

INSPECTION REPORT

BROADBOTTOM CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Broadbottom, Hyde

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106227

Headteacher: Mrs J A Fallon

Lead inspector: Sheila Pemberton

Dates of inspection: September 29th – October 1st 2003

Inspection number: 260653

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:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	76
School address:	Mottram Road Broadbottom Hyde
Postcode:	SK14 6BB
Telephone number:	01457 762382
Fax number:	01457 765465
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr P Bibby
Date of previous inspection:	September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is much smaller than most primary schools with 30 girls and 46 boys on roll. Significant renovation over the last year has improved the facilities of the Victorian building. The school serves the village of Broadbottom and a handful of families from the neighbouring Hattersley estate. Pupils live in a variety of socio-economic circumstances. There are four classes; three are mixed-age classes. In 2002, the number of pupils on roll had fallen by as many as 18 since the last inspection in 1998. However, the school is oversubscribed from September 2003 and potentially for the next few years. Almost all pupils are from white British ethnic backgrounds – three come from white European backgrounds. None of them is at an early stage of learning to speak English. An average percentage of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. An average proportion of pupils has special educational needs, most have difficulties with English and mathematics; a few have more serious difficulties with learning and physical disability. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn Spanish and French. The school is involved in Healthy Schools and Eco Schools projects. It has a holiday club catering for 16 pupils.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20810	Sheila Pemberton	Lead inspector	English
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Geography
			History
			Religious education
			Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage
14083	Andrew Anderson	Lay inspector	
31012	Ann Welch	Team inspector	Mathematics
			Science
			Information and communication technology
			Music
			Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Because teaching is good, standards have risen over the last three years and pupils with different abilities achieve a personal best in national tests. Good leadership and systematic management have brought improvements to teaching and the curriculum. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics and very well in science but standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are not high enough in the juniors.
- Leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are good; very good management of teaching and learning has improved pupils' achievements over recent years.
- Although governors are involved in the school they lack understanding of their responsibilities.
- Teaching is mainly good, but teachers are not always aware of the restless behaviour of some pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs get good help to overcome their difficulties.
- The school makes very good use of the resources and facilities of the local community.

The school has made good improvements since its previous inspection. Teaching has improved and the achievement of all pupils is better than in 1998. More able pupils attain good results in national tests. Standards have risen and are good in religious education, history and geography. Good planning by teachers and thorough assessments identify the needs of all pupils in mixed-age classes. Although the headteacher and staff carefully evaluate pupils' achievements, governors are not reviewing the school's academic performance. While pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved, teachers are sometimes unaware of restless behaviour. The way pupils present their work is now good and resources for ICT are improving.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	B	C	A
Mathematics	E	D	C	B
Science	E	D	A	A*

*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.*

Pupils' achievement is good. Comparisons with all schools are unreliable as the school's results depend on the standards reached by individual pupils. More telling in 2002 was the comparison with similar schools when standards in English were very high, above average in mathematics and in the top five per cent nationally in science. In 2003, there was a vast improvement in the results achieved by more able pupils in mathematics and science and standards rose in both subjects. Although they did well in reading, more able pupils did not attain high standards in writing. **There are fewer more able pupils in this year's Year 6, but they are likely to reach the expected level in English and mathematics.** In Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science that were mainly low or very low from 1999 to 2002 rose to a high level in 2003. They were very high in science and more able

pupils did well in all subjects except writing. **Standards in all four subjects are likely to be higher in this year's Year 2.** Standards in ICT are unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Children in the reception class achieve well and most reach the expected goals in speaking, listening, reading, writing and mathematics by the time they reach Year 1.

Pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development are good. Moral development is satisfactory. Pupils are interested in their lessons and work hard. Behaviour and attendance are satisfactory. Punctuality is good

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good and is based on the tracking and recording of pupils' progress and thorough assessments of their learning. As a result, teachers meet all pupils' needs with tasks that challenge their thinking. Skilled teaching assistants improve the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' good use of technology enlivens pupils' learning. Sometimes, teachers are unaware of undercurrents caused by pupils talking too much in lessons. The curriculum provides rich opportunities for learning from visitors, visits and work in the locality. A lack of resources limits some aspects of ICT in Years 3 to 6. Good partnerships with most parents make an effective contribution to their children's learning. Provision for pupils' health and safety is very good. Good procedures settle children into the reception class. Sound links are in place with a local secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. Good steady leadership by the Headteacher ensures that staff have a clear view of where they want the school to go. The Headteacher's management of teaching is very good and has led to significant improvements to the curriculum and pupils' achievements. Governors do not support the headteacher and senior staff; nor are they aware of how well the school is doing.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have positive views of the school. They are pleased with the teaching and their children's progress. A small group of parents is dissatisfied with behaviour, management and the information provided. Many pupils enjoy school and know that they need to do their best.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ensure that the governing body works corporately to achieve a good balance between support and challenge
- raise standards in ICT in Years 3 to 6
- raise teachers' awareness of pupils' restless behaviour in some lessons and, to meet statutory requirements:
- ensure that the full programme of study for ICT is taught
- monitor the school's policy for promoting good race relations.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of children in the reception class and of pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 is good. In a small school standards vary annually and are dependent on the capabilities of individual pupils. However, standards in national tests rose and were higher than in previous years in 2003. Although variations occur between the achievements of boys and girls, girls tend to do better than boys in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In 2003, standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 and Year 6 made a strong improvement and rose to a much higher level than in recent years.
- More able pupils did well in reading and mathematics in 2003 and very well in science. They did not achieve the standards they were capable of in writing.
- Pupils' achievement in writing has improved as a result of teachers' drive to raise standards.
- Standards in ICT are unsatisfactory in Year 6.
- The standards achieved by all pupils have risen to a good level in the humanities.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.5(28.1)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.5(25.9)	26.7(26.6)
Science	30.2(27.8)	28.3(28.3)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Care should be taken when interpreting the results of such a small group of pupils. There were too few pupils in Year 2 in 2002 for the results of national tests to be meaningful.

