

INSPECTION REPORT

Millbrook Junior School

Kettering

LEA area: Northampton

Unique reference number: 122109

Headteacher: Mr A. Vian

Lead inspector: Mr P. Bamber

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th March 2004

Inspection number: 263824

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

© Crown copyright 2004

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	474
School address:	Churchill Way Kettering Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN15 5DP
Telephone number:	01536 417432
Fax number:	01536 517092
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Gosling
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Millbrook Junior School is a very large junior school with 474 pupils on roll, organised into 16 classes. Pupils are from predominantly white British backgrounds with around seven percent from mainly either mixed white Asian or Asian backgrounds- no pupil is at an early stage of English acquisition. About twenty-six per cent pupils have special educational needs (well above the national average) with an average proportion of pupils with Statements of special educational need. Mobility is around the average, with twenty-five pupils joining and twenty-four pupils leaving the school at times other than the normal. There are a small number of pupils who are in public care. Pupils' attainment on entry is above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15064	Paul Bamber	Lead inspector	Mathematics Physical education
19557	Liz Halls	Lay inspector	
29688	Mike Brammer	Team inspector	Special educational needs English History Geography
11227	John Moles	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education Design and technology Music.
29424	Vivienne Stone	Team inspector	Science Art and design Personal, health and social education.

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education
102, Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucester
GL 53 7JX

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2	17
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** standard of education for its pupils and offers **satisfactory** value for money. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average and pupils' achieve satisfactorily. The quality of teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. Leadership and governance are good and management satisfactory.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils enjoy school very much because its environment is so positive.
- Provision in music is very good.
- The very good support and guidance provided for pupils with special educational needs, enables them to achieve well.
- Pupils do not always achieve as well as they should in some lessons because the tasks they are set do not always match their needs.
- Pupils behave very well and have positive attitudes to learning largely as a result of their very good spiritual, moral and social development.
- The school succeeds very well in its aim to include all pupils in its provision, in and out of the classroom.
- Teachers' marking does not always help pupils improve their work.
- Teachers do not sufficiently encourage pupils to present their work as well as they could.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Most of the key issues identified in the last report show improvements. Pupils are now given more opportunities to investigate in mathematics and science, teaching assistants are now clearer about what the pupils they are supporting are intended to learn and assessment procedures are now satisfactory overall.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The school has recognised a slight dip in Year 3 pupils' attainment on entering the school, compared with the standards indicated by their results in national tests taken in the previous May. Pupils enter the school with above to well above average standards. The Year 6, 2003 national test results show that overall pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards have tended to be highest in reading and in science and there have been recent improvements in overall standards and achievement in mathematics. The school has identified that writing standards need improving, especially those of boys and have implemented effective strategies to improve achievement in this area. Currently, standards are well above expectations in music. Overall, pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are very well supported and their provision is very well managed. In some lessons, pupils do not always achieve as well as they might, because the tasks they are set do not sufficiently match their needs.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Pupils' behaviour is very good and they have good attitudes to school. Their attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is **satisfactory** overall. Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory and the curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced. Pupils are given very good opportunities for enrichment outside the classroom. The school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The quality of support, advice and guidance for pupils is satisfactory. The school provides pupils with very good care and welfare. Links with parents are good and the very strong links with the community and other schools contribute very well to the pupils' curriculum and experiences.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership is **good**, with the headteacher presenting a very strong role model to staff and pupils, in creating a caring and positive community, which embraces all in its work. Management of the school is **satisfactory**, but with more rigorous self-evaluation needed. Governance is **good**. Governors are well informed and prepared to take effective action to maintain standards and provision.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with the school and think very highly of the headteacher's leadership. Pupils also express a great liking for the school, particularly how friendly everyone is and how well they are cared for.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Make sure that all teachers consistently set work that matches pupils' needs.
- Improve the presentation of pupils' work.
- Ensure that teachers use marking more effectively to help pupils improve their work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. Achievement is satisfactory overall, but very good in music and good in information and communication technology (ICT) and for pupils with special educational needs in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are high standards and pupils achieve very well in music.
- Pupils read very well.
- Standards and achievements are above expectations in ICT.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- The achievement of pupils in some lessons is not as high as it should be.

