

INSPECTION REPORT

MORTON TRENTSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gainsborough, Lincolnshire

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120464

Headteacher: Miss Julie Norbron

Lead inspector: Mr Geoff Cooper

Dates of inspection: 12 – 14 January 2004

Inspection number: 260518

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:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	209
School address:	Crooked Billet Street Morton Gainsborough Lincolnshire
Postcode:	DN21 3AH
Telephone number:	01427 613 472
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Melanie Bullock
Date of previous inspection:	20 September 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Morton Trentside Primary School admits pupils from the village of Morton and increasingly from the wider community of Gainsborough. Pupils come from a very wide range of social backgrounds. Few pupils take a free school meal, partly because the local education authority has no arrangements for providing a cooked school meal. Records show that overall attainment on entry to the school varies widely from year to year. On balance, attainment on entry is broadly average. Pupil numbers have grown since the previous inspection and are currently stable at 210. Numbers of boys and girls are approximately equal. Almost all pupils are of a white British origin, and all speak English at home. The incidence of identified special educational needs, including the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, is average. The most commonly identified learning difficulty is delay in acquiring the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. A few pupils have specific barriers to learning, such as communication difficulties or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Few pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual time of joining or leaving. A distinctive feature of the establishment is that it is a 'Chance to Share' school, with community use of the field and parts of the premises out of school hours. The school recently gained 'Investors in People' status. In 2002 an improvement in National Curriculum test results was recognised with a Schools Achievement Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23647	Mr GW Cooper	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Citizenship Special educational needs
14061	Mr LV Shipman	Lay inspector	
32620	Mr O Davis	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology History Geography Religious education English as an additional language
11419	Mrs PJ Underwood	Team inspector	Foundation stage Mathematics Music Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Morton Trentside Primary School is an improving school, which provides good value for money because the cost of educating each pupil is low. The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards were broadly average in the subjects inspected. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are good. Teaching and learning are good. An appropriate curriculum is very effectively enriched by extra-curricular activities. Leadership and management, including the contributions of the governing body and key staff, are good. The school ensures that pupils benefit from a wide range of learning opportunities.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very strong leadership by the headteacher is complemented by the skills of governors and the commitment of the whole staff.
- In recent years National Curriculum test results at ages seven and eleven have improved more rapidly than the national trend of improvement.
- Pupils are well taught, and learn well as a result.
- Targets for pupils with learning difficulties are not always clear and precise.
- Opportunities are missed to develop pupils' thinking and practical skills in mathematics and science.

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. National Curriculum test results are higher. The school has responded well to the key issues of the previous inspection. Standards in English and information and communication technology (ICT) are better. Assessment is more rigorous. Strategic planning and financial control are well managed. Overall, provision has been maintained or improved in all areas of school life.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	D	A	A
Mathematics	B	E	D	D
Science	A*	E	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.*

Achievement is at least satisfactory throughout the school. It is good for children in the Foundation Stage¹ and satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. Achievement is sound in reading, writing, mathematics and science. As the table above shows, results in National Curriculum tests vary considerably from year to year, largely because of variations in pupils' attainment on entry to the school. In addition, the nature and extent of pupils' special educational needs varies from one year to another. The A* for science in 2001 indicates a high point in achievement when science results were in the highest five per cent nationally. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress, and those with special educational needs achieve well because they receive good teaching and very skilled support in the classroom. Standards are good in English and are improving in mathematics and science, where they are satisfactory, although further improvement is necessary, particularly in practical and investigative work. Standards in ICT, which were criticised at the previous inspection, are satisfactory and improving. In the work seen, no significant differences

¹ The Foundation Stage: in this school, the children in the Reception Year.

were noticed between boys' and girls' achievement, nor in the achievement of year groups other than the current Reception class.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good, as a result of effective provision by the school. Attendance is very good and punctuality good. Pupils are very interested in their work and relate very well to adults and other pupils. Behaviour is good both in the classroom and beyond it.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Good teaching ensures that pupils learn well, with the result that achievement and standards are improving, although there are some continuing weaknesses. In the Foundation Stage children get off to a good start in their learning. This is built on well in the rest of the school. Particular strengths throughout the school are an insistence on good behaviour, good use of the skills of learning support assistants, and the way teachers ensure that all pupils are included in the learning. Because their motivation for learning is strong, most pupils rapidly acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding. There are continuing inconsistencies in the way work is marked, opportunities are provided for the development of practical skills and in planning appropriate work for different ages of pupils. These factors have a bearing on overall achievement.

The curriculum meets national requirements and is satisfactory overall, although there are some weaknesses in planning. It is extended very well through activities out of school hours, and by visitors to the school. Foundation Stage children enjoy a good curriculum. Because they are very well supported in lessons, provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, despite some lack of precision in the targets for their learning. Care, guidance and support are good. Adults and pupils work in a positive, clean and safe environment. The school works well with parents, other educational establishments and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has led the school very well since the previous inspection. In most respects the governing body plays a full role in the work of the school and meets its legal obligations. Other key staff have clearly defined roles, which they fulfil well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

With few exceptions, parents and pupils are well satisfied with the school. Parents are particularly pleased that their children like school and benefit from good arrangements for settling in when they first arrive. Some parents feel the need to be better informed about how their child is getting on, although the school makes arrangements for this that are similar to those in most schools. A minority of parents and pupils believe that there is too much homework. Inspectors feel that the amount of homework is broadly appropriate. Pupils are particularly pleased with the work of the school council in making their views heard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Match the planning of lessons more precisely to pupils' ages and prior attainment.
- Ensure that targets for the learning of pupils with special educational needs are precise and time limited.
- Plan consistently for the development of pupils' practical and investigative skills in mathematics and science.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good in the Reception Class. Achievement is satisfactory overall through Years 1 to 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress. The results of National Curriculum tests vary considerably from year to year and from subject to subject. In the work seen, attainment was broadly average overall, although above average in English at the ages of seven and eleven and above average in mathematics at age seven.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start in their learning and achieve well.
- Achievement is satisfactory because pupils get the tasks and support they need to enable them to build successfully on their prior learning. However, achievement is affected by a lack of opportunities to use practical and investigative skills sufficiently and by a mismatch of some tasks to pupils' ages.
- The results of National Curriculum tests are rising faster than results are nationally when pupils are seven and eleven.
- Because there is very good support for pupils who find learning difficult, these pupils make good progress and achieve well.

