

INSPECTION REPORT

DAVENTRY GRANGE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Daventry

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121897

Headteacher: Mrs Gaynor Yates

Lead inspector: Ms Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

Dates of inspection: 8th – 10th December 2003

Inspection number: 260762

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	281
School address:	Staverton Road Daventry Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN11 4HW
Telephone number:	01327 705785
Fax number:	01327 312207
Appropriate authority:	The Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Banks
Date of previous inspection:	12 th October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Daventry Grange Junior School is a large school with 281 pupils on roll. The percentage of pupils identified as being eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils are generally from families of white British heritage and mainly below average circumstances. There are no pupils with English as an additional language, and two per cent (below average) come from ethnic minority backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, 26 per cent, is above the national average and there is an above average percentage (27.7 per cent) of pupils with statements of special educational need. The school population is a stable one, although in the last school year 30 per cent of pupils entered and left the school in the upper juniors. Attainment on entry is average overall but varies from year to year, ranging from above to below average. In the last academic year the school has improved considerably and has achieved an Artsmark Silver Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People Award and, in 2002, received a School Achievement Award. The school is about to become involved in the Strategic Leadership of Information and Communication Technology initiative. The headteacher has only been in post 16 months, and the staff have only operated as a strong team since the appointment of new members of staff in September 2003. Prior to the appointment of the new headteacher, there had been considerable academic underachievement of pupils reflected in national test scores.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19938	Bogusia Matusiak –Varley	Lead inspector	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language Science Art and design Religious education
392	Terry Heppenstall	Lay inspector	
11642	Carol Parkinson	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with special educational needs English Geography History Music
3942	Keith Sanderson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Parkman Ltd. in association with *PkR*
35 Trewartha Park
Weston-Super-Mare
North Somerset
BS23 2RT

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS	19
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school that is improving rapidly, under the overall good leadership and management of the headteacher and newly appointed deputy. It is inclusive in all of its practices. Teaching and learning are good. Standards in English, mathematics and science are below national averages but are improving. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. Effective systems for raising standards have been established, but it will take a time for them to have an impact. Pupils have good attitudes to learning, behave well and are leaving the school as well rounded individuals. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Whilst standards are below national averages in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, they are improving due to the recently introduced very good assessment procedures.
- Higher attaining pupils could be challenged further even though the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Standards in art and design, dance and music are above national expectations and pupils' achievements are good due to the very good provision for creative and performing arts.
- Standards in writing, spelling and experimental and investigative science are not high enough because of inconsistencies in teachers' marking and the use of assessment data.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are good; a clear educational direction is now firmly established.
- Attendance is below the national average but good systems are in place to improve it.
- The school has good links with parents and parents value its work.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning, behave very well and leave the school full of confidence.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The appointment of the new headteacher and establishment of a strong leadership team has established a clear educational direction and the school is now well placed to improve further. The quality of teaching and learning is now good. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and music have improved, as has subject leadership. Acts of collective worship now take place and very good assessment procedures in English and mathematics have recently been put in place. There is still work to be done on ensuring that skills in foundation subjects are developed systematically. Standards are starting to rise due to the good quality of teaching and learning.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The table shows that pupils did not achieve well enough last year. The significant improvements in leadership and management have improved learning and this year the picture is more positive. Standards in art and design, music and dance are above those expected nationally due to the strong emphasis on creative and performing arts and pupils achieve very well in these subjects. Standards in English, mathematics and science are below average by the end of Year 6 but pupils are achieving satisfactorily as a result of the improved teaching. More than the usual numbers of pupils joined or left the school in the present Year 6 (30 per cent) which has affected standards.

Standards in ICT are satisfactory. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to targets in their individual education plans.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning, although attendance is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a sound quality of education. Teaching and learning are good and are improving. A very good range of extra curricular activities is provided, motivating pupils to learn, especially in creative and performing arts. Basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics and ICT are taught well. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced and is satisfactory overall. The use of pupils' skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects is satisfactory but is insufficiently developed. Staff know their pupils well, they are caring and professional individuals who are working very hard at improving their own practice. Partnership with parents is **good**.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher make a strong team and the headteacher has made her mark on the school in the 16 months that she has been in post. She has a relentless drive and passion to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching. The deputy headteacher is a very effective practitioner and leads by example, instilling accountability and high standards in staff. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is gaining an increasing understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and its contribution to the school development plan is satisfactory. The school complies with all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils value the school highly, especially the verve, vigour and enthusiasm of the headteacher. Parents are delighted that their children are well cared for and pupils are very pleased with the progress that they are making in learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in all subjects and challenge higher attainers further.
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work and use of assessment data.
- Ensure that further opportunities are provided for pupils to use their skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT in all subjects of the National Curriculum.
- Raise attendance levels.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Standards are below national averages in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 but are improving. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. There are no differences between the achievement of boys and girls. At present the best rates of progress are in one Year 6 class where pupils are taught by the deputy headteacher who is a highly effective classroom practitioner.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing and spelling and experimental and investigative science are not high enough and could be better.
- Standards are above national average by the end of Year 6 in art and design, music and dance, and are a strength of the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress but, at times, higher attainers could be challenged further.
- Standards are improving and are poised to rise because of the school's effective self-evaluation, good quality teaching, and the good leadership and management of the headteacher.
- Pupils are achieving well in ICT and are attaining average standards.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (26.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.8 (26.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.5 (27.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 88 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. Over the past few years there has been considerable underachievement by all groups of pupils and standards have not been high enough. The appointment of the new headteacher, just over a year ago, has resulted in a thorough analysis of why standards were so low when pupils' had average, and even above average attainment on entry (depending on the academic profile of particular cohorts). The 2003 national test results show that standards in English and science in comparison with all schools were well below national average and in mathematics standards were below those expected nationally. In comparison with those schools that achieved similar average point scores at Year 2, standards in English, mathematics and science were well below national average. Over three years the performance of pupils fell below the national average for their age group. There was no difference in performance by gender.
2. The improvement in the school's national assessment for all core subjects over the last five years is broadly in line with the national trend. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels in English, mathematics and science was well below that expected nationally. When the headteacher arrived she identified many weaknesses in pupils' attitudes to work, behaviour in and around the school, and low academic standards. Furthermore, there were weaknesses in teaching and not all staff were working as an effective team. She set about creating changes which would immediately impact on ensuring that an effective learning culture was established so that both staff and pupils could feel valued. Recognising that the school was under-performing, the headteacher set about bringing in measures to raise pupils' standards. She has:

