

INSPECTION REPORT

**CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC (VOLUNTARY AIDED)
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Halton Moor, Leeds

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 108024

Headteacher: Mr G O'Kane

Lead inspector: Mrs L J Traves

Dates of inspection: 15th - 18th March 2004

Inspection number: 262302

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	328
School address:	Halton Moor Avenue Leeds West Yorkshire
Postcode:	LS9 0HA
Telephone number:	0113 248 3095
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Veronica O'Reilly
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Corpus Christi is a large Catholic primary school situated just outside Leeds city centre. It has 328 pupils on roll, who are mainly drawn from the two local authority housing estates close by. The area is one of significant social and economic need. The majority of pupils are white and speak English as their home language. There are a small number of pupils of different ethnic origins, with the largest group being Afro-Caribbean. Two pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), but are not in the very early stages of learning English. In recent years, the numbers on roll have declined, due to a falling birth rate in the area and local authority housing policy. This has also led to an increase in the number of pupils who leave and join the school other than in the reception year. These factors increase the challenge for the school in providing for all pupils. When pupils start school in reception, their skills are often well below those expected for children of this age. An above average proportion (21 per cent) has special educational needs (SEN), with an average number who have statements. These mainly concern learning difficulties related to speech and language development and a small number with physical disabilities. A well above average number of pupils (44 per cent) are eligible for free school meals. In recent years the school has achieved the 'Investors In People' award for its commitment to staff development and the 'Active Mark Silver' award for its provision for physical development. It is part of a local 'Excellence in Cities' initiative.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
24039	Mrs L Traves	Lead inspector	Geography History Physical education
13723	Mrs J Overend	Lay inspector	
17907	Mr M Bowers	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Special educational needs English as an additional language
18370	Mr K Johnson	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology
17685	Ms L Spooner	Team inspector	Science The Foundation Stage Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school, with some very strong features. It is highly valued by the community it serves. The majority of teaching is good and enables pupils to achieve well over time and very well in their personal development. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, staff and governors work together with commitment and determination to help pupils overcome barriers to their learning. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The majority of pupils, including those with SEN, achieve well in response to good teaching; pupils reach high standards in information and communication technology (ICT);
- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership;
- The school creates a very positive climate for learning in which children flourish;
- The pupils develop as mature, well rounded individuals who show respect and care for others, behave very well and have very positive attitudes to learning;
- Learning experiences are enriched through highly effective partnerships with other local institutions, the parish and the community; a very wide range of out of school activities is offered;
- There are some inconsistencies in teaching to be ironed out and some satisfactory teaching which could be improved to match the quality of the good teaching;
- The role of subject leaders in checking on standards, teaching and learning could be extended and developed in some areas.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. It has been very good in ICT, which was judged to be unsatisfactory last time and is now a strength of the school. This is a significant achievement. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are now thorough and effective. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 has also significantly improved. There is still more to do in the Foundation Stage (reception classes) to fully tailor the curriculum to new national requirements.

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	E	C	A
mathematics	D	D	B	A
science	E	E	D	A

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

Pupils achieve well during their time in the school. In the 2003 tests for 7-year-olds, standards were below average when compared to schools nationally and broadly average when compared to similar schools. An above average number of pupils achieved the higher level (Level 3) in reading; however, there were a significant number who only just scraped over the crossbar. Results for pupils in Year 6 were impressive when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards are average for the current Year 2 pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and are also average in English, mathematics and science for the current Year 6. Pupils with SEN achieve well in relation to their abilities and the small number with EAL also do well. Standards in ICT are better than those seen in most schools at the ages of 7 and 11. In most other subjects pupils achieve well. Pupils get off to a steady start in the reception classes and achieve particularly well in their personal and social development. On entry to school, children's skills are well below those of most others of this

age. Despite the progress they make, it is unlikely that the majority will meet the nationally expected goals for children at the age of 6, except in their personal and physical development.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are also very good. Levels of attendance are below average but most pupils are punctual. A number of parents take children on holiday in term time, against the school's advice.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching is good overall.

There are examples of very good teaching and learning in most year groups and occasionally teaching is excellent. In these lessons, pupils are challenged to the limit and a lot is expected of them. In some lessons, the pace and challenge is steady rather than sharp and pupils could be given a better idea of what they need to learn and how they could improve. Reading is taught well in the reception classes, which gives the pupils a firm foundation on which to build, but more challenge could be provided for the more able pupils in some lessons.

The curriculum is varied and interesting, offering an increasingly rich range of opportunities as pupils move through the school. Provision for ICT is very good and pupils use their ICT and literacy skills frequently across subjects. Staff have very strong relationships with pupils; they are caring and have their best interests at heart.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher is particularly strong in setting a firm direction for the work of the school. His workload of checking on the quality of teaching and learning could be shared more fully by subject co-ordinators. Governance is also good; governors undertake their role of 'critical friend' well. The school makes good use of any resources at its disposal in enhancing pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. Parents feel comfortable approaching staff if they have concerns. A small percentage feel that behaviour could be better; however, inspectors observed very good behaviour in class and around school. Pupils say that they like school and appreciate their teachers' care and humour; they feel that they are valued.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

From this strong position, the most important things the school should do to move forward are:

- Extend and develop the role of some subject leaders to enable them to play a greater part in checking on standards, teaching and learning;
- Use the examples of very good and excellent teaching to improve the quality of the satisfactory lessons and ensure that inconsistencies are ironed out.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well during their time in the school and reach average standards in most subjects. Standards in ICT are better than in most schools and pupils' achievement in this subject is very good. In some aspects of physical education and design and technology at the ages of 7 and 11 and in art and design at the age of 7, standards are better than expected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards achieved in the national tests for 11-year-olds are impressive when compared to similar schools;
- Standards in ICT have significantly improved from the time of the last inspection;
- Standards in science are improving;
- Pupils with SEN achieve well;
- The children in the Foundation Stage achieve particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development, but the more able could make faster progress in some other areas.

Commentary

1. The school's performance in the national tests for pupils aged 7 has fluctuated over the last four years in reading, writing and mathematics. Over time, however, the trend has been in line with the national picture. In the 2003 tests, results dipped to below average in reading and well below average in mathematics. They remained below average in writing. This was mainly due to the high proportion of pupils in the year group who had SEN. The vast majority of these pupils achieved well in relation to their capabilities, but a significant number only just scraped over the Level 2 crossbar and some did not make it, despite the good progress they had made. Higher attaining pupils did well in reading, with an above average number attaining the higher level (Level 3). When results were compared with schools in similar circumstances, standards were average in all three areas.
2. At the age of 11, the school's performance in the national tests has also fluctuated, but has kept pace with national trends. In 2003, the results significantly improved in relation to the two previous years and were average in English and above average in mathematics, in comparison with all schools nationally. An average number of pupils achieved the higher level (Level 5) in mathematics. In these subjects, the results were impressive when compared to similar schools, being well above average. In science, the picture has been a weaker one, with results being below and well below average for several years, compared to schools nationally.
3. Inspection findings indicate that most of the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils will reach standards expected in English, mathematics and science. Improvements are being brought about in several ways. In English, national 'catch up' programmes are being used effectively to boost progress and a higher emphasis is being placed on guided group reading. Writing has been a major area of focus for school development and the impact of this can be clearly seen in the better standards pupils are achieving. In mathematics, the arrangements where children are grouped and taught by ability for some lessons are boosting progress and the input of the headteacher with the oldest, most able mathematicians is paying dividends. In science, there has been a change in curriculum arrangements and more emphasis on investigative work.
4. Underpinning these initiatives are improved procedures for analysing test results and assessing pupils' progress, in order to identify gaps and make any necessary adjustments to

teaching, the curriculum and the support provided. Improvements are being brought about despite the challenging circumstances the school faces, particularly with regard to falling rolls and more pupils moving in and out of the school after the reception year. Changes in the local area have also led in recent years to changes in the pupil profile, with a significant number having turbulent family circumstances. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and this has a strong impact on their achievement. Boys do as well as girls, overall, because the school creates a really positive climate for learning for all pupils and thinks carefully about how it can ensure boys remain 'on board', despite outside pressures.

