

INSPECTION REPORT

MARSHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Goole

LEA area: East Yorkshire

Unique reference number:

Headteacher: Mrs C Grafton

Lead inspector: Mrs L J Traves

Dates of inspection: 10th –13th November 2003

Inspection number: 260503

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	239
School address:	Hall Road Old Goole Goole East Yorkshire
Postcode:	DN14 5UE
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Howcroft
Date of previous inspection:	September 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Marshlands is an average sized primary school situated in the Old Goole district of Goole, East Yorkshire. Old Goole is cut off from the main town by the river and the docklands area, which is now mainly used for light industry. Due to the decline of the docks, which has limited employment opportunities, the area itself has declined. It now has large pockets of significant social and economic need. Many families move in and out of the area, or stay a short time and as a result, a significant number of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times. The majority of pupils come from the council estate and the compact terraced housing which surrounds the school. There are 239 pupils on roll, all who are white and English speaking. Of these, 46 are taught in the Foundation Stage, 19 on a part time basis. The number of children who have free school meals is above average (30.6 per cent), as is the number of pupils who have special educational needs (27.7 per cent). Of these pupils four have statements. These are mostly related to learning and emotional and behavioural difficulties. When children start school, their skills are much lower than those of most children of a similar age, particularly in language and personal and social development. The present headteacher was appointed to the school in September 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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19807	Mr K Osborne	Lay inspector	
4295	Mr D Dodds	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography Information and communication technology
2733	Mrs S Oultram	Team Inspector	English Art and design Music Religious education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **sound** education, overall. It has significant strengths in the care given to pupils and positive ethos created. However, there is still a lot more to do to raise standards. Much of the teaching is good. This is accelerating pupils' achievement, particularly in reading, speaking and mathematics. However, pupils could do better in science and writing. The headteacher leads and manages the school well and has set a clear direction for improvement. The school gives **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, staff and governors are working together effectively to bring about improvements;
- Good teaching, particularly in reading, speaking and mathematics is leading to better achievement, but some teaching could be more effective;
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and are very well supported;
- The high standard of care and the positive climate for learning ensure pupils flourish;
- It enables pupils to develop as mature, responsible individuals who respect others and whose manners are outstanding;
- Learning is enriched very well through a wide range of activities within and outside lessons;
- Pupils could achieve much more in science and in writing;
- Better use could be made of writing, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning in other subjects;
- Some subject leaders could play a stronger part in the drive to raise standards;
- Attendance could be improved.

Overall, the school has made **satisfactory** improvement since the last inspection. The rate of improvement has accelerated in the past year, but there is much still to be done. The most significant improvements have been in the quality of teaching in Years 3 – 6 and in pupils' personal development, both of which are key factors in raising standards and which were not identified as issues last time. Standards in religious education have also improved, as has school governance.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Despite the fact that test results have remained stubbornly in the bottom 5 per cent in the country, the majority of pupils achieve **satisfactorily** overall, in relation to their starting points. The school has a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and although these pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities, many do not reach average levels. There is also a significant number who suffer disruption to their education, which also affects standards. These factors caused a particular dip in 2003. Far fewer pupils than in other schools reach the higher levels in the tests. However, there are some pleasing signs of improvement, particularly in reading and mathematics, with most pupils of all abilities making faster progress. Standards are set to rise. However, there is still more to be done to raise standards in writing and in science. When pupils enter the Foundation Stage they have skills significantly below those of others of a similar age, with their communication skills being

particularly weak. Although they achieve well, few will reach the goals they are expected to, except in their physical and creative development.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are strong. The pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes are very good. They have strong relationships with others and their manners are outstanding. Attendance is **below average**, despite the school's best efforts.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education by the school is **satisfactory**. Much of the teaching is **good** and there are some examples of high quality, innovative teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and gets children off to a good start. There are, however, pockets of teaching that are more ordinary and very occasionally, ineffective and these need to be improved. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are provided with high quality, sensitive support. The curriculum is enriched effectively through the wide range of visits, visitors, 'Golden Time' activities and clubs. Pupils do not use their writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) skills frequently enough in other subjects. Staff know the pupils very well. They take **very good** care of them and have their interests at heart.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**, overall. The headteacher's leadership and management are **good** and a crucial factor in the school moving forward. The governors are committed to supporting the school in its drive to improve standards. They carry out their responsibilities **soundly**.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents feel, on balance, that the school has improved recently, but are not yet sure about the effectiveness of all of the changes made since the new headteacher was appointed. Pupils enjoy school and also feel it has improved. They report that teachers are fair and good-humoured. They love the new 'Golden Time' activities and work hard to earn these.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- develop teachers' skills in teaching science, to ensure that all strands of the subject are covered effectively, that pupils have appropriate opportunities for investigations and that assessments are used effectively to provide work at the right level of challenge for all pupils;
- ensure that more time and attention is given to the teaching of writing throughout the school;
- provide more opportunities for pupils to use writing, mathematics and ICT skills in other subjects;
- check on teaching more rigorously and use the examples of exciting and innovative teaching to raise the quality of the more mundane and less effective lessons;
- develop the skills of some subject leaders to play a more effective part in school improvement;
- develop current strategies to improve attendance and punctuality.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are **well below average**. Pupils in the Foundation Stage achieve well. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils achieve steadily, overall. However, there are signs that learning is accelerating in reading, speaking and listening and mathematics throughout the school and pupils are achieving better than in recent years. The large number of pupils with special educational needs achieve well, in relation to their abilities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is improving in reading, speaking and listening and mathematics;
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development and do well in all other areas of learning;
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported;
- Achievement in science is unsatisfactory;
- Pupils throughout the school could make faster progress in writing.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.3 (14.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.1 (12.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	13.8 (12.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.0 (23.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	22.2 (24.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	24.8 (25.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Commentary

1. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is well below that expected for pupils of this age. Their communication skills and personal and social development are particularly poor and a significant number do not know numbers or colours. A strong emphasis on developing their personal and social skills ensures they make very rapid progress in this area. This ensures a firm foundation on which future learning can be built. Although children achieve well, overall, few are likely to meet the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1, except in their physical and creative development.
2. Results in the national tests have remained stubbornly well below average and in the lowest 5 per cent in the country, over several years, when compared to all schools nationally and to similar schools. Pupils at Key Stage 2 do not appear to have made sufficient progress in relation to their results at Key Stage 1. There are several key factors that affect pupils' attainment, in addition to their limited skills on entry to school. A significant percentage of

pupils have special educational needs. School data shows that the majority of these pupils achieve well. However, because they have a lot of ground to make up and take smaller steps in learning, many are unlikely to reach average levels in the tests, despite their good progress. Many pupils also have a history of disrupted schooling. For example, 26 per cent of last year's Year 6 class had joined the school since the reception year and a number had joined in the latter stages of Key Stage 2. In the current Year 5 class, this figure is already 36 per cent. Often these pupils have too many gaps in their learning for the school to plug successfully in the time available. Records show that those pupils who have been at the school continuously achieve far more than others do in relation to their previous attainment. Poor attendance is also a factor that disrupts learning for some pupils.