Commentary

1. Children enter school with knowledge, understanding and skills similar to those expected for their age, although this varies considerably from year group to year group and from individual to individual. Children in Reception make good progress. They are well on target to achieve the expected goals² in the areas inspected – personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Children achieve well overall because they are very well taught and learning opportunities are good.
2. The most recent results of National Curriculum tests are tabulated below. At the end of Year 2 they show an overall rising trend that compares well with results nationally. Results at the end of Year 6 are significantly better for 2003 than for 2002.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.6 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.8 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.6 (17.4)	16.3 (16.5)

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

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.3 (25.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.4 (24.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.6 (26.8)	28.6 (28.3)

² Expected goals: the Early Goals are the targets agreed nationally for the learning of children by the end of the Reception Year.

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The school's results in National Curriculum tests have been rising recently and the rate of improvement is above the national trend when pupils are seven and eleven. For seven year olds, results in 2003 were above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. The results of teacher assessments in science were also well above average. For eleven year olds in the same year, results were well above average in English but below average in mathematics and science. When the results for seven year olds are compared to schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, reading was average, writing well above average and mathematics above average. When the results of eleven year olds are considered in the light of their results when they were seven, progress in English is well above average, in mathematics below average and in science well below average. While this group of pupils made very good progress in English, their progress in mathematics and science was below that expected. In some measure this is accounted for by the fact that achievement in English was a primary target of the school improvement plan but at that stage mathematics and science were not. Mathematics is the primary target of the current plan and there is evidence of improvement. There are some differences in the achievement of boys and girls in tests. The differences are inconsistent although at age eleven, girls do better than boys. These gender differences were not apparent in the work seen during the inspection.
4. Standards in English have improved recently and much of this improvement is the result of added rigour in teaching but also it is a mark of the success of a well-managed and sharply focused school development plan. Inspection evidence suggests that the improvement in National Curriculum test results is being sustained in the classroom. Boys make good progress in English because teachers have good strategies to make lessons interesting for them. Standards in mathematics are also improving, although mathematics is a more recent target of school development planning and there has been insufficient time for these outcomes to be seen in test results. While pupils' computational skills are developing well, they are less adept at solving problems and applying their skills to practical contexts. It is a similar situation with science. Test results have been comparatively low recently. However, the work seen is showing clear signs of improvement. They are less secure in developing the language and skills necessary to devise their own investigations. However, some of the developmental work going on in mathematics is also having an impact on science.
5. Significant improvement is found in ICT. Provision was a point of criticism at the previous inspection. The school has a new computer suite and pupils now have access to the full curriculum in ICT. There is still scope to increase the structured and planned use of ICT across the curriculum. Standards in religious education match the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and provide good support to pupils' personal development through spiritual and cultural awareness. The individual examples of work seen in other subjects were at least of the expected standards for pupils' ages. There is a growing good use of literacy skills across the curriculum and some evidence of the impact of the use of numeracy skills.
6. There are no pupils in the school learning English as an additional language. Higher attaining pupils make the progress expected of them. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well. Although some targets on learning plans are very general, teachers and other adults working in the classroom support pupils with special educational needs very well. As a result, they make good progress, reaching levels that are good given their prior attainment. Some targets for the achievement of Year 6 pupils in 2003 were missed, especially for the expected standard in mathematics and others exceeded, especially targets for higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics. Until recently, the school had no consistent strategy for setting precise targets against prior attainment. Currently, pupils are well on track to achieve the challenging targets set for them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Levels of attendance are very good because of good procedures to promote punctuality and regular attendance. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are good. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The result is that pupils have positive attitudes towards others and increasingly mature self-esteem.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils arrive punctually and quickly settle down to their work.
- Attendance is very good.
- Standards of behaviour both around the school and in lessons are generally good. Nearly all the parents confirm this.
- The school's promotion of positive relationships is very good. This is a fully inclusive school.
- The pupils are happy and enjoy the responsibilities allocated to them.

Commentary

7. Many of the younger pupils come with their parents, whilst others now take advantage of the 'walking bus'. Because of the efficiency of the school's systems, attendance is well above the national averages. Very good attendance has a positive effect on pupils' achievements. Recently there has been some unauthorised attendance by a very small number of pupils. The school is working well with the education welfare officer, the parents and other agencies to enforce the importance of attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

8. Once into their classes, the pupils quickly settle into class routines. For example, prior to registration they read quietly or chat with their teacher. This helps improve their standards in literacy. Registration is taken quickly and this influences the pupils' overall attitudes to learning.
9. Behaviour in lessons is generally of a good standard, especially in the Foundation Stage, where it is very good. Good teaching and good classroom management conform to the very effective whole school policy on behaviour. There are isolated pockets of restlessness by small groups of pupils. However, this does not affect the flow of lessons or the learning opportunities of others. For those pupils with special education needs there is very good level of support.
10. In playtime or around the school, standards of behaviour and courtesy are consistently good. Pupils take initiative by opening doors, allowing adults to go first or happily engaging adults in conversation without being intrusive. The School Council is confident that their input is helping improve the school. They enjoy their role in helping others, setting examples or ensuring that playtime behaviour is free of aggression. In their view every pupil is treated fairly and given full opportunities irrespective of background. For example, special mathematics lessons are provided to support lower ability mathematics groups. Pupil exclusion is rare although one pupil was excluded for one day last year. The absence of graffiti, litter or recent vandalism shows that the pupils respect their school and property. The positive features of pupils' personal development happen because the school builds well on values taught at home. There have been improvements since the previous inspection and the

issues identified at that inspection have been addressed successfully. There are no significant weaknesses. However, one or two parents would like re-assurance that behaviour issues in class are being dealt with effectively.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
177	1	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. It is well supported by good teaching and learning, good provision for the personal development of pupils, including a very good programme of study in personal, social, health and citizenship education. The school takes good care of its pupils, ensuring a good climate for learning. The progress of pupils is tracked carefully. A limitation lies in provision for pupils' understanding of life in a culturally rich and diverse society.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is satisfactory. The quality of teaching has a strong impact on achievement, where standards are rising consistently. However, achievement is affected negatively where some lessons are not as good as others.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a clear idea of what makes a good lesson. However, there is insufficient consistent focus through the school on developing pupils' practical and investigative skills in mathematics and science and some occasional mismatch of tasks to pupils' ages.
- The most consistent strengths in teaching are insistence on high standards of behaviour and the use made of the skills of additional adults supporting learning in and out of the classroom.
- While there are some very good strategies for marking and questioning, there are inconsistencies across the school, which have a negative effect on achievement.
- Pupils' good response to lessons makes them good learners.
- The school strives to include all pupils in all learning opportunities.
- Teaching is very good in the Reception Class.
- Pupils who find learning difficult achieve well because they get very good support.

Commentary

11. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen is shown in the table below.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	16	6	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons. As fewer than 30 lessons were seen, no percentages are given as the statistic becomes unreliable at that level.