5. On entry to school, the majority of pupils have skills which are well below those expected for children of this age. There are particular weaknesses in their communication and language skills and in their personal and social development. Pupils get off to a steady start and achieve well in their basic reading and number skills and in their personal and social development, because staff rightly place a high emphasis on these areas. However, in speaking and writing, children could get off to a faster start and the small number of higher attaining pupils could be challenged more consistently. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority will have achieved the Early Learning Goals in their personal and physical development, but despite the steady progress they make, the majority will have a lot of ground to make up in other areas.
6. In ICT, pupils are achieving very well and are reaching standards that are better than those seen in most schools. This is a significant improvement since the time of the last inspection, when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory. The vast improvement has been brought about through a determined effort on the part of the headteacher, staff and governors to improve resources, staff skills and the curriculum. Few pupils have computers at home and the school works hard to provide good opportunities for them in school. In the games element of physical education throughout the school, swimming at the age of 11, in aspects of design and technology and in art and design at the age of 7, standards are better than in most schools.
7. Pupils with SEN achieve well because they are well supported in class and given work that is at the right level for them. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) provides many of these children with additional one to one support, and this is proving to be successful. Those pupils with EAL and from ethnic minority groups achieve as well as others. Those who are particularly gifted, for example, in mathematics also achieve well because they are given extra support through the close links with the local high school. Pupils with particular sporting talents are also enabled to achieve their potential through the many opportunities provided for them to be part of school teams, for example and to have the benefit of training from time to time, from professional coaches.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.1 (24.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.6 (25.9)	26.7(26.8)
science	27.6 (26.6)	28.3 (28.6)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.8 (16.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.6 (13.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.2 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is unsatisfactory but most pupils are punctual.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships underpin the very positive ethos evident throughout the school;
- Pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is actively promoted and impacts on all areas of school life;
- The attendance rate is unsatisfactory though improving.

Commentary

8. Pupils work very hard and are diligent in lessons. They say they like school because they like their teachers who make the work interesting for them and help them discover lots of new information. Consequently, they settle quickly at the start of lessons and most take great pride in the work they produce. In the best lessons the children are fully committed to pleasing their teacher and to improving their work, as seen in a Year 2 physical education lesson where their keen response to very good teaching led to very good improvement of their bat and ball skills. Children in the reception classes respond very well to the clear routines and classroom organisation and show very good attitudes to their work and to each other.
9. Pupil behaviour throughout the school is very good and they show clearly that they know what is expected of them. In a Year 1 science lesson, for example, very good behaviour in response to the teacher's high expectations ensured that a messy and delicate experiment with bean seedlings was carried out very carefully and sensibly Pupils are very well mannered and enjoy being helpful to classmates and visitors. There are few instances of inappropriate behaviour or bullying. Where these occur and are brought to the attention of staff, they are dealt with quickly and effectively, in line with the school's sensible agreed approach. There is a policy to promote racial harmony, which also works effectively and no incidents of harassment were observed. Pupils are given plenty of responsibilities and they take these very seriously. A good example of this is seen when the children clear up the plates and food in the lunch hall very helpfully and patiently. Older pupils look after younger ones in the playground and organize the 'Zone Park' activities very well.
10. A strong Christian, family atmosphere is very evident throughout the school. Staff act as very good role models and provide a consistent approach to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the school. Assemblies and class prayers are an important part of the school day. Parents at the meeting were pleased about this. Pupils have the chance to ask for prayers and often write their own, which are used in class prayer times and assembly. They also organise and conduct their own acts of worship, as seen during the inspection when Year 5 children led the Reconciliation Service in preparation for Easter with great skill and reverence. Times of guided reflection are provided and children's efforts and achievements are valued and celebrated.
11. Parents are very pleased that the school teaches right from wrong very clearly. There are also many opportunities to consider the needs of others and the children respond to charity initiatives with enthusiasm and amazing generosity. Pupils are encouraged to understand and accept the responsibility of living in community. A very pertinent example of this was seen in a Year 2 personal, social, health education and citizenship (PSHCE) lesson on road safety, where the children learned that their behaviour could affect the safety of others out on the streets. There are plenty of opportunities for children to work together in pairs and groups and they respond very well and productively to this. Pupils have the chance to study other faiths and both they and their parents are very positive about this. Music, the arts, history and

geography are all used to make the children aware of the local cultural heritage and, to a lesser extent, that of others. Some opportunities to celebrate the achievements of other cultures and to be aware of the diverse nature of society in Britain are missed.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.0	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. Since the last inspection, the attendance rate has dropped and is currently below the national average. Recent actions have resulted in improvement for particular children, facilitated by the learning mentor and the school procedures to promote and monitor good attendance. These include a 'first day response' system and awards. Parents are given many reminders of the need for good attendance and punctuality and all parents spoken to were very aware of the school systems and policy. However, some parents are still choosing to ignore the message that taking children on holiday in term time affects their learning.

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	310	1	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	4	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall and some very good and excellent teaching was also seen. A higher percentage of good and very good teaching was seen at Key Stages 1 and 2 than in the Foundation Stage, where teaching is satisfactory, overall, but with some key strengths. There is also some satisfactory teaching across key stages, classes and subjects, which could be improved to match the good and there are some inconsistencies to iron out. Assessment procedures are also good. This is an improved picture since the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are some examples of exciting, stimulating teaching that provide good quality examples for others to follow;
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and pupils are managed very well;
- ICT is taught very well and children learn rapidly, as a result;
- The basic skills of reading are taught well in the reception classes;
- Good quality support is provided for pupils who have SEN and those with EAL and this enables them to make good progress;
- There are some examples of less effective teaching and inconsistencies which slow the pace of learning;
- In some lessons, teachers do not make best use of information on pupils' progress to provide work at the right level of challenge for all abilities;
- Marking and target setting are not used consistently across the school to ensure that pupils are clear about how they can improve.

Commentary

13. Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a strong start in their personal, social and emotional development and in the basic skills of reading and number because teaching is good in these areas and a high emphasis is rightly placed on them. This ensures a firm foundation on which to build in the future. Teaching in the area of physical development is also good and enables children to progress well. However, there are aspects of teaching that whilst satisfactory, are not as strong and there are some inconsistencies in teaching between the two classes. For example, planning for mathematics is stronger in one class than the other and progress is therefore slower for some. Teachers do not always plan as effectively as they could to meet the needs of all the children. For example, there are occasions when the more able children are not stretched as well as they could be and more attention could be given to developing speaking skills. Pupils with SEN and with EAL in the reception classes are given good support, which enables them to make good progress.
14. In Key Stages 1 and 2, a high percentage of good and very good teaching was seen, which accelerates learning well. ICT is particularly well taught and lessons seen were consistently very good. There were examples of excellent teaching seen in physical education and in English. However, there were a number of more ordinary lessons seen in various classes and subjects, where progress was slower. Very occasionally, pupils are getting a different deal in the same year group. This was evident in the scrutiny of work undertaken. For example, in geography, pupils in one junior class sometimes carry out more challenging tasks than their counterparts in the parallel class. The practice of teachers exchanging classes to use their particular expertise is working well and could be extended. The 'setting' arrangement in mathematics, where children are grouped by ability is also having a significant impact on the oldest, most able pupils in particular, who are benefiting from the expertise of the headteacher. The average and less able pupils also benefit from smaller, more focused groups.
15. Throughout the school, there are very good relationships between teachers and their pupils, which create a very positive climate for learning. Expectations of work and behaviour are high throughout. As a result, pupils try very hard to please their teachers and produce a copious amount of well presented work. Pupils are well managed in all classes and consequently, there are no disruptions to learning. The respect that teachers show for their pupils provides a good model for them and in response, pupils work together well and are able to undertake joint projects, such as presentations in history. This has a strong impact on their personal development and their ability to take responsibility for their own learning, as they progress through the school.

