching formally throughout the school and to follow this up with the identification of priorities for development for individuals and the school as a whole.

MATHEMATICS

59. By the end of Year 6, attainment is well above average and the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. This is an improvement on the 2002 National Curriculum test results, which showed that attainment was above average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. In the last report, attainment was judged above average. Last year's target for pupils reaching the expected level was achieved, and an initial analysis of the 2003 test results shows a further improvement as more pupils achieved the higher Level 5. Good standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
60. By the end of Year 6, all pupils have very good mental arithmetic skills and a very broad base of knowledge and understanding in number. Even those with lower attainment have quick recall of tables and basic number facts. Pupils have good strategies for calculation as well as a secure understanding of formal methods and they use all of these to solve problems and when investigating patterns in number. Their knowledge of shape and space is good although, on occasions, accuracy is marred by the quality of drawing, particularly for those with lower attainment. Data-handling skills are used effectively in other subjects such as science, and pupils are competent when presenting and analysing their work using computer skills or drawing graphs for themselves. Pupils with all levels of attainment achieve well, including those with special educational needs.
61. Teaching is good. It is very good in most lessons, and consistently so in Year 6, but there is some unsatisfactory teaching in one of the Year 5 classes, leading to unsatisfactory achievement. Teaching of mathematics in all years in the computer

suite, by a specialist teacher of ICT, is also consistently very good and not only develops mathematical skills but also computer skills. In the most effective lessons, the mental arithmetic activity at the start of the lesson is challenging and offers the opportunity for all pupils in the class to answer questions at their own level, including those pupils with special educational needs. The best teachers have high expectations of behaviour, attainment and quantity of work to be completed. Tasks and resources are extremely well prepared so that no time is wasted. Teachers have very good subject knowledge of each small step of learning needed to develop a secure understanding of a mathematical concept. They often expect pupils to explain their reasoning or method to the class, developing speaking skills and reinforcing understanding.

62. Where teaching is least effective, work is not sufficiently matched to the needs of the pupils. On some occasions it is too easy and at other times far too difficult. Skills are not carefully developed because the teacher has not prepared well enough, and explanations are muddled. This means that pupils become bored and do not concentrate sufficiently. Marking is inconsistent, with some very good practice in one Year 4 class that assesses pupils' understanding and helps them to improve their work. Similarly, ongoing assessment in lessons is varied. The best teachers very quickly identify misconceptions and put them right, and use short sessions at the end of lessons to assess whether the learning target has been reached. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 4, one lower attaining pupil was asked to 'teach' the class how to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10. His successful presentation not only demonstrated his understanding but also boosted his confidence and resulted in much pride in his achievement.
63. Both leadership and management are very good, and have been effective in raising attainment. National Curriculum test results are carefully analysed, weaknesses identified and the curriculum adapted as a result. Weaknesses in teaching are identified and efforts made to address these. Additional support classes are provided for groups of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 at different times throughout the year, based on assessed need. There is a good supply of good quality resources to help learning.

SCIENCE

64. Standards are above average and have been maintained since the last inspection. An initial analysis of the 2003 National Curriculum test results shows standards improving compared with last year's good results. This is the result of the high quality of teaching in Year 6. There have been improvements to the teaching of investigative skills, which were a point for improvement at the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. The contribution that the subject makes to standards of literacy is very good in Year 6 and satisfactory in other year groups. At times, for example in Years 3 and 4, there is too heavy a reliance on worksheets and this limits the pupils' opportunity to record their investigations using their own words. Standards of numeracy and ICT are promoted well and there are many opportunities to calculate, take measurements, draw graphs and compile data, often using good quality software. However, there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and pupils' work in order to confirm that standards are consistent across parallel classes.
65. Pupils in Year 3 learn about forces, materials, living things and healthy eating. They carry out investigations on the strength of magnets and waterproofing of materials. They can classify materials according to those that are man-made and those that are

naturally occurring. They have an emerging understanding of how to make a test fair, for example when investigating plant growth, that they need to change only one condition at a time. They know that the earth turns once on its axis every 24 hours. Pupils in Year 4 find out about the function of a switch in an electrical circuit and the conductivity of materials. They are able to classify animals by different criteria, such as vertebrate and invertebrate. In an investigation on floating and sinking, pupils began to see that two opposing forces, gravity and upthrust, are operating when a piece of fruit is lowered into water. They begin to predict accurately and to explain their findings in cogent terms. Recently, pupils in this year group have established a garden area and are tending flowers and vegetables that are grown, thus helping the pupils to understand the processes of seed germination and growth.

