

INSPECTION REPORT

HATCHFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104121

Headteacher: Mr. G. W. Onyett

Lead inspector: C.D. Loizou

Dates of inspection: 19 – 22 January 2004

Inspection number: 262144

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	445
School address:	Yorklea Croft Chelmsley Wood Birmingham West Midlands
Postcode:	B37 5EG
Telephone number:	0121 770 4050
Fax number:	0121 770 7518
E-mail address:	head@hatchford.rmplc.co.uk
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor J. Allcock (Acting Chair of Governors)
Date of previous inspection:	2 November, 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hatchford Primary School is a large school with 445 pupils on roll. This includes 54 children who attend part-time in the nursery and 14 pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Need. The Additional Resource Centre (A.R.C.), which admits pupils who have moderate learning difficulties, is part of the school. From the reception year, there are two classes in each year group and three classes in Year 6. The number of pupils leaving or joining the school at times other than the usual time of admission to the reception year or transfer to secondary education is relatively low compared with most schools. The large majority of pupils are of British white heritage and there are 24 pupils of mixed heritage and 14 pupils of African or Caribbean heritage. All the pupils speak English as their main language, so there are no pupils who require additional support. Thirty-four per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is in line with the national average although the proportion with a Statement of Special Educational Need is well above average as this includes 13 pupils in the A.R.C. The children's attainment on entry to the school is well below average.

The school has a number of features which are aimed at serving the local community. For example, there is a 'nurture group' that includes provision for parents and carers who wish to be supported in helping their children in school and at home. The school also accommodates a community project that serves the needs of parents in the community. Before and after school clubs, "wraparound" care and a breakfast club make up part of what the school offers its pupils, parents and community. In addition to this, the headteacher has participated in creating European links with other schools as part

of the 'Comenius Project' and this has been successful in forming a professional development partnership with others schools in Spain and Italy, for example.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18645	Charalambos Loizou	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology Art and design, Design and technology, Music, Physical education
11437	Tony Anderson	Lay inspector	
18568	Mary Sinclair	Team inspector	Science, Geography, History
4926	Thelma Aspin	Team inspector	Special educational needs, Foundation Stage, Additional Resource Centre
21235	Marjorie Graham	Team inspector	English, Modern foreign language (French), Religious education

The inspection contractor was :

Inspire Educational Ltd

The Coach House
132 Whitaker Road
Derby

DE23 6AP

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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 areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
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 AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	19
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a good education. The headteacher and senior staff have successfully developed an ethos in which the pupils can achieve. Consequently, the pupils achieve well because the teaching is good with a significant amount that is very good. Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below the national average but the pupils have made good progress. Although science standards are also below average the pupils could do better. The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership. The leadership and management overall are good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The pupils throughout the school achieve well in nearly all subjects because the teaching is good
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and senior management team resulting in sustained school improvement and rising standards
- Standards in science are not high enough because the teaching is not always challenging
- The teaching and curriculum in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception years) are particularly strong
- The personal development, welfare and care of the pupils are strong features of the school's provision. Support staff are highly skilled and make a positive contribution to the pupils' development
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, including those in the school's Additional Resource Centre
- The school provides a very good curriculum. Standards in art and design are above national expectations
- Despite the school's best efforts, unauthorised absence rates are too high

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection in 1998. Standards have improved markedly in English and mathematics but less so in science. The quality of teaching has improved very well, especially for Years 3 to 6. The curriculum has improved well with a better balance of time, for example in physical education. The leadership of the school is now much more focused and provides a clear direction for the work of the school. The new governors and senior management team work closely and subjects are better managed by curriculum leaders.

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	B	E	C
Mathematics	E	E	E	C
Science	E	E	E	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2*

Achievement is good overall. In the Foundation Stage and the Additional Resource Centre, children are achieving very well. The children start school with standards that are well below those typical for children of their age and are making very good progress in all areas of learning. In Year 2, standards

are below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. The 2003 national test results confirm that standards are rising rapidly by the end of Year 2, except in science, where standards are well below average. In Year 6, standards are rising in line with the national trend. Standards in this year's Year 6 have improved in English and mathematics to below average, though they are still too low in science. In other subjects, including ICT, standards are average, except that in art and design the pupils achieve very well and reach above average standards.

The pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are very punctual and very well behaved but rates of unauthorised absence were too high last year. **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good.** There are very good opportunities for the pupils to show respect and demonstrate care for each other.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. The quality of teaching is good overall. There is some very good teaching in most parts of the school, most frequently in the Foundation Stage and the additional resource centre. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in English, mathematics and in most other subjects but only satisfactory progress in science. The pupils use literacy and numeracy skills effectively in other subjects. Those with special educational needs are very well provided for by well-qualified teaching and support staff. Learning is good overall because teachers plan work that is based on very good assessments. Consequently, tasks are well matched to the abilities of the pupils but assessments in science are not as rigorously applied and so more able pupils could do better.

The curriculum provides very good opportunities for learning throughout the school. ICT is used to very good effect in other subjects. The staff in the nursery and reception years provide a very good curriculum and have a good understanding of the curriculum for children of this age.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. Senior staff regularly monitor teaching and learning and analyse assessment information. Governance is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements. The new governing body has good capacity to improve; it receives reports about standards and the impact that the teaching is having. The headteacher, senior staff and governors have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to sustain the current trend of rising standards. The management of the school is good overall and that demonstrated by the headteacher and senior staff is very good, providing a steer to the work of governors and subject leaders across the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents hold the school in high regard. They are very involved in the life and work of the school and are very well informed. The pupils have very good attitudes to school and learning and the school involves them in decision making.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In order to improve the good quality of education provided, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- raise standards and improve the quality of teaching in science so that tasks are better matched to the abilities of the pupils and particularly, more able pupils;

- reduce unauthorised absence rates with the co-operation and support of the parents involved.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are rising faster than the national trend in Years 1 and 2 and steadily in Years 3 to 6. Standards are below average in English and science by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are average in mathematics by the end of Year 2 and below average by the end of Year 6 but improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English and mathematics are improving well in both Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6 but science standards could be higher
- The children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress and achieve very well
- The pupils with special educational needs achieve very well throughout the school
- The pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects
- Information and communication technology is used well in other subjects
- Standards in art and design are above national expectations

Commentary

1. The children start school with standards that are well below those expected for children this age. The very good provision in the Foundation Stage enables the children to achieve very well but most children still fall short of the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.4 (13.3)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.0 (11.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.1 (13.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.8 (27.7)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.9 (24.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.0 (27.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. By the end of Year 2 in 2003, standards were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics and science. However, when compared to similar schools standards were above average in reading, average in writing, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. Over the last three years the trend of improvement has been above the national trend in reading, writing and mathematics. Science standards remain too low.