Commentary

- 1 The attainments of most children who start the reception class are typical for their age. By the time they reach Year 1, more able children make very good progress and are already working towards the first level of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. Children of average ability are starting work in the National Curriculum, but less able children still have some way to go before achieving the goals established for their learning. All children achieve good standards in relation to the goals for personal, social and emotional development.
- 2 In a small school where the results of one pupil can influence the results in National Curriculum tests, standards in English, mathematics and science have varied from 1999 to 2002. However, in 2002, the achievement of pupils in Year 6 was very good when compared with their attainments in Year 2. Standards in national tests in 2003 showed a marked improvement on the school's results in recent years in Year 2. More able pupils achieved a good result in reading and did very well in mathematics and science. Too few of them attained the standard they were capable of in writing. Pupils

in this year's Year 2 are likely to attain higher standards in national tests in 2004: more able pupils are doing better in writing.

- 3 Although standards in English, mathematics and science vary as much in Year 6 as they do in Year 2, standards were better overall in 2002 than in the previous three years. Pupils' attainment in comparison with their performances in Year 2 was very good. This improvement continued in 2003, when almost all pupils reached the level expected for their age in mathematics and the whole class achieved the expected level in science. Standards in English were not as high as in mathematics and science because none of the more able pupils in the class reached a high level in writing. However, more able pupils did well in reading: half the class reached a high level in the subject. More able pupils achieved satisfactory results in mathematics. They did very well in science. Although most pupils are likely to attain the expected level in English and mathematics in 2004, standards will probably not be as high as in 2003. This is because there are fewer more able pupils in the current Year 6. The school exceeded its targets for attainment in English and mathematics in 2003.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. Behaviour is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has gone to considerable lengths to promote good behaviour in the playground.
- Pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good.
- The school uses good procedures to monitor and improve attendance and punctuality.
- No exclusions for poor behaviour have occurred in recent years.

Commentary

- 4 The table below shows the attendance figures for the school. Attendance has improved steadily over the last four years and is now broadly in line with the national average.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

- 5 Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. They arrive promptly and settle quickly to lessons. Children of all ages readily join in activities and most of them willingly answer questions and offer their own opinions.
- 6 Overall, behaviour is satisfactory. A small group of parents thinks that pupils' behaviour is poor and that bullying is rife and not properly dealt with. Other parents, most pupils and the local education authority's educational psychologist do not support these views;

neither does inspection evidence. Although some pupils are highly active, noisy and boisterous, and undesirable behaviour does occur, the school has gone to considerable pains to maintain acceptable standards.

- 7 The school promotes good behaviour by
- *taking parents' concerns seriously*
 - *increasing the number of lunchtime supervisors (including teachers in the hall)*
 - *providing interesting activities, resources and materials to occupy pupils at break and lunchtime*
 - *making the layout of the playground attractive to pupils*
 - *altering lunchtime arrangements so that pupils will not be outside for too long a time*
 - *arranging training for lunchtime assistants through the local education authority*
 - *seeking advice from the local education authority's educational psychologist*
 - *implementing a scheme of playground buddies in Year 6, who make it their job to help pupils who are lonely, upset or new to the school*
 - *establishing clear rules about where pupils are allowed to play*
 - *making the penalties for unsatisfactory behaviour plain to all*
 - *implementing the school's behaviour policy*
 - *dealing with incidents firmly as they arise.*
- 8 Provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved and is now better than at last inspection. Opportunities for spirituality occur in assemblies, worship, religious education and activities to promote pupils' personal development. Last year, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were encouraged to express their hopes and fears, deal with hurt feelings and experience the dilemmas and situations experienced by others. Provision for moral development, although satisfactory, is not as strong as previously. This is because teachers are sometimes slow to squash a persistent undercurrent of off-task chatter in lessons. Pupils' understanding of wider moral issues is good because of the school's work on environmental problems. Social development remains strong. Provision includes the positive contributions that personal social and health education makes to personal development, the care many older pupils show to younger ones and the energy pupils put into raising money for charities. Cultural development has improved and is now good. This is mainly because of better teaching in science and the humanities which gives extra depth and meaning to pupils' appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

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

No of pupils on roll
74
3

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides pupils with a good education.