16. Pupils with SEN benefit from good teaching and consequently they achieve well. Carefully prepared individual education plans clearly identify the next small steps in learning. This enables teachers to set activities that challenge at an appropriate level in most lessons. The skilled and knowledgeable learning support assistants have a strong impact on the learning of these pupils. Pupils with more complex needs receive regular extra support from the SENCO. This provides good opportunities for pupils to reinforce their English and mathematics skills and for the SENCO to assess their progress.
17. There are some key features that characterise lessons which are good or better:
- teaching is exciting and stimulating. The pace is brisk and pupils are fully involved, engaged and challenged at the appropriate level. This was seen in an excellent English lesson in a Year 4 class, where pupils were stretched to the limit in improving both their understanding of sentence structure and their ICT skills;
 - teachers have high expectations of pupils' involvement and work rate. For example, in an excellent Year 6 games lesson, all pupils worked tremendously hard and improved their ball control skills at a very rapid rate, because the teacher continually challenged them to improve and conducted the lesson at a cracking pace;
 - teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching. As a result, learning objectives are sharp, explanations are clear, children understand exactly what they are to do and therefore learning time is maximised. A very good example of this was seen in a mathematics lesson taught by the headteacher, where pupils quickly 'cottoned on' to work on factors and the concept of prime and square numbers;
 - teachers use questioning with high levels of precision to draw out previous learning, to probe pupils' understanding and to extend learning further.
18. Where teaching is less effective, the following characteristics are evident:
- lesson objectives are not as sharply defined as they could be and as a result, teaching lacks clarity;
 - teaching lacks the sparkle and excitement to catch pupils' interest and fire their enthusiasm;
 - in some lessons, work is not matched closely enough to the abilities of the pupils. Sometimes the higher attaining pupils could be challenged more and on a few occasions, the average pupils could be taken further in their learning.
19. Assessment procedures are good overall and have strongly improved since the last inspection, when they were identified as a key issue for action. At whole school level, external and internal test results are carefully analysed to highlight areas of strength and weakness, so that teaching and the curriculum can be adjusted accordingly. There are particularly strong procedures in English and mathematics, where progress is carefully tracked and the information used to provide the appropriate levels of support for pupils. In the majority of other subjects, pupils' knowledge and skills are assessed in relation to the topics they cover, following national guidelines. The procedures for assessing the requirements and the progress of pupils' with SEN are thorough and effective. Individual and group pupil targets have been introduced, but they are not used consistently throughout the school and as a result, pupils do not always have a clear enough understanding of what they are aiming for. Similarly there are inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' marking. At its best, marking is evaluative, positive and identifies clearly how pupils can improve. However, in many instances, although work is regularly marked, it does little to pinpoint the next learning steps for pupils.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4)	14 (29)	19 (40)	13 (27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

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

The curriculum

The curriculum provided is good overall. It is stronger in Years 1 to 6 than in the Foundation Stage. Learning is very effectively enriched, as pupils move through the school and a wide range of extra-curricular activities is offered. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is planned thoughtfully to reflect most pupils' needs;
- Enrichment activities provide very good opportunities for pupils;
- Personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) has a strong impact on pupils' attitudes and their learning;
- Pupils who have SEN are well provided for;
- Aspects of the curriculum for the reception pupils could provide greater opportunities for learning through play and better links between areas of learning.

Commentary

20. The school works hard to provide a relevant and worthwhile curriculum, which meets the needs of the majority of the pupils well. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the time of the last inspection. Curriculum planning is more effective and each subject is now underpinned by a scheme of work and guidance, which ensures that pupils can build effectively on their skills from year-to-year. The use of national guidance to support subject planning ensures that all statutory requirements are fully met. This guidance is adapted well to make learning more relevant, for example, by use of the local area in geography.
21. Literacy and numeracy are given a high priority to ensure pupils have the necessary skills to deal with the learning challenges they meet. However, there is a good balance between subjects so pupils are enabled to achieve well. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and evaluated and adaptations made to reflect particular needs. A high priority is given to sport. The school holds the 'Active Mark Silver' award for the strength of its participation in physical activities and is now working hard to achieve gold. Expert tuition is provided outside of school time and sometimes, within lessons, which enriches provision well. Pupils have opportunities to develop skills in soccer, basketball, gymnastics, rugby, dance and tennis. Strong links with partner secondary schools also enhance opportunities for pupils and contribute to the high standards seen in the school in sport and also enrich other areas, such as design and technology. Arts are also promoted well. A notable link with Lotherton Hall enables pupils to develop their art and design, design and technology and music skills. This has resulted in some outstanding examples of regency style furniture made by pupils using card, papier-mâché and ceramics being displayed in Lotherton Hall. ICT is another area of strength and again, provision extends beyond the school day when parents and pupils have the chance to work alongside each other in the ICT suite. Provision for pupils' personal development is well established. They are expected to accept responsibility and do so willingly. The annual residential visit for Year 6 pupils also contributes well to their personal and social development.

22. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is sound overall. There are areas of strength, particularly in the provision for personal, social and emotional development and physical development. Provision for those with SEN and EAL is good. Their needs are sensitively met through the good quality support that they receive. In addition, provision for basic reading and number skills is good. However, because some aspects are planned more closely to the requirements of the national curriculum, rather than the Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals, there are some missed opportunities to enrich pupils' learning more effectively through play and to exploit the connections between areas of learning to the full. However, the nature of the building and the physical separation of the two classes creates a barrier to providing a fully enriched Foundation Stage curriculum and staff try hard to overcome some of the limitations.
23. Pupils with SEN are involved in all the activities that the school plans for its pupils. There is a good balance between whole class teaching where pupils with SEN are taught in small groups and when they are withdrawn from class. The school organises learning support staff effectively, which ensures that these pupils receive any extra provision identified on statements. The few pupils with visual or hearing impairment are well catered for, having the necessary hearing aids and large computer keyboards and monitors. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are catered for well and helped to improve their behaviour. The small number of pupils with EAL, none who are in the very early stages of language learning, are similarly well provided for in order that barriers to learning are overcome. Good provision is made for pupils who have particular aptitudes. Groups attend regular lessons at the adjacent high school for mathematics and science and one pupil is coached there in gymnastics.
24. Teachers are well qualified and provide expertise in a wide range of subjects. Staff turnover is currently low and this stability benefits pupils. The number of support staff is adequate. They are a skilled and effective team who provide good learning support. The school has worked hard to provide an attractive learning environment, both inside and outdoors. It is kept clean and well maintained

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. The school provides good support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships throughout the school are very good;
- Staff know the children very well so they can cater for their needs effectively;
- Pupils with SEN are well supported in the classroom and through the work of the SENCO;
- The learning mentor enhances the good quality support provided for children and their parents;
- Transition to secondary education is very well considered and there is good induction into the school for Foundation Stage children.

Commentary

25. Pupils and parents are very positive about the helpfulness and friendliness of the staff. Parents at the meeting before the inspection said that staff are so caring they do not 'wash their hands of them at 3.00 pm', but continue to provide for their needs in many different ways. Very good relationships underpin the family ethos of care and trust and follow the children through from induction until they are settled at their secondary school or beyond. This ensures children always feel they can seek help or express concerns.

26. The school provides well focused support for children and their families. The appointment of a learning mentor and provision of a full-time SENCO are indicative of the school's strong determination to remove all barriers to learning and has a good impact on both learning and personal development. The breakfast club provides a number of pupils with a nourishing start to the day and a punctual arrival at lessons in a relaxed social environment.
27. Better systems of assessment are now in place than at the time of the last inspection so that staff can monitor children's progress more effectively and quickly pick up on those children who need more support or those who are particularly gifted and need more scope. Good quality support is provided for pupils with SEN through effective use of individual education plans and the teamwork of the staff. There is a similar level of good support for the small number of EAL children. Curriculum links to the local high school ensure children do not suffer a check in their progress at transition. However, the closeness of links to the high school also ensures there are very many opportunities for pupils to get to know their new school and new teachers so that transition is made much easier for them.
28. The school has taken steps to identify hazards to safety before they arise, such as by preparing risk assessments for external visits. Full use has been made of local authority expertise to audit the school for health and safety and to flag up issues. These, together with issues raised during the inspection are already receiving attention, including addressing the need for closer monitoring of procedures. Pupils are taught about keeping themselves safe at home and in school with longer-term health issues discussed appropriately. For example, in summer, pupils are encouraged to use sunscreen and sun hats. There are also effective procedures in place to ensure child protection.
29. The school has sought the views of pupils, such as when planning the new playground. An emphasis of the PSHCE lessons is to provide opportunities for pupils to discuss their feelings and values. When they have the opportunity to make their opinions known, these are valued by staff. There is, as yet, no more formal forum for pupils to express their views, such as a school council.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good. Links with the community, parish, other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive good information and show a very high level of satisfaction with the school;
- The school works hard to support parents and responds well to their concerns;
- Parish links are close and supportive of every aspect of the school;
- Community links are very well planned and impact very positively on learning;
- Very strong links with other schools and colleges enhance learning opportunities very well.