3. The results of the national tests in 2003 at the end of Year 6 show that standards were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science but overall standards improved well in mathematics. Untypically, the English results in 2002 showed above average standards but that particular cohort of pupils was expected to do well as an above average proportion exceeded or reached the standards expected for their age and very few in the year had special educational needs. This accounts for the apparent decline in standards in 2003 compared with the previous year in English. As is the case by the end of Year 2, science standards are too low and are not improving as well as those in English and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, the results show average standards.
4. The headteacher and senior management team have been directly responsible for a co-ordinated and determined strategy to raise standards. The effective analysis of assessment data and very good assessment procedures, much improved teaching and targeted support for pupils across the ability range have brought about improving standards. Much improved professional development of staff and a significant proportion of good and very good teaching across the school have contributed to the current trend of rising standards. The most immediate effect has been the sharp rise in standards in the infant years and the shared commitment by teachers and support staff in Years 3 to 6 to raise standards by targeting those pupils who have the potential to reach or exceed the standards expected nationally. Art and design standards are above average and standards in information and communication technology have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In all other foundation subjects, standards are in line with national expectations, however, science standards are not improving as well as those seen in English and mathematics.
5. The pupils with special educational needs, including those in the Additional Resource Centre, make very good progress and achieve very well. They receive very effective support from highly qualified and competent staff who are able to meet their specific learning needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, as is their personal development. Attendance and punctuality at the school are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils exhibit very good attitudes and behaviour in the classroom
- Pupils are very well behaved around the school and in the playground
- The pupils' personal development at the school is very good
- Excellent support systems cater for the needs of those with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties
- The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good
- The attendance is satisfactory and punctuality levels are good but unauthorised absence rates are high

Commentary

6. The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good and they are a significant strength of this school. Most pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. For example, in a whole school assembly, pupils walked quietly into the hall and

demonstrated appropriate responses to the deputy headteacher's excellent presentation in which several pupils were expertly and dramatically used to convey a significant moral message. In the playground, the pupils played very well together and they demonstrated very good relationships with all teaching and supervisory staff. There has been just one recent fixed-term exclusion from the school. Parents are very pleased with the way their children are cared for and believe that behaviour is very good. Pupils and parents also feel secure about the way the school deals with any incidents of bullying. In this way both the pupils and parents are confident in the school's policy towards bullying and harassment and this is reflected in the overwhelming views of pupils who say they are happy in school.

7. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and in most lessons pupils' concentration levels were high. In a physical education lesson for example, the pupils worked in pairs as they were taught to create dance sequences to a set theme and with the aid of very dramatic music which had been chosen with great care by the teacher.
8. The school council has been in operation for a few years and this provides a very good forum for pupils to debate the school issues of the day as seen through their own eyes. The whole school also has input into the school council system via the regular class councils and to this extent it is a very inclusive provision which adds significantly to the pupils' personal development at the school. Many other opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility for their own standards of work and in carrying out various tasks around the school.
9. Pupils with special educational needs are valued members of the school. Other pupils understand that the pupils with special educational needs require additional support, accept their differences and treat them respectfully. This means that the pupils with special educational needs gain confidence and try to answer questions in class. They often receive help from those with higher attainment, for example when using computers. Pupils with identified behavioural or emotional difficulties respond to the school's intervention strategies very well. Excellent support systems cater for their specific needs. As a result their actions and behaviour rarely disrupt the learning of other pupils.
10. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very strong and they are provided with many opportunities to work together in the classroom and to explore the local environment by means of many curricular linked visits into the community. Many subjects of the curriculum such as art and design, music and history are used well to promote the pupils' spiritual development and a computer multi-media presentation in science contributed towards the pupils' cultural development at the school. Moral and social development are enhanced, for example, through the many opportunities provided for speaking and listening and in working and playing with other children. Older pupils regularly work with younger ones, listening to them read, and this adds significantly to their personal development.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	1.4
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.

11. The overall attendance at the school is satisfactory and is in line with the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is much higher than the national average but the main reason for this is the school's very strong line on excessive family holidays taken in term time which are all recorded as unauthorised. The large majority of parents are supportive of the school in terms of helping to ensure that their children attend school regularly and promptly.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	335	5	
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7		
Mixed – any other mixed background	17		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	6		
Black or Black British – African	1		
No ethnic group recorded	8	1	

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good overall with a very good curriculum. This accounts for the good achievements of the pupils in most subjects in relation to their attainment when they start school.

Teaching and learning

The teaching and learning are good and very good assessment procedures are used to track the progress of the pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching right across the school is very well planned and takes full account of the abilities of the pupils
- Good use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning
- Teaching by A.R.C staff is consistently very good
- The pupils make good progress and achieve well because the tasks set for them are challenging, although in science lessons this is not always the case
- The teaching is most effective in the additional resource centre, the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6 because the pupils achieve very well, especially in literacy and numeracy

Commentary

12. Teachers prepare lessons that are well matched to the abilities of the pupils because assessment procedures throughout the school are very well organised and effective. Assessment information is recorded to group pupils by ability and to plan tasks that meet their specific learning needs. In this way lessons build well on previous learning and the pupils understand the stages of their learning as well as their learning targets. The large majority of the teaching seen across the school was consistently good or very good because the senior management team have implemented an effective programme of professional development and fostered a real sense of teamwork amongst staff that has galvanised the school towards improving standards for all pupils.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 69 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	25 (36%)	33 (48%)	10 (14%)	1 (1%)		

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.

13. In the nursery and reception classes, nearly all of the lessons seen were of good quality or better. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good as three-quarters of the lessons seen were very good. From Year 1 to Year 4 the teaching is good and approximately one-third of the lessons were very good. In Years 5 and 6, the teaching is strong and nearly half of the lessons in these two year groups were very good. Very good teaching in key parts of the school is responsible for the sustained improvement in standards. Recent appointments to the teaching staff in the last two years have strengthened the teaching and the rapid rise in standards in the infant years is beginning to filter up to the junior years. A few lessons were judged to be less effective than the large majority seen because expectations were lower and tasks were not well matched to the needs of more able pupils. However, the teaching is good overall and is responsible for the pupils achieving well over time and making good progress in nearly all subjects. The teaching of science, although satisfactory, is not as sharply focused as in other subjects. This leads to some underachievement in science, especially amongst more able pupils who are not challenged sufficiently.

14. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and is having a positive impact on the children and their learning. There is a very good understanding by teachers and support staff about how young children learn and they set high expectations as to how best to prepare them when teaching basic communication skills and improving their personal and social development. Consequently, the children start Year 1 with much improved personal and communication skills. In all areas of learning the children have made significant gains so they develop very good foundations for learning basic literacy and numeracy skills when they start Year 1.

15. Throughout the school the teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are used very well to guide teachers' planning. In addition to this the leadership of the school has developed very good assessment procedures that enable teachers to group pupils by ability and to aim their work accurately towards these targets. This has led to much improved learning in basic skills that builds on previous work. In Years 1 and 2, teachers group the pupils for literacy and numeracy lessons and record how well they are doing after regular assessments of their progress. These procedures are followed up in subsequent years and in Year 6 the pupils are taught in special ability groups for English and mathematics. Given the success of this method in Year 6 the school is considering adopting similar procedures for other year groups in the junior years. Science lessons are not as well focused on the development of skills compared with English and mathematics lessons and this is particularly relevant for more able pupils. This leads to science lessons that provide tasks that are similar for all ability groups so that some pupils make only limited progress.

16. Teaching assistants, learning mentors, behaviour support assistants and other special educational needs support staff make a significant contribution to the learning of special educational needs pupils. The quality of teaching in the A.R.C. is consistently very good and

the relationships between SEN staff across the school, class teachers and SEN pupils are very good. Precise planning in line with the pupils' Individual Education Plans enables the pupils to achieve very well. Individual education plans are carefully matched to the assessed needs of the pupils and reviewed regularly. Pupils know their own key target and try to achieve it. Record keeping and other assessment procedures are very good and are a clear indication of pupils' achievements in their time in the school. It includes diaries of incidents that happen from day to day, and special achievements. This forms a very secure record of progress in personal development. Other documentation is well maintained and used to support the A.R.C. pupils in their transfer to other schools.