Commentary

1. Standards have not changed significantly since the previous inspection. The school's own baseline assessment of pupils' attainment on entering Year 3 in September reveals a dip in their standards when compared with their Year 2 national test results from May that year. They show pupils entering the school with well above average standards in reading and above average standards in writing and mathematics. Currently standards reflect those on entry, indicating that pupils achieve satisfactorily through the school. In those other subjects fully inspected, standards are in line with expectation.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (29.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.6 (27.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.4 (29.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 112 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Currently, standards in Year 6 are above expectations in English, mathematics and science. Whilst these standards are lower than those reflected by the 2003 tests (in which standards were well above average) they represent satisfactory achievement in those subjects, given the higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in the year group.
3. Because of high quality teaching, pupils throughout the school attain well above expected standards in all aspects of music and achieve very well. The effect of this very good provision has been to encourage many pupils to seek instrumental tuition outside school in order to further their skills and interest in this area of the arts.
4. Throughout the school, pupils read fluently and read a wide range of books for pleasure. Since acting upon its realisation that boys had less interest than girls in reading, the school has successfully encouraged them to read a wider variety of texts by providing more relevant books. Pupils talk knowledgeably and critically about books they read and identify valid reasons why they enjoy some authors' style to others.

5. Pupils attain standards well above expectations in ICT because of good specialist teaching in a well-equipped media centre. However, pupils' use of ICT to support their learning in other subjects is only satisfactory. Although ICT lessons often use learning in other subjects as a vehicle for acquiring and practising technical skills, the availability for pupils to use the media centre for research purposes is quite limited and restricts achievement in this aspect of their learning.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well with a significant minority attaining expected standards in national tests. The school rightly prides itself on the progress made by pupils with learning difficulties, those who find concentrating difficult or who have physical impairment. The very good management of the learning of these pupils contributes significantly to their good achievements. The very good support they receive in English, mathematics and science lessons means that their progress in these subjects is particularly good. Pupils with statements of special educational need make good progress in all lessons as a result of more consistent one-to-one support. Pupils who have special talents or gifts are encouraged to pursue their particular interests and have satisfactory provision within the limits of the school's resources. This has enabled pupils to shine on a wider stage, in areas such as the arts and sport.
7. Because aspects of the school's assessment systems and self-evaluation processes have weaknesses, pupils do not always achieve as well as they might in lessons. The quality of presentation is often not good enough and some teachers have too low expectations of its quality. As a result, pupils can be careless when writing, spelling the same word differently in the same paragraph, ignoring necessary punctuation and not joining their letters. Work in other subjects is often untidily presented and difficult to decipher. In some lessons, pupils do not achieve as well as they should because the work they are set does not always meet their needs, either being too easy or too difficult. Although pupils now carry out more sophisticated investigations in mathematics and science, their research skills are limited due to restricted access to the library and the media centre.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' have **good** attitudes and behaviour is **very good**. Their personal development including their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development has strong features. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring ethos of the school permeates all activities and helps to promote pupils' good relationships, attitudes and personal development.
- The very good role models of the staff ensure that pupils quickly know the difference between right and wrong and behave well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Staff manage the small minority of pupils who exhibit difficult behaviour well.

Commentary

8. Pupils' positive attitudes, behaviour, values and personal development are a strength of the school. The generally positive picture found at the last inspection has been maintained. The vast majority of pupils behave well, are polite and courteous, and respond well to the caring ethos of the school. There are a few pupils who display challenging behaviour, but staff work successfully together to consistently reinforce good behaviour. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and are proud of being members of the school community and show a keen interest and involvement in the wide range of activities the school provides. Parents are very supportive of the school, and happy with the values the school promotes.