Commentary

30. Parents expressed very positive views of the school, particularly appreciating the good teaching, leadership and management and that their children are expected to work hard. The only area of slight concern which came from the questionnaires was that a small minority thought their child had been bullied. This inspection finds that while children have the potential to 'fall out' in the playground, as in any school, the school takes bullying very seriously and deals quickly with all such issues brought to the attention of the staff. The school is reviewing its anti-bullying policy and regularly undertakes work in assemblies and PSHCE lessons to prevent bullying.

31. The school keeps parents well informed about events and regularly invites them into school. Pupils' written reports meet statutory requirements and include targets and an indication of progress made during the year. Parents' views are sought both informally through personal contact by staff and governors and formally on parents' evenings. The school seeks to support parents through the work of the learning mentor and directs them on to educational courses that could be of help to the family.
32. Links with the parish constantly support the pupils, staff and families and this is very much appreciated by the parents whether it be Father Frank dropping into the playground to chat to the children or the contribution made to the children's personal development in assemblies, religious education and preparation for the Sacraments. Visitors are a regular feature of the provision, including theatre groups and musicians or the school nurse or community policeman. The school is also very well supported by the local community, such as through the Halton Moor Regeneration group, which has provided the funding for the breakfast club, and the YMCA, who support the family learning program for ICT and the gym club. The work undertaken by the children with the staff of Lotherton Hall is having a significant affect on their learning extending the range of 'hands on experiences' that can be offered in music, history and art and firing the children's enthusiasm for these subjects. The school is also outward looking and seeks to give back to the community, supporting local charities generously or allowing community members to use school facilities as when they use the football field on Saturdays.
33. The school is also very appreciative of its links with the neighbouring college (high school) and has very good links with the family of schools and other local partnerships of schools. The facilities made available by the college make a great impact on the achievement of these pupils. These include extension mathematics classes for the children identified as gifted in this area. All children benefit from the ICT provision made available. This impacts well on learning and extends the work possible in design and technology and other subjects.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The governance of the school is good. The headteacher gives particularly strong and effective leadership.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- School leadership has created a very positive climate for learning created; relationships are very good;
- The governing body fulfils its role well and makes good use of individual expertise and experiences;
- The school has a clear understanding of how well it is doing, what it needs to do to improve and how to bring improvement about;
- Good use is made of performance management to develop staff skills and impact on pupils' achievement;
- Parents have a high level of confidence in the leadership of the school;
- There is good financial management;
- The role of co-ordinators could be extended and developed in some areas.

Commentary

34. The headteacher gives a very firm steer to the work of the school. He has a clear vision of how the school should be and he communicates this vigorously to staff, parents and pupils. He is well supported by the deputy head, staff and governors in dealing with the challenges that face the school. A real strength of the work of the headteacher is his knowledge and understanding of the context of the school and the needs of pupils and their families. This

enables the school to get right to the heart of what needs to be done to support pupils in overcoming the barriers to learning that they face. This is reflected in the very strong enrichment of the curriculum, the high emphasis placed on supporting pupils with SEN and the commitment and time given to helping pupils and families with particular difficulties.

35. The headteacher, staff and governors have created a very positive climate within the school, which underpins learning and personal development very well. Relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils and staff get on well. Children respond positively to the high expectations staff have of them because they want to please them and value their support. In discussions, children stated that they liked their teachers 'because they have a sense of humour and they help you' and 'they are fair and expect you to work hard'.
36. There are effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. There is good analysis of data from national tests, internal tests and teacher assessments. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked; and teachers are observed teaching by the headteacher as part of a well established programme of performance management. Through these processes the school gains a clear understanding of how well it is doing and what it needs to do to improve. Action plans are drawn up and implemented and they have a positive impact on the quality of education the children experience. For example, in English, national 'catch up' programmes have been implemented and more emphasis placed on guided group reading. In science, more attention is being placed on investigative approaches and scientific enquiry and in ICT there has been a drive to use computers more widely to support work in other areas. All these initiatives have proved successful in raising standards. The role played by co-ordinators in this work has improved significantly, since the last inspection. They have ensured that teaching in their subjects is guided by an appropriate scheme that colleagues are supported with advice, for example, on planning and delivery and that resources are well managed. All have produced clear action plans and most have also led staff training. However, there are some inconsistencies between subjects as to how monitoring and evaluation is carried out. This is, to some degree, down to the experience of staff and the financial implications of setting time aside, for example, for co-ordinators to check on teaching and learning through observing colleagues. Where monitoring has closely involved co-ordinators in checking on and supporting work in the classrooms, as in English and mathematics, for example, the impact can be clearly seen. In other areas, such as the Foundation Stage and geography, where there has not been such close involvement, improvements are not as sharp. In addition, some subjects could benefit from staff being able to observe the work of the very best practitioners, for example to help raise the quality of the satisfactory teaching to that of teaching which is good or the good to the quality of the very good. The headteacher takes much of the work of monitoring teaching upon himself and the school would benefit from this being shared more equitably, in terms of workload. Several staff have rightly identified this as an area for their own further professional development.
37. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that all children are able to achieve their potential. The school provides effective support for the different groups of pupils. The employment of a full-time SENCO and a learning mentor underpins this well. SEN is led and managed effectively. There are good systems and procedures in place, which reflect current national requirements. An appropriate vision for 'inclusion' has been established, which ensures the pupils with SEN and the small number with EAL are fully included in all aspects of teaching and learning and receive extra support when necessary. The timetables of learning support staff are continually monitored to ensure they are used in the most efficient and effective way. Outside agencies are used well to assess the school's provision for those pupils with speech and language difficulties, hearing and sight impairment and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The SENCO regularly monitors the quality of individual education plans and the standard of work produced by SEN pupils. However, there is no ongoing monitoring of the teaching of these pupils in class to check on whether improvements could be made. The school effectively supports children with particular gifts or talents. For example, very able mathematicians attend classes at the nearby high school.

38. Governors use their own expertise and skills well to support the work of the school. Those who can are regularly involved, making visits to school, helping out in classrooms and sitting in on lessons. Through these activities and the regular information they receive from the headteacher and subject leaders they are well informed. They have a clear knowledge and understanding of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve. They are actively involved in the decision making processes and keep a careful check on the progress children make and how well improvements are coming along. They deal effectively with difficult situations when they arise and plan strategically for the future. For example, the governors are well aware of the implications of falling rolls on the budget and staffing and have clear contingency plans in place. Finances are managed well. The budget has been difficult to manage in recent years due to the decline in pupil numbers. However, the school has prudently set aside funds to offset the effects of this. It has kept a good balance between keeping staffing levels high to support learning, refurbishing an ageing building to ensure it is an attractive place in which to work and resourcing key areas, such as ICT. The headteacher and governors draw in as much support as possible, both financial and otherwise to enrich the learning opportunities for the pupils. The school gives good value for the money it spends.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	731260
Total expenditure	671260
Expenditure per pupil	2003

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	80000
Balance carried forward to the next	60000

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision, in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** and enables pupils to get off to a steady start. Teaching is also satisfactory. Although there were examples of good and very good teaching seen during the inspection, the percentage was not as high as in Key Stages 1 and 2 and there was more satisfactory teaching seen. There are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching between the two classes. There are, however, areas of strength in both.