17. The pupils throughout the school try hard and persevere with tasks. They rise to the challenges set by teachers and support staff. In Year 1, the pupils enjoy learning to spell new words and use their very good knowledge of letter sounds to attempt unfamiliar words when reading and writing. Very good use of the interactive whiteboard was made in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 2. The pupils used the whiteboard to identify multiples of two. Similarly in a very good Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher helped the pupils to recognise groups of numbers as they solved problems involving division. The pupils enjoy talking about their learning as in a Year 5 art and design lesson when the pupils evaluated each other's paintings. For example, they described why they preferred particular styles when contrasting their own pictures with those of famous artists studied in previous lessons. In the Foundation Stage, children enjoy choosing from a wide range of activities that are very well planned to stimulate curiosity and learning. Information and communication technology is very well used across the school to enhance learning in other subjects. Younger pupils learn to combine text and graphics to produce very good quality storybooks or self-portraits with written accounts about themselves. Older pupils enjoy undertaking research using the Internet or looking up information on CD-ROMs. More able pupils can e-mail and receive messages from partner schools, including those in Italy or Spain as part of the school's Comenius Project.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is very good and is well matched to the needs of all the pupils. It is enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities, French lessons and a wide range of visits and visitors. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provided for English and mathematics contributes to improving standards
- Very effective monitoring has informed curricular development
- The taught curriculum is broad and there is very good provision for extra-curricular activities
- A very good range of initiatives are implemented to help pupils with different special educational needs participate fully in school activities

Commentary

18. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is inclusive as it provides very good opportunities for all the pupils across the school. Implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies, including catch-up programmes like 'Springboard Mathematics', has helped to ensure that standards in English and mathematics have risen since the last inspection. The use of nationally recognised schemes of work to guide teachers' planning in

other subjects, the appointment of curricular teams and joint planning are helping to secure consistency and progression in the curriculum.

19. The curriculum has improved well since the last inspection through very effective monitoring by senior staff that informs curricular developments. Time allocations for subjects have been revised to improve the balance between subjects, and the timings of the school day adjusted to maximise learning opportunities for the pupils. Efficient timetabling has broadened the taught curriculum to include French for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Citizenship is developed well through school council meetings where pupils learn to become active and responsible citizens by raising matters of concern, suggesting possible solutions and voting on the actions to be taken.
20. Monitoring has identified that pupils' progress is inhibited when lessons are spaced too far apart and pupils did not make links between subjects. Consequently, three-week teaching blocks for history, geography, design and technology and art and design now provide intensive engagement with curricular subjects and subject skills. Units of work are arranged to facilitate subject links, particularly with literacy and so the pupils make good progress because they use their well developed reading skills to help them understand facts, knowledge and skills gained in other subjects.
21. Applying literacy skills in other subjects is helping to remove a barrier to the development of pupils' independent learning skills. Alongside this, pupils are taught to plan and carry out their own investigations and encouraged to develop their own ideas. Extra-curricular activities include very good opportunities for the pupils to use computers to work on individual learning programs. The next stage is to develop a coherent, whole-school approach to promote independent learning.
22. Out-of-hours activities support learning in the taught curriculum and provide sport and leisure activities. Learning support includes a newspaper club and a before-school club in which students from the local secondary school work to develop individual pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. A professional coach provides training in football skills.
23. Classroom assistants plan alongside teachers and are adept at modifying the work so pupils with special educational needs can meet the overall learning targets in the lesson at their own level. Individual educational programmes that set specific short-term targets for learning are mostly very good and used well. Many initiatives are implemented to increase the pupils' ability to take a full and active part in the life of the school and no opportunity is lost to trial any techniques that will help the pupils to learn. For example, the Behaviour Support Manager visits homes, checks registers for absence patterns and acts as a friend with whom pupils can share any concerns.
24. A very well adapted curriculum is provided in the A.R.C. for those with standards of attainment that are much lower than those of the same age in the school. Every effort is made to meet the specific requirements identified in pupils' statements of educational need. The A.R.C. is provided for pupils with statements of moderate learning difficulties. There are currently 13 pupils aged from 7 to 11 who are brought in from surrounding areas. Teaching and support assistants are committed to providing a balanced curriculum that helps pupils take their place in society. It provides many opportunities for pupils to work alongside those of a similar age in mainstream lessons, while giving them additional support of small group teaching, and where appropriate, an adapted curriculum carefully matched to their needs in a secure area. Pupils spend different amounts of time in mainstream classes, depending on

their levels of attainment, age and maturity and ability to manage their own behaviour in large classes. Every effort is made to integrate them as much as possible and not overprotect them. They take part in all extra-curricular activities. When necessary additional support is provided over lunch and break times to help pupils cope with their own difficulties.

25. Classroom and support assistants are all well qualified, and many are highly skilled. Between them they have a very wide range of specific expertise and all have a very good understanding of how to support pupils with different learning difficulties. The accommodation is used very well to support pupils with SEN.
26. The school is well staffed to meet the needs of the curriculum. Teaching assistants are well trained and make a highly effective contribution to pupils' learning and welfare. The school provides good accommodation, enhanced by attractive displays. The resources for teaching are good.

Care, guidance and support

The procedures for child protection, welfare and health and safety are good and the procedures for supporting and guiding pupils' through monitoring are very good. The procedures for seeking and acting on pupils' views are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures work very well
- Medical records are well maintained and fire drills are undertaken and recorded
- Good risk assessments take place in advance of school trips
- The contribution of staff and pupils of the A.R.C. to the life of the school is very good
- The school provides a very high level of support and guidance as pupils' progress through the school
- There are a small number of minor health and safety issues of which the school are aware and which are now the subject of reviews

Commentary

27. Child protection systems and procedures are very clear and the reporting person is known to all staff in the school. Relevant staff training in child protection matters has also taken place. The teaching and support staff, occasionally supported by external agencies, provide a very high degree of welfare support to individual pupils and this is demonstrated best in the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Very effective additional provision, such as A.R.C. and 'Nurture Group', have been set up to provide a very high level of specialist care for some pupils and these, and all other pupils in the school, are additionally very well supported by the Learning Mentor and the Behaviour Support Manager. The school monitors the pupils' academic performance and personal development both formally and informally. Steps are taken to identify any individual problems with a range of very good strategies. These include the provision of individual education plans for some pupils. The school's systems for the monitoring and promotion of attendance are of a very high standard as are those for logging late pupils and for those children who leave the site early.
28. In the classroom, teachers and support staff know their children very well and they are quick to observe any personal difficulties exhibited by pupils and to take appropriate action. The school operates a good first aid system for minor accidents and appropriate records are maintained. Medical files are kept on all pupils and relevant staff are made aware of any

particular allergies. The school carries out regular fire drills and appropriate records are maintained. However, fire drills ought to involve the whole school rather than parts of the school in order to best simulate the procedures that may have to be adopted in an emergency. The school also carries out occasional health and safety audits of the site and is proactive when considering possible risks on external trips out of school.