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	439	5	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	7	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	15	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0

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

9. When given opportunities to work independently or in groups, pupils work co-operatively, sharing and valuing ideas, and concentrating well on the task. Occasionally, some pupils become restless and inattentive when expected to sit too long on the carpet, or when the task does not match their needs. In these situations achievement is limited.
10. Pupils' relationships with adults and with each other are very good, and have a positive impact on their learning. They are supportive of each other and their teachers. Pupils are happy and secure, and enjoy school life in an atmosphere where all are valued. Pupils respond well to the help provided, and enjoy the praise that is often given. Pupils mix well at break time and lunchtime, and pupils with special educational needs take a full and active part in lessons, and activities at break times.
11. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and contributes significantly to the very good relationships firmly established in the school. Spiritual development is promoted very well through regular and sincere periods of reflection in collective worship. The accomplishments of individuals are celebrated very well in these sessions as well as in history, art and design and religious education lessons. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is very well developed and this contributes to the school's success in promoting very good relationships. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds relate well to each other. The good number and range of extra curricular activities, including involvement in sporting and musical events, visits and visitors contributes well to pupil's personal, social and cultural development.
12. Most pupils learn to respect the views of others and develop appropriate social skills. They learn to act according to their own principles and to challenge things that they consider unfair. They have opportunities to exercise their initiative and take responsibility. For example, they carry out a range of duties in class and around the school. Members of the school council take their duties seriously and are proud of their achievements. They consult with their classmates and ensure that pupils' views and ideas are considered and discussed with the head teacher. Older pupils act as 'Friends of Friends peer mediators' for those pupils who find making and sustaining relationships difficult, often diffusing potential upsets in the playground.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	0.0
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.

13. Attendance is above the national average and levels of unauthorised absence are below. Most pupils arrive punctually for the start of school. The school takes effective action to promote good attendance and registration practice is efficient.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. Specialist teaching in English, mathematics and music adds value to the pupils' learning. Teacher's marking does not always help pupils' to improve. The very good links with the community and other schools contribute significantly to pupils' experiences. Pupils are very well cared for.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is some good specialist teaching. Assessment is satisfactory but test data is not always used rigorously enough and marking is not always sufficiently helpful to pupils in improving their presentation and the quality of their work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The effective use of specialist teaching, especially in music.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and supported, enabling them to make good progress.
- Teachers do not always sufficiently match tasks to pupils' needs.
- Teachers' marking, whilst often supportive, does not clearly tell pupils what they need to do to improve or is it rigorous enough in ensuring that pupils present their work consistently well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (6 %)	26 (58 %)	15 (34%)	1 (2%)	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.

14. While the majority of lessons observed were good or better, further evidence from the analysis of pupils' work and teachers' assessments, indicated that overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.
15. A strength in the quality of teaching is the use of specialist teaching throughout the school in music and in Years 5 and 6, in English and mathematics. Pupils' standards and achievements are well above expectations in music because of the high quality teaching by the specialist music teacher. In a very good Year 3 lesson, the teacher's very good subject knowledge, combined with high expectations and a cracking pace, enabled pupils to refine and develop

their singing of two songs very well, in order to prepare for a public performance. Setting arrangements in Years 5 and 6 make it possible for teachers with specific expertise to teach English or mathematics to more than one set of pupils. As a result, pupils in these sets often achieve well. For example, Year 6 pupils' knowledge and skills in writing in a particular style were promoted well through good teaching. Several pupils in a well taught Year 5 mathematics lesson, made a 'breakthrough' in their ability to measure angles accurately, using a protractor, because the teacher had explained the method so well.