Teaching and learning

Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good overall. It effectively promotes pupils' learning particularly in English, mathematics and science. Assessment is thorough and informative. It gives clear direction to pupils' learning when used to plan their work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good command of most subjects and areas of learning with the exception of ICT.
- They are raising standards by covering a range of subjects in considerable depth.
- Assessment is used well to plan work at the right level for different pupils.
- Marking and target-setting do not always help pupils to improve their work.
- Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' learning in school.
- Teachers do not always insist on high standards of behaviour in lessons.
- Teaching assistants provide good help and guidance for the learning of pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

- 9 Better teaching since the last inspection is based on the teachers' determination to raise standards. This is backed by regular training to increase their expertise. It is reflected in gains to learning in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and the humanities. Teachers have remedied former weaknesses in their planning and now set clear objectives for learning. Two main factors underpin better teaching. The first arises because teachers have benefited from the structures provided by national strategies for literacy, numeracy and other curriculum areas. Not only have they increased their knowledge of different subjects and areas of learning but now also cover them in considerable depth. In response to identifying writing as a subject in need of improvement, an impressive breadth of coverage is evident in pupils' written work. However, an exception to this is ICT, where staff training is late but underway. Secondly, improved procedures for assessment allow teachers to pinpoint the progress pupils make. This has in turn raised their expectations and strengthened their planning. As a result, pupils achieve well and considerably more reach high standards than at the last inspection.
- 10 Teaching assistants are skilled at helping pupils who find learning hard. They work closely with small groups, offering guidance, explanations and advice. Teachers do a good job with more able pupils. They set tasks that challenge and extend the thinking of these pupils. Teachers' marking encourages pupils but does not consistently provide guidance on how to improve their work. Teachers use assessment to set targets so that individual pupils know how to improve their work in English and mathematics. Although pupils know their targets, some are not sure how to achieve them. This is because teachers do not use the targets when marking pupils' work.
- 11 Pupils' efforts to present their work have improved since the last inspection because teachers now expect high standards. When homework is provided, it consolidates and extends pupils' learning and prepares them for work in school. A barrier to teaching being very good is that teachers sometimes fail to notice pupils speaking at the wrong time in lessons and generally fussing over one another's work or possessions. This issue remains unresolved since the last inspection.

- 12 Leadership and management of the curriculum have improved teaching and learning since the last inspection. Teachers have made good improvements to most subjects through training, acting on advice from the local education authority's advisers and working together as an effective team.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	9	9	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

The curriculum

The curriculum is richer and more balanced than at the last inspection and now provides pupils with a wealth of first-hand experiences that promote their personal and academic achievements. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curricular planning is good overall.
- The school provides a good curriculum for children in the reception class.
- Additional activities that enrich learning add to the value and interest of the curriculum.
- Pupils with special educational needs get a good, well-balanced curriculum.
- Statutory requirements for ICT are not met. This reduces the quality of the curriculum.

Commentary

13 The school has successfully addressed issues relating to the curriculum from the last report. The school has prepared policies and programmes of work for all subjects and areas of learning. They have been reviewed subsequently in the light of national guidance and are implemented well. Planning for children in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science, and the humanities is particularly effective and has improved pupils' achievements. The curriculum is enriched by work in the locality where absorbing activities link subjects such as science, geography and history. To raise their awareness of environmental issues, pupils make frequent visits to a local outdoor centre. The school's status as an *Eco School* and a *Healthy School* extends the range of worthwhile activities available to its pupils. Improvements to assessment procedures ensure that the curriculum takes account of the different levels of work required for pupils in mixed-aged classes. The curriculum is also enhanced by visitors to school and educational visits provide pupils with good first-hand experiences. Extra-curricular provision remains satisfactory and includes sporting, musical and gardening activities.

14 Good improvement has been made to the curriculum for religious education. Sufficient time is allocated to ensure that pupils' attainment meets the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. However, the school has fallen behind in its provision for ICT, due to a lack of resources. As a result, statutory requirements are not met. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have yet to develop their skills in control and modelling technology.

- 15 There are enough, well-qualified and experienced teachers to teach the curriculum and they receive good backup from a good number of support staff. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely as a team, particularly to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of both age groups in a class. Teaching assistants provide the school with its strongest human resources in terms of providing a well-matched curriculum for pupils' special educational needs. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory and have improved for religious education and ICT. The school has recently purchased the necessary software to fill gaps in the curriculum for ICT. The building has been improved and extended and now provides an attractive and more enjoyable place for learning. It is as difficult to find space for physical education inside the building as it was when the school was last inspected. The facilities of a local gymnasium continue to fill gaps in the school's resources. Work to make the playground secure is now complete.