29. Lessons in personal, social and health education and circle time are used well to provide the pupils with the opportunity to talk about themselves and to develop their self-esteem and confidence. The school council enhances this provision by providing every pupil with a voice in relation to how the school should develop and improve. The pupils' personal development is further enhanced through the provision of both classroom and individual targets to which pupils are expected to work. The school acknowledges pupils' achievement through the praise given to them in the classroom and, more formally, in regular sharing and presentation assemblies. This practice is clearly a much valued and effective area of the school's promotion of pupils' personal development and self-esteem.
30. The very high level of child protection and welfare support to pupils at the school, together with the very good procedures for promoting pupils' personal development and well-being, have a very positive impact on their learning and they are a significant strength of the school.
31. Pupils from the A.R.C bring an added dimension to school life. Other pupils learn to accept that these pupils have special needs in life, readily accept them as friends and treat them with respect. Support assistants readily work alongside other pupils with special educational needs, so making very effective use of time and resources.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school' links with parents are very good. Links with the local community including other schools are also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The large majority of parents and children like the school
- Parents feel that the school is well led and managed and that the teaching is good
- Parents feel that the school is approachable and reaches out very well to all parents
- The school utilises the community and other schools very well to support the curriculum

Commentary

32. The pre-inspection parents' meeting with the inspectors was reasonably well attended and the parental questionnaire was returned by a moderate number of parents. A significant majority of parents who returned the questionnaire are very supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. Parents feel that their children like school and that they are making good progress. Parents also feel that the teaching is good. The majority of children completed the pupils' questionnaire and their overall response was largely positive.
33. The information provided by the school through the prospectus, annual governors' report to parents and through well designed newsletters (both curricular and general) is of a very high standard. Annual reports to parents about their children's progress are of a high standard and include individual targets for improvement. There are three parents' evenings each year during which parents have very good opportunities to discuss their child's progress. These

evenings are very well attended by parents and they believe they are very useful and informative.

34. A few parents are frequent visitors to the school both in terms of providing very welcome classroom support and in assisting with external visits and extra-curricular activities. All parents have been invited to enter into a home/school agreement, which is designed to promote improved communication between the school, parents and children. Parental attendance at school concerts, celebrations and sports days is very good. The school is also very proactive in providing a wide range of extra support to parents and, in addition to the senior management of the school, the very wide range of internal welfare and support specialists are always available to discuss any issues or concerns. This is a very exceptional provision and it adds significantly to the growing partnership between the school, parents and pupils.
35. The school makes good use of the local environment to enhance the pupils' curricular access and the range of extra-curricular clubs and activities is very good. The school has very good links with the community and regular field trips are made to study the local environment or to visit theatres or museums. The school nurse and education welfare officer are occasional visitors and many other community representatives are also frequent contributors to the day-to-day life of the school.
36. Very close links are also apparent with several local schools both at primary and secondary level. Year 11 pupils from the main feeder secondary school are frequent visitors to the school and they work closely with the school's Year 6 pupils. The induction arrangements with this school, to which the majority of pupils will eventually transfer, are also very strong. The transfer of pupils from Year 2 to Year 3 is also very well managed by the school. The school's sporting links are good and Year 5 pupils take part in an annual trophy competition with other cluster group schools in sport and athletics. The school also has good industrial links with a locally based national energy company who provide a number of adults who listen to pupils read.
37. The school's links with parents, other schools and the community provides a very strong contribution to pupils' learning and personal development and they are strengths of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are good overall. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher is very good
- The members of the governing body are developing their strategic role well but need a training programme to enable them to fulfil their roles more effectively
- The key staff with management responsibilities manage their roles well
- The A.R.C. is very well led and managed
- Teamwork is good and there is a clear commitment to improvement
- The school monitors performance data very well and uses this information very effectively
- The school improvement plan is very well conceived and focuses on key priorities
- Financial administration and control are good

Commentary

38. Leadership and management have improved well since the last inspection. The headteacher has the confidence and support of the staff, parents and governors. He is supported very well by the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. These three form the school's leadership team. They have a clear vision, strong sense of purpose and high aspirations for all the pupils, whatever their needs and abilities. They have commitment and drive and have created a strong school improvement team comprised of middle managers such as subject, phase and year group leaders. This team forms and re-forms into working groups to consider specific issues and co-opts other members of the teaching and support staff. This level of team work means that all the members are clear about priorities and their roles and responsibilities in achieving them. This has broadened the base of the management of the school so that the pupils benefit from individual expertise and the staff benefit from the professional development opportunities. Professional development is regarded as very important. Teachers are set targets for developing and improving their skills and given the resources and training to succeed. The management and provision for special educational needs are very good and closely follows the guidance in the national Code of Practice. Management is very good in the Foundation Stage, in English, mathematics and art and design. It is good in all other subjects except in science where it is satisfactory. The school is a good provider of teacher training and there are effective and welcoming procedures for mentoring and supporting teachers new to the school.
39. There are well established procedures to ensure that the school runs smoothly and the administrative staff contribute much to this success. The members of the leadership team have analysed the future needs of the school and the potential resources available and have strategies to cope with eventualities. Financial controls are administered well with effective systems to evaluate spending and the funds, including those for specific purposes and grants, are well used.
40. The A.R.C. is very effectively led and managed by a highly qualified teacher. She is supported by three very experienced and knowledgeable assistants. These assistants work in mainstream classrooms with their special pupils for different amounts of time.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,304,450	Balance from previous year	143,483
Total expenditure	1,376,947	Balance carried forward to the next	70,986
Expenditure per pupil	2,822		

41. The school's strategic plan is clearly focused as an improvement plan and includes identification of the priorities that are most effective in raising achievement. There is regular review of the school's provision and the pupils' performance through systematic monitoring and evaluation. All the information is used effectively to develop appropriate strategies and structures to enable the teachers to identify what needs to be done to raise standards and enable more of the pupils to attain higher standards. There is careful tracking of the pupils'

progress to determine the value added to their achievements and this has shown that the majority of the pupils make good progress. The headteacher and senior staff ensure that the management of the school is highly committed to developing the curriculum with innovative policies and practices so there is very clear vision, a sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school.

42. The members of the governing body are developing their strategic role well during a difficult time. Due to the retirement of several experienced governors, five new members were appointed in September 2003 but there has never been the full complement of eighteen members so that four vacancies remain. All the governors continue to have a strong commitment to the school and ensure that all the statutory duties are fulfilled. This includes a strong commitment to promoting race equality, which is evident in the work that the pupils do in personal, social and health education as well as in other parts of the curriculum. The headteacher keeps them very well informed and they discuss the ways in which the funds can be spent wisely. They have recently discussed the analysis of the school's performance in the 2003 national tests and by doing so they have followed up the strengths and weaknesses identified by senior staff and subject leaders with visits to lessons so they are becoming increasingly aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Long serving and new governors have linked with subject co-ordinators who have advised on National Curriculum requirements, the range of documents and how to evaluate teaching and learning when observing lessons. The governors are proud of the school's commitment to inclusion and ensure that equality of opportunity is a strength. They are aware that their role is to challenge as well as to support. To achieve this, a training programme will shortly begin to develop their confidence and knowledge and understanding of their role.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