12. Across the school, teachers understand what makes a good lesson: effective planning, good relationships, a brisk manner that keeps pupils attentive and focused and interesting, engaging activities. Particularly strong throughout the school are the strategies teachers use to ensure that all pupils are learning. There are some restless and occasionally noisy pupils but this is effectively managed and pupils get a good volume of meaningful work completed. Generally, behaviour is good and sometimes, where a lesson is particularly stimulating, it is very good. The other consistent strength is the way teachers plan with additional adults supporting lessons to make best use of their considerable skills. Most, but not all, of this support is given to those who find learning difficult. For those with identified learning needs and for those who find concentration and proper classroom behaviour difficult, this is very good provision to ensure the continuity of their learning and achievement. Children in the Reception Class achieve well because the quality of teaching ensures their good progress toward the expected goals for learning.
13. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. They enjoy their relationships with their teachers and other pupils. They work well together and concentrate on their tasks. Even when a minority are noisy, it is usual that they are discussing the task and their knowledge and understanding. The difficulty is that often they use outside voices instead of classroom conversation voices. Because pupils respond well to tasks and activities, because most listen well and develop appropriate understanding, it is rare that any time is wasted in setting to work. Because pupils are well engaged in their learning, they make progress that is at least satisfactory and most achieve according to their capabilities. There is particularly good acquisition of literacy skills throughout the school and pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 are making good progress in their achievement in mathematics. Teachers plan well for the range of different abilities in each class and that means that all pupils are included in the learning opportunities offered. Of particular note is the progress made by pupils who find learning difficult.
14. Teaching in the Reception Class is characterised by very happy and cheerful relationships, a clear intention to promote pupils' learning across each of the areas of learning for children of this age and a great deal of effectively applied knowledge of the learning styles of young children. There is very good teamwork between the teacher and those who support in the classroom. Children get off to a good start in their learning.
15. Assessment is satisfactory overall. While there is very good practice in some classes to challenge pupils through questioning and to promote their further intellectual involvement, some questioning is about factual content, rather than challenging pupils to explain what they think and know. Equally, there is very good marking in some year groups, where effort, endeavour and accuracy are acknowledged and praised, and where the marking makes further demands of pupils' thinking and extending what has been learned. Sometimes, in other classes, pupils' endeavour is acknowledged only by a tick with no comment to praise, correct or set further targets and challenges.
16. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. There is consistently good teaching in literacy and numeracy, so that pupils acquire and use basic skills in good measure. The improvements since the previous inspection are due to several features: the continuous professional development of staff to enhance their teaching skills, the effective use of school development planning, the extension and development of the role of the subject leader and an added rigour to the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management.

The curriculum

The school's curriculum is good in the Foundation Stage, where good planning takes account of the six areas of learning. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall. It is broad, balanced and inclusive, meeting the needs of all pupils in school. However, there are areas for development in making opportunities for practical and investigative skills and in ensuring lessons fully match the needs of pupils of different ages. All National Curriculum subjects are taught and statutory

requirements for the teaching of religious education and collective worship are met. The school provides very good opportunities for enriching pupils' learning. The accommodation is good and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's provision for pupils' personal development and for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- There are some shortcomings in the way that subjects other than English and mathematics are organised and taught.
- The curriculum is very well enriched by a good range of additional activities, visits and visitors.

Commentary

17. Improvements have been made in the curriculum since the previous inspection. The school has taken account of the need to ensure curriculum balance. For example, pupils are having more experience of using ICT in the newly developed computer suite and this is having a positive impact on their achievement in this subject. Links are made between subjects and pupils are encouraged to develop their literacy and speaking and listening skills in subjects other than English. Some improvements have been made in the way that the school is preparing its pupils to live in a multi-cultural society, but more could be done in presenting pupils with positive images of people from different cultures. The time spent on investigative mathematics and science remains insufficient for pupils to develop the required skills in problem solving.
18. The school provides very well for pupils' personal development and for pupils with special educational needs. A full and rich programme of study provides very well for personal, social, health and citizenship education. This includes provision for sex education where appropriate and lessons on the beneficial and harmful effects of drugs use and misuse. Circle time³ has a strong impact on pupils' ability to relate to and understand each other. The very good provision for pupils with special needs is the result of the determination of school leadership to support pupils effectively. Teachers plan well for the needs of all their pupils. Particularly for those pupils who find learning difficult, support is well targeted on pupils' specific needs. The school makes very good use of the skills of its support teachers and learning support assistants. This provides very well for pupils with special educational needs and ensures that they achieve well. However, although the school has effective systems for managing special educational needs, the targets on some programmes for learning are very general. A lack of precision and time constraints means some targets are not achievable in the period of time available between reviews, making it necessary to repeat some targets.
19. There are some shortcomings in the way the work in the subjects other than English and mathematics is organised and conducted. Although all classes contain single age pupils, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, Years 5 and 6 are taught using the same topics. This is organised on a two-year cycle. Although pupils are given the same topics it is intended that the work will be appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of pupils in the different year groups. In practice, some of the tasks set are not planned on the basis of previous learning and are teaching the same skills and knowledge to all pupils irrespective of ability or age. Consequently, in some lessons older and higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged and younger and lower-attaining pupils find the tasks too difficult. For example, in the science lessons taught separately to Year 1 and Year 2, a relatively abstract task on circuit diagrams was sufficiently challenging for Year 2 pupils but many Year 1 pupils found the work too difficult. The subject leaders have produced detailed planning for their subjects and check outcomes. However, this monitoring is not thorough enough to ensure that pupils are working at the appropriate level.

³ Circle time: when pupils sit in a circle taking turns to speak about and listen to the views, opinions and feelings of others.

20. The range of visits and other activities to enrich and support the curriculum is very good. Every subject has some enrichment activities to enhance pupils' learning. For example, visits to theatres, museums, galleries, exhibitions and visits by theatre groups and music groups and participation in local festivals and 'New Opportunities Funding' Arts at the local secondary school encourage pupils' interests in the humanities and the arts as well as their cultural development. Visitors come into school to talk about their work in the community or to teach pupils new skills. The geography curriculum is enhanced through field studies and environmental work and through opportunities for older pupils to take part in a residential visit to Gibraltar Point. The school offers a good range of lunchtime clubs such as recorders, dance, choir, netball, football and badminton.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. Their views are sought and valued to help shape the school's future. The pupils' support and guidance, including that for pupils with learning difficulties, are good. The school has maintained the high standards of care identified at the previous inspection. Parents and carers appreciate this high quality of care their children receive. The quality of care provided has a positive impact on achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety (including first aid) and procedures for child protection are good.
- The school collects a good deal of tracking data, which is now used effectively to help and guide the pupils' progress.
- Since its formation, the School Council successfully reflects pupils' views and has a positive effect in shaping the school's future.
- There is room for sharpening some of the targets set for the learning of pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