3. Results in the 2003 tests show a downturn in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 and in all subjects at Key Stage 2. Evidence suggests that this was largely due to the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in both the Year 2 and Year 6 classes, which were higher than in 2002. However, the results for mathematics at Key Stage 1 and reading at Key Stage 2 showed pleasing signs of improvement, despite this. Only three children failed to reach the average level in mathematics in Year 2 and one of these had a statement of special educational needs pending. However, far fewer pupils achieved the higher levels (levels 3 and 5) at both key stages. The school has recognised this and has taken measures to redress the balance. The current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are on course to do better in English and mathematics this year and there are signs that achievement is improving in all classes, particularly in reading, speaking and mathematics. In fact, teachers report that in mathematics, they are teaching classes much more advanced work than two years ago. Improvements have been brought about by stronger teaching, the arrangement of pupils into groups of similar ability, the use of national 'catch up' programmes and the creative use of teaching time to enrich learning for all ability groups. As a result, basic reading and numeracy skills are taught very systematically and those who do not progress so well are given a 'boost'. The school is also making better use of the records it keeps on pupils' progress to identify what they need to learn next. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and this is also accelerating progress. The effective leadership of the headteacher in this area is really making a difference. However, the focus on raising standards in writing has not been as great as in reading and although pupils are achieving steadily, more could be done to ensure faster progress.
4. Standards in science are unsatisfactory, because pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to carry out practical and investigative work. Also, teachers at both key stages do not cover all the elements of the teaching programme and as a result, pupils do not always build on their skills systematically. Pupils achieve soundly overall in ICT. Although in some aspects they reach standards that are better than expected, they do not cover other elements in sufficient depth to maximise achievement. Standards in religious education have improved since the last inspection and meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Achievement is satisfactory in most other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are **good**. Attendance and punctuality are **unsatisfactory**. Pupils' attitudes are **very good**; their behaviour is **good**. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and their behaviour is good, overall;
- Pupils have outstanding manners and develop strong, productive relationships with the adults who work with them and with other children;
- Pupils' social development is very good;

- Attendance is well below the national average, but there are signs of improvement this term; most children are punctual, but some are regularly late for school.

Commentary

5. Pupils develop very positive attitudes to school largely because of the strong relationships they form with staff. They know they are valued and respected and in turn, they value and respect others. This starts from the earliest days in school in the Foundation Stage. These good attitudes and relationships provide a firm foundation for learning. The majority of pupils remain absorbed in their lessons. They report that most teachers make lessons interesting and good fun. They settle quickly and are never afraid to contribute their views or make mistakes. They work well as individuals and in groups.
6. Older pupils enthusiastically adopt appropriate roles as monitors, showing very good levels of maturity and care for younger ones. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils working with Year 1 'maths pairs' have had training in their roles and are almost as good as the teachers! Pupils' manners are outstanding for children of this age. They always say 'please and thank you', greet people politely on meeting, and hold doors open for others. This is a direct result of the high expectations staff have of them and the very good examples they provide. Pupils with special educational needs have the same very good attitudes as others.
7. Pupils enjoy new, collaborative ways of working such as in circle time, where they can express themselves and talk about their thoughts and feelings without fear of ridicule. They also enjoy the 'Golden Time' sessions on Fridays, when they get a chance to choose from a wide range of activities as a reward. After school clubs are popular, as are team competitions in sport and have a strong impact on learning in many areas. Certificates, stickers and badges provide targets to aim for, and the 'special mention' assemblies on Fridays underline the importance of good work and high achievement, as well as behaving well and being polite.
8. Pupils behave well and they know what is expected of them. A few pupils find conforming to the high standards set by the school difficult, but these pupils are very well managed by staff with the minimum of disruption. The definition of bullying has been amended in discussion with the school council, to refer to 'deliberately hurting someone else', and pupils know that if they report bullying to a teacher, or if it is seen in the playground, it will be dealt with. As a result, they are confident and secure. The school fosters self-esteem very well, particularly with Key Stage 2 pupils in the 'emotional literacy' groups. These excellent groups provide support for those pupils with emotional and communication problems, to help them talk about themselves and their feelings, and reduce frustration.

Two senior support assistants work with small groups for half an hour twice weekly. A warm, relaxed, yet purposeful atmosphere is created and relationships are good. Sessions focus on short, sharp games activities, which extend pupils' vocabulary and understanding of words related to feelings and emotions. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the game format and work extremely hard to gain reward stamps for their team. The team which gets 60 stamps is rewarded with a freshly baked cake, which adds greatly to the pupils' enjoyment and sense of achievement. Activities are also centred on developing conversation and social skills, to help pupils express their thoughts and feelings and listen to those of others. Staff give pupils time and space to respond and value their contributions. As a result, not only do their social skills develop, but also their self-esteem and confidence grow. They and their teachers report that they are better able to manage 'incidents' and disagreements, for example, on the playground.

9. The school provides well for pupils' personal development and enables them to become mature and responsible. By Years 5 and 6 they are able to discuss moral concepts such as the difference between 'mugging' and other situations where people are forced to hand over money, such as taxation or membership subscriptions. They recognise that boys and girls

have different levels of skills in sport or schoolwork but that both sexes are equal. They listen to each other's ideas about whether God created people or whether evolution occurred, and realise that there is always the question 'Who made...?' which cannot be answered. The school provides a good range of cultural experiences such as visiting theatre groups and visits to nearby towns such as York. In religious education they study rites of passage from various cultures and took part in an Indian dance day, but the school has identified the need to extend their awareness of living in a multi-cultural society. This forms part of a useful review of personal, social and health education and citizenship.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.7%
National data	5.4%

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.9%
National data	0.4%

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

10. Attendance in the year to June 2003 was 92.4 per cent, well below the national average, and unauthorised (or unexplained) absences were fairly high. However the school has implemented stricter policies on punctuality and absence, with rewards for those achieving 100 per cent attendance and more effective visits from the education welfare officer as part of a local truancy initiative. Because many families do not have telephones, same-day follow-up is not always possible. Because of the provision of more interesting lessons and activities, levels of attendance have improved, notably in Y6. During the inspection week many pupils were away with a viral infection.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – any other mixed background

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
238	1	0
1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Much good teaching in reading, speaking and mathematics is leading to rapid learning and improved achievement. The curriculum is soundly planned and organised to meet the needs of the pupils. A very good range of experiences to enrich learning is provided.

Teaching and learning

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	9 (24%)	15 (39%)	12 (32%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)