43. Children are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis at the beginning of the school year in which they have their fourth birthday. They transfer to one of the reception classes the following September. Up to one in ten children join the reception year from other pre-school groups or straight from home.
44. There is a wide range of ability but on the basis of a variety of assessments carried out when they have settled into nursery, the standards on entry are well below those normally expected and particularly so in speech and language development. All the children, including those quickly identified as having special educational needs and those with high attainment on entry, achieve very well. Few are likely to attain the early learning goals in all areas by the time they enter Year 1.
45. Teachers and nursery nurses are very aware of the children's stages of development and their individual needs. They plan as a team to make sure that themes and experiences are not repeated unnecessarily, and that skills are developed from one year to the next. Themes and areas of learning are linked together well so that key skills are continually reinforced. Nursery nurses show initiative in the way they support children. For example, following a whole class numeracy activity using a magnetic board and numerals, the nursery nurse immediately went to the board with two SEN children with whom she had been sitting and reworked the activity to reinforce their learning. Each member of the team knows what they are expected to do and when, making efficient use of time. There is a very good balance between activities directed by teachers and those selected and explored by children. They are well chosen to match the children's levels of maturity. There are high expectations of children's behaviour and attitudes so no time is wasted. The Foundation Stage classes are very well led and managed. The teacher in charge monitors planning and the performance of the children regularly. She ensures that the Foundation Stage provides a continuous curriculum so that the children who transfer from the nursery experience a curriculum that builds on their learning in the nursery. The teaching teams have created stimulating and secure environments in both nursery and reception classes that encourages a spirit of enquiry and broadens children's experiences.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve very well because the teaching is very good
- Children enjoy coming to the well-organised, secure and stimulating classrooms
- Personal, social and emotional development permeates all activities
- There is very good provision for children with behavioural, social or emotional difficulties

Commentary

46. The teaching is very good and children achieve very well in all aspects of this area although the majority will not reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Before they

start school and before they enter the reception year there are home visits and good procedures to ensure that children are well prepared. Teachers and support staff provide a secure, stimulating and welcoming environment where classroom routines are consistently applied. This means that children settle down quickly. Adults promote self-esteem and develop self-confidence. They demonstrate that they value every child by the way they respond to their contributions and achievements. The children achieve very well because the work done in the reception year builds on that done in the nursery. Assessments of the children's performance in all areas of learning are made to help the staff track how the children are doing. This helps the reception teachers to continue tracking the performance of the children and so achievement is continuous. In all activities opportunities are taken to help children become aware of the rights and values of others. Activities are organised carefully to allow children to develop independence and learn to make choices. Each child is given an opportunity to take responsibility for small, but important tasks. When a child's behaviour is not acceptable teachers make sure the child understands why. Where children have specific behavioural, personal, social or emotional difficulties, temporary or longstanding, they are given special high quality support to help them develop in maturity in a quiet and thoughtfully resourced area where careful consideration is given to the stage of maturity of the child.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve very well because of very good teaching
- Rigorous early assessment identifies individual children's specific needs
- Specialist support is given to those with low attainment in early speech and language skills
- Many opportunities are provided for children to listen, speak, share and enjoy books, and develop early writing skills effectively

Commentary

47. Activities are very well planned to cover speaking, listening, the development of specific vocabulary, communication with adults and with other children, and early reading and writing skills. In the nursery, books and well-told traditional stories are used to engage the children's interest and provide a basis for discussion, role-play and a variety of activities that extend their language effectively. This helps the children when they reach the reception year so that the children love to retell and act out the stories using their own words and are familiar with the sequence of a story and the characters involved. Reception children quickly learn that text has meaning and this builds on the very good work done in the nursery when the children talk about characters in books and observe illustrations to point out what is happening in the story. A special activity every day, taught in small groups, helps them learn the sounds and shapes of letters. The more able children in reception are beginning to use these skills to spell simple words. Children are encouraged to develop early skills of writing and learn that writing can be for many purposes through, for example, answering a letter from Percy, a character in a familiar story. The majority of children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals by Year 1 in this area despite the very good progress in their learning. Children's stages of development in speech and language are rigorously assessed as early as is reasonably possible. Children with speech and language development that is much lower than that expected for their age are given additional support from a specialist, brought in by the school, to help them overcome their difficulties.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve very well because teaching is very good
- Practical activities are used well to support learning

Commentary

48. Although children enter school with some knowledge of number names, they are insecure actually counting objects and relating to quantities. Spatial awareness is also well below that normally expected for the majority of children. In the nursery, the children are taught number rhymes and games to help them remember the names and order of numbers and begin to see how numbers are used. This is built on in the reception classes as the children begin to order numbers, match the number of objects in groups and then associate the value of numbers by checking their place on a number line. Many opportunities are provided for children in both the nursery and reception years to develop spatial awareness through construction activities, using shapes and making patterns. They begin to understand capacity and size, developing associated language through, for example, comparing the bowls, chairs and beds of the three bears in the story of 'Goldilocks', and by using sand and water. Counting activities are often linked to their stories and to add interest, teachers provide associated objects such as knitted mice. Although children reach higher standards overall in mathematical development, and a greater number attain the early learning goals than in other areas of learning, the majority are unlikely to attain all the goals by the time they enter Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because teaching is very good
- No opportunity is lost to extend the children's knowledge of the world about them

Commentary

49. Knowledge of the world is built into every activity because teachers are aware of the need to extend the children's understanding and experience of the world about them and develop a spirit of curiosity. No opportunity is lost to improve children's basic knowledge, for example, in their understanding of the passage of time. In the nursery, the children learn about animals, where they live and what they eat. Reception children share and look through books and the staff recently used a visit to a farm to act out the nativity. This gave them the experience of being among farm animals and handling other creatures, such as snakes, as well as helping them understand the nativity story. The Chinese New Year has formed the basis of learning about another culture and a large number of objects associated with that culture have been looked at and handled. Children work with a variety of materials to find out how to join things together. They use the computer and explore different programs. Despite the very good achievement, the majority of children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because the teaching is good

- Teachers are very aware of the specific areas of development where attainment is well below average and provide for this

Commentary

50. Currently, during the development of imaginative and secure areas for all Foundation Stage children to provide safe adventurous activity, there is no continual access to outdoor activity. Teachers provide many different types of experiences to compensate as far as possible. Children are carefully supervised when doing outdoor activities. They balance on mini-stilts, develop co-ordination using bats, balls and other small items. They learn to push and pull wheeled vehicles, co-ordinating their movements to avoid obstacles on an imaginary 'building site'. In the hall they become more aware of the space around them when running and moving in different ways. Children generally have average bodily development for their age although often have difficulties with hand-eye co-ordination and manipulation of small items. Because of this many construction opportunities are provided. Children gradually develop the skills of managing their own clothes, manipulating buttons, zips and laces. They learn to use a variety of implements and tools such as scissors. In this aspect of the area of learning the majority of children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because teaching is very good
- Many different types of opportunities are provided for children to work creatively and use their imagination

Commentary

51. The stimulating environment provided is full of opportunities for creative and imaginative activity including role-play. In the nursery, children dress up as Goldilocks and the three bears and act out the story in the 'kitchen' and the 'bedroom', often with an adult taking part. In the reception classes children pretend to be 'Percy' in Percy's hut or his animal friends or 'build' parts of the school using digger trucks in sand. They look at the work of different artists such as Heindrick Avercamp and create their own version of pictures of winter scenes. In all classes children use different media such as chalk and paint freely and create collages from a large choice of materials. Although no taught musical activity was seen during the inspection week, children in the nursery sang along happily to a computer program and demonstrated that they enjoyed action songs and rhymes. The majority of children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE (French)

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although standards are below average, they are improving well. The pupils of all abilities achieve well
- The teaching is consistently good and teachers' marking is of good quality and helpful to pupils' learning
- The subject is very well managed and the leadership of the school has had a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching across the school
- The pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects
- The pupils' written work is displayed and celebrated very well across the school