21. The school has adopted locally agreed procedures with respect to child protection. At present the headteacher is the designated member of staff. However, a member of staff is due to be fully trained and will undertake that important role. The headteacher will then revert to supporting the role. All members of staff have been trained in many aspects of child welfare, including behaviour, child protection and relationships.
22. Health and safety, including risk assessments are properly recorded. All members of staff have been trained in first aid and the accident book used correctly. The Local Authority has recently undertaken a comprehensive health and safety audit. A parent governor has recently attended a health and safety course.
23. Many members of the support staff, such as the midday supervisors, are mothers with children at this school. Because of their close working relationships with pupils or teaching staff, any concerns or trends are quickly picked up and dealt with. As a consequence, pupils are confident in reporting concerns to adults. The school council represents the pupils with increasing confidence and maturity. For example, the house point system was replaced by class point system - awarded per pupil. The council argued that this has resulted in greater self-esteem and personal achievement.
24. A very comprehensive 'whole school' behaviour policy has been ratified. Pupils are fully aware of the very clear rewards or sanctions and consider them fair. For those pupils with particular education needs, the special needs co-ordinator has very good existing links with outside agencies. For example, Education Behaviour Support in Schools visits and works effectively with the staff, pupils and their parents. The school retains a racial incident book

but to date it has not been necessary to make an entry. Strengths in this area of school life have a positive impact on pupils' standards of achievement, both in their academic attainment and in their personal qualities.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and with other school and the wider community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, the parents have a positive view of the school.
- Links with the community to enrich the curriculum are good.
- Links with the pre-school groups, the senior schools or colleges are good, ensuring the continuity of the pupils' education.

Commentary

25. Despite some staffing changes, the school has maintained its good links with parents. The parent questionnaire data is more positive and the return rate higher than at the time of the previous inspection. A few parents would like better information regarding their child's progress, for example at parents' evenings. Some would like clearer newsletters. Inspectors believe that the information provided is similar to that provided in most schools.
26. There are very positive links between pupils, parents and the school during the induction process into the Foundation Stage. Exchange visits between the school and local pre-school groups ensure the smooth transition into Reception. There is a 'My Special Book' for both parents and pupils. As a consequence, many more parents help voluntarily in the Foundation Stage and this has a positive impact on children's confident learning.
27. The school has tried very hard to improve the overall links with all the parents. Workshops to explain modern teaching methods, as in the teaching of numeracy have been held and with some success. At a parent's suggestion, a formal 'suggestion box' was created and the school does respond to those contributions. The school is aware that there is more to be done to encourage more parents into the life of the school. A parent representative for each class was proposed, but very few parents responded.
28. Although the school has not circulated to parents a questionnaire of its own, parent governors and others keep the staff fully informed of the views of parents.
29. Routine information is good in quality. The annual report clearly indicates targets for improvement in academic work and the pupils' personal, social and citizenship development. A small but significant number of parents feel that too much homework is set. One or two parents stated that teachers do not always respond to comments in the reading logs. Reading at home is still encouraged and certificates are awarded where there has been significant improvement in reading standards. Inspection evidence shows that homework to support teaching and learning is satisfactory.
30. Parent governors and the enthusiastic Friends of Morton School involve parents and the community in fund raising events. Profits from these events go towards much needed resources to improve the quality of education. For example, library furniture and books were bought. A number of parents help in a voluntary capacity, for example with reading, and this makes a significant contribution to support teaching and learning.
31. For those parents whose children require special support for learning difficulties, the school ensures they are fully involved in reviews. For those pupils transferring to the senior schools, well-established links fully involve the school, parents and pupils.

32. A wide range of extra curricular activities involving the wider community enriches the curriculum. There are visits to local landmarks or they receive outside visitors, such as grandparents, or the Police. Being in an area that is largely typical of a single culture, the school is anxious to develop the pupils' perception of our contemporary multi-cultural society. To that end, the school is arranging visits to a Mosque and a Synagogue. The school is aware that more needs to be done in this respect.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the head teacher is very good and is well supported by the effective leadership of other key members of staff. The governance of the school is good and all statutory requirements are fully met. Good management and efficient organisation ensure that the school runs smoothly and calmly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is an informed 'critical friend'. However, governors have no formal strategy for school visits.
- The monitoring role of subject leaders, including the non-core subjects, is well defined and particularly in English, mathematics and ICT is having an impact on raising standards.
- An effective and inclusive school development planning process provides the school with clear priorities for the future.

Commentary

33. The governing body is well organised and manages its work efficiently through relevant committees and delegated responsibilities. All statutory requirements are met. The governors understand the main strengths and weaknesses of the school but have little involvement in its development through planning and strategic thinking. They act as a "critical friend", challenging the decisions made. They monitor the tests results annually. There is no current strategy for formal and systematic focused visits to classrooms to give governors a clearer first-hand understanding of the school's provision. The governors have a good grasp of the financial management of the school and are well supported by administrative staff.
34. The head teacher leads the school very well and all staff are appropriately focused on raising standards, particularly in English, mathematics, ICT and science. The school has a good understanding that more needs to be done to develop the use of ICT and pupils' practical skills in mathematics and science. The clear leadership has resulted in careful analysis of the relevant assessment information and setting appropriate priorities. Good action plans are having a positive effect on raising standards. For example standards in English have already risen and those in mathematics and science are rising. In the previous report the school development plan was criticised for being too long, almost unworkable and with no costings. The present school development plan is clear and concise with few targets and carefully thought out success criteria. This helps staff to focus on the priorities and have success. The plan covers three years so that everyone is aware of where the school is going. It was the head teacher's decision to make the plan brief and workable so that success could be seen by achieving the priorities. Everyone shares the school's vision for the future because all staff are involved in devising it, so all have similar expectations.
35. The head teacher has created a team of teachers who are performing well and who are fully committed to evaluating and improving their work. The leadership of the Senior Management Team is very good. They are very supportive of the head teacher and ensure information passes from the head teacher to the staff and that the head is aware of staff opinion. The subject leaders' monitoring role is well defined. They look at and talk to pupils about their work, check planning and observe lessons. All draw up brief yearly action plans for their subject whether or not the subject is a priority. Teachers plan in teams but this does not

always have a positive effect. For example, two year groups may plan well together to cover the same history topic but do not necessarily refine plans to develop the relevant skills appropriate to pupils' ages.