- asked for help from the local education authority.
 - monitored teaching and learning.
 - appointed several new teachers.
 - implemented rigorous performance management procedures.
 - improved resources and accommodation.
 - introduced a high profile project for creative and performing arts.
 - set about training subject leaders to make them accountable for standards pupils attain.
 - appointed a new deputy, with a good track record for developing and using assessment and developing the quality of teaching and learning.
 - raised staff's and pupils' self-esteem by ensuring that their efforts were recognised.
 - created effective teams for raising standards.
 - put in place an effective standards driven school development plan, which the governors can easily evaluate.
 - developed closer working relationships with the infant school so more productive dialogue could take place between the two schools on raising standards.
3. Furthermore, a whole school approach to curriculum planning has been implemented and, whilst there is still more work to be done to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils, a common format is in place. All these initiatives need time to embed firmly in staff's practices and filter through the school in order to have a significant effect on raising standards. These systems are already showing dividends, where the present standards in Year 3 are broadly average, with several higher attaining pupils attaining higher than expected standards in English and mathematics. However, the present Year 6 classes have a high percentage of below average attainers and 30 per cent of the year group did not start their education in this school. The recent emphasis on developing the quality of teaching and learning has had a positive effect on raising standards and presently pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall and are improving, although higher attainers make inconsistent progress and could be challenged further in some classes. Overall they do, nevertheless, make satisfactory progress.
4. Inspection findings show that standards in English, mathematics and science are below average but are improving as they were overall well below the national average in the 2003 test results. Short term progress has been good because of the high emphasis that has been placed on developing the quality of teaching and learning. The current Year 3 pupils' attainment on entry to the school, as evidenced by national test data, is above average but the school's internal assessments do not confirm these findings. Many pupils entering Year 3 have not retained over the summer holiday skills learnt previously, especially spelling patterns and writing conventions. Taking into consideration the school's assessment results and inspection findings, overall, the present Year 3's attainment on entry is average in writing, reading and mathematics.
5. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 6, standards in speaking and listening and reading are average. Pupils are confident speakers and make their needs known; the school's emphasis on the use of drama has contributed to the high levels of confidence in speaking to audiences. Pupils are avid readers and show an interest in books and authors. A contributory factor to their mastery of reading is the good quality of books the school has purchased and the strategies put in place to focus on developing boys' interest in reading. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors, such as Jacqueline Wilson and Dick King-Smith, and are able to summarise the main events of a story. The high emphasis placed on visiting poets and authors by the school is paying dividends. Standards in writing are below national averages but are improving. Pupils can plan, draft, revise and edit their work but their competence in spelling is weak, especially the spelling of subject specific words. The school has put strategies in place to rectify this weakness but it will take time for these to have an effect on standards throughout the school. A high emphasis has been placed on developing subject specific words, especially in science and already this is having a positive effect on raising standards in writing.
6. In mathematics, standards are improving and pupils' achievements are satisfactory, although higher attainers could be challenged further by participating in even more demanding work.

Pupils are using the four rules of number appropriately and have good recall skills in mathematics. They plan well for problem solving activities but do not always have sufficient opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects of the curriculum. The use of booster classes and intervention strategies is helping to raise standards. The use of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is inconsistent but is satisfactory overall, however, there are elements of good practice seen in Year 6, but this is not consistently applied throughout the school.

7. In science, by the end of Year 6, standards are just below the national average but pupils' achievements are satisfactory since the very recent appointment of the science co-ordinator. Pupils are now more focused on developing their skills of experimental and investigative science, they can plan and set up experiments, although their skills of evaluation and recording their findings in a variety of ways still need attention.
8. In ICT, pupils meet the expected standards of 11-year-olds and their achievements are good because of the recent high emphasis placed upon staff training and upgrading of equipment. Pupils can now use e-mail, import digital images and use CD-ROMs to research information. However, their skills of data analysis, using graphs, spreadsheets or charts, whilst satisfactory overall, are less well-developed. The use of ICT in other subjects is satisfactory and it has been rightly recognised as an area for future development through the school's good systems of self-evaluation.
9. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education, and their achievements are satisfactory, although higher attaining pupils could be challenged further in writing more extensively about what they have learnt. Pupils know many stories both from Christian religions and other faiths and know that festivals, holy books and prayer form an integral part of religious practices; opportunities for writing, especially for the higher attaining pupils, are not sufficiently well-developed and this restricts pupils' progress.
10. The priority focus of the inspection was to analyse standards in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education. In physical education, art and design and design and technology some sampling of provision was undertaken. Geography was not sampled due to timetable arrangements and in history and music pupils' work was evaluated and lessons were observed. In history, pupils make satisfactory progress, their achievements are sound and standards meet the national expectations of 11-year-olds. In music and art and design, standards are above the national expectations for 11-year-olds and pupils' achievements are good. Standards in music are improving rapidly because of the very good quality of teaching by the recently appointed teacher of music. In art and design, a contributory factor to the high standards is the pupils' participation in the very good after school art club and the very good use made of artists supporting pupils' learning. The provision for creative and performing arts is a strength of the school and the pupils' achievements in drama, dance, music and art and design are good.
11. Theoretically, improvement since the last inspection could be viewed as unsatisfactory because standards in core subjects of English, mathematics and science are below those expected nationally when the previous inspection identified them as being in line with the national average. It must be remembered that the inspection focused on a different cohort of pupils, many of whom have special educational needs and have not been taught at the school since the start of Year 3. Analysis of 2003 test data shows that over time standards have been too low and, in relation to their prior attainment, pupils have been underachieving. This is no longer the case as a clear education direction has been established by the headteacher and standards are improving rapidly.
12. Overall standards are improving, as evidenced by the above average attainment of pupils seen in drama, dance and music, a priority for the pupils that the headteacher recognised would improve their self-esteem. The headteacher and governing body have recognised that the school has not been as effective as it might be and secure plans are in place to remedy this. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to targets identified on their individual education plans. Higher attaining

pupils make satisfactory progress, with satisfactory achievements overall, but there is room for further challenge in lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes to learning and the school cultivates pupils' personal development well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and has a significant effect on pupils' good skills of personal development.
- Relationships are good throughout the school; pupils love learning and they appreciate the very good provision made for them for extra curricular activities, especially the residential visits.
- The school has very good procedures to record, monitor and improve the level of attendance.
- More could be done to help pupils to develop an even better understanding of life in multi-cultural Britain.
- Opportunities for independent learning are limited.
- Too many pupils take holidays in term time and the level of attendance is below that expected nationally but improving.
- Help from outside agencies is restricted.