Care, guidance and support

Care, guidance and support are good. Health and safety procedures are very good. Achievement and personal development are monitored well. The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A caring staff is committed to pupils' well-being.
- Child protection procedures are securely in place and fully understood by the staff.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' health, welfare and safety are very good.
- Children are supervised conscientiously at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Good procedures for induction provide children in reception with a secure start to their learning.
- The school takes good care of pupils with special educational needs.
- Limited opportunities exist for pupils to formally contribute to the running of the school.

Commentary

- 16 Concerns about dangers to pupils' health and safety in the playground were highlighted by a small group of parents. Inspection evidence does not support these concerns.
- 17 The headteacher has taken steps to ensure pupils' health and safety and to set parents' minds at rest.
- *The school was subject to a very thorough external audit of all its procedures and arrangements for health and safety on the 4 – 5th of September 2003.*
 - *The audit makes it plain that the school satisfies the expectations of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, (the local education authority) in all but one minor aspect of health and safety.*
 - *A recent report by an educational psychologist from the local education authority identified good practice by the adults who supervise children in the playground.*
 - *The headteacher has successfully completed the Institute of Occupational Health's course on managing safety.*
 - *The headteacher has produced a comprehensive policy for health and safety which recognises the responsibilities of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and the school. The local education authority advises that this policy should be integrated with the governors' approved policy to ensure that these responsibilities are met.*

- 18 The school does not yet have a school council and there are limited opportunities for pupils to be consulted about school life. The way that teachers settle children into the reception class makes them feel secure and helps them to adapt to life in school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with most parents are good. Links with the local community are very good. Links with other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents have good positive views about the school.
- Parents make good contributions to their children's education at school and at home.
- Information provided for parents is very good.
- A small group of parents is dissatisfied with behaviour, management and health and safety.
- The school makes very good use of the local community to enrich pupils' learning.

Commentary

- 19 The school provides very good information for parents. Fortnightly newsletters containing details of specific events keep them aware of current activities and issues. Parents are well-informed about their children's learning through annual reports, meetings about the curriculum and termly consultation evenings. When parents attend consultation evenings, they help to set targets for their children. Involvement in this process gives parents a clear view of the next stage of their children's learning. As a result, many parents report that they are pleased with the progress their children make in school. Parents of new children get helpful packs of information and take part in discussions with the reception teacher before their children start school. In this way, parents are clear about the school's expectations and their children get a good start to their education. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept in close touch with teachers. They are informed about the steps taken to resolve their children's difficulties and encouraged to help them at home. There are plenty of opportunities for parents to talk informally to approachable and welcoming staff at the start and the end of the day.
- 20 There is a tiny, but vocal, minority of parents who the school finds very hard to please. All serious complaints to inspectors were found to be unfounded and were refuted by inspection evidence. Inspectors found the staff to be open, welcoming and receptive to fair and honest criticism.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's good leadership unites the staff in their drive to raise standards. Aspects of the headteacher's management are very good. While governors are involved in the school, their understanding about their responsibilities and how to discharge them is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are not acting as critical friends to the headteacher or holding the school accountable for its standards: they do not meet statutory requirements for ICT in Year 6.
- Clear planning, strong teamwork and determination to bring about improvement underlie good leadership by the headteacher and senior management team.

- Very effective management by the headteacher has improved the curriculum, teaching and pupils' achievements since the last inspection.

Commentary

- 21 The governance of the school is unsatisfactory. The governors have failed to establish a clear and corporate understanding of their responsibilities or defined and implemented the necessary protocols for carrying them out in practice. Unilateral actions by governors, perceived to be in the school's best interests, have been counterproductive. The partnership between staff and governors has been undermined and morale adversely affected. Governors have spent extraordinary amounts of time discussing health and safety with the result that this is now very good and has been validated by an external advisor from the local educational authority. However, this was not achieved harmoniously between governors and the senior management team and has had an unwelcome demoralising effect on the headteacher and deputy Headteacher. Very lengthy meetings have done little to extend governors' understanding of the school's performance and placed unreasonable demands on time given by school staff. Consequently, their views about improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection or subjects where standards are unsatisfactory are limited. Some governors are unaware of their responsibility to act as a body or to support as well as criticise the headteacher. Although the governors have established a policy for promoting good race relations they are not assessing its effects or its influence on teaching or the resources that are used.
- 22 Leadership by school staff has grown in strength and quality since the last inspection and is now good. A good feature of the headteacher's leadership is a clear view of where priorities lie and the ability to unite staff in getting a fair deal for all pupils. The headteacher has been influential in building an effective team of staff that is dedicated to raising standards. The management of support for pupils with special educational needs is responsible for their good achievements. Planning for improvements since the last inspection has involved teachers and support staff in a drive to raise standards in subjects where they were low. The Headteacher has achieved this successfully by linking teachers' personal objectives and training with the school's priorities. Curriculum leaders change their responsibilities and improve their skills and those of the staff when different subjects are prioritised. In this way, good gains have been made since the last inspection to pupils' achievements in literacy, numeracy, science and the humanities.
- 23 Although management is generally good, the headteacher is particularly successful at manoeuvring the school's resources to ensure that pupils gain the maximum advantage from teaching. While all classes benefit from the skills of trained teaching assistants, the input into Year 6 is such that a small group of pupils has intensive teaching for a good part of their final year in the school. This strategy has brought about recent improvements to standards. When numbers are low in a specific year group, the school's finances are stretched in terms of budgeting for staffing. Recent overspending to a budget that allows little for resources has been approved by the local education authority at a time when numbers are predicted to rise over the next few years.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	333481
Total expenditure	362209
Expenditure per pupil	4312