Commentary

52. Although standards are below those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils achieve well over time and make good progress. National tests show that standards are improving rapidly in Years 1 and 2 and steadily in Years 3 to 6. The leadership of the school has strengthened the teaching throughout the school since the last inspection and this has resulted in sustained improvement in standards over the last two years and this is best reflected in current standards which, although below the national average, compare well with similar schools, especially by the end of Year 2.
53. The good progress made in the infant years is built on effectively in Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 6, although standards are below average, like Year 2 pupils, they are higher than last year's standards reflecting the school's sustained improvement in national test results. The pupils enter the nursery and reception years with well below average literacy skills. They make good progress from this very low base because the teaching is consistently good and tasks are well matched to the abilities and needs of the pupils.
54. Throughout the school the pupils with special educational needs attain standards that reflect their individual targets. They are supported very well and make good progress. These pupils benefit from a balanced programme of whole class teaching, small group work and individual attention to address their areas of difficulty. The teaching assistants' effective guidance and support play a significant part in this good provision. The school has also used effectively the National Literacy Strategy intervention programmes such as Early, Additional and Further Literacy Support materials and methods.
55. The school is making significant efforts to improve the pupils' speaking and listening skills and to raise standards. As part of the personal and social development of the pupils each class has a class council as well as the school council, which provide good opportunities for the pupils to develop confidence in speaking as well as listening to others. In a good Year 2 lesson, the pupils took the part of chairman and secretary and used the teacher's typed minutes from the previous meeting using notes made by the pupils. By the end of Year 6 some pupils have well-developed speaking skills and use interesting language with complex sentences. However, a significant number lack confidence in speaking and do not use a wide vocabulary and are not articulate when explaining their ideas. Most pupils think carefully when they answer questions, some explain their point of view and justify their answers and opinions in a mature way. During a very good Year 6 lesson the pupils contributed their ideas sensitively about the relationship between the boy and his grandfather in 'The Long Walk'.
56. Standards in reading are below average but improving well in both the infant and junior years. The pupils are introduced to a structured reading programme supported by the effective teaching of letter sounds. The pupils learn techniques that help them to read unfamiliar words and they make good progress. By the end of Year 2 many pupils can respond to books by re-

telling the stories and describing characters and events. The higher attaining Year 1 and 2 pupils read accurately although their fluency varies and is often affected by a limited vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, the higher attaining pupils read fluently and expressively and they are independent and enthusiastic readers who can use inference to discuss meaning. They enjoy the popular modern fiction available in school and explain why certain books appeal to them. One Year 6 boy who is particularly interested in history was keen to discuss his current reading of a Christmas present book about the Great War, which contains soldiers' letters to their families. Many pupils can explain the range of strategies they use for dealing with unfamiliar words and for checking that the text makes sense but too few of the pupils have the skills necessary for this level of independence. Most of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 know index and glossary of reference books. Throughout the school, the pupils use books and computer programs for research and to support their work in other subjects such as geography, history and religious education.

57. From learning to write simple sentences, which are well punctuated with capital letters and full stops, more able pupils in Year 2 can sequence events in a story. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are below average but the pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The National Literacy Strategy has heavily influenced the structure of lessons and this is having a positive impact on the development of the pupils' knowledge of grammatical structures and the process of writing in different styles and for different purposes. The pupils make good progress with spelling as there is a structured spelling programme with direct teaching of rules and patterns. Standards are improving well.
58. From the early development of writing skills in Years 1 and 2, younger junior pupils in Years 3 and 4 find it difficult to produce a piece of sustained writing with the variety of language and accuracy expected nationally for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to define what makes a good start to a story in order to capture a reader's attention. They prepare an initial draft of their work and higher attaining pupils edit it to clarify their thoughts in writing. They write narrative, arguments, factual pieces and poetry. However, there is a lack of fluency in much of their writing. There is ample evidence that the pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects. Year 6 pupils have produced interesting and informative reports about seeing Concorde's last flight to Birmingham Airport and Year 4 have written about how they designed and made purses in design and technology. Teachers have high expectations and this is reflected in the good quality of presentation in pupils' writing, workbooks and displays. Pupils of all abilities make good progress because teachers use their marking and assessments to inform them as to how best to help the pupils.
59. The pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and enjoy their lessons because the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. During class discussions the pupils are clear about the teachers' expectations and try to do their best at all times. English makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social cultural development of the pupils as they begin to understand the power of words to create moods and atmosphere, to pose questions, create arguments and encourage empathy.
60. The teaching is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Support staff play a significant part in this good provision. All the members of staff have a good knowledge and clear understanding of the subject. The teachers plan work carefully and explain clearly what they want the pupils to learn and set targets with them. These features were present in a good Year 4 lesson. The teacher used the pupils' ideas to explain the use of adjectives, similes and alliteration to help them write descriptions of aliens. They did this in style and content

suitable for the youngest pupils in the school and contrasted with what would be suitable for older pupils. Lessons are well organised and teachers' planning detailed with appropriately challenging tasks for pupils of all abilities. Teachers use questions effectively to establish the pupils' understanding and then use the answers effectively to support and extend learning. These strengths were evident in a Year 2 lesson when the teacher planned imaginative ways to introduce the pupils to the use of speech marks. At the end of the lessons the pupils are sometimes given opportunities to discuss what they have been doing but teachers rarely involve them in discussing or reviewing their learning. This is an area for development. The summing up at the end of many lessons does not always help the pupils to evaluate what they have learned.

61. The school's resources are good, with a suitable collection of reading schemes and other fiction books. The library and class collections have a good range of reference books. The pupils are taught library skills and some pupils use the library for independent research. The school no longer has the services of a librarian and is aware that the temporary location of the library is inhibiting its use. Plans are in hand for the library to be moved and be part of the new resource centre. Throughout the school, the pupils make good use of information and communication technology for research and by using word processing to enhance their written work. The contacts with a school in Italy are providing the pupils with opportunities to exchange e-mails.
62. Both English co-ordinators work together effectively and manage the subject very well. The school is aware of the need to ensure that standards of attainment are raised and the co-ordinators check the quality of teaching and learning by observing lessons, looking at the teachers' plans and the pupils' books. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide a wealth of assessment information by analysing the results of tests and assessments to establish a tracking system to record the pupils' progress and performance and to identify the value that has been added to their learning. In this way, the senior management of the school have ensured that teachers can identify precisely what needs to be done to raise standards and enable more pupils to attain higher levels in the tests. The formation of sets according to ability in Year 6 is supporting the specific needs of all the pupils and this has been successful in ensuring that standards are improving well.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. The pupils use their literacy skills well to support work in other subjects and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Their skills in speaking and listening are used across the curriculum in support of discussions in lessons and in group work in subjects such as mathematics and religious education. The pupils are encouraged to retrieve information from a range of sources to support history and geography topics and their writing skills are developed well in most of the subjects.