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

The quality of teaching is **good** overall and some very good and excellent teaching was also seen. Consistently good teaching in the Foundation Stage is ensuring that children achieve well. Teaching in Key Stage 2 has improved since the last inspection. More good and very good teaching was seen at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. However, there are pockets of less effective and more mundane teaching across key stages, classes and subjects. Teaching is strongest in reading, speaking and listening and mathematics and as a result, many pupils are achieving well. It is weaker in science, where the one poor lesson was seen. Overall, this is an improved picture since the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and as a result, children achieve well;
 - Good teaching in reading, speaking and listening and mathematics is accelerating learning;
 - Good quality support is provided for the significant number of pupils who have special educational needs and is enabling them to make good progress;
 - There are examples of exciting, innovative teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2;
 - There are some pockets of less effective teaching and inconsistencies which slow the pace of learning;
 - In some lessons, teachers do not make best use of information on pupils' progress to provide work at the right level of challenge for all abilities.
11. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage because teaching is consistently good. Learning activities are well planned to meet the needs of both the younger and older pupils. Staff know their pupils very well and as a result, effectively plan the next steps for them. Good leadership and strong teamwork ensure that all pupils receive a good standard of teaching and the same diet, whichever adult they work with.
12. In Key Stage 2, a high percentage of good and very good teaching was seen, which is accelerating learning in many lessons. However, there were a small number of more ordinary lessons seen, where progress was slower and one lesson where teaching was ineffective. At times, pupils are getting a different deal, depending on who is teaching them. This is most evident in science, but there were also occasional examples in other subjects such as history. At Key Stage 1, although there were also examples of good and very good teaching seen, there were more occasions when teaching was ordinary. Teaching of small groups of pupils in English and mathematics during 'enrichment time' was consistently good and is having a significant impact on the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those of lower ability. The practice of teachers exchanging classes to use their particular expertise is working well in mathematics and a significant number of the older pupils are benefiting from this. However, in science the arrangement is not proving as effective. Throughout the school there are very good relationships between teachers and their pupils, which create a very good climate for learning. Staff manage behaviour effectively and there are few disruptions to lessons.
13. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for throughout the school. The majority of teaching assistants are highly skilled and their work is often guided by very well focused plans. They are set precise targets, well matched to their individual needs. Their progress is accelerated because of the many small group programmes provided for them. Staff work very well with those pupils who have behaviour difficulties. They settle and calm them quickly in order for them to achieve appropriately. Pupils' progress is closely evaluated at the end of lessons and the information shared with the class teachers. This good practice ensures that they make rapid gains in their learning. In a small number of lessons, better use could have been made of the classroom assistant's time during the teacher's input to the whole class.

14. There are some key features that characterise lessons that are good or better:

- Teaching is exciting and stimulating. The pace is brisk and pupils are fully involved and engaged. This was seen in an excellent geography lesson when pupils were planning a new playground.

Pupils examined the school's playground to see how it could be improved. The lesson was extraordinary because of the arrangements the teacher made to give them a real sense of purpose and ownership. In previous lessons they had used a questionnaire to canvas the opinions of other pupils and had talked to the youngest children. They had mapped out areas of the playground into 'quiet', 'noisy', a 'covered area', 'sporting' and 'games'. In this lesson they examined the ideas through the eyes of different groups. A governor had come into school to lead the governors' group, which examined financial issues. Other 'user groups' represented the needs of young children, older children, those who enjoy sport, and those who wanted a 'learning' area. Each group had a chairperson, a reporter and a spokesperson. They handled their roles and responsibilities with panache. When reporting back, each group used presentation sheets with headlines and bulleted 'key points'. After their presentation, they responded punctiliously to questions. Responses included, 'We were looking at the cost of keeping the equipment safe. If the slide is used by a lot of children it will wear out. We will need to repaint it and check it for safety.' and 'We have a problem. We would like a pond, but it wouldn't be safe for the youngest children. But we have a solution.'

In one lesson, the pupils learned rapidly to marshal ideas with an eye to purpose and audience, to act as an interest group, to make a logical and concise presentation and to respond to questions. At the conclusion, one group of pupils set off with the digital camera to collect playground images for a multimedia presentation that the group was preparing to give to the school, and then to a local charity known for funding such ventures.

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' involvement and work rate. For example, in a Year 5/6 dance lesson, all pupils worked together well to interpret the music because the teacher continually challenged them to improve ;
- Work is planned effectively to take the needs of different ability groups into account;
- Lesson objectives are sharp, focused and explained clearly to the pupils, which maximises learning time;
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching. As a result, their explanations are clear, children understand exactly what they are to do and therefore learning time is maximised. A very good example of this was seen in an English lesson taught by the headteacher, where pupils cottoned on quickly to how they could make their play scripts more interesting through the way this was demonstrated;
- Pupils are well managed to minimise disruptions to learning.

15. Where teaching is less effective, the following characteristics are evident:

- Lesson objectives are not as sharply defined as they could be and as a result, teaching lacks clarity;
- Learning is not sequenced or organised as effectively as it could be to help pupils build rapidly on their previous knowledge. This was evident in a Key Stage 2 religious education lesson about 'Remembrance'. The teacher did not use the pupils' own experiences of remembering important events at the outset, which meant that they were slow to understand the concept of 'Remembrance Sunday';
- Teaching lacks the sparkle and excitement to spark pupils' interest and fire their imaginations. This was exemplified in a Key Stage 2 history lesson, in which the same, rather bland and undemanding task was given to all pupils. The particularly good attitudes of the pupils ensured that they plodded through the work diligently, but with little real enthusiasm;
- In some lessons, work is not matched closely enough to the abilities of the pupils in the mixed age classes.

16. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory overall. The school analyses test results well and is now using the information gained very productively to identify gaps in learning and adjust teaching to fill them. Procedures are good for reading and mathematics, where progress is carefully tracked and the information used to identify needs, provide the right support and move learning on. The systems for tracking writing progress are not yet showing the same impact. Individual pupil targets have recently been introduced in these subjects, but it is too soon, as yet, to judge their effect. Assessment in science is not used well enough to impact positively on learning. The procedures for assessing the requirements and the progress of pupils with special educational needs are particularly thorough and effective.

The curriculum

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is being improved with some purposeful and innovative modifications;
 - The school is finding many good ways to enrich the curriculum;
 - The provision for science could be improved;
 - The implementation of some of the national subject guidance and the school's cyclical 2-year teaching plan need some adjustments.
17. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good. It is well planned to cover all areas of learning and is rooted effectively in practical experiences. The curriculum for the infant and junior classes is satisfactory, overall. It is appropriately matched to the needs of the pupils and the school has recognised the need to make it exciting and stimulating by including many enriching opportunities for the pupils. The good enrichment arrangements have been introduced in a very short time. The school has the capacity to improve the curriculum further because senior management and staff are constantly seeking opportunities for innovation. Improvements are due to the very hard work and the unstinting giving of time by the headteacher and staff.
18. The school has adopted national guidance for most subjects and has successfully adapted them to the needs of the school in most instances. There are some inconsistencies to be ironed out, however, particularly in science and to a lesser extent in history and geography. Some subjects are 'blocked' to give pupils the opportunity to work in a more sustained manner. This is generally successful for subjects such as art and design and technology. The amount of time allocated in this fashion for history and geography needs to be re-evaluated in order that sufficient time is given for pupils to be able to achieve more depth in their studies. The school is making some good links between subjects to reinforce learning and to provide purposeful contexts for pupils' work. For example a multi-media presentation by Year 5 and 6 pupils draws together work from a field study in geography and science. However, the use of ICT, writing and numeracy skills to support learning in other subjects is underdeveloped. The school makes particularly effective use of national 'catch-up' programmes to 'boost' pupils' progress in reading and mathematics. The impact of the 'catch-up' programmes has been made more effective through teaching them in 'blocks' to give more continuity. Pupils with special education needs are well supported by an effective teaching programme. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. The school has increased opportunities for them to discuss and reflect upon personal matters, through the very successful introduction of circle-time and through a well-structured personal, health and social education programme.
19. Recent curriculum innovations and arrangements are having a good impact on learning. Work in literacy and numeracy is now more appropriately matched to pupils' ability levels because the school has introduced the grouping by ability of pupils across the junior classes. Enrichment times are timetabled daily, where pupils work in small ability groups to

undertake group reading or number activities. Those who are particularly talented, for example, in mathematics are given work to stretch them further at these times. Younger pupils' numeracy and literacy skills are further aided through the introduction of 'numeracy pairs' and 'reading monitors' led by older pupils. The older pupils take their responsibilities very seriously and both they and the younger pupils report that they thoroughly enjoy these sessions. The school has introduced a homework club for the winter months. Staff are also examining the organisation of the timetable in order to ensure pupils can undertake a range of subjects when they are most fresh.