Commentary

13. Pupils have good attitudes to learning; they are keen, enthusiastic and show an interest in all aspects of school life. They are enterprising and willing to take responsibility. For example, the older pupils look after the younger pupils well and the recent introduction of playground buddies is helping to forge even better relationships with all pupils. If any pupils do not have a friend to play with, the playground buddies take care of them. In lessons, pupils break into spontaneous applause when they have got their spellings times tables correct, in Year 3 for example, classroom rules ensure that pupils have a firm grounding in what is expected of them and this helps them settle in quickly to school life. The secure system of classroom routines enables pupils to work in a safe learning environment and contributes positively to pupils' progress. All pupils feel included in all aspects of school life, they love their school and speak very highly of the very good provision of extra curricular activities, especially the residential visits, which have a positive effect on their social skills. Pupils behave very well because there are good policies in place to support their behaviour. They negotiate their own rules, they take responsibilities very seriously, and monitors work hard in classrooms ensuring that their peers and teachers have appropriate equipment. The school council ensures that pupils' opinions are sought, and the recent purchase of equipment to use at play times has been very well received by the pupils. Lunch time supervisors have undertaken training and lunch hours are pleasurable experiences where pupils get on well with one another.
14. Pupils' personal development is good as the school places high emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is good overall. Opportunities for learning about aspects of life in multicultural Britain, whilst satisfactory, could be improved. Acts of collective worship and provision for religious education promote pupils' spiritual development well. Provision in moral development is good and is reflected in the good behaviour of all pupils. Children fund-raise for charities, such as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and Children in Need, and show empathy for those less fortunate than themselves. Good opportunities are provided for pupils' social and cultural development. Pupils work in groups, both in lessons and clubs, and treat one another with respect. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about the need to 'push oneself that bit further' in order to achieve quality; artists, musicians and poets are regular visitors to the school and many opportunities are provided for personal reflection. Pupils are taught how to respect the creative process and this contributes positively to their aesthetic awareness. When they dance pupils 'feel the music', their facial expressions demonstrate a deep understanding of what the music means to them. The very good provision for creative and performing arts not only contributes to pupils' cultural

development but is instrumental in awakening a spiritual dimension in their lessons, and raising their self-esteem.

15. The headteacher is largely responsible for the good behaviour and pupils' positive attitudes to learning, because she has introduced an effective creative and performing arts programme, through which pupils achieve well and are becoming aware of their personal potential. The secure learning environment created by the staff ensures that pupils feel valued and well cared for. Whilst opportunities for independent learning are limited the headteacher's priority was first to set up a rigorous structure for behaviour management and create a secure learning environment; this has now been effectively established. Pupils and parents appreciate the hard work and effort of the staff in creating such a conducive environment for learning. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to learning and are included in all aspects of school life.
16. Since the previous inspection, attitudes and behaviour have improved and there have been no exclusions.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.5	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

17. The level of attendance is below the national average. However, recent procedures to monitor registers rigorously and to target pupils with poor attendance records, along with a system of rewards for good attendance, are having a beneficial effect. A long term decline has been reversed. About one quarter of absence is due to holidays in term time and this is a major difficulty in improving attendance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and co-ordinators are working hard at ensuring that subject specific skills and opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT are identified rigorously in planning. Provision for extra curricular activities is very good; it is good for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall and is improving rapidly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is improving and examples of very good teaching were seen in several year groups, especially in the Year 6 class taught by the deputy headteacher.
- All teachers have good skills of exposition, manage pupils' behaviour well and value pupils' responses. As a result, relationships are good between pupils and teachers.
- Several examples of good and very good teaching were seen in literacy and numeracy especially in one Year 6 class.
- Support staff make a valid contribution to pupils' learning.
- Time is not always used effectively and, in several lessons, plenary sessions were not as focussed as they could be.
- The very good assessment procedures in English and mathematics are not used sufficiently well to move pupils on in their learning.

- The quality of marking, whilst satisfactory overall, is inconsistent, spellings are not always marked correctly and pupils are not sure what they need to do in order to improve their learning.
- Opportunities for independent learning are limited.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8 (19%)	16 (39%)	17 (41%)	0	0	0

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

18. Teaching is improving and is good with very good features. The best teaching is in one Year 6 class where pupils are taught by the deputy headteacher. In this class expectations are consistently high, assessment data is used well to plan the next steps of learning and pupils are pushed to reach their full potential by ensuring that they are fully aware of their targets for improvement. During the week of the inspection 58 per cent of teaching seen was good or better, although there are inconsistencies amongst teaching in different classes. The headteacher is aware of this through her effective monitoring of teaching and learning and is already in the process of ensuring that staff will be better informed of how the impact of their teaching affects pupils' learning and how best practice can be shared throughout the school.
19. Examples of very good teaching were seen in Year 6 in literacy and numeracy and ICT, music in Years 4 to 6. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In music teaching is very good and pupils make very good gains in learning because of the very good subject knowledge of the specialist teacher.
20. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge, they give clear explanations of what they expect from their pupils, although in some classes the above average attainers are insufficiently challenged because data from assessment is not sufficiently well used in planning the next steps of pupils' learning. Overall, whilst these pupils make satisfactory progress over time, they could be achieving even more, especially in developing their extended writing skills and in experimental and investigative science, where conclusions of experiments are not always evaluated in sufficient depth. For example, most of the pupils were undertaking the same work and some higher attaining pupils were not being sufficiently stretched to achieve their full potential.
21. Teachers have good knowledge of the principles underpinning the national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy and teach basic skills well. They ensure that reading and writing structures are appropriately modelled before pupils are asked to undertake independent activities, this helps pupils to produce examples of better writing as they know what is expected of them. A very effective example of this was seen in a literacy lesson in Year 6 where the teacher painstakingly repeated the use of adjectives to describe Charles Dickens' Scrooge as a nice character. She first reminded the pupils of the adjectives in the story such as 'squeezing' and 'wrenching' into 'caring and sharing'; pupils were delighted with the effects and very quickly learnt how meanings can be altered through the choice of words.
22. In the very best lessons seen teachers have high expectations and promote equality of opportunity well especially in including pupils with special educational needs who are taught well and have appropriate access to all aspects of school life. There are times, however, when tasks are not always matched to pupils' needs, especially for those pupils who are above average attainers, because there is an over emphasis on whole class teaching. This is because the very good assessment procedures for English and mathematics have only been put in place since the recent appointment of the deputy headteacher and not all teachers are fully aware of how to use assessment data to inform the next steps of learning.