French

Provision in French is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because the teaching is good
- The subject supports the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills
- French lessons contribute successfully to the pupils' cultural development

Commentary

64. The teaching of French by a specialist teacher has been introduced since the last inspection. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 have been learning French since September 2002 and have two lessons each week. Since September 2003 all the classes from Year 1 have one weekly lesson.
65. The aims and objectives are clear and French is taught to help develop the pupils' skills in speaking and listening and also to contribute to their cultural development. There are no national standards for the subject but the pupils achieve well within the aims and objectives of the planned course.
66. By the end of Year 6 many pupils speak words, phrases and short sentences competently. Many ask and answer questions in French about a range of topics such as their family and pets. The teaching observed in Year 3 and Year 6 was good. Lessons are planned carefully and organised and managed well. The teacher is a fluent speaker and moves skilfully from French to English. Her explanations are clear and her questioning skills are good. She uses the pupils' answers effectively to assess their understanding and sensitively supports them when helping them to correct their mistakes. She places a suitable emphasis on conversational skills and the mutually respectful relationships have created an environment where the pupils are gaining confidence in speaking. They are aware that they are all learners who started the language at the same time and have had the same level of support and teaching. In addition to supporting their cultural development the lessons are also supporting their personal and social development. The pupils enjoy the lessons. They are very well behaved and attentive and keen to take part. There is a systematic assessment process, which records the pupils' progress, but at the end of the lessons there is little opportunity for the pupils to discuss their learning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well and standards are rising. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected nationally
- The teaching is good and teachers set tasks that are well matched to the abilities of the pupils
- The teachers use interactive whiteboards and information and communication technology well to support the pupils' learning in mathematics
- The leadership of the subject is very good, analytical and effective in raising standards

Commentary

67. There has been a good improvement in standards throughout the school since the last inspection especially by the end of Year 2 as standards are currently in line with the national average. The number of higher achieving pupils in Years 1 and 2 exceeding the standards expected for their age is now above average by Year 2. This is increasingly becoming a similar pattern in Years 5 and 6 so that standards are below average by the end of Year 6 compared with well below average standards last year. This improvement in standards has come about because of the successful implementation of the numeracy strategy and much

better teaching which is now more consistent across the school than that found at the time of the last inspection. Consequently, the pupils enjoy learning and make good progress in lessons. They are becoming increasingly confident at calculating and manipulating numbers both mentally and in written forms.

68. Lessons begin briskly and teachers use ideas and resources to quickly engage all the pupils. Teachers explain carefully what the pupils are going to learn and even use this part of the lesson to skilfully develop the pupils' learning. Lessons are carefully planned so that different ages and abilities have work that is challenging. Teachers have a good knowledge of mathematics and this shows in the way they make the work interesting and exciting. This is further enhanced by the use of interactive whiteboards and information and communication technology. Small groups and individuals with special educational needs have work that is appropriate and challenging. The highly skilled support given by teaching assistants ensures that SEN pupils make good progress.
69. Towards the end of lessons teachers check the pupils' understanding and reinforce the planned learning. There are opportunities for pupils to explain their understanding and share how they solve any problems. Work is marked regularly to check the accuracy of the pupils' work and the progress they are making. In most of the marking across the school there is good practice where the teacher's comments help pupils to understand their progress, related to the planned learning, and advises the pupils as to how to improve their work.
70. Pupils are encouraged to use their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects, such as geography, science and design and technology. Computers are used to develop an understanding of spreadsheets and the related graphs as well as programs to practise and develop skills, such as measuring angles.
71. Leadership of the subject is very good and very analytical. Both co-ordinators make very good use of assessment information to help teachers to track the progress that pupils make. In this way target setting is accurate and is used by teachers to predict the likely outcomes of assessments each half term. The co-ordinators analyse the results of tests throughout the school and have monitored teaching and learning and the level of resourcing. This has led to the identification of priorities that focus on raising standards further and improving the pupils' problem solving skills. The analyses of past tests has informed the co-ordinators planning so, for example, the school is now focusing on improving the pupils knowledge of measures and how to read calibrations on different scales and measures.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Mathematical skills are being used well in other subjects. The progression of skills is good as Year 1 and 2 pupils can record information as a chart or table and older pupils can represent information on charts, matrices and graphs. The pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well to identify a problem and this has been a focus for school improvement this year, which has had a positive impact on the pupils' problem solving skills. The pupils can interpret information on simple graphs, charts and matrices and explain their methods when calculating or solving problems. Good opportunities are provided to use computer skills in mathematics, for example when transferring information and presenting this in different forms.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Science standards are too low and could be higher
- The teaching does not provide sufficient challenge for the pupils and particularly the more able
- Pupils are given opportunities to develop their investigational skills and plan a fair test

Commentary

73. Inspection evidence shows pupils achieve standards below the national average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards for Year 6 are lower than at the time of the last inspection. The curriculum is based upon national guidelines sequenced to ensure systematic progression in the development of children's knowledge and skills. However, in almost half of the lessons pupils of different abilities were taught the same level of science. Although most teachers modify tasks to provide a good match to pupils' oral and writing skills, they do not always take sufficient account of their different rates of progress in developing scientific knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, some pupils, particularly the more able, are not always sufficiently challenged and only make satisfactory progress.
74. Often the concluding sessions of lessons are restricted to revising key points or recapping facts presented earlier in the lesson. However, in one good lesson, the teacher used the interactive whiteboard effectively to consolidate and assess pupils' learning. After pupils had tested their ideas about helping solids to dissolve more quickly, the teacher used a video presentation to model the way in which particles dissolve in water. Close questioning helped pupils to relate this to the outcomes of their own investigation, enabling them to progress beyond stating the results of their experiment to explaining its outcomes.
75. Recently, teachers have received training in experimental and investigative science and the school is developing a systematic approach to conducting experiments. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Year 1 pupils are given opportunities to make observations and comparisons. They can identify different objects made from the same material and name the material. Using a helpful framework, Year 6 pupils can express their ideas in a form that they can investigate and make decisions about how to carry out a fair test. However, overall, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for the pupils to conduct investigations of their own devising.
76. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors planning and teaching to identify areas for development. Senior management ensures all teachers assess pupils' scientific capability at the end of each unit of work and this is beginning to inform teachers' planning. The task facing the school now is to build on the good work done in English and mathematics to make science teaching more effective by providing appropriate challenge for pupils with different scientific capabilities and to use this information to track how well the pupils are doing.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well and reach the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6
- ICT is being used very well to support the teaching and learning across the school
- Resources are very good and are well used to enhance the pupils learning experiences across a good range of subjects

Commentary

77. The school has improved its ICT resources well since the last inspection and now has a special ICT room that is well equipped. In addition to this, teachers and pupils use interactive whiteboards as useful aids in lessons and this has had a significant impact on motivating the pupils, particularly in helping them to see at first hand simulations that reinforce their learning in subjects such as mathematics and science. The teaching of basic skills is good because the computer room is a good facility and enables whole classes to receive intensive support that builds on previous learning. Standards are in line with national expectations because the pupils use their ICT skills well and apply these skills to other subjects. This is evident in word processed extended forms of writing and complex numeracy work using spreadsheets and graphs. In lessons, the pupils are confident and adept at applying basic ICT skills, often edit written work with confidence using spelling banks and self-correct text by refining and editing. Year 6 pupils made very good progress editing and modelling graphic presentations and preparing these to be used by different audiences.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. ICT is used well in other subjects and the introduction of interactive whiteboards and laptop computers has further harnessed the use of new technology in lessons. In English, the work pupils do involves editing and refining extended writing using word-processing skills, and in other subjects, such as geography, history and religious education, word-processed work is also evident and often enhanced with graphics and images imported from the Internet or pictures using the school's digital camera. Very good use was made of the digital camcorder in a good art and design lesson in Year 4. The pupils adapted and refined their sketches of action poses using the camera as an assessment tool. This was highly successful and incorporated new technology with the development of art and design skills. Teachers' planning across the curriculum is very good and much of it incorporates the use of ICT so that the curriculum offers the pupils many opportunities to fully utilise the potential that new technology holds to enhance and stimulate learning.