Balance from previous year	18723.14
Balance carried forward to the next	6136.37

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The management of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is based on well-informed knowledge of young children's needs. Provision has improved since the last inspection and is now good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching allows children to develop socially and emotionally as well as intellectually.
- Children thrive when encouraged to work together at well-planned and imaginative activities.
- With good care and encouraging relationships, children quickly adapt to the school's routines and expectations.
- They develop confidence and independence in a secure setting.

Commentary

- 24 After a month in school, children's personal, social and emotional development has already been boosted by positive experiences through induction. As a result, most children arrive at school knowing that they can trust their teacher. They appear confident that they will be cared for as they expect to be cared for at home. The teacher has done a good job in a short time to engage children in the routines of the class. They are aware of expectations that everyone will register their own name on arrival and will share in tidying the room at the end of activities. Without prompting, some children use dustpans and brushes to clear lentils and sand from the floor. Others put equipment in the right place and lids back on their containers. These are good steps towards achieving the goals set for personal development before children reach Year 1. The teacher is also successful in encouraging children not to waste time. Without comment from their teacher, they find their own activities when they know she is busy. When the teacher asks children to show their work to the class, they happily share their ideas with others.
- 25 Good leadership ensures that social development extends beyond the classroom. Staff accompany children in the hall at lunchtimes and see it as part of their roles to settle them into the school's lunchtime routines. By helping children through a situation where they eat alongside older children, lunchtimes become pleasant social events where children chat happily with their friends and gain a good measure of independence. Some children are already good at playing together in a spirit of co-operation. A small group was busy in the playground building a wall. They shared the tasks without help or dispute, chatted amicably about their work as they mixed cement and laid out bricks to a pattern. Several children are close friends with one another. They talk knowledgeably about one another's families and how they watch out for their grannies walking past school. Although much ground remains to be covered, their early days in school have given children a good start to their personal, social and emotional development.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skilful teaching gets children off to a good start with English.
- Children's speaking is better than their ability to listen.
- With encouragement from their teacher, children are keen to learn to read.
- More able children do well at writing.

Commentary

- 26 Good teaching in the reception class gives children confidence while chatting with adults and voicing their views. Most children are reasonably articulate for their age and take little persuading to exchange comments with their teacher and others in the class. A few children encounter problems with the clarity of their speech but this hardly holds them back as they try hard to communicate with others. While interesting information is easily absorbed, speaking, not listening is the strongest suit of many children. Stories are a different matter from instructions and when these are told, the teacher has no problems gaining their attention.
- 27 A love of books is evident from children's early weeks in school. To facilitate this, their teacher fills boxes full of stories and books about *true things* for them to consume as they wait for tidying up to end after lessons. Sitting on the carpet with rapt attention, children turn pages, lift up flaps, look at pictures and experiment with words. Diverting them from this pursuit is difficult and many children would happily spend great tracts of time enjoying books. More able children soon absorb the names and sounds of letters. They use this knowledge to write about their homes and families. Last year, some children's attainments were so strong that they started work in the National Curriculum well before the end of their reception year. However, most children are not so far ahead and need help from their teacher to produce a simple phrase. By the end of reception, their attainment reaches the level expected for their age. A few children are only beginning to write their names and will not meet the goals established for their learning until they are in Year 1.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching provides children with good opportunities for practical work.
- More able children are encouraged to extend their thinking.
- The teacher provides guidance for children who need extra help.

Commentary

- 28 Good, clear explanations enable children to achieve the objectives of lessons in mathematical development. The wide range of children's early experiences with numbers is evident in this year's class. In the first weeks of term, some children are unable to count backwards from five to one, while others complain that counting from one to 10 holds no challenge for them. *Let's count to 29 today!* To accommodate these differences, briskly paced lessons include everyone in thinking and answering questions. At the end of an activity, where they selected long and short objects from a

pile, everyone was confidently using *long* and *short* accurately. Because of the encouragement and praise they received, more able children moved on from the initial activity and applied their learning to wider contexts. For instance, they suggested, *You could say...a long train and a short train*. By the time they left reception in 2003, more able pupils exceeded the goals set for their mathematical development in the Foundation Stage and were well on their way to work in the National Curriculum. Most children were on the brink of achieving the goals but the less able still had a long way to go.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

No lessons were observed or work seen during the inspection to make judgements about these areas.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen since the last inspection and all pupils achieve well.
- Good teaching ensures that more able pupils do as well in writing as they do in reading.
- Pupils with special educational needs benefit from working with skilled teaching assistants.
- Pupils write extensively in other subjects.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation.
- Good use of personal targets encourages pupils to improve their work.
- Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' reading.