23. Opportunities for independent learning are limited in spite of the good provision made for pupils' personal development; the school recognises this as an area for improvement, but has concentrated on ensuring that behaviour strategies are in place before pupils are given more responsibility for independent learning. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and keep them interested in learning. Support staff make a valuable contribution to learning and help pupils to access the curriculum fully. They are knowledgeable, hard working and are involved in helping teachers plan, contributing to the good rates of progress pupils make, especially those pupils who have special educational needs.
24. The use of homework is satisfactory, it is given regularly, is based upon the work covered in lessons and enables pupils to consolidate their learning. Teachers' marking, whilst satisfactory overall, is not consistent. Too often, spelling errors are not corrected and, whilst all teachers mark to the objectives covered in lessons, valuable opportunities are lost for pupils to practice correct version of spelling errors, especially the spellings of subject specific words. This in turn limits the accuracy of pupils' writing. There are occasions when teachers do not make the best use of the time available, resulting in weak plenary sessions which do not provide pupils with an overview of what aspect they struggled with in lessons. Too often plenary sessions are rushed because teachers run out of time and, in some lessons, not enough emphasis was placed on enabling pupils to identify what they could do to improve their learning. There is too much emphasis on 'show and tell' and not enough on what pupils found interesting, difficult, and what they would want to find out more about.
25. Where teaching was very good, such as in Year 6 lessons in music and literacy, pupils learnt at a very fast pace. In these lessons the teachers used time very effectively and were passionate about their teaching, their enthusiasm motivated the pupils to learn and, as a result, pupils participated fully in learning and achieved very well. For example, in the music lesson, pupils could not wait to get started and sat up, bright-eyed, eagerly waiting for the lesson to start. However, the best examples of practice within the school have not been shared amongst the staff although the headteacher has plans to ensure that this happens soon. The school undertakes end of year optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5.
26. Assessment overall is satisfactory but is very good in English and mathematics, where appropriate targets are set for pupils, helping raise standards. Assessments are very detailed and identify the skills needed to move pupils on in their learning but as yet the staff have not had sufficient time to fully implement them as they have only been in place one term. In other subjects assessment is mostly satisfactory in that it is based on end of unit assessments of what pupils have learnt but this does not provide a sufficiently accurate picture of the subject specific skills that pupils have acquired. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory but it is inconsistent, not all pupils are given guidance on how to improve their work, especially their spelling of subject specific words. Pupils' targets have recently been put in place and now form an integral part of the staffs' performance management pupils' progress objectives. Not all pupils know their targets because they have only recently been put in place.
27. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and the good quality of teaching pupils with special educational needs has been maintained. There is no unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school. This is attributable to the effective monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and the appropriate implementation of performance management.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory**. Very good provision for extra curricular activities, including participation in the creative and performing arts, enriches the curriculum. The quality and range of learning resources and accommodation are **good** overall and the quality of displays around the school is very high.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good opportunities for enrichment.
- Very good provision for the creative and performing arts.
- Good provision for personal, social and health education.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for.
- Medium-term planning at present does not identify progressive development of subject specific skills and formal opportunities for links with literacy, numeracy and ICT are not identified.
- The quality of displays around the school is of a very high standard.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to participate in residential visits.

Commentary

28. The curriculum meets statutory requirements including provision for religious education and collective worship. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The quality and range of opportunities provided are satisfactory with some good and very good elements. A very good range of additional curriculum opportunities enriches pupils' learning outside of classes. The school provides a range of activities from French to orchestra, model making to girls' football, drama, dance and tennis. Particularly strong is the school's emphasis on the creative and performing arts, including drama. Artists, musicians, authors and poets help staff develop their skills. The school works hard to ensure that pupils, regardless of ability or gender, have access to the very good range of extra curricular opportunities it provides. Provision for personal, social and health education is good with well planned programmes for sex and drugs education. There are very good opportunities for pupils to participate in residential visits and each year group has the opportunity to stay away from home overnight, which has a positive effect on their social skills.
29. At present the school's curriculum planning is largely reliant on national guidelines. Whilst the balance of time afforded to each curriculum area is satisfactory, the school acknowledges the need to work further at planning for the progressive development of subject specific skills. There is a need for more clearly defined expectations of what pupils should achieve by the end of each year group. The school has made an effective start in adapting its planning so that it meets the particular needs of its pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, but more needs to be done to create planned learning opportunities for higher attaining pupils. At present the schemes of work do not fully reflect clearly defined expectations of what all groups of pupils should be achieving. This has an adverse effect on teachers' planning as they are unsure where to pitch the level of work. Also, whilst there are already some useful links between ICT, mathematics, literacy and history, more needs to be done to enable links between all subjects to be planned systematically to ensure even greater consistency in pupils' rates of progress.
30. Resources to support learning are good overall and the school's accommodation is good. It has created an art and design and technology area and a music room from unused teaching areas. These developments enhance the school's facilities, and along with the very good presentation of pupils' work, and displays round the school, help create a stimulating environment in which to work. The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum is satisfactory, all staff are experienced in teaching all subjects of the National Curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for the care, welfare and health and safety of pupils and the support and guidance they receive is **good** overall with some very good features. The standard of care is particularly noteworthy.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a very caring organisation.
- The school ensures that its pupils work in a secure and safe environment.
- The school makes good efforts to raise self-esteem and give all pupils a chance to be successful, seeking their views on all aspects of school life.
- The school has very good provisions for the welfare of its pupils.
- The pupils' personal development is not formally monitored.

Commentary

31. The school gives a very high priority to the care of its pupils and to raising their self-esteem. A very caring ethos and a large number of supportive staff help the pupils feel happy and secure. A similar position was reported at the last inspection.
32. Pupils' achievements are recognised and celebrated through rewards and special assemblies. The school tries to create opportunities for all pupils to succeed. Its aim to achieve excellence in the creative and performing arts is a particularly good example of how pupils are receiving good support to develop their artistic talents. Also, the school makes good efforts to ascertain and take account of the pupils' views using the School Council and questionnaires. These initiatives contribute significantly to the development of self-esteem and they are valued by the pupils. There are satisfactory links established with the local infant and secondary schools and induction of new pupils runs smoothly.
33. The care provided by the school extends beyond the normal school day and this adds to the security and welfare of the pupils. For example, there are well used care arrangements at the start and end of the school day and during holidays and there is a well supported breakfast club. The caring ethos also extends to all the school staff. It has been accredited with an award which recognises its strength as an 'Investor in People'. This helps to create an inclusive organisation.
34. The governors ensure that all health and safety requirements are met and very good risk assessments are undertaken regularly. There are good arrangements for health and safety and for child protection, which have been improved following criticism at the last inspection. Lunchtime supervision arrangements are also good. Consequently, the school is a safe place for the pupils to work.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership with parents is **good**. The school makes good efforts to develop links with parents. Parents hold the school in very high regard but most have little involvement in its activities. Links with other schools are **good** and there are **satisfactory** links with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very satisfied with the school.
- The school tries hard to develop links with parents and to involve them in its activities but a large number of them have little involvement with the school and their children's education.
- The range and quality of information provided for parents is good overall.
- Links with other schools provide useful benefits for the pupils.
- The governors' annual report and the prospectus do not comply fully with DfES requirements, but already this is being rectified by the headteacher.

