

INSPECTION REPORT

ULVERLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Solihull

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104078

Headteacher: Mr I Jones

Lead inspector: Dr M J Bradshaw

Dates of inspection: 8th - 11th December 2003

Inspection number: 260516

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 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Boys and girls
Number on roll:	423
School address:	Rodney Road Solihull
Postcode:	B92 8RZ
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr I Grayson
Date of previous inspection:	20 th September 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has 379 full-time pupils from reception to Year 6 and 44 part-time nursery children. The proportion of boys is 57 per cent. The changes to the school's roll during the school year are quite low. Children usually enter nursery part-time in the September of the year in which they are four years old, and transfer to reception full-time in following September. Attainment data show that the attainment of children joining the school in nursery is about average, although a little lower in English skills. About 84 per cent of pupils are from a white ethnic background. The rest are from a wide variety of backgrounds, with the largest group being from a Pakistani background. Two pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English receive additional support. Other pupils whose mother tongue is not English are competent in the language and do not require extra support. There are two refugees on roll. Pupils' backgrounds are about average. About 14 per cent of full-time pupils claim free school meals, close to the national average. About 21 per cent of pupils in reception to Year 6 have been identified as having significant learning needs, including 13 pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. Overall, these figures are above the national average. The special educational needs Resource Centre caters for nine pupils with physical disabilities, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs. For most of their time in school, these pupils are taught in classes in the main school. The 'Fun Factory' is a community initiative, which uses part of the school's accommodation. It offers a 'Wrap Around' service for children aged 3 and 4 years, and before and after school care for children aged 3 to 11 years. The school also provides facilities for adults from a range of ethnic backgrounds to improve their English.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6169	Dr M J Bradshaw	Lead inspector	Science Physical education
13526	Mr R Barnard	Lay inspector	
26945	Mrs S Gatehouse	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Provision for pupils with special educational needs Art and design Design and technology Music
16971	Mr R Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography
22685	Mrs N Moss	Team inspector	English History Religious education Provision for pupils with English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school now gives a **satisfactory** and improving **quality of education** and provides **satisfactory value for money**. In the recent past, however, pupils have been underachieving by Year 6. Achievement is currently satisfactory and improving throughout the school. Most pupils enter the school with average attainment levels and in most recent years they have attained average levels by Year 2. However, subsequently, pupils have made inadequate progress in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is now good overall and pupils' progress is improving. The school is well led and managed.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management of the new headteacher and his deputy are good; they are well supported by the governing body.
- The provision for children with special educational needs, including those with physical disabilities, is good. They make good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. The racial harmony and full involvement of physically disabled pupils reflect the inclusive nature of the school.
- The school provides very good support for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety.
- Good links have been established with parents, the community and other local schools.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, but there are inconsistencies.
- Pupils' attainment by Year 6 is not high enough in English, especially writing, and mathematics.
- In science, the curriculum is not well organised and attainment is not as high as it could be.
- The school does not yet monitor pupils' progress sufficiently or use information to set reliable and challenging targets.

The school has gone through a difficult time following the illness of the previous headteacher. There has been unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. Since the new headteacher took over a year ago progress has improved significantly. Attainment of pupils by Year 6 has not improved significantly since the previous inspection and has drifted further below the national average.

Teaching is now better, and achievement is improving. The role of subject coordinators is now being developed, but they have had insufficient training to be fully effective. Assessment is now improving, but it is not yet possible to analyse data quickly to identify trends and compare the progress of groups of, or individual, pupils. Short term planning is better, but it still does not use monitoring information sufficiently to ensure all pupils are challenged enough in some subjects. Reporting procedures to the governing body have improved and there is more involvement of senior managers in the school's planning for improvement. Collective worship now meets requirements and the progress of pupils in music is better. Provision for religious education is satisfactory. Time is used better and health and safety procedures are more secure.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

For pupils who left the school in recent years, **achievement was unsatisfactory**. Improving teaching is now leading to better achievement. Children in nursery and reception make good progress, and most will reach, or exceed, the goals expected by the time they start Year 1. Steady progress continues in Years 1 and 2, and standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are about average. In most other subjects, attainment is close to that expected. The exception is physical education where standards are above those expected.

Progress in the juniors has been inadequate in the past and this is affecting current attainment. Progress is much better now. However, by Year 6, standards in English, especially writing, mathematics and science remain below average. In most other subjects, Year 6 pupils reach the standards expected. The exception is history, where pupils' writing skills restrict attainment.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong, and they have good respect for others. Their attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching is good and this is leading to good learning in most lessons. There are however inconsistencies which affect the pace of learning, particularly in mathematics and science. Members of the support staff make a positive contribution to children's learning.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which is enriched by a good range of visits and extra-curricular activities. Accommodation is good, and has the potential to enrich the curriculum further. This is a very caring school in which the needs of pupils, including those with physical disabilities, are looked after very well. Pupils' education is aided by the good links that have been established with the wider community. The school has good partnerships with parents and local schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. Leadership of the new headteacher and his deputy has given a sense of purpose and direction to the efforts for improvement. The very effective members of the administrative staff help to ensure that the school runs well. The governing body provides good support and has helped the school survive a very difficult period. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally satisfied with the school. In particular they think children like school and make good progress. They also think teaching is good and that the school is well led. Pupils are positive in their views of school, and think that the internal environment of the school has improved greatly in the last year.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in English, especially writing, and mathematics;

- review the organisation of the science curriculum, and improve the quality of teaching in the subject so that standards are raised;
- ensure consistency in the quality of teaching to match the best in the school;
- continue the work that is currently taking place to improve the monitoring and recording of pupils' progress, and use the information to improve lesson planning to ensure all pupils are sufficiently challenged and set individual targets that reflect their potential.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in nursery and reception is **good**, and in Years 1 and 2 it is **satisfactory**. During recent years the achievement of junior pupils has been **unsatisfactory**, but it is now improving. When pupils leave the school, standards in English, mathematics and science are currently **below average**, but they are **average** in most other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in nursery and reception.
- Achievement is good in information and communication technology (ICT), music and physical education, and in Years 1 and 2 in design and technology.
- Children with special educational needs, or those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well.
- Achievement is now improving throughout the school, but currently attainment by Year 6 in English, especially writing, mathematics and science is below average.

Commentary

1. In recent years, pupils' results have tended to be close to the average or below average in reading and writing by Year 2. In mathematics, attainment by Year 2 has been consistently average or better. In English and mathematics by Year 6, results have declined in recent years, and have ranged from average to well below average. Science results have fluctuated but also been average to well below average. Attainment is currently about average by Year 2 and below average by Year 6. Improving teaching and learning throughout the school are leading to rising achievement. In all lessons and much of the work seen, achievement is now at least satisfactory, and often better. However, the previous weaknesses mean that for pupils now in Years 5 and 6 achievement is unsatisfactory for their time in the school.

Foundation Stage

2. Children who have just entered nursery have broadly average attainment, although it is weakest in aspects of English skills. Good provision ensures that nursery and reception children make good progress, and virtually all children will achieve, and some will exceed, the goals expected in all areas of learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.6 (16.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.0 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.1 (17.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Recent results by Year 2 show that girls attain higher standards than boys in reading and writing, with the differences being greater than those seen nationally. In mathematics, there have been no significant differences. Indications are that, for current pupils, the differences are not so

marked. Children make sound progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve satisfactorily, but this picture is showing signs of improvement. In most lessons seen, achievement was better, and this was especially evident in English. As a result, standards in English, mathematics and science are about average. In ICT, good achievement results in attainment by Year 2 that is similar to that expected. Pupils' work in religious education indicates satisfactory achievement and work similar to the standard expected. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' displays and other work available demonstrate good achievement in design and technology, music and physical education. In physical education, attainment is above that expected. In other subjects, attainment is broadly in line with that expected.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.4 (26.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.4 (26.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.5 (28.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Recent results by Year 6 show that boys tend to perform slightly less well than girls, but the differences are not as great as evident in recent Year 2 results. No significant differences are evident currently. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests, attainment was well below average in English and mathematics, and below average in science and the trend in improvement was below the national trend. These results reflect previous underachievement. However, achievement is now improving and was satisfactory or better in lessons seen. The improvement is also evident in pupils' work. As a result, pupils' work in Years 3 and 4 is in line with the standard expected. However, the attainment of older pupil has not yet overcome the previous underachievement and remains below average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' writing is consistently below average, and this affects learning in some other subjects, such as history. In science, pupils develop satisfactory factual knowledge, but investigative skills are less well developed. In ICT, pupils achieve well and their attainment by Year 6 reflects the standard expected. In religious education, satisfactory achievement is reflected in attainment that matches the expectations of the syllabus. In Years 3 to 6, good achievement is evident in music and physical education.

5. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs attain well in their work because well-informed and experienced teaching assistants help them sensitively. Several pupils worked hard in a group learning to spell words of two syllables, and rearranged words to make a sensible sentence. It was challenging work but due to well-structured teaching they achieved well. There are very few pupils in the school who are at the early stages of English acquisition. These pupils are achieving well through lessons by a specialist teacher from the local education authority in which they are either withdrawn from mainstream classes or supported in the classroom. In addition, high quality support assistants assist them in their learning for the rest of their lessons and their classroom teachers do much to help them progress well. Ethnic minority pupils achieve as well as other pupils in their class.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils want to come to school and learn and they behave **well**. Their personal qualities develop **well** due to the **good** provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance levels are about **average**. Standards in relation to behaviour, attitudes and personal development and levels of attendance have been maintained at a similar level to those described in the previous inspection report.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is good overall because of very good moral provision and a consistent positive approach of staff.
- Pupils like school and show a positive interest in school activities.
- Very good racial harmony and full involvement of physically disabled pupils reflect the inclusive nature of the school.
- Pupils have good respect for others.
- Attendance is about average and punctuality good.
- Pupils are willing to take responsibility but opportunities for them to develop independence are limited.

Commentary

6. Parents and pupils themselves say they enjoy school and this is evident in their keen attitude to the range of activities provided. Their interest and attention are reflected well in lessons where throughout the school they listen well to their teachers and are keen to get on with tasks set. They respond particularly well in music and physical education lessons and this is reflected in their achievements in these areas. In a Year 4 physical education session pupils' very keen and eager approach helped them develop their tactical awareness and ball skills well as they set the rules and then played their own ball games. Pupils show a very keen approach to the good range of extra-curricular activities provided and participation helps them develop self-esteem and confidence. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes and behave well in lessons because they are interested and motivated. This was evident, for example, in a music lesson, when they threw themselves into performing a song in different styles because the teacher made this fun and the activity was fast-paced. They lose concentration, however, in lessons where they are expected to listen for long periods and are not actively participating in the lesson.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	352	2	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	6	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	29	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0

Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

7. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Racial harmony is very good and all pupils play and work together very well. Pupils’ kind and natural acceptance of and the full involvement in school life of pupils with physical disabilities reflect the highly inclusive nature of all at the school. Pupils are friendly and helpful. Pupils behave well in lessons and particularly well on formal occasions such as in assemblies and in the dining room. They respond well to and appreciate the simple school rules. Two boys were excluded on a temporary basis last year. In the current year there have been no exclusions. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and how their actions can impact on others. Behaviour in the playgrounds is good and pupils are supervised well. Pupils feel correctly that more activities could be provided especially during the long lunchtime break. Pupils and parents have no serious concerns about bullying, racist or sexist behaviour and attitudes, and systems are in place to deal with any potential issues very quickly and effectively.

8. Pupils show good levels of responsibility and maturity. Junior pupils benefit from the opportunity to choose from a range of residential visits offered. Older pupils are very willing to help around school with a good range of tasks, for example helping in the infant playground at lunchtime and in moving coat racks and lunchboxes. However, the school provides limited opportunities for them to develop their independence, awareness of citizenship, representing the views of others and having a say in the life of the school or in the planning and assessment of their own learning. Promotion of art and design, sport, music and all aspects of cultural development are good. Children in the nursery and reception are given a good introduction to the wonder of life and joy of discovery. This is developed adequately throughout the rest of the school although opportunities are missed resulting in a satisfactory development of pupils’ thirst for discovery and spiritual awareness.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

9. Attendance is satisfactory. Procedures to record and monitor attendance are good and help the school to follow up absences effectively and leads to low levels unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good and lessons start on time. A small number of parents, due to the holiday arrangements of a major local employer, take their children on holiday late in the summer term. The school monitors these absences closely and ensures that they have the minimum impact on pupils’ learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education based on a **satisfactory** curriculum, and **good** teaching and care for the pupils.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning have improved and are now **good**. Assessment is currently **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in nursery and reception is good.
- Teaching and learning are generally good in most subjects, although there are inconsistencies, especially in mathematics and science where they are satisfactory.
- Teaching is good for pupils with special educational needs; teaching assistants are used well.
- There is not always enough challenge for higher attaining pupils in planned activities.
- Assessment is improving, but is currently unsatisfactory overall.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 62 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (1.6%)	8 (12.9%)	36 (58.1%)	17 (27.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

10. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, although there are inconsistencies. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection; no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection. The main factors that have led to the underachievement previously have been dealt with by the recently appointed headteacher and deputy headteacher. Teaching and learning are therefore now better than the overall achievement of pupils while they have been in the school, especially for those now in Years 5 and 6. There are still occasions, however, when satisfactory teaching is not good enough to overcome previous underachievement.

11. The quality of teaching in nursery and reception is good. As a result, children's learning is good. All members of staff give good attention to developing children's personal and social skills. The support provided by teacher assistants is very good. Children with special educational needs receive very good support. One reason for the success of the teaching is the very good relationships between staff and children.

12. Teaching in the rest of the school is good overall, and never less than satisfactory. Although previous data indicate slower progress in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2, this is not the case now. The new headteacher and deputy headteacher have successfully raised teachers' expectations of what children can achieve. There are, however, variations, between some subjects. Teaching in mathematics and science is satisfactory; it is good in all other subjects where sufficient evidence is available. In mathematics, there is not always enough challenge for higher attaining pupils and the pace of learning can be too variable. In science, the organisation of the curriculum restricts the impact of teaching, and too often pupils are not engaged with interesting and challenging tasks. In the best lessons, for instance, in an excellent mathematics lesson involving the use of ICT, pace, challenge and high expectations were very evident. Learning is best when pupils are engaged in tasks and have opportunities to contribute ideas or carry out practical activities. It slows in satisfactory lessons when teachers talk for too long at pupils and do not engage pupils sufficiently. Lessons of this type are not good enough to overcome the previous underachievement. Planning of lessons is good but, on occasions, planning does not indicate how more able pupils are to be challenged.

13. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, and these pupils make good progress because their tasks are sufficiently challenging and designed to meet their needs. Pupils who have individual education plans are well supported by teachers and their assistants because they refer to the individual targets and work steadily towards them in English and mathematics. The school works very hard to ensure that all pupils are fully included in lessons. All adults in the school treat and value pupils as individuals. Very good provision is made in classrooms for pupils with disabilities. These pupils receive very good support from effective learning support assistants, who work closely with teachers. The support they give is as unobtrusive as possible and effectively ensures that any hindrance these disabilities might be to learning is minimised. Support assistants play an important part in the success of pupils with special educational needs. They care for the pupils diligently and sensitively and have established very good relationships with their pupils based on mutual respect. They know when to allow these pupils to exercise their freedom of choice and independence, for instance in physical education, when they stand back and let them try activities for themselves. These pupils are sometimes withdrawn for a lesson into the Resource Centre where there are special resources for their use. A strong feature of most teachers' planning is the range of suitable activities planned for these pupils. These take account of the range of learning needs and provide them with effective challenges. As a result, the work in lessons given to these pupils is usually appropriate to their learning needs and helps them to make progress.