Pupils are taught in two reception classes and children are split between these by age. When children enter reception, their skills are often well below those usually seen. In response, a high emphasis is rightly placed on children's personal, social and emotional development and on some aspects of basic number and communication, language and literacy. As a result, pupils achieve well in these areas. The nursery nurse and other support adults make a good contribution to teaching and learning, particularly in the development of reading skills and helping children who have SEN and EAL. Pupils also achieve well in aspects of their physical development because of good teaching, which builds successfully on the average skills they demonstrate on entry. In this area of learning and in their personal and social development, the majority of children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. In the other areas, the majority are unlikely to meet these, despite the sound progress they make. Although the curriculum is satisfactory and takes appropriate account of the national requirements for the Foundation Stage, some aspects are planned to National Curriculum guidelines. This does not always, for example, allow for sufficient opportunities for learning through play.

Leadership and management of the area are satisfactory. The co-ordinator gives effective guidance to her colleague, for example, in implementing the recent Foundation Stage assessment systems and effectively directs the work of the classroom support assistant. Currently, though, she does not have enough opportunity to monitor and evaluate standards of work and the quality of teaching to bring about improvements and ensure consistency. The nature of the building and the two classes being housed some way apart are proving difficult barriers to overcome in planning for a fully enriched Foundation Stage curriculum. Joint learning projects and sharing of resources and expertise, for example, are more difficult to organise. Uncertainty about projected numbers and falling rolls also make it more difficult to plan provision from year-to-year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are cared for very well and as a result, are happy and secure;
- Children achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development and in some aspects of their physical development, communication and number skills;
- The teaching of early reading and number skills is good;
- There are good links with parents and they are provided with helpful information;
- Assessment systems are detailed and cover all six areas of learning but the information is not always used as effectively as it might be to set new targets for learning;
- Tasks are not always set at the right level of challenge, particularly for the more able pupils;
- A richer range of opportunities could be provided for play and to promote spoken language skills;
- The reception classrooms are housed some distance from each other and this provides a barrier to flexibility and links between the two classes.

Commentary

39. Teaching in the area of **personal, social and emotional development** is good and children achieve well. The children behave well, relate positively to each other and have good attitudes to their work. Most children have already attained the Learning Goals in these aspects of personal development. Many have yet to reach the expected goal in independent learning. Teachers and support staff ensure that the children feel safe and know what is expected of them. Many opportunities are planned to help the children learn how to relate to others in a wide range of situations. Adults are very good role models in what they say and do. Routines are clearly established and these, combined with high expectations of behaviour and relationships are at the centre of the children's developing confidence. The children respond very positively and attainment in most aspects of this area of learning is typical of children of this age. There are a good number of opportunities for the children to make choices, such as choosing which activity to join. Many children, however, are reliant on close adult support in activities. The more able children would benefit from more opportunities to work independently.
40. Children achieve soundly, overall, in the area of **communication, language and literacy**. However, good basic skills teaching enables pupils to achieve well in the development of listening, reading, letter recognition and handwriting skills. For example, in a good lesson seen, children were thoroughly engaged in trying to 'beat the teacher' as they played a word recognition game, targeted at different levels of ability. They achieved well because the work was well planned and they were actively involved in learning. Teachers have high expectations that the children listen to adults and to each other during stories and discussion times. As a result, the children are developing listening skills that are broadly typical of most children of this age and are achieving well. The children are making satisfactory progress in the development of speaking skills but a large majority of the children are unlikely to attain the expected learning target in this area. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for the children to respond to questions and talk about what they see, know and understand in class discussion time and focus group activities. However, planning does not consistently and clearly identify opportunities for extended language development, such as the key vocabulary to be learned or specific questions to be asked of children from different ability groups. Although a range of activities is available for children to visit when not involved in focus activities, there is insufficient adult intervention to promote and enrich the development of speaking skills.
41. Reading skills are promoted well. This is through regular opportunities for the children to listen to and talk about the stories that are read to them by adults. A significant strength in this area is the very consistent approach to the development of letter and word recognition skills. As a result, a majority of the children are already reading familiar words from the early books in the reading scheme. Many know all of the letter sounds of the alphabet and some more able children are beginning to use their knowledge to build up simple words as they read.
42. Handwriting skills are taught systematically and as a result, many children are beginning to form letters correctly. However, lesson planning does not always provide enough opportunities for the children to write independently and children make slower progress, as a result. Evidence in books from work done since the start of the school year shows that almost all written work is copied from adults' writing. Although the progress of the majority of the children is satisfactory, there are not enough opportunities for the children to write for different purposes and to 'have a go' at writing for themselves. In addition, the more able children are not achieving as well as they might because the work planned for them to do in lessons is often not challenging enough.
43. Children achieve steadily overall, in their **mathematical development**. However, the majority of the children achieve well in the development of basic number skills, because they are taught effectively and systematically. Work done in both classes since the start of the school year and in one of the two mathematics lessons seen during the inspection shows that the work planned for the more able children does not provide enough challenge or opportunity for

them to achieve as well as they might. Discussion with a group of more able children during one lesson showed that they were capable of working at a higher level than the work that had been set for them. There is limited evidence in teachers' planning of opportunities for more enriched mathematical experiences linked to other areas of learning.

44. Teaching was good in one of the mathematics lessons seen. This was because the lesson was well paced, with good opportunities for the children to reinforce and extend their number knowledge, particularly during the mental arithmetic part of the lesson but also in the interesting activities available during the lesson. All of the children were provided with the right level of challenge particularly through the good quality adult support. Average ability children were provided with a well thought out activity that allowed them to work independently while the teacher and classroom assistant effectively supported children in the less able and more able groups.
45. Achievement in the area of **knowledge and understanding of the world** is sound. Many of the children enter the reception with a narrow range of experiences and limited language skills to support their learning. Teachers provide a satisfactory range of experiences in this aspect. During the inspection, for example, the children were fascinated by the newly hatched chicks. This experience provided them with many opportunities to learn about the life cycle of a chicken. Many were keen to talk about how the chicks had hatched and have learned that they need food, water and warmth to survive. Computers are always available. The children make satisfactory use of the mouse to control events on the screen.
46. In the area of **physical development**, teaching is good and the children achieve well. Although there is no designated outdoor learning area, teachers make good use of the school hall for a range of physical activities. Teaching in the one lesson observed was very good and the children reached levels above expectations. During this lesson, all of the children were confident as they found different ways to use the apparatus, showing well developed balancing skills. The skills of using pencils, crayons and scissors are carefully planned and taught and frequently practised. As a result, many of the children are on course to attain the Learning Goals in this area. There is no designated outdoor learning area, which was a weakness identified at the time of the last inspection. In response, the playground markings have been upgraded and the reception teachers make appropriate use of these and the school grounds during the year.
47. There was insufficient evidence available to form an overall judgement on standards, teaching and provision in the area of **creative development**. Children visit the role play areas during lessons but teachers miss some opportunities to make the best use of these areas through, for example, planning experiences where adults work with the children to develop language and help to create and extend imaginative experiences. During assemblies, the children join in with the rest of the school in singing hymns. A selection of artwork on display was typical of children of this age. In one of the classes, drawings of daffodils, done with the support of the nursery nurse, showed that the children are beginning to develop satisfactory observational skills.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and as a result, pupils achieve well in all aspects of English;
- English is promoted well in other subjects;
- Pupils use ICT very well to support their writing;
- Marking quality is not consistent. Pupils do not always understand what they need to do to improve their writing;
- There are some inconsistencies in teaching between classes to be ironed out.