20. The school has striven hard to give the pupils a much enriched curriculum. 'Golden Time' is really appreciated and provides a broad and changing programme of activities. The curriculum is also enriched through visits and visitors and the experience of live performance in the arts is particularly rich. There is a good range of out-of-school activities for the pupils, and opportunities to participate in sport are particularly strong. Pupils' gifts and talents are fostered and acknowledged. For example, a lower junior boy's prowess on the football pitch is highlighted in a display of press cuttings, and during circle-time he said that his 'best listener' was 'his manager'! There are rewards systems a-plenty to encourage pupils' efforts. The school also uses and develops links well with local primary schools for curriculum and sporting development and with the secondary school. Useful and effective links are also made with the local organisations for pupils to learn to value and appreciate the contributions that the Church, the police, the fire brigade and the youth services make to the community. The richness of this provision is reflected in the very positive attitudes and interest that the pupils show.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for the care, welfare and safety of pupils is **very good**. **Good** provision is made to give children support, advice and guidance, and pupils' views are valued and acted upon **well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupil care, welfare, health and safety are very good, with good systems in place for risk assessments and inspections;
- The school gives good support, advice and guidance to pupils;
- Pupils are involved well; the school seeks their views, values and acts on them, especially at Key Stage Two.

Commentary

21. The care and welfare of pupils is a key part of the school's work, and is managed effectively. All staff show a high degree of care; many of them have worked at the school for a long time and know the children, the parents and grandparents well. The school provides a warm, supportive and welcoming atmosphere for pupils and their families.
22. Health, safety and child protection arrangements are good. A detailed health and safety audit and risk assessment has been undertaken recently by the LEA, to provide a baseline for the future. The school is working towards Healthy School status; this is evident in the standard of meals, the playtime tuck shop, and the emphasis on physical activity, such as the numeracy through physical education lessons in Year One.
23. There are effective systems for improving behaviour and reducing aggression on the playground. This has been a major focus of the school's work in the past year and continues to be closely monitored and evaluated. Pupils report that behaviour has improved because they know what is expected and they enjoy the rewards they receive when they behave well. These are working well. The School Council is an effective body, consulting pupils about changes and improvements. Year 6 pupils also undertake opinion surveys as

part of the 'Healthy Schools' initiative. There is an effective policy in place for promoting racial harmony. Teachers and support staff have had training in enhancing and supporting children's personal development and there are effective arrangements in place for monitoring pupils' progress in this area. Induction procedures for new pupils work well. Those who have joined recently from other schools report that they have been welcomed and treated well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **satisfactory** overall, with some **good** features. Links with the community are **good**. Links with other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Partnerships at pre-nursery level and in the Foundation Stage are very good, especially with the 'community bungalow;'
- Publications for parents are good overall, but some pupil reports are not written in language that is easily accessible;
- The school consults with parents over important issues;
- The school makes good use of other local facilities to support learning;
- Links with the local high school are good and support learning well.

Commentary

24. All staff throughout the school promote good relationships and provide support for children and their families. The school continues to foster successful links with parents of very young children through the 'Community Bungalow', as at the last inspection. Childcare and play facilities, as well as social and educational opportunities for young parents and carers, are provided by the staff here. The Community Nursery Nurses have many years' experience and knew many of the parents when they themselves were young children. They work in close partnership with the Foundation Stage staff, to ensure good relationships, continuity of care and support for families when children start school and beyond.
25. The school is working hard to involve parents in its work and help them support their children's learning. For example, it has consulted parents about the discipline and attendance policies, and issued a good behaviour booklet which makes its expectations very clear. Nearly all parents support this, but a few are not happy about the ban on hitting back and play fighting. Other publications are clear and helpful, but sometimes the computerised phrases used when writing pupil reports are unnecessarily complicated. Innovations such as the 'Family Literacy' sessions, for example, where young children and their parents work together with school and outside agency staff, are proving very beneficial for those who attend. However, although parents are mostly supportive of the school and can point to improvements taking place, recent changes have unsettled some. For example, some at the parents' meeting felt that there was now too much emphasis on English and mathematics.
26. There are good links with local facilities, especially sporting and leisure clubs. The police and fire services contribute special days each year, and the local church is used, for example, to show children the rite of baptism.
27. Valuable links have been made with other local primary schools, for sport and physical education, and the development of the emotional literacy and behaviour strategies. There is a good programme for preparing children to transfer to the High School, with shared lessons and joint approaches to behaviour management.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management is **satisfactory** overall. The leadership and management of the headteacher are **good**. She leads the school firmly towards improvement. Governors are strongly supportive and carry out their responsibilities **soundly**. The leadership and management of other key staff is **satisfactory** overall. Whilst some curriculum co-ordinators carry out their responsibilities well, there is room for the skills of others to be improved. The leadership of the school is working diligently to overcome the barriers to learning experienced by many pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The effective leadership and management of the headteacher has set a clear direction for the work of the school;
- The headteacher, key staff and governors are working together well with a strong drive towards improvement;
- Special educational needs, mathematics and the Foundation Stage are particularly well led and managed;
- Many governors are new to their roles and are in need of training to enable them to become fully effective;
- The skills of some subject leaders need to be developed so that they can play a greater part in monitoring and improvement.

Commentary

28. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and has communicated this well to staff, pupils and governors. Since her appointment a year ago, she has set the strategic direction well and created a team who not only are committed to raising standards, but also have a good understanding of how this can be achieved. She is well supported by the senior management team. As a result, the school is moving forward, although all recognise that there is still much more to be done.
29. The headteacher's determination and creative thinking have brought about improvements in reading, speaking and listening and mathematics. She has effectively utilised the skills of staff within the school and the support and advice offered by the local education authority in achieving this. She has shown the ability to 'stick to her guns' when she feels a course of action will benefit the pupils. A considerable achievement has been in the creation of a very positive and supportive climate for learning. This is underpinning the good attitudes to learning in evidence, which is having a strong impact on the achievement of many pupils.
30. Subject leadership and management are variable because there are differences in the skills and expertise of the co-ordinators. Some have only recently taken charge of their subjects and are very inexperienced. Most have had little experience in monitoring teaching, learning and standards in their subjects. Their skills need developing in order that they are able to be more effective in bringing about the necessary improvements. There are good examples to draw on in the school, for example in the leadership and management of mathematics, which is successfully driving up standards. The leadership of the work for pupils with special educational needs is very good and ensures that these pupils are supported well.
31. The governing body is committed to improving the school and supporting its work. They are playing a stronger part in checking on the work of the school than was noted at the last inspection. For example, several governors have monitored aspects of the school's work to share information with their colleagues and some assist in classrooms. Longer serving governors have close links with the school and the local community and are able to bring this experience to bear in making decisions. A significant number are very new to the role and as yet have had little time to get to grips with their responsibilities or make an impact.