16. The teaching and support provided for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they achieve well as a result. In English and mathematics lessons particularly, relevant, well targeted work and rigorous but sensitive support, ensures that pupils improve well in those areas in which they have greatest difficulties and are fully involved and contribute in 'whole class' sessions. These features were evident in a very good, Year 5, English lesson in which less-able pupils improved well in their ability to identify interesting facts from a text and to include them in their own writing.
17. The quality of teachers' assessment is satisfactory overall, but has some weaknesses. Although the school analyses pupils' test papers in order to identify weaknesses in their attainment, not all teachers consistently use this information to set work that specifically addresses these shortcomings. In several lessons observed, pupils were set work which was either too easy or too difficult. This was particularly the case in subjects other than English and mathematics, although there were examples in these subjects of the same tasks being set for all pupils, regardless of whether they matched their needs. As a result, pupils did not always achieve as well as they might.
18. The analysis of pupils' books revealed that teachers' marking is supportive but often perfunctory, without any clear indication of ways in which pupils might improve their work. When pupils present their work poorly, which is often the case, teachers rarely comment or insist upon higher standards. There is a whole school marking policy but not all teachers follow this.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** with very good opportunities for additional activities to support it.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Time is used well during the school day to allow all subjects to be taught in sufficient depth.
- A wide range of visits out of school and a very good range of extra-curricular activities enrich pupils' learning.
- Pupils do not have enough access to computers to use them for independent study.

Commentary

19. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. Time-table arrangements have been adapted to ensure that all subjects have enough time allocated to them, whilst retaining the emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy. This has addressed the imbalance in time that was identified at the time of the previous inspection. The time allocated to investigative work in mathematics and science has now also improved, resulting in better achievement in this area of pupils' learning.
20. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils are fully involved in all aspects of school life. The setting, by ability, of pupils in English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 makes a good contribution to catering for the needs of different groups of pupils. However, in some classes planning does not always ensure that the work set matches pupils needs sufficiently. Good cross-curricular links are planned into many lessons, but these have not been identified in longer-term plans, which makes the practice inconsistent across the school.

21. Pupils benefit from and appreciate the many visits that take place, which link to their learning in different subjects. The two residential visits that are offered make a very good contribution to pupils' personal and social development and are a telling example of the school's very inclusive ethos. There is good provision for pupils to take part in a range of sporting and musical activities as well as a very good range of other activities such as juggling skills and Spanish.
22. The school uses specialist teachers well in music and ICT. This has raised the profile of these subjects in the school and opened up greater learning opportunities for pupils. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to supporting pupils' learning in the classroom.
23. The school has already identified that pupils have insufficient access to computers to use them regularly in their study of different subjects. Pupils learn their ICT skills in the context of other subjects, but this is limited to their weekly ICT lesson. This, therefore, reduces the pupils' opportunities for independent study. Access to the library is also limited because it is used as additional teaching space each morning. However, the school makes good use of it at other times to encourage the development of pupils' library skills.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are **very well** cared for. The school has good systems for seeking and acting on pupils' views and provides satisfactory personal support and guidance. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with staff, which benefit their confidence in seeking support when they have any concerns or wish to share their achievements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported.
- Learning support staff and teachers work well together to provide good support.
- Pupils trust the staff and are confident that they will listen and take actions regarding their concerns and opinions.
- Very good induction arrangements help pupils who join the school to settle in well.

Commentary

24. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils are very good. First aid provision is good and trained staff are designated to provide assistance in the event of an emergency. Safe practice is promoted well in lessons and the school carries out regular risk assessments. Child protection procedures work effectively because staff are experienced, well trained and vigilant. Staff know pupils very well and act sensitively to provide a level of personal support to match pupils' individual needs and support their development.
25. Induction arrangements are very good for pupils entering the school. The good and trusting relationships that exist between pupils and staff give pupils the confidence to seek support and guidance when they have a personal problem, or when they want to share a success. Staff provide a good response to such requests and, through their good knowledge of the pupils, offer support. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. The outside agencies that are involved are invited to annual reviews and give good support to the school.
26. The school successfully seeks pupils' views through the school council. Pupils that show particular strengths in their social development are selected to help other pupils' who experience friendship difficulties forming positive relationships.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents have very positive views of the school and the quality of education it provides. The partnership between school and home is **good**. Links with the community and other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very happy with what the school provides for their children.
- The school's partnership with parents makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning resources and activities.
- Links with the community enrich learning experiences for pupils and provide very good opportunities for their social development.
- The quality and informative content of newsletters and general information provided to parents are good.
- The committee of the Friends of Millbrook Junior School (F.O.M.S) works hard to support the work of the school.
- Reports to parents about their children's progress do not always provide clear information about what their children need to do to move to the next stage in their learning.