Commentary

48. Standards in English are broadly in line with those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improved picture in Year 2 where levels in reading and writing had previously dipped below the national average. In Year 6, the upward trend seen in the 2003 national tests has been maintained following a period of very low attainment in English and inspection findings indicate that test results will be similar this year.
49. Given pupils' limited language development when they start school, they achieve well in both infant and junior classes. When compared with similar schools, for example, pupils in Year 6 performed very well in the national tests, while Year 2 pupils achieved at least as well as expected in both reading and writing. The schools own data analysis shows that there is no significant difference between boys' and girls' achievements or the achievements of pupils from different ethnic groups. Pupils with SEN and EAL achieve as well as others because of the good support they receive.
50. Pupils are given good opportunities to improve their speaking and listening skills. Skilful questioning by teachers encourages pupils to answer thoughtfully. There are opportunities in lessons for role-play where, for example, pupils answer questions put to them by others. During school assemblies, pupils are confident and self-assured when reading aloud. Older pupils readily engage in informal conversation about subjects that interest them. Some of the younger pupils find listening harder and are still over enthusiastic during class discussion and tend to call out instead of taking their turn to answer.
51. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading. Basic reading skills are taught well in the infant classes, building on the good start made in reception. There is a strong emphasis on learning letter sounds and group reading sessions are used effectively to teach pupils how to use expression, and to work out the meanings of unfamiliar words. By the end of Year 2, pupils are fluent readers and can often work out deeper meanings. A good example of this was seen when a pupil deduced that 'venom' is a poison from the word's context within a passage being read. Pupils learn to use dictionaries so they can look up spellings and word meanings to help their writing. They understand how to use contents and index pages in non-fiction books to find information, for example, in science. Good progress continues in Years 3 to 6. Pupils read accurately and take good account of punctuation such as exclamation marks in order to convey meaning to others. Pupils are taught how to gain meaning from the text, for example, by re-reading passages, or reading forward to look for clues. Most pupils report that they enjoy books and are keen to talk about their favourite authors. Some supplement their school reading by borrowing from the public library. Pupils develop good research skills, which they use well to find information for topics, for example, in history. They are also refining their ICT research skills well to find information on disc or via the Internet.

52. There is a high expectation throughout the school that pupils will write. Consequently, there is a good range and purpose to pupils' writing and the amount that they complete is impressive. Pupils get off to a good start in Years 1 and 2 by building up a sound vocabulary and learning to spell key words. Teachers encourage independence by letting pupils write from their own experiences. As a result, they gain the confidence to express ideas freely, often writing with real feeling about events such as celebrations, or visits they have made. In Years 3 to 6 the range of pupils' writing increases. They learn to write in different styles, sometimes following that of a particular author, or using more formal language in letters or instructions. A strong feature of writing is the use made of pupils' writing skills in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 4 wrote accounts of the Great Plague in history, using the style of a newspaper report. Science investigations are written in clear logical sequence and test pupils' understanding of specific language. The use of ICT contributes significantly to pupils' learning and development of writing skills. Teachers increasingly encourage pupils to use computers and in one lesson, the writing tasks for the whole class were prepared on-line and completed by pupils in the ICT suite. This was an exceptional lesson because of the exciting approach to learning, rooted in the teacher's subject knowledge and expertise.
53. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Elements of unsatisfactory teaching have been dealt with through staff training and monitoring of teachers' classroom practice. Good learning and achievement are firmly underpinned by the very good relationships that are fostered within the school. Pupils are secure and confident about their work, knowing that the teachers value their efforts and they will get the help they need. Most teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons well so that pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn. There is good pace to lessons and a good balance between instruction and time for writing. Expectations are high and pupils respond by working hard to finish their writing. A very strong feature of teaching is the way the use of ICT is promoted. There are many examples of word processed work in all subjects displayed around the school. However, there are a small number of lessons which are more ordinary and which lack the sparkle to really catch pupils' attention and fully engage them. This was seen in a poetry lesson in a Year 5 class where the discussion about the poem failed to inspire and the pace of learning was slower, as a result. There are also some examples in children's books of tasks being set which do not fully match the abilities of the pupils, for example, weekly spellings in one infant class were too hard for some and too easy for others.
54. Teachers have a good understanding of how well pupils are progressing because clear records are kept and relevant information is passed on from class to class. However, the quality of marking is not consistent so pupils are not always made clear about their next steps to improvement. There is scope also, for involving pupils more purposefully in assessing and evaluating standards of their own work to give them better understanding of their learning and progress. In some classes, group and individual targets are shared effectively with the pupils. This focuses them on what they are aiming for, but it is inconsistent.
55. Subject leadership and management are good. The subject leader has effectively checked on standards and initiated strategies to bring about improvements. The introduction of early literacy support for pupils in Year 1 and additional support for pupils in Year 5 has had a positive impact on their achievements. Good use of information gained from analysing pupils' work has enabled the school to focus more strongly on areas such as non-fiction writing. As a result, there are clear signs that standards are improving.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. There are good examples of pupils developing literacy skills in other subjects, including history, geography, science and design and technology where pupils do written evaluations. Specific language is taught well so pupils use correct terminology for each subject. There are also opportunities to discuss and evaluate work in art and physical education lessons. There are sufficient books in school to promote reading and research skills and these are

supplemented well through library loans. Overall, literacy is promoted well across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection;
- All pupils are achieving well because of good teaching and learning;
- There is a strong focus on the developing of pupils' numeracy skills;
- Effective monitoring of teaching and learning has helped to raise standards;
- The development of target setting to help pupils assess their rate of progress is inconsistent.

Commentary

57. Standards in mathematics in both Year 2 and Year 6 are average. Children achieve well, overall. In the 2003 tests, although average numbers of Year 2 pupils achieved the national standard, a larger than average proportion achieved the lowest level within this. The numbers of pupils achieving the advanced level (Level 3) was also below the national figure. These results reflected the attainment on entry picture, which identified larger than usual numbers of pupils with SEN for that year. When these results are compared with schools in similar circumstances, by Year 6 many pupils are achieving very well. Pupils with SEN are well supported by teachers and learning support assistants and they achieve as well as their classmates. Boys and girls are currently making similar progress. The introduction of 'setting' in some lessons is providing effectively for different abilities and particularly extends pupils that are more able in Year 6.
58. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to raise standards in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels has risen steadily and teaching has improved. Most pupils enter the school with below average mathematical understanding but by Year 2, they are working within the expected range for their age, developing knowledge and understanding of place value to 10 and beyond. They are applying these skills to money calculations. They are taught to recognise number patterns and use different strategies to solve number problems. As pupils move through the school, the speed and range of mental mathematical calculations increases. Year 4 pupils, for example, apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to investigate number patterns, calculate decimal values and study the relationship between fractions and decimals. By Year 6, pupils are 'rounding' complicated number values to the nearest 10, 100 and 1,000. They accurately multiply, for example, 327×45 and confidently convert fractions to decimals and percentages.
59. Pupils often make good use of computers to practise numeracy skills in their classrooms. Some mathematics lessons take place in the ICT suite with whole class use of computers becoming an integral part of the session. This boosts progress.
60. Pupils are confident and skilled in other areas of mathematics. Pupils in Year 2, for example, show good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and talk confidently about their attributes. They create complex patterns along lines of symmetry and their understanding of data handling is sound. Pupils accurately tally information but they do not analyse it using bar charts. Year 4 pupils accurately calculate perimeters and investigate the geometrical patterns within three-dimensional shapes. By Year 6, pupils examine various 'nets' of shapes to check if they can be used to construct cubes and they use protractors accurately to measure angles. They also calculate the areas of regular shapes by applying simple formula.
61. In almost all the lessons seen, teaching was good. In Year 2, lessons with lower attaining pupils and in a lesson with Year 6 higher attainers, taught by the headteacher, teaching was very good.
62. There are some common features of good teaching in the subject:

- lessons are planned effectively and teaching captures pupils' interest and enthusiasm;
- there is good emphasis on the correct use of mathematical vocabulary;
- pupils are enabled to feel secure and contribute without fear of failure;
- clear explanations ensure that all pupils understand how to complete their tasks and questioning is used well to check pupils' understanding and advance their learning;
- resources are chosen and used effectively to help pupils with SEN and EAL to gain understanding of mathematical patterns and relationships;
- lessons have brisk pace and time is used well with support assistants deployed effectively to give extra help and support.

63. There are some areas for development within this strong teaching picture:

- more use could be made of targets to help some pupils identify and recognise the progress they are making and what they need to achieve next;
- occasionally in some classes, work could be more closely matched to the abilities of the pupils.