Commentary

- 29 Higher standards in Year 2 in 2003 stemmed from improvements to teaching through training that brought more skilled use of the National Literacy Strategy. The resultant gains in most pupils' achievements brought better results in national tests. An exception to this was writing. Although most pupils reached the standard expected for their age, too few seven-year-olds achieved the higher level. This was not the case in reading, where a good proportion of pupils achieved a high standard: only a small proportion missed the expected level. Pupils in this year's Year 2 look likely to do better in writing than those in last year's class. This is because of teachers' drive, particularly in the last twelve months, to improve pupils' writing throughout the school.
- 30 Reading was also stronger than writing in Year 6 in 2003 and a high proportion of pupils reached a high level in national tests. This was not the case in writing, where no pupils reached a high level. To redress this situation, more time is allocated to writing during the literacy hour and teachers make sure that pupils have enough time to produce substantial written work in other subjects. Although there are fewer more able pupils in the current Year 6, all pupils are likely to attain the expected results in national tests.
- 31 The use of assessment has improved since the last inspection and is pivotal to the school's ability to improve its performance. Teachers track pupils' progress and feed the information gained from assessment into targets for improvement. The targets set for individual pupils are clear, specific and intended to raise pupils' awareness of

weaknesses in their work. Because they are aware that boys often do less well than girls, teachers monitor progress by gender. They do their best to involve boys in all activities by using texts that appeal to them during the literacy hour and topics that interest them in writing.

- 32 A strong feature of management lies in the high ratio of adults to pupils in the years they take national tests. Good levels of help also improve the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Well-qualified teaching assistants pay close attention to these pupils' needs, often explaining the objectives of lessons and helping them to use the right vocabulary in discussions. Restrictions to pupils' confidence with spoken language are noticeable in classes with high proportions of less able pupils. Parents also play a good part in their children's learning. The work they do at home helps to raise standards in reading. The school's willingness to accept help in the classrooms involves adults from the community in its reading programmes.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

- 33 Improvements to provision in English lie in the wide range and many forms of writing teachers plan in other subjects. Throughout the school and in most subjects, writing is abundant in all pupils' work.
- 34 Pupils' skills in English are improved and used effectively when they:
- *research, debate, discuss and record the findings of investigations in mathematics and science*
 - *write to express their views and understanding in religious education, geography, history and personal, social and health education.*

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards have risen since the previous inspection
- Teaching is good throughout the school
- Assessment is used effectively to focus on how well all pupils are doing.

Commentary

- 35 Standards are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. Almost half of the class reached a high level in national tests in 2003. By the end of Year 6, the school's results were also good for the same period. For pupils in the current Year 2, standards remain above average. However, for the small group of pupils in Year 6, standards are typical for their age. This is because there are fewer more able pupils in this year's class to attain the same high standards as in 2003.
- 36 Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection and this is largely attributable to training and support from the local education authority's advisory team. Better planning now ensures thorough coverage of the National Curriculum with the result that pupils achieve well in all areas of mathematics. Planning takes good account of different levels of attainment. For example, while less able pupils in Year 2 used non-standard measures to find the length of a variety of objects, more able pupils used centimetres to draw lines of a given length. Teachers explain new topics clearly and frequently. They make use of number charts, models or everyday materials to

illustrate mathematical ideas. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs do as well as they can. These pupils gain from working in small groups where they are given detailed explanations of the work by skilled teaching assistants. Teachers' efforts to make sure they understand the main ideas of lessons contribute significantly to the good progress pupils make in overcoming their difficulties with mathematics.

- 37 Leadership and management are good and are reflected in improvements to standards, the richness of the curriculum and the use of assessment to track pupils' progress. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' learning have improved greatly since the last inspection and place the school in a strong position to continue to raise standards. Teachers put a lot of effort into identifying each pupil's strengths and weaknesses and what they need to learn next. This leads to the setting of personal targets. However, although progress towards these is reviewed on a termly basis, it is not generally linked to the guidance that teachers include in pupils' books.

Mathematics across the curriculum

- 38 Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in subjects such as science, geography and ICT. For example, when pupils in the Years 1 and 2 class explored aspects of the local area, they recorded their findings as simple graphs, some of which were plotted with a computer program.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good and many achieve beyond the expected level.
- A rich curriculum places good emphasis on investigative work.
- Teachers use homework effectively to reinforce and extend what is learned in school.