66. Pupils in Year 5 learn more about the human body, including the digestive systems and the effect of exercise. They know about the effect of heat and cold on water, causing evaporation and freezing. Pupils use planning sheets well to organise their writing about investigations and they begin to plot line graphs to chart the temperature rise in the boiling of water. In one lesson, pupils made and interpreted a graph showing the times of sunrise and sunset in a year. In another, pupils prioritised what they might need to take with them on a journey into space. They learned about basic needs or essentials. Pupils in Year 6 have very good opportunities to carry out investigations and work at a high level of challenge on topics such as photosynthesis, microorganisms, separation of materials and solutions. No lessons were observed during the inspection that involved pupils in Year 6 because of timetabling arrangements, but it is clear from a scrutiny of their work and regular assessment tasks that the pupils' learning is very good. They have a very good understanding of concepts and know how to carry out and draw conclusions from an investigation. In almost all lessons, pupils have good attitudes to the subject and are enthusiastic. Behaviour is good and pupils co-operate well in group tasks. This was evident in a lesson involving pupils in Year 4, using tanks of water in their investigation.
67. The quality of teaching is generally good and teachers have good subject knowledge, although in one lesson involving pupils in Year 3, the teacher did not show clearly the direction of the earth's spin when explaining the phenomenon of day and night. Planning is very thorough and generally consistent across parallel classes, though this is not the case in Year 5. Most staff have good expectations of what pupils can achieve but there is an over reliance on the use of worksheets in Years 3 and 4, and sometimes these do not take pupils' learning far enough. There are examples of very thorough and detailed marking that is subject-specific, but this is not consistent across all classes. Opportunities for pupils to investigate regularly feature in topic work and these enhance the quality of pupils' learning by making it relevant and first-hand. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace and pupils get through a good amount of work. Teachers use correct terms well and encourage pupils to use them. There is no systematic learning of terms or their spellings, however, to aid their recall. Most staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and the presentation of work, especially in Year 6, is very good. However, there are exceptions to this high standard, especially evident in one Year 5 class.
68. The subject leader has not made enough progress, since the last inspection, in ensuring that all the required programmes of study of the National Curriculum are consistently taught, and that all pupils receive the same high quality of teaching and learning opportunities. Standards have been maintained largely because of the efforts of class teachers themselves. There has been insufficient analysis of pupils' work to make sure that opportunities are taken to use the subject to develop skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. As a result, these aspects are patchy across the school.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

69. The two subjects are planned separately but blocked together for teaching purposes. During the inspection there was a limited amount of either subject to inspect and evidence is based on some observations of lessons, a scrutiny of pupils' work and displays around school, and discussions with pupils and both subject leaders.
70. Standards in both subjects are average by the end of Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both subjects from entry into school to the end of Year 6. Teaching of both subjects is satisfactory and progress since the last inspection is satisfactory overall.
71. Strengths in these subjects are their integration into work in other areas of the curriculum, the range of activities undertaken in both subjects and pupils' enthusiasm for them. There are two areas for development. The monitoring of teaching in both subjects needs to improve to ensure consistency, good practice and that learning is progressive. The development of a system for recording progress and measuring attainment is needed in order to relate the assessment of pupils' progress to national guidance for judging standards.
72. Pupils have opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities in both subjects and a wide selection of their work, including displays, sketchbooks and photographic records, was presented for inspection. Teachers are successfully integrating art and technology activities into other subjects and some very good examples were seen. For example, pupils in Year 3 have designed and built Greek chariots as part of their history topic on Ancient Greece. In Year 4, pupils produced large drawings of native rainforest dwellers as part of their work in geography on the rainforests. In Year 5, pupils used *modroc* to make interesting tiles with designs linked to Egyptian figures, as part of their work in history on Ancient Egypt. In Year 6, pupils planned, built and evaluated working models of a fairground roundabout with direct links to science and ICT.
73. All pupils have their own sketch books and a good range of work is undertaken to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the use of colour, texture and shading in their drawings. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the experiences they have in both subjects and most would like to be able to spend more time on them. They have a good understanding of the total design process and could describe changes they would introduce, following evaluations, if they were to undertake some of the tasks again. Pupils also have a very good knowledge of the life and work of some artists, in particular Van Gogh, Picasso, El Greco and Ando Hiroshige. Pupils have attempted satisfactorily to produce their own interpretations in the style of these artists. The work undertaken in both subjects contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.
74. The teaching in both subjects is satisfactory overall but there is evidence of inconsistency in different classes. Where teaching is good, there is a wide range of good quality work undertaken, work in sketchbooks is well presented and is regularly marked with helpful comments by the teacher. The standard of work is at least average. In some classes, the range of work is limited. It is not regularly marked and the overall standard is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient regular monitoring of teaching by the subject leaders to enable them to identify areas of strength to share with others, and to eliminate less than satisfactory practice. Currently, there is no