64. Leadership and management of the subject are good. A regular pattern of monitoring is in place, which helps the school identify areas for development and share good practice. Internal test and teacher assessment data and national assessment results are analysed to identify possible areas for development and, thereby improve provision. This has had a particularly strong impact on raising standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Pupils often use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and, consequently, develop an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. For example, they use co-ordinates in geography, measure materials in design and technology, use ICT to interrogate spreadsheets and use tables and graphs to record data in science. The school has identified five gifted and talented pupils in the current Year 6 who attend regular weekend mathematics classes provided by the local education authority.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving and are now broadly average at Years 2 and 6;
- Teaching is good and all pupils achieve well, including pupils with SEN and pupils for whom English is an additional language;
- Planning is of a good quality. It is thorough and detailed and ensures all pupils are given the right amount of challenge;
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

66. Standards in science are broadly average at Year 2. This is an improvement on the 2003 teacher assessments of science for last year's Year 2 pupils, when standards were judged as well below average with a particular weakness in scientific enquiry. Standards are also typical of those seen in most schools at Year 6 and show an improving trend. The school has fully addressed the weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection. The teaching of investigative skills has significantly improved and as a result, standards in this aspect of science have also improved. The weaknesses in planning and the use of assessment information to set challenging work have been tackled successfully. The relatively recent whole school focus on the development of a more practical and investigative approach to

science is now paying dividends. This has been further strengthened by a programme to improve the teaching of scientific enquiry skills. The revised scheme of work is now bedding in successfully and provides a secure framework for teaching and learning.

67. Evidence in books and lessons indicates that pupils are achieving well in all year groups. Pupils who have SEN and those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as other pupils, because they are well supported and provided with the right amount of challenge. The school's determination to ensure that pupils develop good scientific enquiry skills is underwritten by the evidence in workbooks since the start of the school year and in the lessons observed.
68. The quality of teaching and learning are consistently good. Planning ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered and that pupils have many opportunities to think scientifically and work independently to solve problems. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils were fully engrossed as they investigated and recorded the changes that occur when ice is melted. In a Year 6 lesson, the pupils' responses to questions showed clearly that they are developing a secure understanding of how different electrical circuits operate and pupils worked very productively in small groups to investigate and explain their findings. Throughout the lesson, the teacher's skilful use of explanation and questioning effectively built on what had been learned previously and the pupils achieved well.
69. Pupils' work in books is of a consistent quality across the school. Teachers have high expectations of presentation. Pupils respond positively and most work is neatly presented and well organised. The majority of marking provides pupils with good information on how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. Teachers provide a range of opportunities for pupils to present their work in different ways. As a result, the pupils gather information in a variety of ways, through observation, research, discussion and measurement and record their work through scientific reports, extended writing, diagrams, graphs and charts. ICT is used appropriately for research and data handling.
70. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has led the implementation of a revised scheme of work and professional development programme. This has been successful in promoting a consistent approach to teaching and learning. The results of the national tests at Year 6 are analysed and appropriate action is taken to include the findings in the subject improvement plan. The co-ordinator has not, as yet, had sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching to ensure that the current good quality is maintained and to check on the standards being achieved by different groups of pupils across the school. He has identified this as an area for further professional development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been very good improvements since the previous inspection;
- Teaching is very good;
- ICT is used very effectively to promote learning in other subjects, particularly in English;
- Pupils achieve very well and develop very good attitudes;
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

71. Standards throughout the school are better than usually seen. This is because all pupils are taught to use computers very effectively in their learning. Skills are developed through purposeful tasks which are linked particularly well to work in other subjects. Pupils' confidence is high and they have very positive attitudes to work. Given their very limited opportunities and ICT experiences outside of school, pupils achieve very well, overall.
72. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. Resources are much improved. The ICT suite has significantly influenced the way skills are taught and practised. Good quality resources in classrooms back this up. Whole staff training along with new appointments of teachers who are skilled in ICT has greatly improved teaching quality. The curriculum is well planned and for older pupils in particular, is enriched by the opportunity to see how technology is used in everyday life, for example, through a visit to observe the production of a newspaper.
73. The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers' confident approach motivates pupils so that they follow instructions carefully and tackle new skills without hesitation. Pupils in infant classes learn techniques such as how to create pictures by using 'spray' and 'brush' tools. In Year 1 they learn to 'click and drag' words from a 'word bank' in order, for example, to label the different body parts on a diagram of a person. This work also provided a good focus for both literacy and science skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop more sophisticated skills. For example, after gathering data about 'favourite sports' and 'favourite animals', they entered the information onto a spreadsheet then re-presented it as a block graph. All pupils knew the correct terminology such as 'spreadsheet' and 'cell' and were able explain the graph displayed on their screens. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build well on their earlier learning because teachers plan systematically and steadily increase levels of challenge. All pupils are taught to 'log on' and find the program they need to begin work. One English lesson took place entirely in the ICT suite. Pupils learned about sentence structure and then opened their own work 'folders' on the computer to find tasks prepared for them by the teacher. The work not only consolidated English learning but also challenged pupils' ICT skills by requiring them to move text and change colours to enhance the display.
74. The significant improvement in standards and achievement stem from very good leadership and management of the subject. Monitoring of standards and progress is rigorous and thorough. Record keeping by teachers is systematic and this too is checked by the subject leader to ensure consistency. The co-ordinator is a highly skilled practitioner as are many of the staff team. As a result, the use of ICT contributes very effectively to pupils' learning.

ICT across the curriculum

75. The use of ICT across the curriculum is particularly strong. The school had identified this as an area for improvement and has worked hard to ensure that pupils receive a rich range of experiences in many subjects. Teachers expect pupils to apply the skills they learn in the ICT suite in other subjects, so that, for example, data handling in mathematics, research in science and history and word processing are all common features of lessons.

HUMANITIES

One lesson was observed in **geography**, as the work of the subject was sampled but not examined in detail. Other evidence was drawn from teachers' planning, discussions with staff and pupils and a scrutiny of pupils' work. Pupils achieve well to reach standards that are broadly as expected by the age of 11. A scheme of work is in place, in line with nationally recommended guidelines and the school has made appropriate adaptations for fieldwork and local study to enrich the curriculum. This is an improvement since the last inspection and underpins teaching and learning well. A good range of relevant topics are studied, throughout the school, in appropriate depth and pupils are enabled to build on their knowledge and skills from year-to-year. A particular strength of the subject is found in the area of mapping skills. These are developed well from the earliest stages, so, for example, by the

time pupils are in Year 4, they recognise symbols on Ordnance Survey maps and can find places with ease, using co-ordinates to link with mathematics. Pupils in Year 5 build on this work for example, by using atlases to identify key features of the Indian sub-continent. In most classes, pupils are also given good opportunities to use their literacy skills through researching topics and writing their findings independently and this accelerates learning. ICT skills are used well for research and for presenting findings. However, occasionally, work is copied from a sheet or book and is not set at the appropriate level of challenge, particularly for the more able, because all do the same task. Marking is not used as well as it could be, in many classes, to help children to understand how they can improve.

The subject is led and managed soundly. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and provides help and advice for colleagues on planning and resources. She has collected some pieces of pupils' work from all classes to ensure the curriculum is covered effectively. However, she has not yet had the opportunity to support and guide colleagues through observing teaching and learning in their classes, to ensure, for example, that inconsistencies are ironed out.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well;
- A good range of topics are studied in sufficient depth;
- There are good links between history and literacy;
- ICT is used well for research and presentation;
- There are some inconsistencies in teaching.