36. A good feature of the work of the school is the effective strategies it has for self-evaluation. The head teacher regularly observes teachers working with pupils, as do subject leaders. This information is then used to share good practice and set targets for the improvements necessary. Performance management is appropriately linked to a programme for observing teachers and is very effective. There is a strong commitment to continuing professional development for all staff. This supports them in celebrating their strengths and provides further opportunities for training, particularly those relating closely to the priorities highlighted in the school development plan. There have been a number of changes of staff recently. However, this has had a positive effect on the welcoming ethos of the school. The constructive involvement of teaching and support staff in deciding the school's priorities and as members of teams helps all those working in the school to be more confident and committed to the school.
37. Financial management is good and has improved considerably since the previous inspection when financial control was a key issue. All issues raised have now been addressed and the head teacher and chair of finance regularly monitor the budget. Good care and thought go into planning expenditure and to ensuring that good value for money is achieved. Although the balance sheet at the end of the previous financial year (extract shown below) suggests a larger balance of funds than is usual or necessary, significant financial commitment during the year was not accounted for. The actual balance is now significantly less because essential bills have been presented and paid.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	395,190
Total expenditure	392,832
Expenditure per pupil	1,871

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	83,340
Balance carried forward to the next	85,698

EXAMPLES OF OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

Example of outstanding practice

An example of a very good lesson supporting a group of pupils with special educational needs.

This lesson was briskly founded on a purposeful but humorous relationship between the teacher and the pupils. She had a very acute understanding of their personalities and their learning needs. A wide range of strategies was brought to bear. Because she constantly pushed at the boundaries of their prior learning and because she was persistent and lively, they completed the tasks they found challenging to a better standard than they had thought possible. Not only did her skills and engaging manner enable them to achieve a high degree of task satisfaction but, also, the lessons successfully raised their expectations of themselves.

Example of outstanding practice

An example of a very good science lesson that capitalised well on pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

In a preparatory lesson Year 6 pupils had gathered and tabulated a large amount of data about pulse rate. The objective of the lesson was to enter data onto a spreadsheet, make a graph and interpret the information. As the teacher explained the task, pupils made bullet points of the details they needed to remember, making good use of their literacy skills. During the introduction the teacher asked them to explain how to make calculations such as the average using paper methods. Higher-attaining pupils demonstrated to other pupils how computer technology could be used to facilitate computation, presentation and analysis. Because the content of the lesson was well pitched and appropriately challenging, pupils were able to use their own workstations to complete the task. Pupils with difficulties in learning were able to progress because they were very well supported throughout the task.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when provision was satisfactory. Teaching is very good and children are offered a wide range of experiences in all areas of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Reception Class provides a welcoming environment for all children so that they feel happy and secure.
- The quality of teaching is very good because the teacher is knowledgeable, understands the needs of young children and is enthusiastic.
- Children are offered a wide range of activities and experiences to help them achieve or exceed the expected learning goals.
- The formal recording of day-to-day assessment is underdeveloped and needs to involve learning support staff as well as the teacher.

Commentary

38. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Children are admitted to the school in the September before their fifth birthday. Presently there are 30 children in the Reception class, all attending full time. The majority of children have had pre-school experience, often attending the local nursery. There is good liaison between the nursery and the school and the induction process is thorough and appreciated by the parents. Consequently, children settle quickly into the routines of school life.
39. The Reception classroom is spacious with a variety of displays on the walls, showing a range of work by the children. A secure outdoor play area provides for a wide range of activities that become an extension of the classroom. However, because there is no shelter, the area cannot be used during inclement weather.
40. Attainment on entry is broadly average, although evidence from previous baseline assessment for different cohorts shows a great variation in standards. In some cohorts a large proportion of children achieved above average standards and in other cohorts more children achieved below than above average standards.
41. The present cohort is on course to achieve or exceed the expected levels for personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development. No judgements could be made about standards in the other areas of learning - knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development - because insufficient evidence was available during the inspection.
42. The quality of teaching overall is very good. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the needs of the children mean they are provided with a wide range of experiences in all areas of learning. This ensures that they make good progress towards achieving the early learning goals, (nationally agreed levels for children at the end of the reception year). Planning is closely linked to these goals and is a shared activity between the teacher and support staff. Questioning is used effectively to encourage children to develop their speaking skills and extend their vocabulary. Very good relationships give children confidence to respond to adults' questioning and to share their thoughts and opinions. The support given by the learning support assistants for all children, not just those identified as having special

needs, has a positive effect on their learning and helps them to understand and engage in the tasks. Regular assessment is being carried out but there is a need to develop a more formal but easily managed system of day-to-day tracking involving all adults in the classroom.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**. This is reflected in the way children are learning to respect each other, share resources, take turns and play together.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to enhance the children's development and the majority are on course to exceed the expected levels by the end of the Reception year.
- The children achieve well because of very good teaching.
- Very good relationships are being established so that children feel happy and secure.

Commentary

43. The personal, social and emotional development of the current Reception class is already good and so, by the end of the year, the majority are on course to exceed the early learning goals. Most children find it easy to conform to the high expectations of good behaviour set by the staff. Children know the routines well, settle to tasks quickly and with the minimum of fuss, and behave sensibly. Most children are well focused and interested in what they are required to do, concentrate well, even when not directly supervised, and are eager to learn. A calm working atmosphere pervades most sessions. The very good teamwork of the adults provides the children with good role models for co-operation. All adults expect the children to listen carefully and respect the thoughts of others; however, just occasionally, children are very excited, over enthusiastic and call out. Because of the supportive relationships the children are confident to ask for help and feel secure and consequently enjoy coming to school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good and helps to ensure that children achieve well.
- Children are given many opportunities to develop their language skills and extend their vocabulary.
- A good range of planned activities also helps children develop their reading and writing skills.

Commentary

44. Early indications suggest that most children are on course to achieve or exceed the early learning goals for reading, writing and speaking and listening. Children are making good progress in developing their language skills as a result of the all opportunities provided for speaking and listening. Many children are already articulate, confident speakers replying to questions in complex sentences. All staff take every opportunity during activities, particularly directed activities, to develop vocabulary through probing questions and insistence that they use appropriate terminology. For example, during a mathematics session children were extending their knowledge of shape through using correct terminology. During '*circle time*' children had to listen very carefully and only talk when they had the '*toy*'. Most were successful. Children enjoy sharing stories and are making good progress towards reading. The more capable children are becoming more secure in recognising familiar words and using clues to help read new words. The less able sound out letters and find the letters of their name on the page. All handle books with care and enjoy talking about their favourite stories, characters in their books and reciting nursery rhymes. All Reception children have many

opportunities to explore writing, developing their skills through mark making and then beginning to make recognisable letter shapes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good so children make good progress and achieve well.
- Every opportunity is utilised to develop children's counting skills including through the use of number rhymes and songs.
- A wide range of activities is offered to support learning in this area so that children become confident in understanding numbers.