systematic approach to assessing pupils' progress to ensure more effective planning for the next stage of their learning.

GEOGRAPHY

75. Attainment overall is average, the same as in the last inspection, but there are strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' subject knowledge, owing to variations in the quality of provision in different year groups.
76. By the end of Year 6, pupils with all levels of prior attainment have a secure understanding of the formation of rivers and mountains, and their impact on ways of life. They know, for example, how deltas are formed and how the movement of tectonic plates changes the surface of the earth. They draw information from world maps, the Internet, photographs and books. Those with high attainment have a wide breadth of knowledge of different rivers and mountain ranges. A recent local river study gave pupils a great insight into their own area, and supported learning very well in number, measure and data-handling. Pupils in Year 6 find it difficult to remember anything about comparative local studies, and features of local maps, a topic covered in Year 5 according to whole school planning. The current written work in Year 5 is unsatisfactory.
77. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Because of timetabling arrangements, no direct teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6. In the lessons seen in Years 3 and 4, teachers were well prepared and knew what they wanted pupils to learn. Good use was made of time and resources. In one good lesson, the teacher questioned the pupils well to draw from them what sources of information could be used to find out about news. She helped pupils to understand the importance of the questions *what, when, where, who* and *why* when presenting information to others. A weaker aspect of teaching is the acceptance of one-word answers to questions. Although pupils listen well, they do not always develop their speaking skills sufficiently or practise using subject specific vocabulary. One very good feature of provision that has been particularly effective in raising attainment in Year 6 has been the work completed by a student teacher, together with the specialist teacher of ICT, to help pupils to create multimedia presentations based on their own research of the Internet.
78. In the last inspection, a weakness was the lack of a scheme of work. The planned curriculum meets national requirements. However, insufficient monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to ensure that this planned curriculum has been covered effectively and that good quality work is produced in each class mean that weaknesses have not been dealt with effectively. Resources are sufficient to help learning.

HISTORY

79. During the inspection the subject was not taught in Years 3, 4 and 6, because of the way the subject is taught in units of blocked time. Judgements have been made based on lessons observed in Year 5, a scrutiny of pupils' work during the past year and discussions with the subject leader and pupils. Standards are average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' progress, including that of pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory and, as a result, they gain sound factual knowledge and understanding of topics covered in the curriculum. Teaching is satisfactory overall and progress since the last inspection has been good, owing to good management of the subject by the subject leader.

80. Strengths are the management of the subject leader, the range of resources for teaching and learning, including visits to places of interest linked directly to topics and end-of-unit evaluations that pupils are required to make. Areas for development include the monitoring of teaching to build on good practice and ensure that learning is progressive, and a review of the current topic planning in order to reduce the gap in time between topics from one year to the next. Further points for improvement are the development of a formal system for assessment and recording, and a reduction in the amount of work being done on worksheets.
81. The curriculum is enhanced in all year groups by visits to places of historical interest, like the local Guild Hall, where pupils are often able to dress up in period costume and gain an understanding of life at certain points in history. Arrangements are also made for visiting speakers who come into classes, dressed as a character from a particular period, and speak with pupils about life at that time. An example of this is the guest who comes as a Roman lady to support work on the Year 4 topic of Romans. All of this enables pupils to gain an understanding of life at different times and to compare this with life today. Pupils in Year 6 can identify primary and secondary sources of information to study Victorians. They use a range of books and some ICT resources satisfactorily to undertake personal research before producing booklets on subjects like *Clothing in Victorian Times*, *Victorian Christmas* and *Famous Victorians*. The requirement to undertake evaluations at the end of topics enables pupils to reflect on what they have learnt and provides teachers with useful information on how well pupils are progressing. This information is used at the end of each year in teachers' annual reports to parents. A formal approach to recording the development of skills and the topics covered and knowledge gained has not yet been developed. Currently there is no system, other than pupil self-evaluation, for assessment.
82. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but there is evidence of some good and some unsatisfactory practice. Where the work is good, the quantity and quality of work undertaken by pupils is sufficient to meet all the requirements of the National Curriculum and pupils are provided with a good variety of activities. There are opportunities for them to undertake personal research. Regular marking, with helpful comments and suggestions, is contributing to learning. This sound practice was seen mainly in Years 4 and 6. Where practice is weaker, there is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets, the presentation and overall quality of pupils' work are unsatisfactory and marking is not regular or consistent.
83. The subject is well led and managed by the subject leader. Since the last inspection, when there was no policy and the scheme of work lacked sufficient detail, much work has been undertaken and the subject is now well organised. Topics are planned in each year and teachers choose when to schedule the work so that it fits best with other curriculum areas. This has resulted in some long gaps when pupils are not doing any history and, although the topics are being covered well, the interval between topics is interrupting the development of the pupils' skills of investigation. A good range of resources now exists to help the teaching and the subject leader is building up some very good collections of books for pupils of all abilities. She does not yet have the opportunity to monitor teaching in the classroom and this is currently preventing her from being even more effective in building on good practice.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