Commentary

35. The school works hard to develop links with parents. For example, there is a good range of information about school events and curriculum coverage such as weekly newsletters. Staff are

very accessible which pleases parents. Also, parents' views are sought and acted on. All the available evidence indicates strongly that parents like the school and that their level of satisfaction is increasing. However, most parents do not provide active support to enable their children to learn at home. Most meetings held at school for parents are poorly attended, there are difficulties in recruiting parent governors and there is no parental help in school, which was also noted at the previous inspection. Furthermore, there is no evidence of widespread parental support for their children's learning at home. Overall, therefore, many parents do not take opportunities to enhance their children's education but the school compensates for this by ensuring that pupils receive adequate help and support. An exception to the low level of parental support is the parent teacher association which is very active. It makes significant and valued contributions to the school funds.

36. The information provided for parents is good overall. Parents are fully aware of what is happening in school and in the curriculum. However, the pupils' annual progress reports, whilst satisfactory overall, mainly emphasise achievement. They give little indication of areas of difficulty and the steps which are needed to improve. The governors' annual report and the prospectus are informative but their contents do not fully comply with requirements. These deficiencies have been acknowledged and the headteacher is already putting in place procedures to rectify this.
37. Community links and links with other schools are good and are improving. For example, links with other schools have provided access to specialist teaching in mathematics and Spanish. This has extended the curriculum and provided additional opportunities for more able pupils. The arrangements for pupils to transfer to secondary school are satisfactory overall but the headteacher already wants to ensure that even closer links are developed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. Governance is satisfactory and key staff fulfil their duties well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and key staff are good.
- A strong sense of team spirit has been created.
- There is a strong commitment to improving the school further and systems for school self evaluation are good.
- The administration of the school is good and this has a positive effect on its running.

Commentary

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	732,210	Balance from previous year	16,000
Total expenditure	722,210	Balance carried forward to the next	10,000
Expenditure per pupil	2,345		

38. The headteacher has done a phenomenal amount of work in the short time that she has been in post. She has several very good leadership qualities such as a clear vision, total commitment to the pupils' education and dedication to the welfare of her staff. The pace and successful implementation of change during her 18 month in post is impressive. Management is good and is improving; the recent appointment of an effective deputy headteacher, who is a very good classroom practitioner, is having a positive effect on raising standards. Governance of the

school is satisfactory and getting better as governors are receiving more and more information about standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

39. Since the headteacher has been appointed there has been a dramatic turn around and the pupils are no longer underachieving because of the effective systems for monitoring standards that have been put into place. The headteacher takes whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the pupils in her care receive at least a satisfactory quality of education. This has been achieved and now the school is looking at improving on previous best performance; staff are totally committed to raising standards. The headteacher has raised not only the expectations of staff but also of parents, pupils and the whole community. Under her leadership this is a school that is 'going places'. The headteacher has successfully raised the self-esteem of staff and pupils. Pupils are proud to take part in public performances and staff's passion for teaching had been rekindled. Parents are starting to see the potential that their children have to be successful learners. The governors have described the headteacher as 'a very good communicator who empowers all who work with her'. Parents are very pleased with what the school offers their children, even though at first some thought that the pupils were being pushed too hard. The headteacher, very ably supported by her deputy, is now introducing initiatives that will challenge pupils further, so that learning becomes more varied, diverse and independent. There is now a register of gifted and talented pupils and staff are aware that above average attaining pupils still need to be getting even higher results. The pupils themselves see the school is getting better. "We have much better equipment to work with and just look at our fantastic art work" said one Year 6 pupil during an interview with an inspector. The monitoring of performance data is helping to raise standards. The deputy headteacher has done a very good job on developing very good assessment procedures for English and mathematics, but has not yet trained all of the staff at ensuring that they can use this data to challenge the above average attaining pupils more effectively.
40. The leadership and management of literacy, numeracy, science and special educational needs is good. Key staff fulfil their duties well and know about standards in their subjects. Furthermore, the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher has provided staff with a very clear and detailed analysis of what they need to do in order to improve. The regular and systematic monitoring of staffs' progress in relation to their targets as identified in their performance management of pupils' progress objectives ensures that all staff are held to account for the standards that these pupils attain. This has arrested any element of pupils' underachievement. The school's systems for self-evaluation are good and all staff are committed to giving their pupils the best start in life.
41. The administration of the school is good. The office runs like clockwork, secure routines are established, finances are managed well and all systems for administration are good.
42. The effective systems for performance management that have been put in place have enabled the governors and staff to identify what works and what aspects need further development, especially in relation to training. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked very hard at managing the recruitment, retention, deployment and workload of staff. The management of change has been appropriately co-ordinated and the school development plan identifies the correct priorities for improvement. Governors are involved in all aspects of school life. Many of them are new, but have already shown a keen interest and commitment to the school. The chair of governors fulfils his duties well, he is aware of certain omissions from the prospectus and governing body annual reports which are being rectified.
43. The school is on an upward trend and this is set to continue. A key reason for the improvement is the drive and know how of the headteacher. With supportive staff and governors the school is on course to continue getting better.
44. There has been good improvement in the leadership and management of the school with the appointment of the new headteacher and deputy headteacher. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards overall are below national average at the end of Year 6 but are improving.
- Pupils' writing skills are below the national average and too few opportunities are planned for extended writing in other subjects.
- Pupils' keenness to read.
- Good quality of resources, in particular the library.
- Management is good, as is the quality of teaching.
- Good strategies to develop boys' interest in reading.
- Very good assessment procedures are inconsistently used, and higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.
- Good use of intervention programmes for lower achieving pupils.
- Work set for pupils with special educational needs is well planned and they make good progress.