Commentary

45. Because of very good teaching most children are on course to achieve or exceed the early learning goals in this area by the end of their reception year. Adults use every opportunity to develop children's counting skills even during self-chosen activities. Children are confident counting to ten and some above ten. They can name the number before and the number after a specific number. Many are secure in recognising two-dimensional shapes and in using their correct names and are now extending their knowledge to include three-dimensional shapes. Interesting activities such as using three-dimensional shapes for printing patterns are devised. The need to use appropriate vocabulary is stressed so that children are quite happy to talk about a larger triangle or a smaller sphere.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning shows a good range of relevant experiences being provided for the children.
- Children have very limited opportunities to use computers and develop skills.

Commentary

46. There was insufficient opportunity to observe this area of learning but from photographic evidence, looking at children's work and the curriculum plan it is clear that the children are provided with a range of relevant experiences to enhance their understanding of the world. These include exploring the school environment and local area, looking at parts of the body and how to keep healthy. However, children have few opportunities to develop computer skills because there is no computer in the classroom, and they are not timetabled to use the computer suite until the summer term. This is an area for further development to ensure all children can use a computer appropriately.
47. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about provision or standards in **physical development**.
48. Children are given opportunities to develop pencil control through specifically designed worksheets or colouring. Other activities encourage them to use scissors and cut out carefully. There was no opportunity to observe the children enjoying physical education in the Hall, however some children were briefly seen riding wheeled toys. Despite this there was

insufficient evidence collected to make a secure judgement about the standards likely to be achieved.

49. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about provision or standards in **creative development**.
50. Children were observed using three-dimensional shapes to print patterns. Other children were totally involved in role play in the *'Builder's Yard'* where one child was overheard making a *'telephone call'* ordering materials for the *'house'* whilst another explained to the learning support assistant why he was *'digging holes for the walls!'*. Planning shows children experience a range of different media and regularly participate in music lessons.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, especially at the end of Year 6, have improved greatly since the previous inspection, and achievement is good.
- Standards in writing by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have improved and are well above average.
- Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 are improving.
- Teaching is good.
- Speaking and listening skills are developed well within English lessons and throughout the curriculum.
- The assessment and tracking of pupils' attainment and progress are good.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are well supported.
- The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic subject leader.

Commentary

51. Improvement in pupils' writing skills has followed the greater emphasis given to this area throughout the school and as a result of the training and materials produced by the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and has been improved by literacy training, especially in the teaching of grammatical structure and writing. As a result writing is taught more systematically in school. Good teaching strategies to support less confident writers have led to better standards from many pupils. Similar emphasis is now being given to developing pupils' reading skills and standards in reading are improving as a result.
52. Pupils are achieving well in the subject because of the good quality of teaching throughout the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, partly because of the very good support they are given by skilful and knowledgeable learning support assistants. The learning support assistants receive appropriate training and are involved in the week's planning when they meet with the teacher on Monday mornings. Boys make good progress because texts and other resources are chosen to engage their interest, and teachers vary their teaching styles to make the lessons more interesting for them.
53. All the teaching seen was good, with one very good lesson. In a typical lesson, Year 1 pupils were given a very good opportunity to develop their speaking and listening skills discussing with their *'talk partner'*, devising questions for the pupil, in character, in the *'hot seat'*. With some prompting from the teacher, pupils devised open questions so as to elicit more than a *'yes'* or *'no'* response from the character. Pupils displayed considerable empathy for the

characters in the story showing a good understanding of the text and of the motivations of the characters. The guided group work was used well. Whilst the teacher was working with one group on their writing, the learning support assistant was working very well with a group developing their reading skills. The other groups were working independently and were involved in their work because the teacher had set tasks well matched to the pupils' competence and of sufficient interest to engage them.

54. The subject leader monitors teaching and learning through examining teachers' planning, observing lessons, analysing pupils' assessments and scrutinising pupils' work. Work scrutiny is done in conjunction with members of staff so that teachers are aware of the standard of pupils' work in their classes. Assessment information is then used to inform day-to-day planning. Extensive records are kept on the attainments of individual pupils and the progress they are making in reading, writing and spelling. Pupils have their targets in English that they understand and work towards. They are reminded of their targets when practising their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. The subject leader has a clear vision for the development of English based on a good understanding of the pupils' needs and difficulties. Her very good leadership and management and the priority given to the subject in the school development plan are driving the improvements.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum. Pupils' literacy targets are sufficiently precise and are prominently displayed in the classroom. Teachers draw pupils' attention to them when doing work in other subjects. This encourages them to practise their skills and to see their relevance. Speaking and listening skills are encouraged in other subjects through role-play, drama, presentation, and interactive teaching and learning. Reading for gaining information and understanding what they have to do is consistently reinforced. Writing in other subjects is made interesting to motivate pupils to apply themselves. Written work across the curriculum is planned to give pupils opportunities to practise writing in different genres.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good overall and this has helped to improve standards.
- The recently appointed coordinator is enthusiastic, and is keen to bring about improvements.
- Despite their skills in computation, pupils have difficulty understanding problems expressed in words: they lack the necessary skills to extract appropriate information from the problems.
- Opportunities are missed to plan systematically for the use of ICT skills within mathematics lessons.

Commentary

56. Standards are above what is expected for pupils at age seven and in line for pupils at age eleven. The results of the 2003 National Curriculum tests were encouraging for standards at seven. The results of the national assessments for eleven year olds in 2003 were below the national average. Based on their prior attainment when they took the tests in Year 2, the attainment of these pupils was below average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels at age eleven was below average. However, standards seen during the inspection suggest that pupils are on course to achieve standards in line with the national average, an improvement on 2003, when there was a significant number of pupils in the cohort with special educational needs.

57. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on the learning of number. In Years 3 to 6 the pupils' work shows good progress. Typically, the work of lower-attaining pupils is good in quantity and progress and shows the impact of the very good support and well-matched tasks. The setting of appropriate tasks for both higher-attaining pupils and those with special needs provides a good level of challenge at different ability levels. For example, the higher attaining pupils in Year 5 are challenged through aspects of Year 6 work and those with special needs are more focused on Year 4 targets. The lack of appropriate challenge was criticised in the previous report. The pupils' progress from Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall.
58. In a Year 6 lesson pupils enjoy the multiplication tables challenge around the class and finally on the third round they achieve success in less than two minutes. These pupils are confident enough to use brackets and partition two or three digit numbers. The work sample shows an appropriate coverage and good understanding of the four operations – addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. However, some younger pupils find answering problems expressed in words more difficult. They are competent using the four operations but struggle to deduce the appropriate operations from the text. This is an area of weakness.
59. Most Year 2 pupils are confident counting to 100 in fives but less secure counting backwards in fives. They enjoy using fans to show they know which two numbers they must add to find the answer using the idea of five + a bit. For example 8 is 5 + 3 whilst 9 is 5 + 4. About half the class succeed in relating this to two digit numbers and a quarter to numbers above fifty.
60. The quality of teaching is good overall. Pupils are generally well motivated and keen to succeed because teachers are enthusiastic. Questioning is used effectively to extend or reinforce pupils' knowledge. Because relationships between staff and pupils are very good, pupils are confident in responding to questions and to explain how they arrived at their answers, sometimes by demonstrating on the board. One of the strong features of planning is the way appropriate tasks are planned to match the needs of pupils, thus providing challenges for all pupils. This was a weakness highlighted in the previous report and has been addressed. However, there is no systematic planning for computer use within mathematics. This is an area for development. The very good support provided by the learning support assistants benefits not only pupils with special needs but also other groups within the classes. All teachers share the lesson objectives with the pupils, who put them in their books. However, opportunities are missed to use this strategy as an assessment tool by noting whether or not the objective had been achieved.
61. In some lessons the final session or plenary is well used for recapitulation, to resolve any problems identified during the group work or to extend pupils' knowledge. In other lessons this session is rushed and not used effectively. Lessons judged to be satisfactory tended to be rather slow paced and consequently pupils' were not instantly engaged and motivated by the tasks and lost interest and concentration.
62. Although knowledgeable and enthusiastic the subject leader's work is presently no more than satisfactory because of lack of time to develop monitoring. However, despite being in post for only a short time, the subject leader has already identified strengths and weaknesses in the subject through analysis of test results. The most common area of weakness identified throughout the school is the solving of problems expressed in words. Strategies are in place to develop this area and give pupils the necessary skills.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. There is limited evidence of mathematics being used in other areas of the curriculum. Although pupils draw graphs in science and use measurement in design technology, they do not specifically relate these activities to those they perform in mathematics. One example of very good use of computers was observed during a Year 6 science lesson when pupils were collating data and using spreadsheets.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving and are now average across the school.
- Although the school endeavours to teach a practical and investigative approach to science, pupils do not have sufficient regular practical experience of what science is about to promote their curiosity and thinking.
- Subject leadership is good enough to maintain standards and provision for the subject, but responsibility for the subject is held on a temporary basis, and the subject is not currently a focus for development.

Commentary

64. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2003 suggested that standards in science were well above average. Although achievement in the current Year 2 is satisfactory, pupils are not on target to set a similar standard this year. Test results for Year 6 in 2003 indicated a standard below average nationally and well below average compared both with similar schools and the standard achieved by the same pupils' when they were in Year 2. The current Year 6 is doing better than this. Their achievement is satisfactory and they are on target to reach average standards. The improvement in the work seen is the result of sharper teaching throughout the school. Some of the work being done in the development of mathematics is having an impact on teaching in science. Even so, there is some lack of consistency in teaching a scientific methodology and this holds back pupils' scientific thinking and creativity.
65. The school's programme of study for science is well calculated to cover all elements of the National Curriculum. There is a strength in the way teachers plan together. However, currently lessons are not sufficiently tailored to the needs of each year group. Occasionally this brings about a mismatch between content and need: for example, where older pupils have been reasonably expected to complete a relatively abstract task, but the same task has provided too much challenge for pupils one year younger. Although teachers are concerned with teaching scientific prediction and the principles of fair testing, often their questions challenge pupils' knowledge rather than their thinking and skills. An exception was in a Year 6 lesson where the teacher expected the pupils to explain why it was not enough to test each individual's pulse rate once, but that the measurement needed to be taken several times to be scientifically valid. Pupils rose well to the challenge. Elsewhere, because they have been insufficiently prepared in scientific thinking, pupils had to be prompted and given many clues before they were able to think through the principles behind the investigation. Few pupils are in a position of being able to devise their own valid investigations to test a hypothesis.
66. The subject becomes a focus of school development planning in the next academic year. The school knows where its priorities lie. A start has been made through some teachers' identification of key vocabulary to support pupils' thinking and through their insistence on 'using the right words to explain'. It is intended that outside expertise will be called upon to guide the school through a programme of enhancing teacher knowledge to support the development of practical and investigative science. There is some very good practice in marking pupils' work, where the teacher challenges pupils intellectually through asking further questions at the end of the marking comments. Elsewhere, work is sometimes marked only for accuracy of content, indicated with a simple tick, rather than for depth of thinking and engagement. There is some evidence of the use of ICT in science, for example, for sensing sound and temperature and for supporting relatively complex data handling. However, the use of ICT is not yet consistently planned across all year groups.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement in provision and standards has been good since the previous inspection.
- There are occasions when planning does not take sufficiently into account the age of pupils.
- There are good examples of information and communication technology being used across the curriculum but opportunities are missed for consistently planned links across subjects.

Commentary

67. The school has made significant improvements on issues identified in the previous report. Previously, pupils' progress was unsatisfactory due to poor computer facilities. Pupils now have timetabled access to a computer suite and have regular opportunities to develop their ICT skills within a structured programme.
68. The standards pupils achieve are generally as expected for their age, which is an improvement. Attainment is average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils' work held on the computer suite server shows that pupils are covering the full ICT curriculum. The scheme of work is based upon national guidance and contributes to the systematic development of pupils' skills within the school. However, the two-year cycle of topics organised by the school does mean that sometimes pupils are undertaking tasks that are inappropriate for their age or ability. Under these circumstances achievement is not as high as it should be. Examples of pupils' work show they are learning to use ICT for word processing, graphics, multimedia, the Internet and data handling. The teaching of the control and monitoring component of the National Curriculum is not yet fully implemented, but appropriate software has been purchased.
69. The teaching seen was at least satisfactory. Pupils were given clear instructions and demonstrations, using the data projector in the computer suite. They were attentive, well behaved, worked well collaboratively in pairs and used the opportunity to develop and practise their ICT skills. Pupils with special educational needs were included in the lesson through the skilful help of a learning support assistant.
70. The subject is well led and managed. A portfolio of pupils' work is being assembled and will give teachers a good idea of standards in the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Overall, pupils make satisfactory use of their ICT skills in other areas of the curriculum. Some good examples of the use of ICT skills in other areas appear in pupils' folders in the computer room and in other work. A folder belonging to a Year 6 pupil contained ICT work linked to every subject in the curriculum with the exception of physical education. In a science lesson on pulse rates pupils were taken to the ICT suite and used a spreadsheet program to help them record and interpret the data. However, subject leaders and teachers do not do enough to plan opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills across the curriculum systematically.