14. Teaching for the few pupils at an early stage of English acquisition is good. They receive a planned programme of individual lessons with a specialist teacher, which helps them to acquire the structure and vocabulary they need for the rest of their studies. Classroom teachers all have copies of their individual educational plans and use them well to plan work, which answers their needs.

15. The quality of assessment and its use is a continuing weakness, which the school is working hard to improve. The deputy headteacher, who joined the school in September, is working hard to improve assessment at all levels. Throughout the school marking is improving, but there are inconsistencies. Most work is marked according to the school's procedures, but only in the best are comments included to help pupils appreciate how they could improve. Good whole school procedures for assessment and following pupils' progress are being developed. These are managed by the deputy headteacher, and will allow the school to track pupils' progress from entering nursery to Year 6. The school has already begun to use the information to set more challenging targets for pupils' attainment. Previously the targets were undemanding and set at a level that would ensure below average attainment overall. The assessment of pupils who have special educational needs is good and the information well used to set targets and aid the production of clear individual education plans. However, the assessment of pupils who have learning difficulties, but do not yet have individual education plans, is more variable. Individual targets for these pupils are not yet being set consistently by class teachers. Assessment for those for whom English is an additional language is undertaken regularly and is used to assist classroom teachers to recognise weaknesses and help pupils to overcome them.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is **satisfactory** and meets statutory requirements. The opportunities provided to extend learning outside of lessons are **good**. The school's accommodation is **good** and the resources available to teachers to support their lessons are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning opportunities in nursery and reception are good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and in the Resource Centre is good.

- Accommodation in nursery and reception provides children with a very good learning environment.
- Very effective adult support is provided in most classrooms.
- The science curriculum is unsatisfactory.
- ICT is not used sufficiently across the curriculum.

Commentary

16. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which is generally well planned to make it appropriate for all pupils. Curricular planning has focussed especially on the provision for literacy and numeracy. The curriculum for English is good, with the result that pupils' achievement is rising. They therefore now attain average standards in all areas of the subject except for writing, in which standards by Year 6 are below average. Opportunities are lost in some subjects to enable pupils to use their writing skills. In geography pupils sometimes copy out work instead of writing it in their own words and style. Teachers are not using the full potential ICT gives for pupils to draft and redraft their writing by composing directly onto a screen. Opportunity is available to use the computer suite for literacy lessons but it is not being fully utilised. There are weaknesses in the provision for science and this has a significant impact on standards that are unsatisfactory. There is good provision for pupils in physical education and as a result pupils achieve well in this subject and attain good standards. It also makes a good contribution to their personal and social development. Curricular provision is good for the few pupils at an early stage of English acquisition. Assessment of their needs is done on entry to the school and good individual education plans are drawn up for them. These targets are regularly reviewed to assess progress and to plan future work.

17. The youngest children settle into school quickly and make good progress with their learning as they are provided with a good range of interesting opportunities to play, explore and practise and which are clearly related to their learning needs. They are taught in a very stimulating environment, receive good adult support in the classrooms and benefit from having access to a good range of learning resources, which help their understanding and add interest to the activities they do.

18. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all areas of the curriculum including out-of-school activities and events. This is entirely in line with the school's strong stance on educational inclusion. They attended the visit of a touring theatre group who performed a traditional pantomime in the school hall, and some attend the before and after school provision. They take part in educational visits to local places of interest, for example to a farm to see a nativity re-enacted with animals such as donkeys, sheep, cows and goats. Owing to the very good support of classroom assistants, pupils with special educational needs play a full part in lessons where activities are particularly challenging. They enjoy the challenges in physical education lessons, assemblies and singing practices, and complete the work set for them. Individual education plans are detailed and reviewed regularly. They contain individual targets that are designed to help pupils with special educational needs make progress in small manageable steps. The school's strong stance on educational inclusion is put into practice by all staff. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical impairment, are fully integrated into the life of the school. The accommodation has been improved since the time of the last inspection and is now attractive, bright and spacious. It is well equipped with resources to support the special work pupils do. The co-ordinator has a clear action plan, which includes the review of the policy that is very out-of-date. Closer liaison amongst staff between each phase is now required to ensure that the progress of pupils with special educational needs from class to class is secure.

19. The school provides a rich and varied programme of activities outside normal school time. Most of these are available to pupils from Year 3 upwards. The learning of older pupils is well

supported by the provision of a good list of relevant additional activities, including a variety of sports and opportunities to compete against other schools, for example cross-country running. Pupils also have good opportunities to participate in arts activities. The school runs two choirs, one of which is organised for the younger pupils. Theatre groups visit the school. Pupils can play a range of board games and attend art and chess clubs. Pupils enthusiastically support these and other activities. The programme of residential visits makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal and social development. The school ensures that all pupils can attend these visits if they want.

20. Overall improvement to the curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers are more confident in teaching numeracy and sufficient time is available for teaching literacy. Some good improvements have been made and all pupils now have very good access to the curriculum. Planning for the youngest children has improved well. Considerable improvement has been made to the nursery and reception classrooms. The nursery is now housed in the main building. A new ICT suite has been built and equipped with new hardware with the result that ICT provision has been improved. Resources overall are satisfactory and allow the full National Curriculum for each subject to be taught, but they are not always used to best effect in science.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **very good** steps to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. **Satisfactory** support, advice and guidance are provided to each pupil. The school involves pupils **adequately** in its work and development. Standards of care have improved since the satisfactory levels described in the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety procedures are very good.
- There are very good child protection procedures in place.
- Members of staff are very caring; they give very good pastoral support.
- Good induction arrangements are in place for children joining the school.
- Support for learning is limited by the current assessment arrangements.
- Pupils are valued but they have limited say in the life of school.

Commentary

21. All members of staff provide strong pastoral care that ensures every pupil feels valued and cared for. Parents agree that the school takes good care of their children. Teachers and other adults know the children very well and consistently give good personal support, which is aided by the very good relationships that exist between adults and pupils. Good induction arrangements and continuing care and support ensure the youngest children quickly settle into school and make good progress in their personal development. Children, including looked after children, joining the school later are made very welcome and soon are settled and happy. Both staff and other children are involved in ensuring these pupils settle into school quickly. Child Protection procedures and awareness, very good evaluation of health and safety risks, very good first aid procedures and supervision of pupils at break and lunchtimes enable pupils to feel safe and work in confidence. Important areas such as ensuring that all pupils wash their hands before going to lunch from the playground are not overlooked. Personal development is supported very well, as members of staff all know their pupils well. The integration of the pupils from the Resource Centre and the care shown by all adults to include these pupils in the life of the school sets a fine example to all pupils. Academic support and advice for pupils are satisfactory and improving. The school does not yet monitor their progress consistently or use information to set reliable or challenging targets. These are areas the school, particularly through the deputy headteacher, are currently working on to improve further. Pupils feel that members of staff value their views and this gives most confidence to discuss issues and raise questions. Their say in the life of the school is limited by the lack of formal opportunities to put their views.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** partnerships with parents, the local community and local schools. Provision has improved since that described in the previous inspection report.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Annual reports on pupils' progress are good.
- Parents receive good quality newsletters.
- The school involves parents well and their involvement in children's education is good.
- Good community links are used well to support learning.
- Good links exist with the local secondary school.
- Good support programmes exist through the 'Special Educational Needs Resource Centre' and 'The Fun Factory.'
- Part of the school's accommodation is used for adults whose home language is not English.

Commentary

22. Annual reports give good information on pupils' standards and progress and indications of how they can develop further. The regular consultation sessions also help keep parents well informed well about their children's achievements. Good quality newsletters inform parents well about the life of the school, homework and encourage them to be involved in their children's learning. Regular sessions for parents on the curriculum further support this. Good use is made of parental help in school especially in relation to trips. The Parent School Association provides very good financial support as well as a good range of social activities, such as the highly popular pupil discos. They support homework well, especially reading, and ensure the prompt, regular attendance of their children. The great majority of parents are pleased with the way members of staff deal with potential problems and issues. The school offers an open door to parents and teachers are readily accessible at the end of the school day. The very open start to the school day in nursery and reception both helps the pupils settle quickly and also helps parents to appreciate the open nature of the school.