Commentary

76. Standards at the end of both key stages are similar to those seen in most schools. Pupils achieve well overall, in response to much good teaching and the links made between history and other subjects, in particular, literacy and ICT.
77. Pupils cover a good range of topics in sufficient depth, based on the latest national guidance, which has been suitably adapted to meet the needs of the school. There is a good balance achieved between teaching the skills of historical investigation, through research and pupils learning historical facts. Pupils develop a sound understanding of chronology, through constructing time lines and placing events in order. They learn about famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, Robert Peel and King Henry VIII. They also learn about the customs and cultures of past civilisations. In Year 3, for example, pupils learn about life and death in Ancient Egypt. Other classes carry out research through examining 'first hand' evidence, such as paintings from the Tudor period. Valuable opportunities are provided for the majority of pupils to practise their writing and speaking and listening skills. This benefits the oldest pupils particularly well. For example, in Year 6, pupils had researched and written their own information leaflets about famous Victorians, such as William Wilberforce and Robert Browning. They then presented their findings to their classmates, through role play and oral reports. They made good use of ICT both for research and presentation. Appropriate links are made between history and geography, for example, with Year 4 pupils studying the development of settlements over time. Good use is also made of visits to places of historical interest, such as Temple Newsam House, to enrich learning.

78. Two good lessons were observed, one in Year 2 and the other in Year 6. A scrutiny of work from across the school indicates that teaching is good in most classes, but there are some inconsistencies. The best examples show that pupils record their work in a variety of ways, for example, through charts, reports, timelines and fictional accounts. Extra challenge is built in for the more able pupils and the less able are supported, for example, through the use of 'writing frames' to help shape their ideas. There are some occasions, however, when all pupils carry out the same tasks and the work is not demanding enough for the more able. More opportunities could be provided for pupils in Key Stage 2 to pose their own questions. On balance, however, there is enough good teaching to ensure that overall, pupils achieve well. For example, in the good lesson seen in Year 2, pupils were looking at a range of artefacts, making decisions about what they were used for and how they differ from their modern day counterparts. The artefacts really caught their interest and they made thoughtful observations such as, 'its an iron, but it hasn't got a plug so it doesn't use electricity.'
79. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator gives good support and guidance to colleagues through providing training and advice. She has a clear plan to guide future developments. She has had little opportunity, as yet, to have an impact on the quality of teaching and learning through observing or working alongside colleagues and has identified this as an area for professional development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Although a small number of lessons were observed, pupils' work was analysed and discussions held with staff and pupils, **music and art and design** were sampled but not examined in detail. Work seen indicates that standards are at least as expected for their age. In art and design at Key Stage 1, standards are better than usually seen. In **physical education**, it is not possible to judge overall provision, standards or teaching because only the games element was seen.

It is evident from teachers' planning and a scrutiny of pupils' work that the work in **art and design** is varied and interesting. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. A strong scheme of work underpins learning. Pupils achieved well in a Year 2 lesson seen because of the teacher's stimulating introductions and exciting planned activities, which challenged the pupils to make careful observations of fruit and vegetables. This included good details of seeds and shells and incorporated techniques of sketching and shading to create accurate images. In other lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory. There are effective links with other subjects, for example, history and design and technology. For example, pupils use plaster of Paris and fabric strips to create reproductions of Egyptian artefacts, and when they visited a local historical museum to sketch antique furniture prior to constructing and decorating them using readily available materials. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to study famous artists such as Mondrian, Monet and Lowry, which supports their cultural development.

It was not possible to make an overall judgement on standards at Year 2 or Year 6 in **music**, as not all elements were seen. In the Year 6 lesson, pupils' performing skills in playing a range of tuned and untuned instruments were similar to those seen in most schools and reached the expected standards. The choir is a real asset to the school and in addition, the quality of their singing makes a very good contribution to school worship, pupils also sing at masses and last year sang at a special 50th Jubilee church celebration. A teacher from the music service works regularly with pupils from each year group, including children in the reception class. Pupils in Year 5 are provided with an opportunity to be involved in a music project at Lotherton Hall. Pupils are also offered the opportunity to learn to play the violin. The school invites music groups to the school. Last year, the pupils were able to listen to and take part in a performance of Indian music. This year a 'Renaissance' music group visited as part of a Tudor history project. Such experiences enrich learning well and add effectively to pupils' social and cultural development, as well as their musical skills and knowledge.

In the games element of **physical education**, standards are better than usually seen at both key stages and pupils achieve well. In swimming, school records show that standards are also above average, with the vast majority of pupils reaching the required national curriculum standard by the end

of Year 5. These good standards are the result of high quality teaching and a strong scheme of work, which underpins teaching well. They are also the result of strong leadership and management. The lesson seen in a Year 6 class taken by the new co-ordinator was of excellent quality. Outstanding planning, very strong subject expertise and excellent relationships with the pupils resulted in rapid, high quality learning for pupils of all abilities. Pupils demonstrated very good ball control skills, high standards of agility and excellent teamwork and co-operation. They report that they enjoy games lessons very much. The school gives a high profile to the subject and provides many opportunities, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6, to develop their skills, for example, through the involvement of experts such as players from Leeds United, local coaches and the many after school clubs provided. These are open to all and have a strong impact on learning for the many pupils who take part. The range is impressive and includes rugby, netball, gymnastics, and cricket. Links with local sporting clubs and the YMCA are very strong and are used very effectively by the school to enrich learning. The recent 'Zonepark' initiative, where the playground has been specially marked and equipment purchased, provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their social, as well as their physical skills in a vast number of ways at playtimes. The school has achieved the 'Active Mark' award for its hard work and commitment to pupils' physical development. The new co-ordinator has the expertise to sustain the good work. He has a clear action plan in place to guide developments. He has identified the need to work alongside colleagues to share his expertise and to ensure standards are maintained and where necessary, improved.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, overall;
- Standards of making are better than usually seen;
- The subject is enriched effectively through links with other institutions.

Commentary

80. Pupils achieve well from their starting points. Standards are broadly similar to those found in most schools by Year 2. By Year 6, pupils attain better than expected standards for their age in the 'making' aspect and the quality of much of the work produced by the older juniors in particular is better than seen in most schools. Designing and evaluating skills have improved since the previous inspection and are now broadly similar to those found in most schools by Year 6. Some younger pupils however do not yet give enough consideration as to how products could be improved. National subject guidance has been adapted well to ensure pupils gain a good range of experiences using different materials. These experiences are enriched particularly well because of links made with the high school where pupils in Year 5 have the opportunity to use specialised ICT design equipment and work with materials such as acrylic and vinyl. These experiences have a strong impact on standards.
81. The quality of teaching overall is good. Evidence shows that that over time, teachers' expectations are high and the teaching of skills is tackled systematically. In Year 2, for example, pupils' practise basic design and sewing skills to make puppets. They also drew flow charts first, to plan how these would be made. These skills are built on well in Year 4 when pupils made 'container bags'. They researched the topic well and as a result, produced a wide variety of bags, purses, holders and carriers for many different purposes. Slipper designs in Year 6 are careful and accurate and are clearly labelled to show dimensions, use of materials and finished decoration. Some plans include different views of the slippers. Pupils are reminded to check their designs and to adapt them where necessary. Teachers' skills and subject knowledge have improved overall, since the last inspection because of the support and in-service training provided. Some lessons seen during the inspection were satisfactory, rather than good, because the tasks undertaken were more mundane.

82. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has generated interest and confidence among teachers since her appointment. The issues from the previous report have been tackled systematically and very largely corrected. A firm action plan guides future developments.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has improved;
- Pupils are effectively taught how to keep themselves safe;
- Provision is enriched by very strong community links and partnerships.

Commentary

83. The provision of PSHCE is a current focus for school development and this has led to improvements since time of the last inspection. Training for the co-ordinator has ensured better guidance for staff and good quality resources, such as relevant books, have been purchased. Staff keep a flexible approach to lessons, so that their content is often driven by the needs of the children. Links with the parish support learning well and good opportunities are provided for citizenship, both in school and the community, as children are made aware of the needs of others. The school nurse and community policeman are involved in providing health education and advice on keeping safe in an appropriate and sensitive manner. A particularly memorable lesson on keeping safe from drugs was observed during the inspection with a Year 6 class. The children had to guess which egg, in a box of six, had been left raw and learned the truth as they were smashed one by one over their classmates. They learned that they could never guess which could be a killer drug and realised that it could be the first one they tried. This enabled them to produce some very thought provoking posters on the dangers of drugs, which showed how effective the lesson had been.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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