Commentary

45. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, based upon this year's cohort of pupils where there is a high percentage with special educational needs and below average attainers. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are average. However, standards in writing are below average. When they enter school, pupils in Year 3 have not retained skills in spelling and writing conventions which they have learned previously and this means they lose momentum in their learning. There is a high percentage of pupils in all year groups with persistent special educational needs. The school's good provision for those pupils means that the number of pupils with learning difficulties is reduced steadily over time, although a significant proportion has persistent problems - making the standard of writing below average. The school has too few pupils who attain higher levels in English and this also affects the school's performance. Boys have not been performing as well as girls and the school has put into place good strategies, informed by latest research on raising boys' attainment. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory and all intervention strategies aimed at raising pupils' standards are working well.
46. Standards in speaking and listening are average. Pupils can express themselves clearly and understand instructions and questions. Their articulation is good and they answer quickly. Teachers give many good opportunities to listen by reading aloud to pupils and asking questions, and give pupils time to talk to each other before committing their ideas to paper. There is very good provision for drama, which is well linked to other subject areas and provides valuable opportunities for pupils to perform and to express their ideas and feelings creatively. As a result of the school's new strategies, arising from their own evaluations, pupils' progress is improving.
47. Pupils' standards in reading are satisfactory. Teachers model reading well and pupils are provided with a wide range of texts which they enjoy, helping to raise standards. The good standard of additional help of intervention strategies for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is helping raise standards effectively. The school pays attention to teaching phonics progressively and this is helping develop pupils' reading skills. The library has been largely re-stocked and updated so that pupils are keen to read and they value books.

48. Standards in writing are unsatisfactory. The school has recognised this from its own evaluation and has implemented well founded strategies to help pupils improve their work, the result of good monitoring and very good assessment procedures introduced to the school in the last year. Pupils use writing frames and check lists to support and extend their work with success. Teachers' increasing confidence in using ICT is improving in the example they set to pupils and the way they present information but more emphasis needs to be placed upon using ICT to promote learning further. Weaknesses in spelling and handwriting have been identified and time has been set aside and strategies put in place to help raise standards. The school has made practical arrangements to improve standards of boys' literacy, for example, through seating plans and the choice of reading books and this is beginning to improve the quality of work. Target setting and assessment procedures are very effective and well implemented and the analysis of National Curriculum test data is well used to give a clear pointer to areas for improvement in teaching but, as yet, these are not used consistently across the school.
49. Teaching is good and improving with some examples of very good teaching especially in Year 6. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and their present rates of progress are good but higher attaining pupils could be challenged even further. Teachers know the literacy strategy well and have good subject knowledge, they manage their pupils well and offer good explanations. They model for pupils what is expected of them for writing and, in lessons, produce writing frames so that pupils feel secure in their writing. This helps reduce the stress levels in those pupils who find it difficult to write. Teachers have good skills in ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to base their writing on their reading, helping raise pupils' understanding of purpose and organisation based upon good modelling of texts studied in lessons. The literacy strategy is effectively implemented but, too often, teachers run out of time and so the plenary session is not always as successful as it should be in helping pupils identify their strengths and areas for development in learning.
50. Subject leadership and management are good. The quality of monitoring, analysis of National Curriculum test results and the very good assessment recently introduced all help to ensure pupils make better progress and all have been introduced in the last twelve months. However, the use of assessment to inform the next steps of pupils' learning is satisfactory overall but is not yet systematically applied throughout the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. Provision is satisfactory overall but is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that pupils' writing skills are developing at a fast pace. The headteacher has identified this as an issue to be addressed. Provision for drama, as a learning medium to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, is good. Staff ensure that the spelling of subject specific words is rigorously used in lessons. In some subjects, such as history, there are effective examples of extended writing but the practice of enabling pupils to apply their learning of skills acquired in literacy sessions to other subjects of the curriculum is not consistently developed in all year groups.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below national averages by the end of Year 6 but are improving.
- Subject leadership is good.
- Pupils have good skills of mental mathematics.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- Too few pupils are working at higher levels of attainment due to data from the very good assessment procedures not being sufficiently well used to challenge higher attainers.
- Pupils struggle with problem solving.

Commentary

52. Analysis of pupils' work undertaken, and observation of work in lessons, indicate that, whilst standards are below expectations by the time pupils are aged 11, they are much nearer to where they should be and standards are rising and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. This is satisfactory improvement on last year's test results when pupils did not reach average levels. Previous inspection findings show that standards are in line, but this year's cohort have a high percentage of pupils who are below average attainers and who have special educational needs, many of whom did not start their education at the school.
53. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound sense of number operations and good recall skills of mental mathematics. They are using ICT appropriately to support their learning and are making sound gains in interpreting information for charts. In their problem solving activities they can identify what strategies are to be used, but they need more opportunities to apply the skills acquired in tackling mathematics investigations and in problem solving activities. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and have good skills of mental recall. They are enthusiastic and learn well. The school gathers a lot of data about individuals and groups of pupils, but this is not used sufficiently rigorously to plan appropriately challenging activities for different groups, especially higher attainers. The support for pupils with special educational needs, or for those less capable in mathematics, is good. Learning support assistants work hard to make sure that these pupils are attentive during teacher led sessions and that they are following the lesson. They are included well.
54. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, with evidence of very good teaching in the upper juniors. Here there was the strongest evidence of those approaches to teaching and learning that lead to higher standards, namely crystal clear aims and objectives for the lesson, disciplined and well paced teaching and material offering a good degree of challenge. Teachers work hard, use praise extensively to motivate pupils, and pupils' contributions are valued. There are examples of teachers trying to offer higher attaining pupils more challenging work, but more needs to be done to challenge these pupils even further, as too much time is spent on consolidating learning rather than acquiring new knowledge. A lot of the work undertaken is very much teacher directed and this limits opportunities for independent learning. This is largely due to the fact that, as yet, not all teachers use the data from the very good assessment procedures to ensure that tasks set are rigorously matched to pupils' needs.
55. The leadership and management of the subject is good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and promotes the subject well. She has initiated a range of further training opportunities for staff and has enhanced the learning resources available. She knows the strengths and weaknesses of the subject well and offers good support for staff. The school has also established extra provision in the form of 'Springboard', 'booster' groups and an Easter school to try to raise attainment. The school is working very hard to this end, and senior managers and the subject co-ordinator are aware that a key element in this process is ensuring that the characteristics of the best teaching have to be adopted throughout the school and the use of assessment needs to be more rigorously implemented. Since the last inspection, standards are not as high but this is due to the academic profile of pupils (many of whom are below average attainers and have special educational needs), but the quality of teaching is now good and has improved. This is due to the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. Examination of pupils' work indicates that an effective start has been made in using mathematics across the curriculum, although this is at the early stages of development. In subjects such as science, design and technology and ICT, there are some satisfactory examples of pupils using their mathematical skills. However, opportunities seem to arise coincidentally rather than as part of systematic planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Whilst below national average at the end of Year 6, standards are rising and there has been substantial improvement on 2003 test results, which were well below national average.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- The teaching of experimental and investigative science is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and their progress is patchy.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to record their findings using a variety of methods, and pupils' spelling of subject specific words is weak.