23. The school's use of, and by, the local community are good. The local area is used well to support pupils' learning with a wide range of visits and visitors. Local businesses are used well to provide financial and material support. The school provides a good range of support for the local community. The "Fun Factory" provides a very good child care facility for parents on the school premises.

24. The Resource Centre provides a very good and inclusive facility for parents from the wider community. Children with physical impairment arrive early in the mornings at the centre by car where they are greeted by the co-ordinator and the team of special support assistants, who escort them to their classrooms. This hand-over arrangement provides good opportunities for informal contact between parents and staff, and between staff, so that any particular needs are made known promptly. The early morning start enables pupils to move along the corridors in their own time so that they arrive in their classrooms calmly and without rush.

25. Facilities developed with local colleges provide further support for the community and for a group of mothers who do not speak English as their main language. The school makes part of its accommodation available once a week for these parents to have specialist language lessons. These are provided by a teacher from a local college and are popular with parents. The school does a great deal to encourage parents to attend these classes so that they are able to participate in their children's education. An effective partnership with the local secondary school, which includes regular contact, visits and curricular links, ensures pupils are well prepared for their move to the next stage of education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. Governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, staff and governors are very strongly committed to the principles of educational inclusion and welcome all children whatever their needs, race or background.
- The headteacher provides the school with a very clear sense of direction and purpose.
- The deputy headteacher promotes a strong spirit of teamwork throughout the school.
- The governors use their knowledge wisely to shape the work of the school.
- The co-ordinators are not monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects sufficiently.

Commentary

26. The headteacher has taken swift and effective action to establish a strong sense of purpose, high aspirations and a determination to succeed. Although he has set a fast pace, the sense of teamwork and commitment throughout the school remain steadfast and universal. He has initiated considerable improvements in his first year in post, on, for example, staffing, accommodation and pupils' behaviour. These have had a significant impact upon everyone's morale. He managed the refurbishment of parts of the accommodation, which pupils described as 'previously tatty', and re-organised staffing to deploy teachers' strengths more efficiently. The new deputy headteacher has taken up her responsibilities with alacrity and works closely with the headteacher and other staff in promoting the school's values, ambitions and goals. She provides very good support in fostering these values through her own example. However, co-ordinators have not yet been deployed to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects and this is still a weakness. There is inconsistency in assessment systems and how they are used. The quality of the curriculum is not yet sufficiently monitored, with the result that there are deficiencies in some subjects, for example in science.

27. The quality of education for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are fully integrated into the life of the whole school in line with the school's strong stance on educational inclusion. The governor with a particular interest in special educational needs is very knowledgeable about the provision in school and is fully aware of the school's statutory duties with regard to special educational needs. The management of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator is very experienced and shares her expertise with other teachers. She has created a warm welcoming ethos in the Resource Centre. Reviews of pupils' progress are regularly organised and parents' comments are appreciated. There are close links with a number of agencies including educational psychologists, speech therapists and physiotherapists. Improvement since the last inspection is good. The new Code of Practice is securely in place and the Resource Centre is bright and clean with new carpets and decoration. A photocopying station has been set up inside the centre, which is an informal meeting area for many staff, keeping the provision for special educational needs at the heart of the school. The policy for special educational needs, however, is out-of-date and needs review. The Resource Centre is managed well by the co-ordinator and it provides a friendly and supportive area for nine children who are physically impaired. The centre is used for small groups who need support with their literacy, for physiotherapy and speech therapy sessions, and for review meetings with parents and a wide range of support agencies such as the educational psychology service.

28. Leadership of the provision for English as an additional language is satisfactory for pupils in the early stages of language development. The local education authority's specialist department assesses them upon entry to the school. Their records are thorough and updated by the specialist teacher. When pupils have reached a level of proficiency that enables them to work without specialist support, their progress is still formally monitored and reviewed by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, to ensure that they achieve as well as possible.

29. The school is managed well and runs smoothly. There are regular staff meetings, and all staff were involved in the construction of the school improvement plan to ensure they all knew what the school needed to do, when, how, and by whom it should be done. Three of the members of the senior management team are responsible for different year groups in the school. This arrangement is helping to promote a whole-school consistent approach to such matters as behaviour management. Support assistants are very well deployed throughout the school providing very good assistance efficiently and sensitively. The management of communication has improved since the last inspection. Teachers and assistants now have full access to important documents like the school improvement plan and the annual review, which is conducted by the local education authority advisor. The school has implemented the principles of performance management, making close links between the needs of

individual members of staff with the needs of the school and arranging in-service training accordingly.

30. The governors fulfil their statutory duties well and take a lively interest in the life and work of the school. They provide the headteacher and staff with good support because they are well informed and use their knowledge constructively. They have set up good systems to gain as clear an understanding of the work of the school as they can. There is a governor of the month and governors have recently set up a number of committees that have clear terms of reference to guide their work. All take part in the regular reviews of the school's self-evaluation that underpins the school's comprehensive planning for improvement.

31. The main aids affecting the quality of teaching and learning are the clear direction and pursuit of excellence by the headteacher, the contribution and support of the deputy headteacher and senior management team, the improved accommodation, and the determined commitment by staff and governors to raise standards in pupils' attainment. The main barriers to raising achievement are the lack of monitoring by the co-ordinators, the inconsistency in assessing pupils' performance and the lack of sufficiently challenging targets for individual pupils.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1 072 613	Balance from previous year	20 001
Total expenditure	1 059 502	Balance carried forward to the next	33 112
Expenditure per pupil	2 590		

32. Financial planning and management are good. The governors and headteacher have a good grasp of finances and funding issues. Prudent budgeting and secure financial management based on very good monitoring of expenditure and income, a very good understanding of the importance of pupil numbers on income levels and the accurate estimate of known financial commitments enable the school to meet its educational priorities from a secure financial base. The school works well to ensure as much money as possible is spent directly to support pupils' work and raise their attainment. Most aspects of value for money principles are applied effectively, but those related to consultation with parents and pupils are underdeveloped. Day-to-day administrative and financial management systems are very good as detailed in the latest Auditor's report. The very effective office staff ensure the headteacher and other teachers spend the minimum of time on administrative duties.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

33. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** and has improved since the time of the last inspection.

34. Attainment on entry is broadly average in most areas although there are some indications for a proportion of children that attainment in literacy and social skills are below the expected level. Most children enter the nursery on a part-time basis in the September before their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection, the morning sessions were full and the afternoon sessions approximately half-full. This allows space for other admissions during the year. Children spend one year full-time in the reception classes before transferring to Year 1. They are receiving a good grounding during this time and are being well prepared for transfer to Year 1.

35. Since the last inspection there have been some important recent improvements, which have had a positive impact on the provision for children in the Foundation Stage. The accommodation has recently been refurbished and since September 2003 the entire Foundation Stage has been housed within the main building in a suite of adjacent classrooms. The suite is bright and airy and is a considerable improvement on the accommodation used previously. The outdoor area has been securely fenced, and there is indoor access to other areas of the main school such as the assembly and dining halls.

36. The quality of teaching throughout nursery and reception is good. As a result, children make good progress and achieve well. Indications are that virtually all reception children are on course to meet and some will exceed, the goals expected in all areas of learning. They make very good progress in developing personal and social skills because all adults encourage this aspect of the curriculum. The support provided by teacher assistants is very good. Children with special educational needs receive very good support. The co-ordinator is very experienced and runs regular meetings for all staff to share planning and information. The area has a calm well-organised ethos where children feel secure. Relationships between staff are very good. There are good induction arrangements for children before they begin school including home visits. Each day there is informal contact between parents and staff, and parents are very pleased with the way their children are settled into school so happily. Children are eager to come into school each morning and say they like what they do. Frequent formal assessments of children occur during the school day and these notes are added to the children's individual profiles recording their attainment and progress in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

37. Although the outdoor area has been improved since the time of the last inspection there are still some vital improvements to make. The hard-surfaced area for children to use large-wheeled toys is too small. The extensive grassed area is not well drained. It is too muddy to use in the winter, restricting the area for outdoor play significantly. There is not enough fixed apparatus for children to develop their climbing, sliding, jumping and swinging skills and this is not satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and their assistants seize every opportunity to enhance children's acquisition of personal and social skills.
- Children with special educational needs receive very good support from teachers and their assistants.
- Good relationships are being established based on mutual respect between staff and children.