Commentary

27. The very positive views of parents reflect an overall high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the school's provision. A very small minority of parents expressed some concerns about the information that parents receive. Inspectors support the positive views of parents and agree that more information could be given to parents based on monitoring of pupils' day-to-day and overall achievement. The inspection team judged that newsletters and general information provided to parents are good and that annual reports are satisfactory. Reports reflect the good knowledge teachers have of pupils and inform the parents about the work pupils have completed and their attitudes. However, they are not always consistent in their style and content and sometimes fail to provide parents with clear targets or guidance as to what their children need to do to progress to the next stage of their learning.
28. The school has good arrangements to survey parents and gain their views and normally manages to resolve any concerns of parents. Parents effectively support their children at home by listening to reading and helping them with their homework. A few parents help in school or on outings, on a regular basis. The Friends of Millbrook School (F.O.M.S) is run by a small but hardworking committee and successfully raises funds to provide additional resources and learning opportunities for pupils. The work of the F.O.M.S is greatly appreciated by staff and benefits pupils well.
29. Links with the community and a wide range of visits and visitors provide very good enrichment of the curriculum and contributes significantly to pupils' personal and social development. Links with other schools are very good and the school plays an active part in the local group of schools. Links with secondary schools appropriately support the transfer of pupils by providing opportunities to visit and have an understanding of secondary schooling.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is **good** and management is **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher strongly promotes an inclusive and caring school community.
- The deputy headteacher very effectively manages the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

- Governors are knowledgeable and carry out their duties well.
- Aspects of the school's self-evaluation and performance management are not rigorous enough.

Commentary

30. The headteacher provides a strong pastoral role model and is very influential in promoting the aim of the school to include all pupils in its provision. His presence around the school, his teaching commitment and very good relationships with pupils, staff and parents all contribute significantly to the very positive ethos within the school. His deep knowledge of individual pupils and their circumstances means that their welfare needs are very well catered for and that staff are extremely well informed of any possible barriers to pupils' learning. The headteacher's teaching commitment and regular conduct of assemblies also play a significant part in promoting pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and social development. Parents have great respect for the headteacher's work and principles, which contributes well to the positive links with the parents and their subsequent support for their children's learning.
31. The deputy headteacher leads and manages the provision for pupils with special educational needs very well. As a result, class teachers and teaching assistants are well informed about pupils' specific needs, there are clear, relevant teaching programmes in place and good quality resources available to help pupils learn. All of these factors mean that pupils with special educational needs achieve well, especially in English, mathematics and science. Close analysis of pupils' particular weaknesses has resulted in better provision and higher achievement. For instance, it was noted that lower attaining boys' interest and relative attainment in reading and writing, was not as strong as that of girls. The school has taken effective action to give extra support for boys and by providing them with more relevant books and writing tasks.
32. Governors take a keen interest in the school's work and hold it to account for its standards well. Many have specific expertise to contribute, notably in the area of finance, health and safety and buildings. They ensure that their responsibilities are diligently met. The school is relatively under-funded compared with junior schools nationally, but prudent financial planning ensures that adequate resources are available and that important improvements in the school's accommodation, for example, a second ICT suite, can be provided. The slightly larger than average budget surplus indicated in the financial information table, was allocated for updating the school's heating system.
33. Although satisfactory overall, there are some weaknesses in the school's self-evaluation and performance management. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject leaders all observe lessons in order to evaluate the quality of teaching. Where areas for development are identified, they are noted and discussed with individual staff. However, there is little evidence that there is any formal follow up to check whether improvements have indeed taken place. There is no systematic analysis of pupils' work, carried out on a regular basis. As a result, the inconsistencies noted by inspectors, in the quality of teachers' assessments, particularly marking, have not been sufficiently identified and acted upon. This contributes to pupils' achievement sometimes not being as good as it might be. Test data is analysed closely and where effective action has been taken to address the weaknesses identified, improvements in standards and achievements have resulted. However, the systems to ensure that all teachers act upon the information they receive in order to improve provision, lack rigour.