Commentary

- 39 Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average and have risen since the last inspection, particularly in the number of pupils who achieve the higher levels. However, standards are average for pupils in the current Year 6. This is because in this small class not as many pupils are likely to achieve a higher level. Nevertheless, pupils achieve well and have made good progress through the school. Pupils with special educational needs receive extra guidance from teachers and teaching assistants and this enables them to make the same good progress as other pupils.
- 40 It is good and thorough teaching that ensures that pupils achieve well. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now firmly rooted in an experimental and investigative approach to science. This ensures that pupils not only enjoy lessons but know how to carry out investigations, make and test predictions, decide if tests are valid and use the correct terminology as they record their results. The curriculum is enriched by field work in the locality. This links well to the school's *hands on* approach. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 identify pond life and discover the habitats of different animals. Another strong feature of teaching is the effective use of homework to complement work done in class and to extend pupils' learning. This is particularly so in Years 1 and 2, where parents acknowledge their appreciation of the opportunities teachers provide for them to work together and share their children's learning. The use of ICT in science is better than at the last inspection. Plans to use recently purchased

resources including sensors and software put the school in a good position to continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

- 41 There is one weakness in teaching that prevents it from being very good. Although most pupils behave well, there are ripples of inappropriate behaviour as some pupils, for example, chat when they should be listening, and this is not always nipped in the bud. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has raised standards by reorganising the curriculum, helping teachers with their planning and the monitoring of pupils' work. A good system that checks that pupils learn at brisk enough rates helps to maintain high standards and to raise them even higher.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although standards are rising rapidly, they are below what is expected in years 3 to 6.
- Statutory requirements for the curriculum are not met.
- ICT is being developed well in other subjects.
- Teachers are slow to check the inappropriate behaviour of some pupils.

Commentary

- 42 Standards remain typical of those expected in Year 2 but fall below them by the end of Year 6. This is because the school has lacked the resources needed to keep up with national developments in ICT. However, since the last inspection, the school has bought new computers and software and this is why standards are rising quickly now. All of this is very recent and pupils in Years 3 to 6 are a long way behind in some aspects of the curriculum for the subject, particularly the control and modelling strands of technology. Although their training is not yet completed, teachers have embraced the new technology with enthusiasm and a willingness to get it up and running. Computers rarely stand idle. Teachers are now adept at using interactive whiteboards, for example, to demonstrate the sequence of commands required to enable pupils to access programmes and to use all the features available. As a result, pupils in Years 3 and 4 appreciated and quickly used the wealth of graphics available to combine with greetings on their birthday cards. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers are gaining in confidence as they get to grips with new software and its capabilities. Their enthusiasm motivates pupils who enjoy using computers. However, there are pockets of inappropriate behaviour from some pupils, such as calling out to each other and moving from their computers to chat to friends. Teachers are not prompt enough at calling a halt to this type of behaviour. Leadership is good. The co-ordinator has made much progress in a short time by sorting out teething problems in the network and directing the way forward. She leads by example in her own teaching and this encourages staff to develop their own skills. Management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware that there is still some way to go to raise standards in all aspects of the subject. This includes training to use the new resources for control technology and a system of assessment to indicate where weaknesses in standards lie.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

- 43 Teachers have made a good start to using ICT in other subjects. Pupils use word processing to draft and publish prose and poetry in English. They create graphs and bar charts in mathematics, science and geography. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 apply their skills in ICT to sorting materials using a tree diagram while pupils in Year 2 use a computer controlled microscope to examine the weave of various fabrics. Older pupils

successfully search the Internet to find out, for example, about the Halle Orchestra prior to their visit to a concert.

HUMANITIES

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is taught in considerable depth and standards are high.
- Pupils demonstrate clear understanding of the subject in their written work.
- Christianity receives the greatest emphasis, but pupils gain good knowledge of other faiths.
- Teachers make good use of the local church to develop pupils' knowledge about religion.

Commentary

- 44 Standards have made a good improvement since 1998 when they *hardly met the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus*. By adapting the locally Agreed Syllabus to the needs of the school, staff have made their teaching much more effective and brought pupils to a better understanding of the value of religion in their lives. Good management of the curriculum underlies improvements to teaching and learning throughout the humanities. At the last inspection, pupils' achievements were comparatively superficial. Pupils in Year 6 now discuss the world's major religions with reasonable confidence and accuracy. They also explain that when deciding about religion, everyone should have the right to think for themselves and to make their own choices. Much of the work encourages pupils to reflect on spiritual issues and makes a good contribution to their spiritual development.
- 45 In a religious foundation, the proximity of the church lends itself to exploration of the building. All teachers take advantage of this good resource to establish links between lessons in religious education and features of Christian worship and belief. As a result, pupils in Years 1 and 2 produce careful drawings of the church, altar, font and religious artefacts. They learn about pattern by taking rubbings of tiles and show how people's lives are commemorated through their rubbings of brass memorials. Several parents at the pre-inspection meeting commented that their children's knowledge of world faiths extends their cultural development and their understanding of the world.
- 46 The extent and quality of written work produced by all pupils in Year 6 gives a flavour of their enjoyment and liking for the subject. The writing of more able pupils contains a considerable depth of understanding. Good, well-informed teaching that is shared by the class teacher and the head, introduces pupils to the idea of Christian charity. It is not incidental that pupils throughout the school are aware of the need to care for others. Their contributions to charities such as *Christian Aid*, *Shelter* and *Children in Need* are based on teachers' emphasis on the responsibilities of the religious life.