Commentary

38. A strong feature of the nursery is the way children are encouraged to develop their self-confidence and independence. As they arrive in class children choose their first activity of the day and register their choice beside their first names. They organise their activities, helping themselves to equipment such as bricks and railway tracks, waterproof aprons and paintbrushes. In reception, teachers provide good opportunities for children to build on their previous experiences in organising their own learning and developing independence. Children choose their activities sensibly, exercising their preferences confidently. They acknowledge the class rules without fuss, readily take turns and share equipment such as bricks and computer stations. At the end of lessons, children help to tidy up their rooms properly and put away their things in the right places. Children with special educational needs are swiftly developing their personal and social skills because teachers and their assistants support them very well. Children show remarkable tolerance and concern for each other and are very sensitive to each other's needs. Most children are well on course to exceed the goals expected by the time they move into Year 1.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan many opportunities for children to practise their emerging speaking, listening and writing skills through day-to-day activities.
- Children with special educational needs are fully included and teaching assistants provide very good support.
- Teachers' planning includes special work to accelerate the progress of groups of children including the more able.

Commentary

39. Children make good progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills because teachers and their assistants deliberately provide many opportunities to promote these skills. They talk constantly to children, using their questioning skills very well to stimulate conversations and develop children's vocabulary. Early writing skills are promoted through structured activities, including writing letters to Father Christmas, and many children are eager to write their first names. In reception, children begin to develop their handwriting skills more formally by tracing over letter shapes using pencils with increasing control. A good feature of teaching is the way children's needs are met by careful planning and periods of direct teaching that gently nudge children's learning forwards, for instance in writing. Children use their developing knowledge of sounds in writing labels to explain features on their maps of a farm. They include labels such as 'pig', 'cow' and 'sheep'. Children are developing their listening skills well because teachers provide frequent opportunities through story telling. Nursery children pay very close attention to the story of a teddy bear that falls into the snow. Reception children enjoy sharing books with each other, hold them correctly and turn the pages carefully. They like telling the story from the pictures and are beginning to identify the names of familiar characters such as 'Floppy' the dog. Teachers' planning takes careful account of the need to include work to extend groups of more able children, which enables them to exceed the goals expected. Detailed planning and very good support by teaching assistants also means that children with special educational needs are involved in all activities. Early indications are that most children are well on course to meet or exceed the goals expected by the time they move into Year 1.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good links with other subjects to make mathematics meaningful.
- Children with special educational needs are fully included and very well supported.

Commentary

40. Children make good progress due to good teaching and the good interaction with support staff. Good links with other subjects bring mathematics to life, and teachers use every opportunity to show children how mathematics occurs in everyday activities. Nursery children enjoy celebrating their birthdays, singing a song, and counting from 1 to 4 as their teacher lights four candles. They enjoy opening the numbered windows on their Advent calendar and use a range of mathematical terms such as 'bigger than' confidently. Reception children are beginning to develop their knowledge and understanding of shape. They recognise circles, squares and triangles, and name their properties confidently, such as corners and sides. They enjoy investigating how to turn rectangles of card into cylinders when making their party hats. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and fully involved in all activities, such as when making a snowman with a range of boxes and cylinders stuck together. The majority of children are well on course to meet or exceed the goals expected by the time they reach Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children experience a wide range of interesting activities to support their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- Teachers make good use of the locality to enrich the curriculum.

Commentary

41. All children make good progress because teachers and their support staff provide a vibrant curriculum that stimulates curiosity in the world around them. Nursery children enjoy exploring the properties of sound when playing a range of percussion instruments and have opportunities to observe animals at close quarters such as guinea pigs. Children in the nursery and reception classes have frequent opportunities to explore the technology of their world through the use of computers. They use the mouse and keyboard confidently, and know how to change the colour as they paint pictures and write their names. All reception children, including those with special educational needs, visit a farm to watch a nativity play involving animals such as donkeys, cows and sheep. This is a powerful way of bringing the story of Christmas to life. They enjoy exploring the properties of magnets as they play with a range of materials. When using a range of different containers and funnels, they are beginning to gain an understanding of the properties of wet and dry sand. When baking biscuits they are encouraged to notice how materials such as flour and sugar change when they are heated in an oven. Reception children enjoy touching blocks of ice and observing how they melt. These activities all make a significant contribution to the development of children's knowledge

and understanding of the world. Early indications are that most children are well on course to reach the goals expected by the time they move into Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of stories stimulates children's imagination and provides opportunities for drama.
- Teachers plan many opportunities for children to express themselves in drawing, painting and making music.

Commentary

42. Teachers and their support staff are adept at devising interesting activities to capture children's interest. Very good opportunities are provided in dance, when reception children respond to music and poetry depicting various characters and animals. Both nursery and reception children enjoy a rich range of exciting activities that stimulate their imagination, including opportunities for role-play within each classroom. Nursery children dress up as Father Christmas and his reindeer delivering presents, while others use their developing skills in writing letters describing the sort of presents they would like. Teachers' planning ensures that all children have daily access to drawing, painting and modelling activities. These allow children to express their own ideas as well as follow a particular theme. Teachers provide regular story-times, when they promote enjoyment of books through their own expressive reading and there are good opportunities for children to choose their own library books to take home and share with their parents. Particularly good opportunities are available for reception children to dramatise stories. They enjoy listening to the story of a pig that snores. With the skilled support of a classroom assistant they act out the story wearing masks of all the animals he keeps awake. They are eager to take part, and successfully describe the story to their classmates at the end of the lesson. All children enjoy the visit of a lively theatre group who perform a traditional pantomime in the school hall. In well-organised sessions children are introduced to a range of musical instruments, which they use to make music, and they are encouraged to join in singing sessions. The majority of children are well on course to reach the goals expected by the time they move into Year 1.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have many opportunities to develop their dexterity in a wide range of interesting activities.
- There is limited opportunity to develop some physical skills because the outdoor hard-surfaced area is too small and there is no suitable fixed apparatus outdoors.
- Good use is made of the school hall for dance and movement.

Commentary

43. Children make good progress in developing their dexterity through a wide range of activities involving scissors, glue-sticks, paintbrushes, pencils and crayons. They demonstrate their increasing nimbleness when playing with water, pouring from one container to another accurately and with care. Nursery children throw a ball accurately to knock down skittles, and effectively thread beads in a pattern involving shape and colour. They enjoy using large-wheeled toys on the hard-surfaced play area but this is not sufficiently large to accommodate more than three or four safely at one time. They use pencils carefully to write letters to Father Christmas and most children can write their own names. Reception children use glue carefully and sprinkle glitter accurately when decorating their party hats. Good use is made of the school hall for developing physical skills associated with balance and movement, including dance. However, there are not enough opportunities to develop children's balancing, climbing and jumping skills because there is no fixed large apparatus outdoors. Most children are on course to reach the goals expected by the time they enter Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good, so that pupils make good progress and work with interest and effort.
- The National Literacy Strategy is used very well to plan lessons and pupils are provided with work graded to meet their needs well.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are supported by very good teaching assistants, as well as by their teachers.
- Leadership of the subject is now good and has helped provision to improve.
- Standards of attainment, particularly in writing, are currently below average by Year 6.
- Assessment is not used as effectively as it might be to identify key areas for development.
- ICT is not used sufficiently in the teaching and learning of English.