HUMANITIES

72. In humanities, a limited amount of work was sampled in **history** and **geography**, with only one lesson seen in history and no lesson in geography. It is not possible to make judgements about overall provision in these subjects. There is every indication from pupils' work that standards in both subjects are broadly in line with national expectations. Planning in both subjects follows national guidance to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum.
73. Teaching and learning in the Year 6 history lesson seen were good. The teacher shared the learning objectives with the class. The difference between primary sources and secondary sources was discussed and understood by the pupils. Pupils then went on to use primary

source information to write an account of what life was like for Victorian working children. A small group of pupils with special educational needs worked well with the learning support assistant to complete the task successfully. Achievement in the lesson was good because the good subject knowledge of the teacher enabled her to present quite difficult concepts in a way that pupils could understand.

74. In both subjects visits are used to make the work interesting and relevant. In geography, visits are made in the locality and further afield. Older pupils have the opportunity to join in a residential visit during which they undertake a beach study and compare localities.
75. Subject leaders in history and geography monitor teachers' planning and check samples of pupils' work for curriculum coverage and to ensure that the work set is appropriately differentiated.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are taught to respect the values and beliefs of others.
- The curriculum could be enriched by visits to places of worship and by inviting non-Christian speakers in to discuss their beliefs.

Commentary

76. Pupils reach standards that are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus and achievement is satisfactory. The scheme of work is based on national guidance and provides pupils with opportunities to acquire knowledge about different faiths, including Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. The teaching in school ensures that pupils consider this information in terms of the way we behave towards other people. This is helping pupils to develop respect for the values and beliefs of other people.
77. In a Year 2 lesson in which positive attitudes to others' beliefs and feelings were developed pupils were asked to discuss special memories and to describe things that for them evoked memories and that had emotional associations. Pupils were able to give examples of things significant to themselves. This led to a discussion about the significance of two Christian artefacts, namely the cross and the candle. The discussion was lively and contributed to pupils' spiritual development.
78. The religious education curriculum is well planned and teaching is satisfactory. The local vicar comes in on a regular basis to conduct an assembly. Only visits to Christian places of worship and visits to school by Christian religious leaders enrich the religious education curriculum. Although the school has a good collection of religious objects from a range of religions, there are no visits to or visitors from representatives of other faiths. However, access to these forms of enrichment is difficult given the geographical position of the school.
79. The subject leader provides good leadership and monitors teachers' planning to ensure full curriculum coverage and that the work is appropriate for each year group under the two-year topic programme. However, she has had no opportunities to monitor teaching and learning to enable her to have a clear picture of standards across the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were not a main focus of the inspection but were sampled. Insufficient evidence is available to make secure judgements about standards, achievement, teaching and learning and leadership in these subjects. The monitoring roles of co-ordinators are well developed. Although the school has adopted nationally approved schemes of work in each subject, staff are considering amending some of the schemes to match more closely the needs and development of pupils' skills. A good range of extra-curricular activities has a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment and skills development.
81. In **art and design**, no lessons were seen. Some classes maintain a sketchbook that gives a good indication of the development of their drawing skills. Work in pupils' sketch books and pupils' work on display around the school suggests that standards are broadly average. There is evidence of pupils' using a range of media and working with materials and in three dimensions.
82. Two lessons of **design and technology** were seen. There is clear evidence that a 'design, make and evaluate' process is being taught. Although no design and technology artefacts made by pupils were looked at, photographic and planning evidence shows that pupils are required to create a design to a design brief, identifying materials, fixings, tools and techniques. In the lessons seen, teaching and learning were good. Year 3 and 4 pupils were at an early stage of creating a 'monster' with moving parts, identifying what materials should be used, what parts could move and what mechanism could be used to move the parts. Pupils were accustomed to the planning and thinking process and discussed their ideas productively both with the teacher and in planning groups. Year 5 pupils evaluated the packaging of biscuits as a step in creating their own appropriate packaging for a product. They had a clear idea of the criteria for evaluation and were excited and engrossed by what they were doing. However, much of their evaluation was descriptive and in terms of 'I like...', rather than critical and analytical in terms of 'this is good because...'
83. Evidence from the interview with the co-ordinator shows that all aspects of **music** are taught to pupils throughout the school. Recently teachers received training from a specialist to develop skills for teaching singing. However, when pupils were heard singing in assembly the singing, although tuneful and with clear words, lacked enthusiasm. In a music lesson where the teacher was knowledgeable and enthusiastic pupils were well motivated and enjoyed discussing "Winter", a piece of music composed by Vivaldi. Instrumental lessons are available in violin, brass and guitar. Two recorder clubs are held and pupils are encouraged to play in assembly and demonstrate their skills. The choir regularly performs in the community in the various festivals that are held and in elderly care homes, particularly at Christmas. These opportunities enhance the pupils' music curriculum.
84. In **physical education**, three lessons were seen across the school, all focusing on either dance or basic gymnastics rather than ball skills and games, so it was not possible to make a judgement about standards overall in this subject. In the lessons observed teachers demonstrated appropriate knowledge and encouraged the pupils to try hard and be inventive in building on a sequence of movements. Pupils mostly responded positively to the challenge, working very well together. The reasons for a warm up before each session were stressed, as was the need for safety. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good and includes football, cricket, netball, badminton, athletics and swimming. Pupils participate in competitive inter-school matches and a swimming gala. These activities broaden the pupils' experiences and encourage commitment to the team. The monitoring role of the co-ordinator is well developed. His enthusiasm is having an impact, motivating pupils' to give of their best. Although presently using a national scheme, the school is moving towards finding one that more closely matches the needs of the pupils and the development of their skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in this area underpins much of what the school endeavours to achieve in behaviour, attitudes and the values held by pupils.
- There is a well-structured programme of study that is well supported by all adults working in the school through their work and relationships with pupils.
- As well as benefiting from a great deal of positive discussion, pupils also achieve well through their written work on a range of personal development activities.

Commentary

85. The school regards its provision for pupils' understanding of citizenship and for their personal development as a central element in its aspirations. It is this provision that informs pupils about school expectations of behaviour, relationships and attitudes to work. That the provision is good and effective is seen in the way pupils try hard, get on well with each other and their teachers, and in the lack of behavioural incidents and exclusions. The provision is well managed. It arises from the clarity of vision of the headteacher and senior managers and points the direction for much of the work of the school. Provision is made through dedicated lessons, 'circle time' (where pupils sit in a circle and discuss important issues to do with their personal and social development), science lessons, religious education lessons and assembly. However, there is consistent provision from all staff in the way they work and relate together as role models that match the school's high expectations. The programme fully provides for sex and relationships education, an awareness of the benefits and dangers of drugs, including alcohol and tobacco. It ensures that pupils have a broad understanding of respect and tolerance within society, although more should be done to develop awareness of life in a richly ethnically diverse society. Much of the provision is through discussion, but pupils also make good use of their literacy skills in completing written tasks that reflect their growing maturity and understanding.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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