32. The school finances are managed well. A potential deficit situation has been turned round and the school can now balance its budget for this year and has been able to retain sufficient reserves to support staffing in a time of falling rolls in the area. The headteacher has worked hard to draw in extra funds from as many sources as possible, to increase the number of support staff and to refurbish the buildings to provide a more pleasant 'user friendly' environment. Both these initiatives are having a strong impact on teaching and learning.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	69,8310
Total expenditure	61,1886
Expenditure per pupil	2,340

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	47,501
Balance carried forward to the next	42,990

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Teaching and provision are **good** in the Foundation Stage. Children are taught in the Foundation Stage Unit until they move into Year 1. This is a recent development from September and previously, children had been taught in separate Nursery and reception classes. Staff, have had to make considerable adjustments to planning and organisation and the learning curve for them has been steep. However, high quality teamwork and effective leadership has ensured a positive approach and a willingness to adapt and move forward. The transition is going well. In addition, the unit has had considerable refurbishment and building work recently and at the time of the inspection staff and children had been in their new setting for less than a week. The quality of the learning environment, in the light of this, was a testament to the hard work and dedication of the staff, although there was still more to be done. During the inspection period, a virus reduced numbers considerably and less than half the children were present, with others 'under par' and several having to be sent home. This meant that staff had to be flexible in their teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff create a very secure and happy learning environment in which children flourish;
- Good leadership and strong teamwork ensure continuous evaluation which leads to improvement;
- All staff provide very high standard of care for the children and place a strong emphasis on their personal, social and emotional development;
- Staff have high expectations of pupils and they rise to the challenge;
- Teaching is consistently good and leads to effective learning;
- There is a high emphasis on developing children's spoken language and enriching their experiences in all areas of learning;
- More could be done to ensure that children get off to a stronger start in their writing development.

Commentary

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

33. Children achieve very well in this area because of the high emphasis staff place on it. They are on course to achieve the standards expected by the end of the reception year. Many pupils come into school with very poor skills in this area and staff rightly make it their first priority. The practice of providing full-time places for 4 year-olds (no longer funded from September 2003) has a significant impact on the development of those pupils who were able to benefit from this. A very warm, relaxed, yet purposeful atmosphere is created in which children flourish. All staff have high expectations of children's behaviour, involvement and independence and they rise to this. As a result, they develop an eagerness to learn, good concentration skills and behave very well indeed.
34. After a short time in school, the youngest children have already settled well and follow classroom 'rules' and routines. Staff create and maintain strong links with parents and this also ensures that children settle well. They benefit greatly from the good examples provided by the older children. All the children have formed very positive relationships with the adults who work with them. This enhances their learning because they are keen to please and always try their best. Older children in particular concentrate for sustained periods of time and work together well, for example, when they are making 'playdough' cakes for the class 'Baker's Shop'.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

35. Many children have poor skills in this area on entry to school. Good teaching, with a strong emphasis on spoken language ensures that they develop skills rapidly and achieve well. . However, despite their good progress, the majority are unlikely to meet the expected standard by the time they start in Year 1 and still have a lot of ground to make up. A rich range of experiences are provided for children and through all of these, staff work hard to introduce new vocabulary and engage pupils in discussion. They encourage them to express their thoughts and ideas and value their responses. As a result, children develop confidence and are keen to communicate, even though many find expressing themselves difficult. Children learn to love stories and rhymes because staff encourage this. Older children are beginning to recognise a growing range of familiar words and enjoy books. Children have a reasonable range of opportunities for mark making. A small number are able to write their name unaided and many see the purpose of writing, as for example, when they 'write' lists of what they have sold in the baker's, with some recognisable letters and read them back. A more able child correctly labels a picture of Dave the budgie. However, many are at the stage of making random marks. Few children choose to make use of the 'writing table' without encouragement and most do not show the same enthusiasm for writing that they do for other activities. More opportunities could be provided for writing in other areas of learning and more needs to be done to develop children's enthusiasm and interest. Parents are strongly encouraged to support their children's learning through the 'homework' sheets provided which give parents interesting ideas for working with them. The weekly 'Family Literacy' sessions, in which parents receive help and advice on how to support their children's literacy development and have the opportunity to work with their own children, are very well received and have a strong impact.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

36. Children have many practical opportunities to develop their mathematical understanding. For example, when baking bread, they weigh and measure the ingredients. They make black and white repeating patterns for a display. They explore and develop their understanding of shape through printing with objects such as different sized cylinders, reinforcing vocabulary such as big, bigger, small, smallest. In the role play area, they use real money to buy 'cakes' and many can recognise the denominations of the most common coins. More able and older pupils can count out the money they owe for their 'purchases'. Staff move children on rapidly in their learning as they work with them in the role-play. They know exactly what the next steps in learning are for each child and tailor their questions accordingly. For example, the teacher asks an older child to add up the price of their cakes, while helping a younger child to recognise a two pence coin. Incidental opportunities for counting, for example, through rhymes and songs, are used well to reinforce skills. Mathematical activities are always available for children to choose freely. Children achieve well as a result of good teaching, but few are likely to meet the goals set for children of this age, by the time they enter Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

37. Children are achieving well in response to the good teaching and wide range of opportunities provided to enrich their experiences. However, few children are on course to meet the expected goals by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage. Many have a lot of ground to make up on entry to school. During the inspection period, children were baking bread, exploring the changes made when the dough rises, due to adding yeast. There was much excitement when the bread was baked and they could taste it. Pupils also explored floating and sinking, choosing objects and predicting whether they would float or sink, under the good guidance of the teacher. Their predictions quickly became more accurate as they carried out their tests. More able pupils were able to sort the objects into two distinct sets. Outdoors, the children dug up the summer flowering plants in their garden area and planted

winter pansies in the tubs and containers. There was much excitement when they found a worm and the nursery nurse made very good use of the opportunity to explain what worms do for the soil. Dave the budgie and a small kitten were also invited into school during the inspection period. Children were fascinated to observe them. Throughout the school year, pupils have many opportunities to explore and work outdoors and visit places of interest further afield. Computers are always available for free choice and adult supported activities. Most pupils are adept with using the mouse to click on objects to choose them from a menu.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

38. The majority of children are likely to meet expectations in this area. Children are provided with a good range of opportunities to develop their physical skills both indoors and outside. Daily sessions are planned for children to use a range of wheeled toys, games and climbing equipment in the Foundation Stage play area. Wet weather and warm clothing is available so that children can work outside even in inclement weather. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection. Children also experience gymnastics sessions in the hall. They develop control of their movements and an awareness of others as, for example, they work on the floor and the apparatus. Older pupils set good examples for the younger ones to follow. Sensitive support is given to those who are less confident and they develop confidence, in response. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their manipulative skills through using tools such as scissors, rolling pins, crayons and paintbrushes. They also play with construction kits and 'small world' toys, which also develop their manual dexterity. Many pupils choose these activities with obvious enjoyment.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

39. Children are given plenty of good quality experiences and develop their skills effectively in painting, drawing, modelling and using materials. For example, they have made firework models from recycled materials and have created a display of collages and prints using only black and white. In addition, children are able to choose for themselves from a range of activities that include painting and modelling with playdough. Appropriate opportunities are provided for imaginative role play, both indoors and out. For example, in the class baker's shop, children 'bake' play dough cakes, serve customers and have a cup of tea when they are not busy. Although some opportunities are provided for children to use their writing skills through role-play, these could be extended and developed further.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in reading, speaking and listening and standards are improving;
- Teaching is good;
- Pupil grouping arrangements are proving beneficial;
- Very effective use is made of national 'catch up' programmes;
- Standards in writing are not high enough;
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills through other subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