84. Attainment is above the expected standard by the end of Year 6. All pupils achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. Almost all pupils achieve the expected level and most have attainment above that expected for their age. The full range of

experiences required in the National Curriculum is taught. In the last inspection attainment was judged below that expected and the subject was a key issue for improvement. Since the last inspection, National Curriculum requirements have risen considerably and, therefore, improvement is very good.

85. By the end of Year 6, all pupils are confident when using and exploring computer programs and the Internet. They have a good grasp of word processing, including editing skills, and they organise and present their work in different ways, adding pictures and headings to suit different readers. Those with high attainment are very adept at creating moving pictures, using different effects and adding sound. All pupils send and receive E-mail. They use a spreadsheet with graphing facility to record and analyse data and investigate mathematical relationships. They write programs to control a device. They know and use correct technical vocabulary and have a good understanding of the use of new technology in society. Their skills are used well to help to teach other subjects. For example, in science, pupils measure the effect of insulators and then use a computer program to compare results; and in history and geography, they engage in research. Every class has regular specific mathematics lessons that both use and develop computer skills. Older pupils are all competent using an interactive whiteboard in other lessons. Pupils with special educational needs achieve particularly well throughout the school, owing to the quality of additional support they are given, often in extra clubs. It was very noticeable in one lunchtime club for pupils in Years 3 and 4, whose attainment is below average, that these pupils were already beginning to use more advanced editing skills than those expected for their age.
86. The quality of teaching is very good. Each class has weekly lessons to develop computer skills from a teacher who has excellent subject knowledge. This is rapidly raising the level of attainment. Lessons are very well prepared and carefully adapted from the most recent national subject guidance. Coverage of the required skills and knowledge is rigorous. Activities are carefully matched to pupils' needs and offer plenty of challenge for those with higher attainment. They also support learning across a wide range of subjects. For example, during the inspection one class learned about the structure of musical compositions and practised identifying suitable beginnings and endings by linking phrases using a computer program. Pupils are interested in the activities and try to meet the challenges set by the teacher in each lesson. Behaviour is very good and pupils work well together. This means that little time is wasted. Classroom assistants give good support. Lessons also provide valuable in-service training for class teachers, whose expertise is developing well, which is also an improvement since the previous inspection.
87. Leadership and management, including that of the computer system and security for pupils using the Internet, are very good. Both this and the very good numbers of good quality resources, including a large computer suite, interactive whiteboards in four classrooms, and a range of other equipment, are instrumental in raising attainment. Additional funding has been used very well to improve provision and the pupils' attainment.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (FRENCH)

88. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught French by a part-time specialist teacher for two lessons each week. The good provision reported at the last inspection has been maintained and standards that the pupils achieve are above expectations. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' cultural development, since not only do the pupils learn a foreign language and something of the culture and customs of the French but they also experience life in France first-hand when they take part in a residential visit to Normandy and Paris. The trip includes opportunities to see everyday life, for example a visit to a market and oyster and cider farms, and elements of French history with visits to the Normandy beaches, the Bayeux Tapestry museum and landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower in Paris. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Year 6 had just returned from the trip and described enthusiastically seeing Paris from the top of the Eiffel Tower, the experience of sampling an oyster, buying *un bibelot* as a souvenir and enjoying some of the rides at *Disneyland Paris*. Pupils were preparing to make a presentation to parents about their trip. The subject offers talented pupils a very good opportunity to develop skills and knowledge and the school makes every effort to include all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in the teaching, for instance, by using new technology to help a visually impaired pupil.
89. Most of the teaching is designed to develop the pupils' speaking and listening skills and there are also opportunities to write the language. Pupils in Year 5 are able to greet one another in French, they know terms for numbers, colours, dates and months. They understand simple commands, such as *écoutez, montrez-moi* and *regardez*. They begin to pronounce the letters of the alphabet correctly. In Year 6, pupils learn about the geography of France and can name major rivers and cities on a map. They learn more terms for everyday conversations, such as the members of the family. They are able to take part in a simple conversation, exchanging phrases. For instance, using a toy puzzle (an 'ugimaflip'), one asks, "*Quelle couleur*" and the partner responds, followed by *Quel souvenir* and then the name of an object.
90. Teaching is never less than good and lessons have a lively pace. The pupils respond well and get through a lot in the 35-minute lessons. The teacher consolidates the learning well by asking pupils to take part in simple oral demonstrations, for example guessing letters in the alphabet and pronouncing them correctly. She makes full use of the new technology available in school, and in one lesson used to good effect a video recording of the trip to France to help the pupils to recall the visit to an oyster farm, and taking *petit déjeuner* at the hotel. The teacher uses simple checklists to assess the pupils' progress and passes this to the high schools that the pupils transfer to at the end of Year 6. The lessons provide the pupils with a head start when they continue with their study of the language at secondary school.

MUSIC

91. Attainment in music throughout the school is above that expected nationally in all aspects. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. The high quality of provision identified in the last inspection report has been maintained.
92. By the end of Year 6, pupils sing a wide repertoire of songs, many of which have complex rhythms and demanding melodies. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically, responding well to the meaning of the words. They have a good understanding of formal musical notation and use a wide range of tuned and untuned instruments in their compositions, which they adapt and improve in response to evaluations by other

pupils. They listen attentively to different types of music and show appreciation of the atmosphere produced. For example, in one lesson the pupils listened to a *Berceuse* performed on a guitar by another pupil. They sat still and silently and recognised the mood as that of a lullaby. Many opportunities are provided for all pupils to perform their music before different audiences, either solo, or in small or large groups that are often comprised of pupils of different ages. This contributes greatly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

93. Teaching is very good. A specialist with very good subject expertise teaches music to each class. She exerts firm control but also conveys a great enthusiasm for the subject to the pupils; thus, they enjoy lessons and do not waste time. For example, when they are told to stop playing and put their instruments down, they do so, and resist the temptation to fiddle with them. Music is chosen carefully to appeal to the age group to develop a love of music and performance in both boys and girls, and care is taken to include pupils with special educational needs in all activities. Although there are no formal assessment procedures, all pupils, including those with high attainment, are suitably challenged in lessons. About a sixth of pupils take advantage of specialist instrumental teaching in woodwind, brass, strings, including guitar and keyboard, or recorder lessons provided by a governor. In addition, there is a choir, an orchestra and a hand-bell group. All these activities contribute to the above average attainment of pupils. Information and communication technology is used in many ways to support learning. For example, electronic keyboards feature in many activities, and pupils record their music with a view to improvement. Computer programs are used to link phrases to create compositions with suitable beginnings and endings, and include repeated patterns.
94. The subject is well led and managed. The good supply and range of good quality musical instruments and other resources make a very good contribution to learning. The restrictive accommodation for the large numbers taking part in extra-curricular lunchtime activities does limit the quality of the activity, although attainment is often well above that normally found.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

95. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection, two involving games and one involving gymnastics. It is not possible to judge standards overall from such a small evidence base. However, the good provision reported at the last inspection has been maintained. Swimming is taught in Years 3 and 4, there is a good range of activities outside lessons; and there are opportunities for talented gymnasts, athletes and footballers to receive extra coaching. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, take a full part in the courses available. There is very good support in school for the few pupils with physical disabilities. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social development in team games and the chance to represent the school in inter-school competitions. A few parents were disappointed at the loss of a very popular and successful gymnastics club when a former member of staff left the school. Although it has not been possible to replace the specialist expertise of the teacher, the school helps talented gymnasts to take part in clubs at other establishments as well as providing opportunities in school.
96. Pupils in Year 4 displayed very good balance and poise in a gymnastics lesson. They were keen to improve their performance and appreciated the examples of other pupils who demonstrated how to finish off a movement well. In a lesson focusing on cricket skills of batting, throwing and fielding, pupils in Year 5 displayed skill appropriate for their age. Some were learning how to field the ball throwing over arm and to bowl

correctly; others showed more limited skills and could only throw accurately back to the wicket under arm. Pupils in Year 6 practised in a short game how to throw accurately to base in a game of rounders. Through good teaching, they were beginning to understand the importance of accuracy in order to prevent a player scoring points.

97. Teaching is good overall, ranging from very good to satisfactory. In a very good gymnastics lesson, the teacher displayed good subject knowledge, planned for the pupils to make real progress in the work, monitored the pupils' performance very well and encouraged polished performance by using pupils to demonstrate their skills to the class. There was very good attention to matters of health and safety and pupils understood the importance of healthy exercise in their lives. A rare example of pupils misbehaving reduced the success of one games lesson, and the class teacher signalled appropriate concern and disappointment at how a minority of pupils had lowered the overall impact of the lesson.
98. Subject management is good. It provides a clear framework for teachers' planning, identifies opportunities to assess pupils' achievement and encourages those with talent to improve their skills. In a residential visit, pupils in Year 5 also have the opportunity to enjoy outdoor and adventurous activities, including orienteering.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. The quality of provision has been maintained since the time of the last inspection. The attainment of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is average overall and meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is good overall. There have been improvements in teachers' planning, resulting from the good work of the subject leader, and in levels of resourcing. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development, through the study of major world faiths. It helps pupils' skills of speaking, listening and literacy very well in Year 6 but opportunities for pupils to use their own skills of writing are more limited in some younger aged classes, for instance in Year 3, where there is an over reliance on worksheets. There is very little monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure that standards in parallel classes are similar, that teaching is of a consistent quality and that pupils' learning is as effective as it can be.
100. Pupils study Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. Pupils in Year 3 know about different religious symbols and are made aware of their significance by comparisons with other types of signs that they study in geography. In Year 4, pupils know about some of the great festivals of the Christian, Jewish and Hindu faiths. In a lesson modernising the story of *The Good Samaritan*, the pupils understood the situation described by Jesus in his parable and could empathise with the victim and the Samaritan, readily relating it to experiences in modern times. One pupil displayed good awareness of prejudice by translating the story into one where a black person helps a white victim, when other people from the majority group refuse to help. Pupils in Year 5 investigated in one very good lesson the special features of a synagogue. Using photographs, they first wrote down questions they wanted the answer to, for instance *Why is that cushion red?*, *Why are there three scrolls?* and *What do you call that table?* They then used reference books, CD-ROMs and the Internet to seek the answers. By the end of the lesson, each group was able to give a clear answer to a different question they had raised. Pupils in Year 6 displayed thoughtfulness and sympathy for the plight of the Israelites at the time of Moses.

101. The quality of teaching is good overall and two of the three lessons observed were very good. Teachers plan lessons well and use resources very well to support the work. In the best lessons, the pace of learning was good and pupils were given interesting activities to work on. However, in one of the Year 5 classes, no written work was submitted for the inspector to sample and this is because the work is completed almost entirely orally. In discussion with pupils from this class, it is clear that their recall of work they have covered is very patchy, they are confused about aspects of stories that have similar themes in them, and they have very little knowledge of specialist vocabulary. Their learning has been poor. On the other hand, pupils in the parallel class recalled well the feelings that they had written about in stories such as *Joseph and his brothers*, and they knew a good level of detail about parts of the Crucifixion story and Jewish festivals, such as *Shabbat*. There are some examples of very good marking of pupils' work, with thoughtful responses from the class teachers, who mark the subject-specific content of the work, not simply its presentation or the effort of the pupil.
102. Subject management is good and the subject leader has used her expertise well to support colleagues in their work. However, monitoring has been unsatisfactory and has not eliminated weaker teaching and poor learning, as in one of the Year 5 classes. Nor has it identified very good practice, so that it can be disseminated, as in the other Year 5 class and in Year 6, where provision makes a good contribution to pupils' wider skills of literacy, research, ICT, knowledge and understanding.