Commentary

57. Standards are below the national average at the end of Year 6 but are improving. There has been no difference in standards attained by boys and girls. The 2003 national test results show that standards were well below national averages, inspection findings show that they are now below national averages and that standards are improving. In the national test results too few pupils attained the higher levels. The school has recognised this as an issue and the newly appointed science co-ordinator is working very hard at ensuring that the overall, satisfactory, assessments that are in place are becoming more finely tuned. Staff are becoming clearer about the aspects of scientific knowledge and skills that pupils struggle with and are evaluating how their teaching can be more effectively targeted to meet the needs of all pupils. Standards in life processes and living things, materials and their properties are average, but in experimental and investigative science and physical processes standards are below average.
58. By the end of Year 6, pupils are making good gains in how to set up experiments, they understand the principles of fair testing and are capable of posing a hypothesis. However, their weak skills in writing and spelling of subject specific words prevent them from writing up their experiments coherently. Many pupils cannot explain how their predictions match their findings. Too often work set in classes does not challenge the higher attaining pupils who, whilst reaching average standards, could be challenged further. The use of ICT to support learning is patchy. Whilst it is satisfactory overall due to the research that pupils undertake, more can be done to integrate it fully into the everyday learning, especially in enabling pupils to present their findings using a variety of recording conventions, pictograms and digital microscopes to compare, for example, erosion of different rocks.
59. Pupils know how seeds are dispersed and what conditions are needed for a plant to survive, including nutrition and reproduction. They know how the body works and what foods are essential to keeping a healthy diet. Pupils follow their own lines of enquiry when testing materials and they know which fabric is resistant to wear and tear. They know how sound is made and how pitch can be changed, but they do not evaluate their findings against earlier predictions. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they enjoy group work.
60. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers give good explanations, encourage pupils to look up things on the CD-ROM, they ask challenging questions and relate learning to pupils' experiences. Teachers are aware of the need to develop pupils' skills of investigative and experimental science further. Teachers' marking of subject specific spelling is unsatisfactory overall, not enough emphasis is placed on moving pupils on in their learning by encouraging them to spell correctly. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs who make good progress because of the effective way they are supported in lessons by the support staff.

61. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The newly appointed co-ordinator has secure subject knowledge and has undertaken a rigorous audit of the progressive development of subject specific skills. She is in the process of developing the assessment procedures further to ensure that any signs of underachievement can be quickly rectified.
62. Overall progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory but it has only come about very recently since the new co-ordinator has been appointed to post. Up until then (September 2003) progress has been unsatisfactory and there has been considerable underachievement by all groups of pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been an improvement in standards; they are now in line with national expectations and pupils' achievements are good.
- There have been recent improvements in resources and staff expertise.
- The subject leader is knowledgeable and has a clear view about how to develop the subject.
- ICT is not used consistently to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

63. At the time of the previous inspection both teaching and standards in ICT were deemed to be unsatisfactory. Now, by the time pupils are 11, standards are average, and the teaching is good overall. This represents good and very good progress. Since the previous inspection, national funding has helped improve staff confidence and expertise through training. Staff confidence has improved further because each member of staff now has the regular use of a laptop computer. In the lessons seen, teachers' improved subject knowledge enabled them to give clear, concise explanations and set a purposeful pace to the sessions. The direct teaching lessons, which the school can now plan because it has a computer suite, enable pupils to make good gains in acquiring basic skills. Older pupils quickly used the context of a modern day census to create a database, and they achieved better understanding of how ICT methods compare with alternatives such as 'pen and paper'. Resources have improved with the provision of the computer suite, and the school is introducing inter-active whiteboards to teaching areas as funds allow. The school has plans to create a larger ICT suite to give pupils even more opportunities for 'hands on' provision. Pupils are enthusiastic about ICT, clearly enjoy the lessons and work well with partners or groups to achieve well.
64. Recent changes in subject leadership have yet to be consolidated, but the subject leader is knowledgeable, and has a clear view as to how the subject needs to develop. She is working to create a library of up to date software and is aiming to have in place systems to enable pupils to access their work from anywhere in school. This will help to facilitate the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects. Overall, the leadership and management of the subject are good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. The use of ICT across the curriculum is broadly satisfactory. At present this is a 'developing' area. During the inspection, little use was seen of ICT outside direct teaching sessions and, at present, ICT is not used rigorously to support learning in other subjects because it is not yet formally identified in planning. However, in subjects such as history, geography, English and mathematics, effective examples of ICT were seen during the week of inspection and, in these lessons, pupils made good progress. The school is well placed to raise standards even further.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are in line with national expectations of 11-year-olds and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
- Resources are good.
- Curriculum is extended and improved by visits and visitors.
- The use of drama to develop pupils' skills of empathy with people living at different times in history is good.
- There are too few opportunities for extended writing in the lower juniors and higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

66. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Curriculum planning is now satisfactory and pupils have good opportunities to develop their writing, historical vocabulary and skills through other subjects. They have adequate opportunities for research.
67. Resources are good. They are new, varied in range and are of high quality with many attractive and interesting books in the library. As a result, pupils are encouraged to improve their historical knowledge and are enthusiastic about the work. Teachers plan well to integrate history with other subjects. During the inspection, pupils linked their work on the Victorian era with modern day laws on health and employment, expressed these with drama and read 'A Christmas Carol', realising the different use of language and customs of the times. Some of the work was quite difficult for the pupils, for example, comparing the day of a child in Edwardian times with that of one living in the Victorian era, but pupils began to link the sequence of time and development of laws and technology well. Pupils are keen to learn and try hard. The quality of teaching is good because teachers have secure subject knowledge, give good explanations and challenge pupils' thinking, especially in Year 6 where pupils learn about the changes in Victorian law that helped the children. Teachers use the good resources at their disposal well but medium-term planning lacks detail in specifying opportunities for using literacy, numeracy, ICT and the subject specific skills. Opportunities for pupils to use their extended writing skills are limited in the lower juniors and higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. They could be achieving more but, as yet, the school does not have a sufficiently rigorous assessment system to provide a clear overview of what pupils know, understand and can do. Overall assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory overall, a detailed audit of resources has been undertaken and planning has been monitored.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Drama is used well to develop pupils' skills of empathy.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are making good gains in understanding similarities and differences in different religious ceremonies.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their ability to reflect and respond to experiences of life and religion.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for writing and pupils' spelling is weak.