Commentary

44. Provision in English is now good, but it has not yet had time to contribute to a significant improvement in attainment by Year 6. Standards reached by pupils are average by the end of Year 2. In the National Curriculum tests in 2003, at the end of Year 2 results were below the national average and well below the average when compared with similar schools. Improving teaching and learning mean that standards are now in line with the national average. At the end of Year 6 in the National Curriculum tests, results were well below the average nationally and when measured against similar schools. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2, but currently unsatisfactory by Year 6. Girls achieve better than boys. There are many recent signs of improvement, which indicate that achievement is rising. However, the impact of this has not yet worked its way through to Years 5 and 6. Thus, by Year 6, attainment is about average in the areas of reading and speaking and listening, but below average in writing. The reasons for improvement lie in a good curriculum, good teaching and good leadership of the subject, all of which are beginning to show their effect on standards and achievement. The curriculum is now well tailored to use the National Literacy Strategy to maximum benefit to help pupils achieve at the level of which they are capable through the provision of carefully graded tasks in lessons, especially for the high number of pupils with special educational needs and the few who speak English as an additional language. The planning for lessons is now done in relevant modules, which allow pupils to understand a topic thoroughly, instead of moving on to another area before they have grasped the previous work firmly. This good planning is aided by the high quality of the teaching assistants who make it possible for teachers to focus on different groups of pupils while ensuring that no group is neglected.

45. Pupils' writing skills are less good than their oral skills and their reading. Throughout the school, reading, and speaking and listening skills are about average. Writing is about average by Year 2, but below average for older pupils. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and are very ready to contribute to class discussion with relevance and interest, if not always in a grammatical and sustained manner. They listen well to their teachers and many are learning to sense the appropriate tone for the purpose of their speech, through good directed teaching of oral skills. This was clearly seen in a good Year 4 lesson in which pupils were writing and performing their own play scripts based on the book 'Fantastic Mr. Fox'. Reading skills are technically sound. From Year 1 onwards, pupils use good letter sound skills and strategies to help them to read unfamiliar words and they

reach a satisfactory level of fluency by the end of Year 6. Comprehension of what they read is not always as strong, although many of the older pupils show an ability to make sensible deductions from what they read and acquire a range of more complex reading skills which help them in research projects and independent work. Writing, however, although generally well presented and often thoughtful, is frequently weak in spelling and grammar, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Although a good range of styles and types of written work is accomplished, pupils often write too slowly, achieving less than they might in the time available. They do not complete enough pieces of longer written work to accustom them to presenting their ideas in tests. Here, too, the changes in the curriculum are helping, with the change in approach, which calls for the completion of longer units of work.

46. The quality of teaching and learning is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection and the majority of teaching was good or better. Particular strengths lie in teachers' knowledge and grasp of the subject, the good graded planning in each lesson, their encouragement of pupils and the good relationships they have with them. Teachers are well supported by teaching assistants and make good use of their skills. All these contribute well to pupils' knowledge and understanding of English and ensure that they work with effort and interest. This, in turn, leads to effective learning and to rising achievement. Some extremely good practice was seen, such as in a Year 5 lesson in which pupils were very excited and enthusiastic about writing their own 'concrete' poems after the teacher had very skilfully introduced them to the concept and examples of it. There is not, however, always enough challenge offered to the higher attaining pupils, particularly in their writing and the pace of lessons is occasionally slow, allowing pupils to work without a sense of urgency and effort. Teachers use assessment well to record pupils' progress and to provide them with appropriate work, but there is, as yet, insufficient detailed analysis of test results to identify key areas for improvement.

47. The subject is well led by a good co-ordinator, who has, during a period of high staff turnover, built and supported an effective team of teachers and given them confidence in the planning and teaching of the subject. This has helped to ensure the recent improvements. She provides them with a very good role model and ensures that all planning is relevant and designed to meet the needs of all. Pupils' work is regularly checked to ensure both continuity of work through the school and pupils' progress, but there is no opportunity at present for the monitoring of teaching and learning and the consequent sharing of good classroom practice.

48. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Teaching has improved to be good, with no unsatisfactory teaching and this is a strong indication of the recent improvement that is beginning to show an effect. However, standards are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection. Writing is still weaker than speaking and listening and reading and the monitoring of teaching and the use of assessment data are still at an early stage. Although accommodation and resources are generally good, too little use is made of ICT in the teaching of the subject, for instance to aid redrafting of work.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Language and literacy skills are satisfactory by the end of Year 2, but still unsatisfactory by the end of Year 6. This is largely because the writing of longer pieces of work is not universal and too few cross-curricular links are made which would enable greater practice in writing, such as between English and history or religious education. Some useful links have been developed, especially in geography and in some good topic work in Year 6 on countries in Eastern Europe. In science, however, writing skills inhibit the clear recording of fact and experiment. The school is in the early stages of developing a policy to improve this use of writing. Teachers encourage speaking and listening skills well across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement of all pupils is improving and is currently satisfactory.
- Owing to previous weaknesses, during their time in the school, achievement of pupils by Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory.
- There is insufficient good quality teaching.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy their lessons.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.
- Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.
- In some classes ICT is used well to support the teaching of mathematics, but this is an area for further improvement.

Commentary

50. In the National Curriculum tests in recent years, standards reached by pupils have been at least average by the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6 in the National Curriculum tests, results have generally been below or well below the average nationally. The standards of work seen during the inspection in Year 2 are average. Their achievement is satisfactory and this presents a similar picture to that seen at the time of the last inspection. The standards of work seen in Year 6 are below average and this represents unsatisfactory achievement. There has been deterioration in standards since the last inspection when Year 6 pupils attained average standards. An examination of pupils' completed work shows achievement of pupils in Years 1 to 4 to be satisfactory. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have gaps in their mathematical knowledge and this is causing them to underachieve, despite the now satisfactory teaching. They have poor recall of number facts such as number bonds and tables and this is slowing their progress down. Some lack knowledge of the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and cannot immediately recognise and name some of them. Teachers are aware of these weaknesses and they are striving to remedy them.

51. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although improving and sometimes better in lessons seen. Two very good lessons and one excellent lesson were seen. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Most teachers display good knowledge of the mathematics curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy. Most use the strategy well in their teaching. Planning is usually thorough and clear, based on national guidance, and indicates appropriate activities for different ability groups. However, not all lessons provide an appropriate challenge for all pupils, especially the higher attaining pupils, with the result that those who are insufficiently challenged lack motivation and do not make sufficient learning gains in lessons. Almost all teachers plan well for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are well supported in classrooms by effective teaching assistants and as a result they make good progress in learning, achieving well.

52. Most teachers use questioning well to challenge pupils and assess their understanding. They often ask pupils who do not put up their hands for answers and this keeps all pupils involved and challenged. In the best lessons the last part is often used well to allow pupils to explain what they have been doing and what they have learnt. As a result of this clear structure, pupils are interested in their lessons and keen to learn. Even in lessons that lack pace pupils generally behave well.

53. In the excellent lesson seen, ICT was being used extremely well to help Year 2 pupils understand how to compile graphs and how to extract information from them. Working in the computer suite the teacher made excellent use of all the technology available to help pupils learn successfully. She made full use of powerful visual imagery to help pupils develop the relevant mathematical concepts. She was well supported by effective teaching assistants who helped pupils with special educational needs to benefit fully from the lesson. In another lesson in the computer suite Year 5 used ICT to add significantly to their understanding of the properties of the most common two-dimensional shapes. An examination of teachers' planning shows that the potential offered by ICT to add to pupils' mathematical understanding is not yet being fully exploited.

54. Assessment procedures in mathematics are not sufficiently robust. Information is being used to establish where there are gaps in learning of groups of pupils. However, it is not being used effectively to set individual targets for improvement in order to challenge pupils and to give them a good indication of how successful they are being as learners. Neither are they used effectively to track individual pupils' progress over periods of time shorter than a year in order to spot those important occasions when lack of progress is a cause for concern.

55. Progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. There have been improvements to pupils' attitudes to learning, especially the younger pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved. The quality of teaching has also improved as there was no unsatisfactory teaching observed during the inspection. However, standards at the end of Year 6 have fallen back. The subject co-coordinator still has little opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning directly in classrooms.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. Mathematical and numeracy skills are being used in a number of subjects. In science pupils accurately measure and record findings in charts and tables. In mathematics, pupils investigated different types of boxes that could be made to hold biscuits made during design and technology. Older pupils use co-ordinates effectively in geography when locating places on maps. However, from the samples of work provided and evidence from lesson observations and displays, insufficient use is being made of these skills in these and other areas.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**. Standards are about average by the end of Year 2, but below average by Year 6. For junior pupils, this represents unsatisfactory achievement in recent years, although there are signs of some improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy science and demonstrate good attitudes and behaviour.
- On occasions, good use is made of pupils' mathematical skills.
- The coordinator has recognised the need to improve attainment by Year 6 and to develop relevant assessment procedures.
- The curriculum is not organised to make best use of the time available and this restricts achievement.
- Planned work does not extend able pupils sufficiently and there is too little practical work.

Commentary

57. Pupils' attainment is not yet high enough by the time pupils leave the school. In the past four years, pupils' results in Year 6 have ranged from about average in 2002 to below or well below average. This represents inadequate progress. Pupils' results have fluctuated, and improved between 2000 and 2002. However, the overall trend since 1999 has been below the rate of improvement nationally. In Year 2, attainment is about average, but teacher assessments overestimate the amount of high attainment.

58. Pupils are keen to learn about science and enjoy being involved in practical activities, such as when Year 3 pupils investigated the properties of some soils. They behaved well and made satisfactory strides in their learning. Teaching is satisfactory, with occasional good teaching. In the best teaching, pupils were engaged quickly and questions used to encourage learning. In Year 6, for instance, these features aided pupils' learning about the use of identification keys in biology. In another Year 6 lesson, this work was effectively supported by the use of ICT. Pupils' previous work sometimes shows an important weakness. There is an overuse of undemanding worksheets for pupils to complete or colour. These introduce the basic areas to be learnt but in an uninteresting way. These worksheets do not challenge more able pupils sufficiently. Even when pupils are engaged in practical tasks, insufficient thought is given to raising the challenge for these pupils. The planning to develop pupils' scientific skills is not sufficiently well thought out to ensure the gradual development and use of them. Pupils with special educational needs are often well supported and generally make at least satisfactory progress. Assessment is recognised as an area for improvement. The coordinator is introducing sheets that can be used for assessing pupils' work in each area of study during the year. When fully in use, these should give a good picture of each pupil's scientific knowledge. There is less focus on the assessment of pupils' investigative skills. There has not been a consistent and regular analysis of pupils' answers in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests. The deputy headteacher is developing whole school procedures to aid the setting of more challenging targets in science. Most pupils' work is marked, and some comments are detailed and helpful.

59. The curriculum is now planned using national guidance, but the order of the units does not make the best use of the time available. Some lessons are too long and pupils lose interest, while on other occasions teachers struggle to include all the planned work in sufficient depth in sessions that are too short. Insufficient attention is given to how to develop pupils' scientific skills in a logical way from Year 1 and to ensure each is developed sufficiently. Similarly not all resources are used effectively to aid learning, for instance although the school has a microscope which enables images to be displayed on a computer screen, it was not employed during the soil investigation. The excessive use of worksheets restricts pupils' extended descriptive writing and the opportunities for developing a range of practical investigations planned by the pupils. Examples of good use of mathematical skills include bar charts of hand spans and line graphs of the length of an elastic band as weights are added. Progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Standards have not risen significantly, and weaknesses remain in the areas of assessment and the amount of high attainment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well.
- Teachers are confident using new technology and they teach well.
- The subject is led and managed well.
- Pupils work enthusiastically in the computer suite.
- There has been good improvement in provision since the last inspection.

- Pupils have too few opportunities to use computers in other subjects.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

60. There is a suitable programme for the teaching of ICT in the computer suite and this is reflected in the average standards all pupils attain by the end of Years 2 and 6. All pupils achieve well. The teaching of ICT skills is consistently good or better. Teachers have benefited from extensive training and they use the technology available in the well-appointed computer suite effectively and with confidence. Other adults supporting children in the suite are also confident and give effective support and guidance. All pupils benefit from this support and as a result pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as the other pupils. Pupils' learning in the suite benefits from well-focused and profitable sessions. These lessons are well planned and ensure there is good progression in the development of pupils' skills across all areas of the subject. In class lessons taken in the suite pupils usually work two to a computer. They cooperate well together and this significantly contributes to the good progress they make. Pupils work confidently at computers and they enjoy lessons.

61. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic coordinator. He is a very good teacher of the subject and he supports his colleagues well. Resources and accommodation for ICT have been improved considerably since the last inspection. A new computer suite has been installed with fifteen workstations now being available for pupils to use. Good facilities are available which enable teachers to display a large visual image of the computer screen that they can effectively use in whole class teaching. Each classroom is linked to the Internet by at least one computer enabling pupils to access the World Wide Web to retrieve information, which they do when relevant.

62. An effective programme of staff training has ensured that staff confidence and their competence in teaching ICT skills have been significantly improved. This has effectively contributed to the significantly improved teaching. A start has been made on developing assessment procedures but these are in their infancy. At present pupils' progress is not being systematically assessed and recorded and so it is not yet possible to determine weaknesses in curricular provision.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. Teachers throughout the school make insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils have some opportunities to use the computers in their classrooms for individual or small group work, but very little work was seen in which pupils' learning had been enhanced using ICT. At times, when they are not being used for the direct teaching of skills, teachers also make use of the computers in the suite for work in other subjects, as in a Year 2 numeracy lesson on data handling and in a Year 6 science lesson on the classification of animals.

HUMANITIES

The school's **geography** and **history** provision was not an inspection focus and there is insufficient evidence to make a detailed judgement about the school's provision in these subjects. Evidence available indicates that provision in both subjects is **satisfactory**. The school has a planned curriculum in humanities, which alternates the teaching of history and geography modules. During the inspection, **history** was being taught in only a few year groups and only one lesson was observed, in Year 1. This was a good lesson, in which pupils compared dolls from the past and the present. The teacher skilfully stimulated pupils to use the evidence to deduce which was the oldest doll. Scrutiny of pupils' history books and discussion with pupils indicated that those in Years 5

and 6 had covered life in Victorian times in some depth. In Years 3 and 4, pupils had studied Henry VIII and the Tudors, while younger pupils had enjoyed their work on the Romans in Britain. However, pupils had accomplished too little written work to aid their literacy skills and work was too often done on worksheets, without any extended writing. Presentation of work varied and poor spelling was not always corrected. At the last inspection, standards and achievement in history were judged to be satisfactory, as was teaching, but there was too little sampling of work and monitoring of teaching. Standards now are average by the end of Year 2, but below average by the end of Year 6, mainly because of limited literacy skills. There is still little sampling of work or teaching. In geography there was little evidence of pupils' work, as it was not taught in most classes during the previous half term. However, work was available from pupils in the two Year 6 classes and it appears that pupils are attaining average standards. An examination of teachers' planning for the subject shows that curricular coverage is satisfactory across all years.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good and they learn with enthusiasm and interest.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Leadership of the subject is good.
- Writing skills are not sufficiently well promoted.
- There are few assessment procedures and no opportunity for the monitoring of teaching and learning.

Commentary

64. At the end of Years 2 and 6 achievement is satisfactory, though pupils do not complete sufficient written work. Standards are in line with the expectations of the syllabus. This is similar to the situation at the time of the last inspection. Improvements in teaching are now improving learning. Pupils show enthusiasm in the lessons and learn much about the customs, festivals and symbolism of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. They distinguish moral concepts and accept the idea of consideration for others, as well as learning to empathise with other faiths. Pupils talk confidently about other religions, using the specific vocabulary correctly.