40. Although standards are below average when the pupils are seven and well below average when the pupils are eleven, the school has put a great deal of effort into raising standards in reading, speaking and listening. Achievement is now good and in speaking, has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. Additional time has been created to achieve this and the pupils are taught well in small groups. This provision allows staff to be more focussed on the particular needs of individuals thereby accelerating progress. Each year group contains a high proportion of children who have special educational needs. The school's approach using small groups is particularly well suited to meeting their needs. In addition, the school has recently introduced lessons where pupils sit in a circle taking turns to speak and listen attentively. All of these systems and the considerable skills of the staff have resulted in rising standards.
41. Teachers encourage pupils to ask and answer questions confidently. The pupils are very interested in their work so they listen attentively to adults and to each other. The pupils enjoy discussing ideas and opinions and discussions in pairs or small groups are very productive.
42. The daily reading lesson is helping to raise standards. The work is accurately matched to the pupils' needs. The use of good resources, such as attractive books and additional well-trained adults is speeding progress. Older and more able pupils are confident readers. They use sounds well to help them build unknown words and use pictures effectively to help them to make sense of what they are reading. Older children regularly support younger children in their reading. They show mature attitudes to the task and keep detailed records of progress. By the time they are eleven some pupils reach standards in reading that are close to the national average. However, few pupils reach the higher level. Although some pupils are able to discuss aspects of stories relating to specific characters and themes, which requires them to 'read between the lines', many pupils are less confident. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported by carefully structured programmes, accurate targets and regular evaluation of progress. Generally book areas in classrooms are well organised, but there are few relevant displays to capture pupils' interest. The library is not sufficiently used and some of the books are out dated.
43. The school has rightly identified writing as a key area of development because standards are very low. Recently, with the emphasis being on reading, the school has not allocated sufficient time to the development of writing skills both in English lessons and in lessons such as geography, history and religious education. In their English lessons the children write for a growing range of purposes such as writing and retelling stories, letters of invitation and thanks and to persuade people for example 'that to keep caged animals is

wrong'. Sometimes tasks are too mundane to spark interest, for example, in handwriting where children write a letter of the alphabet many times. Earlier identification of pupils' precise learning needs in writing is required. In Year 1, too much 'copy writing' inhibits children's creativity and their confidence to 'have a go' themselves. This then has a 'knock on' effect on their progress in Year 2. There are too few examples of pupils writing at length. In some more exciting lessons however in Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils write quickly and with enthusiasm. For example, in Year 4 they eagerly plan their play based on 'Red Riding Hood'. They show they are effectively learning how making brief accurate notes will help in the final writing. In Year 5 pupils learn how poets such as Emily Dickinson create powerful images to engage the readers of her poems. They are keen to include some of her techniques into their own work. Handwriting is well below average, often it is untidy and letters are mis-formed. The children are not expected to take sufficient care in the presentation of their work. Standards of spelling are similarly low. These are priorities identified by the school, which are being worked on, but as yet, the impact is not evident.

44. Teaching is good and sometimes very good. Generally the teachers make the lessons interesting, know how to motivate the pupils and expect them to do well. Relationships between adults and children are very good. Good assessment systems are in place. Data is analysed and pupils' progress is tracked regularly. Some marking of pupils' work is good and tells them precisely how to improve. It is however an inconsistent picture across the school.
45. The subject is well led and is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and gives good guidance to colleagues, particularly in relation to reading. In conjunction with the headteacher, she has taken a firm lead in the drive to raise standards. However, she needs to be more actively involved in monitoring standards in the subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. The pupils use their reading, speaking and listening skills well in other subjects of the curriculum. They are always encouraged to speak clearly and confidently. Good quality books effectively support subjects such as geography, history and science. There are a few good examples of pupils developing writing skills appropriately through other subjects such as design technology when pupils write instructions to make a puppet. However these opportunities are too few. Opportunities are not yet systematically planned for or consistently provided.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of teaching is good, particularly at Key Stage 2;
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the support they receive both in class and in small groups;
- The arrangement of children into groups of similar ability is accelerating learning and pupils are achieving more;
- The subject is well led and managed to bring about improvement;
- There is a percentage of satisfactory teaching that could be improved and some pupils are not always challenged as well as they could be;
- More use could be made of numeracy skills in other subject areas and ICT could be used more extensively to support work in mathematics.

Commentary

47. Standards are below average at Key Stage 1 and well below average at Key Stage 2. This is a similar picture to the time of the last inspection. However, the majority of pupils throughout the school are now achieving well. In many lessons, effective teaching is ensuring that most pupils are appropriately challenged and good quality support is provided for those who need it. More frequent opportunities are provided for pupils to investigate and solve problems than at the time of the last inspection. As a result, there are pleasing signs that standards are set to rise throughout the school.
48. In the 2003 national tests, almost all pupils in Year 2 reached the average level, although some only just made it. This represents good achievement from their starting points. The Year 6 pupils did not fare as well and results dipped. A significant proportion of the year group had special educational needs and many more had suffered from disrupted schooling. Pupils who had been at Marshlands since their reception year did significantly better than others who had changed schools, sometimes more than once. The current Year 6 pupils are on course to do better, although results are likely to remain well below average. Although most are achieving well, many have had a lot of ground to make up.
49. Far fewer pupils reach the higher levels in the tests than in most schools, or those in similar circumstances. The school is beginning to address this through using the information it collects on progress to group pupils of similar abilities across classes at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, the most able Year 1 pupils are taught with Year 2 pupils of similar ability. These arrangements have resulted in smaller, more harmonious teaching groups, which allow teachers to provide work at the appropriate level of challenge in all parts of the lesson. They are also ensuring that support for the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs can be maximised and effectively targeted. Close attention is being paid to catering for the most able and at Key Stage 2, this small number of pupils is doing well. However, those who are 'on the borderline' could be more consistently challenged in the tasks they are given. In Year 2, although the most able pupils are given more difficult work than others, it does not always stretch them far enough.
50. Teaching is good overall and some very good lessons were seen. However, teaching is stronger at Key Stage 2, where it is never less than good. At Key Stage 1 there are inconsistencies in delivery and approach, which slow progress in some lessons. At Key Stage 2, teachers' expectations of pupils and the way in which they involve and engage them in all parts of the lesson are consistently good features. The very best lessons are carried out at a cracking pace, with quick-fire oral and mental introductions, which keep pupils on their toes and almost leave them breathless. They respond really well to this level of challenge. This was seen in a Year 5/6 lesson where pupils concentrated tremendously hard and achieved very well indeed in their work on multiplication and division because of the pace and challenge injected by the teacher. Most teachers have a 'can do' approach and strongly encourage pupils to 'have a go'. Lower ability pupils in a Year 3/4 lesson were itching to explain the strategies they were using to find missing numbers on a '100 square' to the rest of the class. Misconceptions and mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities. This develops high levels of confidence in pupils, who are willing to try things out and persevere. Where teaching is less effective in some Key Stage 1 lessons, the pace is more 'laid back' and expectations could be higher. Some teachers are not as confident about what they are aiming for and consequently the pace of learning is slowed. For example in a Year 1 lesson, pupils spent far more time cutting out and making clocks than they did learning about time. At other times, teachers do not use the information on what pupils already know effectively enough to set work at the appropriate level for them. This means that some pupils 'mark time' instead of moving on rapidly.
51. Support for pupils with special educational needs and those of lower ability, is particularly good. Effective use is made of national 'catch up' programmes to boost progress. In lessons, teachers and teaching assistants pay close attention to the individual targets for

these pupils. They ensure that the main teaching points are reinforced and that pupils carry out tasks practically, whenever possible. This develops their confidence and ensures good progress.

52. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has checked on teaching and learning and has identified some key areas for improvement. As a result, greater attention is being paid throughout the school to developing children's mental recall and their ability to apply their mathematics skills to problems and investigations. She has devised effective systems for analysing and tracking pupils' progress and this is ensuring pupils are effectively grouped and supported. Innovations, such as the regular 'parent friendly' homework sheets and the 'numeracy pairs', where younger pupils are supported by older, more able mathematicians are enriching learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Although pupils have some opportunities for using mathematics in other subjects, these are not systematically planned for. There are some sound examples of pupils, for example, collecting data and producing graphs in science and geography. Opportunities are often missed, however, to develop pupils' skills in this way. There are signs that ICT is being used to support learning in some mathematics lessons, particularly in developing basic number and problem solving skills. However, this could be further extended for greater impact on learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has some very good procedures for assessment that are in the process of being implemented; however, they are not being applied with sufficient rigour to clearly identify attainment, and to match the work accordingly;
- The need to develop staff expertise in teaching investigative science has already been identified, and some good support materials are available;
- There is some very good and good practice on which to build the quality of teaching and learning; however overall, teaching is very variable;
- There are some problems in the way the school has implemented the national teaching programme for science;
- Children's work in investigative science is over directed.

Commentary

54. Standards in science are well below the expected levels for both 7 and 11 year olds. The pupils' progress in the subject is not consistent because the teachers' subject knowledge and the quality of teaching are so variable. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme but there are shortcomings in its implementation. For example, the unit on 'healthy eating' usually associated with Year 2 is introduced in Years 3 and 4 and is repeated for Year 5 with much of the content being the same. The school has introduced a two-year cycle for the teaching programme to cater for the mixed age classes but has not planned the work in sufficient detail to match the work to ability. In consequence, a child in Years 3 of the below average ability is doing exactly the same work as that of a more able Year 4 pupil. The work in science also lacks appropriate challenge in some classes because the assessment procedures have not been fully implemented with sufficient rigour. This has particular impact on the pupils in Key Stage 1 where standards and ability are not being identified sufficiently.

55. Pupils do not make sufficient progress in undertaking scientific enquiries. The skills of enquiry are taught soundly, but generally the teacher over directs the work and children are not learning to initiate or undertake independent work. Many of the oldest pupils are still over-dependent upon their teacher.
56. The school recognises many of the shortcomings and staff training is already planned to raise the quality of teaching. The school has already collected some good quality training materials. The subject is not well led at present because the role is under developed. Work in science has not been monitored or evaluated sufficiently, and pupils' progress has not been kept sufficiently under review. The resources for this subject are adequate and are all well organised.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the subject is good;
- Provision is improving ;
- There are examples of good and very good practice;
- There is inconsistent coverage of the teaching programme and some areas of the National Curriculum are under represented;
- There are insufficient planned opportunities for the use of ICT in other subjects.

Commentary

57. Although the standards overall are below those expected for 7 and 11 year-olds, in some areas they are at the expected level and in one area, they are above. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are becoming confident users of a multimedia program to present their information through using digital photographs, text and sound about their studies in geography, history and science. Also, in communication, the oldest pupils are beginning to exchange and share information through an e-mail contact with a Norwegian school. In both Key Stages the pupils are making good progress in using text together with images, and in using CD - ROM based information to find things out. The teachers are beginning to use Internet based information to support learning, such as when Year 5 and Year 6 pupils use the National Space Agency's site to glean information about the planetary system for their work in science. Progress is less marked in those classes where ICT is used less frequently and in those aspects that are less well represented, such as 'Making Things Happen', and integrating information, such as importing a chart into a word processor to explain the purpose and analyse the data. Teachers and classroom assistants are making good progress in acquiring subject knowledge and are using this appropriately to support pupils' learning. Little direct teaching of ICT was seen. However, there were some opportunities to observe pupils using the laptop computers to support work in mathematics in small groups. For example, Year 3/4 pupils with special educational needs were working on a money programme with support from a teaching assistant. They displayed confidence and understanding in using the program.
58. The raising of standards in ICT is a high priority in the school's improvement plan. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The newly appointed co-ordinator brings a high level of subject expertise to the role and together with the headteacher has a clear vision of how ICT will look in the future. Firm plans are in place to dramatically improve provision in the very near future, with the development of a well-equipped and fully networked suite of machines, which will supplement the classroom-based equipment and the whole-class set of portable machines. Regular class lessons for teaching the skills, knowledge and understanding associated with the national teaching programme are

planned and will be undertaken in the suite and the classroom computers will be used to support learning across the curriculum. The school now has the expertise, will, and capacity to drive standards to and beyond the expected level.

Information technology across the curriculum

59. Generally ICT is not yet used sufficiently to support learning in other subjects, but there are exceptions to this. For example, there is developing use in mathematics to support pupils' development of numeracy skills. In science and geography, data-handling programs have been used to create graphs and multi-media presentations have been produced, covering a variety of subject areas. Some work is of a good standard that can be used to exemplify the way forward. However, arrangements are rather 'ad hoc' at present and not systematically planned throughout the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

No lessons were seen in either history or geography at Key Stage 1 and few at Key Stage 2. The one geography lesson seen was excellent and a very good history lesson was seen. A satisfactory history lesson was also seen. A scrutiny of work, however, suggests that these are not representative of teaching across the school. Very little other evidence was available in geography, as the school has focused more upon history work during the first term of the school year. However, the amount of history work was also very limited. It was not possible, therefore, to judge provision, standards or teaching from this evidence.

Commentary

60. In **geography** appropriate opportunities to learn from the first hand experience and practical activities in fieldwork are provided for all pupils in both Key Stages. The older pupils have used ICT most effectively to create a multimedia presentation of their findings in geography and science from a field trip to Danes Dyke. The current work in one of the Year 5 /6 classes of a school-based 'local environment' study is providing learning opportunities of the highest order. The lesson seen in this class was excellent. Pupils were challenged to the limit and achieved particularly well.
61. The school uses the nationally recommended guidelines as a basis for teaching and has made some effective adaptations, especially for fieldwork and local study. The teaching of the geography units is 'blocked', which enables skills to be developed continuously. However, the time provided for each unit needs to be carefully evaluated, so that sufficient time is given for pupils' work to be undertaken to the appropriate depth. The curriculum is extended and enriched through connections made with other subjects, especially science and history. For example, the pupils' mapping skills and knowledge of climate zones has been drawn from their historical work on the Tudors and the 'Age of Exploration' in Years 5 and 6.
62. The resources are appropriate and adequate, and ICT is used effectively in some classes, for example, in the development of an e-mail link with a school in Norway for the study of a distant location. There are good materials to support the teaching of geography.
63. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. Although new to the post, the subject leader is already providing good support for her colleagues and has a clear view of areas for development.
64. The current practice, of teaching **history** in conjunction with other subjects in a 'block' of time is not working as successfully as it could. The limited evidence available shows that time for history is somewhat 'squeezed'. This is resulting in topics, such as the Tudors having too little breadth of coverage. Pupils are therefore limited to a narrow range. For example, they only study the area of Tudor exploration. Whilst this is a very important

aspect and links well with geography, the opportunity is missed for pupils to study the full richness of life in Tudor England. In some classes in Key stage 2, work is not matched closely enough to the wide range of pupils' abilities in some classes. For example, less able pupils in Year 4 receive the same diet as the most able in Year 5, which means that some pupils are not challenged effectively enough and the work is too hard for others. The school has identified the need to review these arrangements. A strength of the subject is the enrichment of pupils' learning through visits and visitors. For example, pupils have visited York and the Jorvik Museum, which engaged their interest.