HUMANITIES

79. Three religious education lessons were observed and discussions were held with pupils. In geography, two lessons were observed and discussions were held with senior staff about curriculum planning. Only one history lesson was observed in Year 2. The pupils' previous work was scrutinised in all three subjects. Geography and history lessons are taught in blocks of three-week periods alongside relevant topics and themes. This integrated approach and topic work is an effective approach, which is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. The work is also very well linked to English, mathematics and information and communication technology so that the pupils are able to apply the skills deriving from these core subjects to other subjects such as geography, history and religious education.

Geography

Provision in geography **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in geography are below average but the pupils are making satisfactory progress
- Good use is made of computers to research
- Planning promotes the development of key geography skills

Commentary

80. The school makes use of national guidelines in its planning. Good emphasis is placed upon the development of subject-specific skills and this is helping the pupils to make satisfactory progress in geography. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
81. The pupils' limited literacy skills hamper oral and written communication and have a detrimental effect on standards. Following a recent review of the way in which geography is taught, teachers' planning identifies more opportunities for pupils to apply skills learnt in literacy lessons. Consequently, the pupils are taught to use a variety of forms of recording, including reports, newspaper articles, letters, tables, annotated maps and diagrams.
82. In lessons where the teaching is good the enthusiasm of the teachers engages pupils in thoughtful activities to help them develop their learning. In a good geography lesson the teacher used skilful questioning to prompt Year 3 pupils to draw on their prior knowledge of rivers and experience of floods to suggest reasons why some houses in Tobago are built on stilts. The pupils make satisfactory progress with good opportunities to use computers to search for information about different countries, cultures and communities.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in history are average and the pupils are making satisfactory progress
- Planning promotes the development of key skills, encouraging pupils to think as historians

Commentary

83. In a good history lesson, Year 2 pupils were involved in role-play as wounded soldiers and nurses before and after Florence Nightingale arrived at the hospital in Scutari. Whilst in role, the teacher questioned pupils to help them to consider the impact the improvement in hospital conditions had on people's lives. The pupils' writing in history helps them to appreciate and report on past events so they gain an understanding of how history is recorded and reported. Using different sources and types of evidence helps the pupils to appreciate that historical facts can vary according to the viewpoint of the observer and so need to be checked against other sources.

Religious education

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are acquiring a sound knowledge of Christianity and other major religions
- The pupils make good progress because the teaching is good
- The subject is well managed
- Religious education supports the pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well
- Assemblies are used well to support religious education lessons and also teach respect, tolerance and understanding

Commentary

84. In Years 1 to 6 standards are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus that has been adopted by the school. This maintains the standards reported at the last inspection. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
85. Analysis of work, three lessons and observations of assemblies indicate that, by the end of Year 6, most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of aspects of Christianity and other religions particularly Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam. They demonstrate an understanding of what is involved in belonging to a faith community in terms of beliefs, practices and values. They can identify some of the similarities and differences in values, holy books, places of worship, festivals and celebrations. They are developing an understanding that religious faith is important to many people and these beliefs have an impact on their lives and on their communities. Year 3 pupils are developing an understanding of the Ten Commandments through connections with the school rules and drama sessions where they consider the impact and consequences of different types of behaviour. The pupils are supported in their studies by being taught about the significance of ceremonies and the signs, symbols and practices through particular forms of service, music, clothing and meals.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Three art and design lessons, one music session taught by a visiting specialist and one design and technology lesson were observed. Three physical education lessons were observed, all were dance lessons as this was the focus in the school's curriculum during the time of the inspection. Art and design and design and technology displays of pupils' work were inspected. Given the limited number of observations, it was not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of the provision or of teaching and learning in design and technology and music. However, the lessons observed in both subjects were of good quality and the involvement of the specialist music teacher provides high quality music provision that is evident in the range of performances and ensembles undertaken by many pupils across the school.

Art and design

The quality of provision for art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6

- The pupils' appreciation of different styles of art and design is developed through good quality teaching and a rich and broad curriculum
- Art and design makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development

Commentary

86. The pupils achieve very well because of very effective and highly organised teaching. The blocking of time into three-week topics allows sufficient time for teachers and pupils to focus on art and design skills and to appreciate the work of a range of artists. In Year 5, the pupils have produced very good quality still life paintings using the styles of different artists as a stimulus. They reflected on the work covered over the last few weeks and eloquently explained why they appreciate certain styles and why they dislike others. The school has successfully built up a very good reputation for art and design and this is celebrated by outside agencies. For example, the local town library has recently exhibited the work of the pupils who produced work in the style of Canaletto's 'Stone Mason's Yard'. This also attracted the attention of the local newspaper as the community celebrated the high standard of art and design work produced by the pupils of the school.
87. There is some excellent work displayed around the school, demonstrating how well the pupils are achieving in their understanding of the full range of the art and design. Year 5 pupils' work is attractively displayed in one corridor depicting their study of the work of Hendrick Avercamp's 'Winter Scene with Skaters Near a Castle'. Highly textured and accurately painted sketches are displayed to a high standard. Very good cultural links are drawn from the paintings as the pupils reflect on the Dutch style of buildings and the contrasting styles of clothing and style in the paintings. The pupils have also produced descriptive writing as part of their topic. An appreciation of poetry, extended writing and art and design are brought together very well to enrich the pupils' learning experiences. Pupils in Year 3 have produced very good quality representations of winter using collages and sketching techniques to produce three-dimensional effects.
88. The subject is very well managed and well resourced and makes a significant contribution to the curriculum, the pupils' personal development and self-esteem.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve above average standards in dance because the teaching is very good
- The curriculum provides very good opportunities to experience the full breadth of the physical education programme
- Extra-curricular activities and participation in sport and outdoor education are of very good quality
- The subject is well managed and the school has just received its National Gold Active Mark

Commentary

89. Standards are above national expectations by the end of Year 6. The teaching is very good. From the evidence of previous achievements, the pupils do well in competitive sports and games and good opportunities are provided for the pupils to receive a balanced programme of

physical education throughout the year. The leadership of the subject is good and the school has just received the National Gold Standard from 'Sport England'. Although no swimming lessons were observed, evidence from records kept about the pupils' performance and achievement shows that swimming lessons are well organised and the pupils get good opportunities to use the swimming facilities in the local area. Qualified instructors and swimming teachers organise these alongside the class teachers. In dance lessons the pupils in Years 3, 4 and 6 used a very good range of movement to produce a sequence of body shapes and well improvised movements to music and other prompts.

90. Extra-curricular activities are extensive and wide-ranging, including a recently established mini-golf course in the school grounds. The pupils learn to play netball, basketball, football and other major sports after school hours. The school has established good links with local coaches and teams who help to run some of the after-school clubs. Teachers also organise team events and coach older pupils for competitive sports with other schools.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

91. Only one Year 2 lesson was observed during the inspection. This was a good lesson and demonstrated how the school helps the pupils to improve their personal and social skills. Across the school, these sessions are used to develop the school council and to involve the pupils in the life and work of the school. Older pupils appreciate how democracy works and younger pupils, such as those seen in the Year 2 lessons, learn to participate in a consultative process where they are asked to improve their school environment. These lessons are successful in discussing issues related to health and sex education; drugs awareness and social issues about friendship and how to be a good citizen. The programme provides good opportunities for the pupils throughout the school to demonstrate courtesy and respect as well as confidence and self-esteem. Class and school councils involve the pupils so the school successfully seeks the views of parents and pupils to determine how best it should serve the needs of its community.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
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	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).