65. Teaching of the subject is good, and very good in some lessons, where achievement is enhanced by the attention given to writing skills. Teachers took pains to build a quiet and reflective atmosphere in which pupils could respond thoughtfully and explore their own feelings and ideas. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson in which pupils were learning that Christians believe that Jesus is God's gift to the world and that other religions regard God's gifts in the same light. This discussion led skilfully to the pupils exploring what giving meant to them and what it means to wait expectantly. Another good lesson in Year 2 used the concept of the importance of light in many religions to remind pupils that light is the symbol of darkness being taken out of our lives. Pupils with special educational needs and those from different ethnic backgrounds are fully included in all the lessons and often bring enlightening experiences from their own backgrounds to the discussions.

66. The new co-ordinator of the subject leads it well. She has adapted the planning to meet the needs of the pupils and to cover the relevant objectives. She is a very good role model to both teachers and pupils, injecting a strong element of spirituality into the teaching of the subject, as well as moral and cultural value. Written work is, however, limited and does not promote writing skills well, so that it is not a true reflection of what pupils know. There is still too little opportunity for the monitoring of teaching and learning and assessment is still minimal. There is little evidence of ICT being used to support the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The school's **art and design** and **design and technology** provision was not an inspection focus and there is insufficient evidence to make a detailed judgement about the school's provision in these subjects. Evidence available indicates that provision in both subjects is **satisfactory**. No lessons in **art and design** were observed during the inspection. Displays indicate that standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils have studied the styles of artists from other times and cultures, such as

Kandinsky and van Gogh, and have emulated their styles and techniques in striking work in paint and pastels. However, the scrutiny of pupils' sketchbooks reveals that little work is being done to develop subject skills systematically. There is very little evidence of pencil work in preparation for the development of sketching and drawing skills. This is unsatisfactory. Art and design is linked to other subjects, such as history, but there is very little evidence to suggest that links with ICT are being made. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in art and design is under-developed and there is no evidence of the co-ordinator monitoring the subject. However, art and design appears in the school's improvement plan in the near future. Only one lesson was observed in **design and technology**. Discussions with pupils, observations of displays and looking at the small amount of pupils' work, showed that they are gaining experience of joining together a range of different materials using glue, staples, and sewing. They are developing the expected skills through making a range of objects using different materials such as fabric, card, paper and polystyrene. Older pupils enjoy designing and making money containers, joining the materials together with glue or stitching. Apart from biscuit making by Year 5, little evidence was available for Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress in designing and making different types of puppets, because they have taken apart puppets to see how they work and how they were put together. This disassembling technique has provided them with an insight into the construction techniques and helped them make decisions about their own. The improvements in pupils' work show that the quality of teaching is good. The good teaching in the lesson observed ensured pupils were wholehearted about their task and concentration levels were high. Pupils with special educational needs were very well supported to enable them full access to this challenging task. Good progress was made because they liked the activity and tried hard. The lesson ended with an appreciation of all pupils' efforts, and a discussion to see what if anything they would change to improve their puppet.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A new policy and detailed curricular planning have been introduced.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils enjoy singing; they sing strongly and in tune.
- Assessment procedures are not developed sufficiently.
- Extra-curricular provision makes a positive contribution to the development of pupils' skills.

Commentary

67. A policy and a scheme of work are in place. These are improvements since the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils are reaching standards in singing that are in line with national expectations. In assemblies, pupils in Years 1 to 2, and those in Years 3 to 6, sing strongly and in tune. They sing with enthusiasm but remain controlled. The words of their songs are clearly enunciated, and they sing sincerely and with feeling, reflecting the meaning of the lyrics.

68. Good teaching and learning are now leading to good achievement. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress in distinguishing the duration of sounds made by themselves and by instruments, because the quality of teaching is good. There is a strong sense of purpose and pupils are 'kept on their toes' by frequently changing activities in the lesson. They are enthusiastic and excited by the activities but remain well behaved and on task. They listen extremely carefully as sounds are passed around a circle, copying the rhythm patterns of long and short sounds accurately. Their singing is dynamic and tuneful. At one point they drop the volume of sound to a whisper to create a suitable

atmosphere. Sometimes the first words of a line or phrase are not as clear as the rest. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported throughout the lesson so they make good progress. They take a full part in all the activities and particularly like the last action song because it dances along with a strong pulse at a good pace and is fun.

69. Year 4 pupils make good progress when singing in two parts for the first time because the teacher uses his very good subject expertise well, for example he shows them how the melodies rise and fall and fit together using a graphic score. They willingly practise and listen carefully to each other to ensure the two melodies fit together correctly. In Year 5, pupils enjoy singing an African song in Bambara, designed to accompany complex drumming and dancing patterns. This is very challenging but they persevere willingly and reach a high standard through effort and concentration. During the lesson they make good progress and their achievement is high because the quality of teaching is good and they are extremely motivated. Pupils with special educational needs throw themselves into this demanding task and achieve as well as their classmates. Standards in singing in Years 3 to 6 are now in line with national expectations. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection.

70. Formal assessment procedures have not yet been established. Pupils performing on instruments and the components of composing and evaluating were not observed in the lessons seen. The co-ordinator is part-time and has not had time to conduct formal monitoring of teaching, learning and the curriculum. This is in the action plan for music. Opportunities are being missed at assemblies to enrich pupils' listening skills, and to extend their knowledge of music from other times and cultures, because music is not being played as they come in to and depart from the hall.

71. Good extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum. There are regular concerts at Christmas and at the end of the summer term. Two successful choirs practise during lunchtimes preparing for performances to parents, and there is an annual residential visit to a centre, which specialises in musical activities. About 30 pupils take lessons from visiting peripatetic teachers in strings, woodwind, brass and guitar. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have access to these.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, and are aided by good attitudes and behaviour.
- Regular 'Fit for Learning' sessions improve pupils' fitness levels.
- Pupils develop good tactical skills.
- Physically disabled pupils are well supported and fully involved.

Commentary

72. Pupils have access to a good physical education curriculum, which covers all the required elements, and includes daily 'Fit for Learning' sessions. These 15-minute sessions are used each day to develop a range of skills, raise fitness levels and to aid learning in other subjects during the afternoon. Good teaching helped pupils develop their ball control skills. Pupils' skills of throwing and catching improve because of good teaching of the skills involved and effective assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of different pupils. From Year 2 onwards pupils begin to develop a good understanding of the need for rules and fair scoring systems, with older pupils having a good

understanding of the tactical element in their games. Pupils enjoy their physical education sessions and show good attitudes, including in the 'Fit for Learning sessions'. They behave well and this helps to ensure good achievement. Great care is taken to involve pupils with physical disabilities. In a lesson observed, a girl joined in the warm up by moving around in her 'walker' and then practised movements and games skills on the floor. Her partner supported her very well, joined in fully and looked after her welfare. A good range of extra-curricular activities, including tennis, cross country running and netball extend pupils' skills well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social and health education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good achievements of children in the nursery and reception are developed well throughout the school.
- Very good relationships, especially racial harmony, are evident.
- There is a strong sense of school community and the development of moral issues.
- Limited opportunities exist for the development of pupils' independence and awareness.

Commentary

73. A strong caring ethos and a committed approach to pupils' personal development by all members of staff successfully ensure pupils' strong moral awareness. They build well on the early start made in nursery and reception and deal sensitively with any issues that arise and any problems encountered by pupils. The very good relationships and excellent racial harmony are testament to the school's success. The recently appointed co-ordinator is reviewing the current policy and programme for personal, social and health education. This currently provides appropriate work on diet, health, sex and relationships, drugs and personal safety. The use of 'Circle Time' discussion and specific lessons helps pupils develop a safe and healthy life style, gain confidence and develop relationships with others. In a Year 3 lesson observed pupils were learning effectively about choices and owning their own behaviour. They reflect sensibly with a range of comments such as "If you are really annoyed punch a cushion" or "Talk to someone if you are upset". The very good inclusion of pupils from the Resource Centre helps pupils appreciate the needs and feelings of others well. The provision of regular residential trips helps pupils' personal development and independence, however they are given limited opportunities to develop their personal qualities, an appreciation of being a good citizen and to contribute their views about school life.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
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	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
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	3
The governance of the school	3
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).