65. The two lessons seen showed that Key Stage 2 pupils sometimes receive very different learning experiences. One was well taught and led to rapid learning for Year 3/4 pupils. Teaching was exciting and challenging, with tasks set which were practical and involved pupils in developing their skills of historical research and enquiry. This fired their interest and enthusiasm and they made good gains in their understanding, as a result. The other lesson observed, whilst satisfactory overall, was more mundane and lacked sparkle. Poorly produced photocopied worksheets of paintings from the Tudor period made it harder for pupils to carry out the task given and slowed their learning. Throughout the school, too few opportunities are taken for pupils to use their literacy and ICT skills in history.
66. The curriculum co-ordinator is new to the role. She has made a satisfactory start in providing support and guidance for colleagues and has identified sound areas for development.

Religious Education

Provision in the subject is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are encouraged to apply religious attitudes and values to their everyday lives;
- The provision for Christianity is good but other religions are less well represented.

Commentary

67. Standards and achievement are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards of pupils' written work are well below those seen in most schools.
68. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity is good. There are effective links with the local church and pupils visit it regularly. As a result they are familiar with services such as baptism and wedding ceremonies. The pupils have also visited York Minster and Howden Minster. Younger pupils know that the Bible is a special book; older pupils understand the significance of events such as 'Remembrance Sunday'. A special assembly held outside at 11 o'clock on the 11th November gave children the opportunity to develop their understanding. A visiting music teacher played the 'Last Post' on the trumpet. Many good opportunities are provided for the pupils to relate their work in religious education to their daily lives. They are encouraged to think about how their actions affect the lives of others. As a result they care for each other and are courteous and polite. The teachers' planning shows that children are taught about other religions but there are not yet opportunities for children to visit places of worship such as a synagogue or to hear the beliefs of people of other faiths first hand.
69. The curriculum is planned on a two-year cycle to accommodate the mixed age classes and the co-ordinator checks to ensure the correct coverage. However, she has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the teaching and learning in the subject to enable her to have a clear picture of standards. Assessment procedures are under developed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

In music, pupils were only observed in Years 2, 5 and 6 where the focus was on singing. Singing was also heard in assemblies. Only one lesson was seen in art and design but it is evident from teachers' planning and from displays around the school that work in the subject is varied and interesting. Only 2 lessons were seen, in design and technology, both of which were on food technology and at Key Stage 1. The school has not retained any 'made' items from previous work and evidence of design was only available from some classes and none from the upper Key Stage 2 classes. In consequence it was not possible to report on provision, overall standards, or the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects

Commentary

70. In **art and design** the school introduces pupils appropriately to the work of famous artists. For example, in Year 1 and Year 2 the pupils' work focussed on Bridget Riley. The children made string prints in black and white to decorate their invitations to a Baptism. Older children in Year 3 and Year 4 show an acute sense of colour, as they cut out rectangles and arrange them in overlapping patterns in their work based on the artist Paul Klee.
71. The oldest children in school reproduced work based on Pablo Picasso's 'Blue Period'. They effectively interpret ideas in paint, coloured glues, cut papers and collage. Throughout the school pupils learn to look carefully. Their observational drawings of flowers, bones and shoes show good attention to detail. The art curriculum is enhanced by visiting artists. For example, recent good quality work on willow lanterns shows that the pupils can select suitable materials and apply decoration to their lanterns to produce pleasing effects. The large number of pupils with special educational needs are given particular encouragement and produce thoughtful pieces of work.
72. The school has adapted the national guidelines for **design and technology** to make the scheme relevant to the school's needs. In particular it has created links across several subjects in a 'topic' approach to make the work relevant and more purposeful. For example, the creation of food products such as fruit salads in Years 1 and 2, and sandwiches in Years 3 and 4 are linked to 'living things' and healthy eating in science, writing recipes and instructions in literacy, and the goal of achieving a 'Healthy Schools' award. The school has also sought opportunities to enrich the subjects through creating some purposeful home-school links, such as the decorated Easter Egg project and the Year 1 model boat 'regatta'. Work is 'blocked' in the timetable so that pupils have the opportunity to work in a sustained fashion for several days and this enables pupils to build effectively on their skills and complete projects. From a lesson seen, and from teachers' planning, it is apparent that the school teaches health and safety aspects well. Adherence to the teaching programme ensures that all the processes of designing and making are included, from an initial investigation, through designing and making, to evaluation of the 'made' product. However, from the evidence available it can be seen that the quality of designing needs further attention, especially at Key Stage 2, in order to raise standards.
73. The subject is led soundly. Resources are suitable to support learning in all aspects of the subjects, with the exception of uses of ICT. The teachers successfully use the School's framework for assessment, but this now needs to be linked more closely to the national standards.
74. In **music**, since the time of the last inspection report, the quality of singing at the end of Key Stage 2 has improved and is now in line with that expected. Standards by the age of seven are below average. The best singing was heard when the pupils rehearsed songs for the 'Hallelujah Concert' to be performed later this year. The majority sang tunefully with an awareness of breathing, diction and dynamics. Throughout the school pupils sing with a high level of enjoyment. When taking part in their recorder club or playing individual

instruments such as the violin the pupils show total commitment. Opportunities like these contribute well to the pupils' overall musical experience.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of learning experiences is provided;
- Children with particular talents are recognised and developed;
- Leadership and management is strong and effective;
- Standards in swimming could be better.

Commentary

75. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Some pupils who are particularly talented, for example, at football achieve well because the school ensures they have opportunities that stretch them. Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those of similar schools.
76. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic and dedicated co-ordinator. She ensures that not only is sufficient lesson time given to all aspects of PE, but also that learning experiences are enriched in as many ways as possible. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in out of school clubs, play a range of team games including football and netball against other school and take part in as many local sporting events and competitions as possible. She also draws in expert coaching whenever possible, for example for football and tag rugby. This develops the skills of all pupils and in particular, the more able.
77. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, although a good dance lesson was observed in a Year 5/6 class. Teachers plan well and ensure that pupils 'warm up' and know the effects of exercise on their bodies. In the Y5/6 dance lesson, pupils responded very well to the teacher's clear instructions and as a result, interpreted the music very well. Her high expectations of work rate and behaviour led to good achievement.
78. Standards in swimming are below those expected for pupils in Year 6. Although the school provides regular swimming sessions, many pupils have little experience of swimming at other times and this limits their progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in this area is **good**.

79. The school is currently reviewing its arrangements in line with new advice from the local education authority, while also preparing for Healthy School status. Year 6 pupils already know about drugs education, diet, and personal safety. Pupils from the whole of Key Stage Two are members of the School Council, and some Y6 pupils are part of the Healthy School Steering Committee, giving them experience of democracy and involving them in opinion surveys and user groups. Older pupils also learn to undertake responsibilities such as reading or numeracy monitors, and to help younger pupils at playtime. Education for puberty takes place late in Year 6, in line with the governors' current policy, but the school recognises that this might not be soon enough.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	6
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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