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning takes account of the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes.
- Pupils are infected by teachers' enthusiasm for the subject.
- Imaginative activities capture pupils' interests.

Commentary

- 47 Teachers' good knowledge of the subject has a marked effect on pupils' learning. A strong feature of teaching lies in the way that teachers take the national guidance for geography and develop a two-year programme of work in considerable depth. In this way, there is no danger that pupils in mixed-age classes will do the same work twice. All pupils in Year 2 last year finished good quantities of work with attention to detail and clear handwriting. In Year 6, pupils communicated their enthusiasm for geography and detailed knowledge of life in Haarlem through vast quantities and different forms of writing, maps and illustrations.
- 48 The way that teachers use the locality for fieldwork makes geography relevant and interesting for pupils. A local study by pupils in Year 6 was presented in the form of a debate. Pupils demonstrated their understanding of problems presented to the area by heavy traffic with cogent reasons for and against a bypass. The topical nature of some of the work in Year 6 informs pupils about problems in the wider world. When studying settlement, their teacher introduced pupils to both positive and negative aspects of immigration to America and from Pakistan and Afghanistan. Imaginative teaching in Year 2 involved pupils in role play in the playground. After studying the human and physical features of a fictitious Hebridean island, pupils enacted parts of the story with help from grandparents and other adults. The thoroughness and imagination brought to teaching, coupled with good leadership for the subject means that there is a good possibility of a further rise in standards.

HISTORY

Provision in history is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers bring history to life for pupils by planning lessons around historically interesting aspects of their own locality.
- Pupils use a wide range of materials to find out for themselves about the past.
- Teachers communicate their enjoyment of history to pupils.
- Good leadership and effective management of the curriculum maintain high standards in history.

Commentary

- 49 Standards have risen since they were last reported. The effective way that enthusiastic teachers use the resources available in the school and the locality engages pupils' interest in history. History is enlivened for all pupils as their eyes are opened to the origins of familiar places. Teacher, and a knowledgeable ranger from a local visitors' centre, introduce pupils to information that helps them locate some of the many shops existing in the village in 1932. As pupils walk along a watercourse that supplied a former mill, they learn of how the mill progressed from using water power to steam in the 1830s. Teaching moves pupils on from acquiring specific information about local life to much wider knowledge of an historical era. From learning about the coming of the local railway, pupils gained a picture of the march of railways as they spread across Victorian England. This was done well by introducing pupils in Years 5 and 6 to extracts of Dickens's novel, *Dombey and Son*. The teacher's imaginative use of contemporary literature illustrated the cost of railways in human terms. Facilitating research about the past is a skilful feature of the teaching that enhances pupils' achievements. The result of this is that pupils are good at gleaning information from artefacts, books, photographs, portraits, paintings, newspaper cuttings and the internet.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

- 50 No lessons were observed in art and design during the inspection but teachers' planning, a limited range of art on display and the folders of pupils in Year 2 indicate that teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to work with different media. Pencil and charcoal drawings and paint are the main forms of artwork in display and standards could not be judged from these.

Design and technology

- 51 Provision in design and technology is identified for attention in the school's improvement plan. Developments in the subject are too recent to make judgements about standards. So far, planning for coverage of the subject has been put into place and the school has bought essential tools and disposable materials. Teaching and learning are due to begin anew this term and staff are improving their knowledge of the design process through training. The one lesson in Year 6 during the inspection was food technology. It occupied a significant block of time in order to make bread and was satisfactory.

Music and physical education

- 52 No lessons were seen in either music or physical education. Planning for both subjects indicates that all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered during the school year. The school continues to make good use of the local gymnasium for dance, games and gymnastics. Swimming takes place on a weekly basis and by the end of Year 6, pupils swim the required distance. Regular orienteering activities in the local area together with an annual residential visit to an adventure centre give pupils the chance to take part in challenging activities outdoors. Football and netball clubs, and sports coaching are available after school to extend the curriculum.
- 53 Pupils' singing during two assemblies was satisfactory. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to listen to and reflect on music from a range of cultures. Visiting musicians include a South American tribal band. A lunch-time recorder club extends pupils' interest and skills in music.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

- 54 Teachers' planning, pupils' written work and the one lesson observed in personal, social and health education indicate that the school covers the subject in satisfactory depth. Much of the work in personal and social education is incorporated into lessons in most subjects. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about citizenship.

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	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
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	3
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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the Headteacher	3
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).