- Assessments are underdeveloped and are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

68. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection, that is they meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Improvement has been satisfactory overall, with more emphasis being placed on pupils relating learning to their own experiences. Progress throughout the school is satisfactory but insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to write in different genres and their spelling is weak. The school has identified that this is a weakness and it has been set as a performance management target that is being addressed. By the end of Year 6, pupils' work meets the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus and pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. Pupils develop a sound awareness of the similarities and differences between Christian and other major faith religious festivals. They gain sound understanding of the importance of stories within religions, and also know that some places and objects have a special religious meaning for the followers of the faith. They know that the Bible teaches Christians how to live their lives and that the Torah represents the sacred writings of the Hebrew faith. Pupils can describe some traditions, festivals and rituals of Sikh weddings. They know the Hindu story of Diwali and are fascinated by designs in Mendhi patterns. They know that white is the colour traditionally used for the bride's wedding dress in Christian religions and that in a Sikh wedding the bride wears red.
69. Pupils understand the meaning of justice, prejudice and freedom and apply it well when discussing racism. In a Year 5 class, drama was used well to develop pupils' skills of empathy when they were exploring the concept of the caste system in the Hindu religion. This enabled them to gain a deeper understanding of the value and uniqueness of individuals.
70. Pupils have good attitudes to learning; they particularly enjoy learning about other religions and their customs and practices. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and they are effectively supported by hard working classroom assistants.
71. The quality of teaching is satisfactory; teachers have sound subject knowledge and give good explanations but the use of these is variable, and sometimes plenary sessions are not as effective as they might be in bringing together an overview of pupils' learning. Marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall but is very variable with the best marking seen in one Year 6 class. Teachers do not place sufficient emphasis on ensuring that pupils correct their spellings and too few opportunities are provided for pupils to write extensively, limiting their progress.
72. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has identified that assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and that these need to be more rigorously aligned with the guidance identified in the locally agreed syllabus.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. Very limited teaching of **art and design** was seen during the week of inspection. Therefore, judgements on provision cannot be made. The school is in receipt of Artsmark Silver Award and the displays around the school and pupils' work show that standards are above average, pupils are able to respond creatively to the focus for learning, and they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Arts weeks contribute very well to the development of both collaborative and creative skills. Pupils have good opportunities to work with artists and every year group now undertakes a detailed unit of three-dimensional work. By the end of Year 6, pupils know about the work of Picasso, Van Gogh, Kandinsky and Matisse and, in their work on 'Images', pupils created large canvas work which clearly showed their good use of colours. Pupils' art work was high profile within the community. Pupils have designed Christmas cards for local churches and their illustrations were used for calendars at a local business firm. When working with artists in residence, pupils have created very well designed felt pictures and three-dimensional masks. They are presently involved in creating a mural project. ICT is used appropriately to support learning and pupils have used a range of pattern, print and drawing

programs. The leadership and management of the subject are good, the co-ordinator has monitored standards and is presently involved in ensuring that a vocabulary log is introduced to help pupils develop their skills of literacy. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and pupils now achieve standards that are above national expectations of 11-year-olds.

74. Only one lesson was seen in **design and technology** and no lessons were observed in **geography**, nor was this subject sampled, so it is not possible to make a judgement about provision. It is evident from discussions and from teachers' planning that pupils are gaining experience of a range of materials and techniques, and ICT is used well to support learning in this subject. Scrutiny of examples of finished work shows pupils developing the expected subject skills through designing and making a variety of products. In the one lesson seen, older pupils had designed and made a range of musical instruments and both the accuracy of construction and the detail in the 'finish' was above what one would normally expect to see.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above national averages and achievement is good.
- The school's resources are very well deployed.
- Teaching, by the visiting music teacher, is very good and pupils make rapid progress.
- Music is used well in performance in assemblies and to support the rest of the school's creative and performing arts programmes.
- ICT is not always used sufficiently well to support composition.

Commentary

75. Improvement has been good as the previous report identified that music was not being taught appropriately. The school has moved rapidly to improve its provision for music in the last year thanks to the good leadership of the headteacher. It has a small room dedicated to music and has an adequate number of high quality instruments to give pupils the chance to develop their skills of performance and appreciation of sound well. A specialist visiting unqualified music teacher attends on a day and a half per week to teach all classes and this is very successful because the work is well-planned to meet pupils' needs and moves at a fast pace. The quality of teaching in her lessons is very good and overall teaching is good and pupils are developing their singing and performing skills well. As a result, pupils make rapid progress in all aspects of music, thoroughly enjoy their work and perform with confidence.
76. The headteacher has identified the need for training class teachers to teach music and arranges for them to observe lessons given by the specialist teacher. This is a successful arrangement to help class teachers to improve their subject knowledge and skills. However, whilst some aspects of ICT are used to support learning, not enough use is made of ICT to support pupils' skills of composition.

Physical education

77. No lessons were seen in physical education so no judgements can be made about overall standards or teaching. From discussions and scrutiny of planning documents, a suitable programme of study including dance, games, gymnastics and athletics is followed. Pupils also have access to a programme of 'outdoor adventurous' activities using the school grounds. The standards in swimming by Year 6 are good and pupils benefit from weekly sessions at a local pool. Pupils attain well in dance and examples of good co-ordination, use of space and sequence of movement were seen in a medley of dances presented to inspectors. During a sharing assembly pupils made good progress in learning and achieved well in the very short time it had taken to put the pieces together. The use of dance contributes very positively to

pupils' self-esteem, especially as the pupils represent the school in local dance festivals. There are good opportunities for competitive sport with local schools despite the school having no school field of its own. A good range of after school clubs develops games' skills further. Good use is made of outside providers to give specialist training in basketball, rugby and tennis. Resources for both indoor and outdoor activities are good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

78. The school's personal, social and health education and citizenship programme is still at the early stages of development but already there are indications that the programme is contributing effectively to pupils' positive self-esteem, personal development and citizenship. A very good lesson was seen in Year 6 where pupils discussed a video on changes that happen in puberty. Boys, as well as girls, demonstrated a very mature attitude to ensuing discussions.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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