Barriers to raising achievement

Currently there are three permanent, experienced members of staff absent from school as a result of long-term illness or maternity leave. As a result, the continuity of learning for some pupils has been somewhat disrupted.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	920622
Total expenditure	949633
Expenditure per pupil	2016

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	111471
Balance carried forward to the next	82460

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils attain good standards in national tests.
- Teaching pupils in ability sets in Years 5 and 6 has a positive impact on the learning of less-able pupils.
- The leadership of the subject is good.
- Pupils are not encouraged to take enough care in the presentation of their work.
- The assessment and marking of the pupils' work do not support learning well enough.

Commentary

34. Pupils attain well in national tests. In 2003 Year 6 pupils attained results that were well above the national average. They were in line with those achieved by pupils at similar schools. The pupils' achievement was average when compared with their results in Year 2 national tests. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in Year 6 are currently attaining standards well above expectations in reading and above expectations in speaking and listening and writing. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Those with special educational needs make good progress. Standards broadly reflect those found at the time of the last inspection.
35. Pupils usually listen carefully both to their teachers and to their peers. This was observed in the responses they made and reflected their good attitudes and behaviour. In formal situations, pupils speak well and express themselves confidently. In a Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils competently used 'technical vocabulary' and the term 'hydrological' when talking about how water was cleaned.
36. Pupils of all ages attain very well in reading. This makes a very good contribution to their cultural development. They read widely and talk easily about their favourite authors such as Jacqueline Wilson and Roald Dahl. In Year 3, pupils understand how to find information from a non-fiction book. Many use the Internet for information and belong to the local library. The school has identified a problem with the attitude of boys to reading and has purchased books to interest them and to encourage them to read more widely. Library skills are taught, but access to the library is limited. It cannot function as well as it should to encourage pupils to research and to learn independently. The school has firm plans to improve library provision, but this is an aspect which has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection.
37. Pupils write for a good range of purposes. Most pupils do not, however, join their letters together in a cursive script although they are taught how to do so. This means that the presentation of their work is not as good as it should be. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length to practise what they learn and improve the standards they attain.
38. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and the National Literacy Strategy is well established. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are in ability groups for literacy lessons. Those with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported by teaching assistants. Teachers manage all pupils well. Although teachers' positive classroom management promotes pupils' sensible behaviour and good attitudes, lower expectations of the presentation of pupils' work leads to some underachievement. For instance, some marking tends to be cursory, failing to express high expectations of the way in which work is presented, or offer helpful guidance on how pupils can improve. As a result, some pupils hand in work that is carelessly spelt, punctuated and written. Good attitudes to

work are not promoted as a result of this weakness in assessment. There is insufficient use of ICT for drafting and editing work.

39. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator effectively monitors teaching and teachers' plans. The results of Year 6 national tests are analysed carefully to help to raise standards further. The subject action plan correctly identifies key priorities for improvement. However, the management of the subject is satisfactory because assessment procedures lack rigour. Pupils' progress is not tracked consistently enough to support their learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

There are good opportunities to write at length in subjects other than English. Pupils in different year groups retell Greek myths, write a letter home from a Roman soldier in Britain and compose poems based on the visit to Everdon.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mental mathematics strategies are taught well.
- Resources are used well to help pupils understand mathematical concepts.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are very well supported.
- Because marking of work is not rigorous enough, pupils do not sufficiently know how they can improve.

Commentary

40. Throughout the school, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Over the last few years, standards have not been as good in mathematics as in English and science. Recent improvements, notably in pupils' ability to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding, have resulted in better standards and achievement, both in the 2003 national tests and in this academic year. Standards in the current Year 6 are above expectation and the pupils are achieving satisfactorily compared with their prior attainment. Similar standards and achievement prevail in other year groups.
41. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A strength, noted in all lessons observed, is the teachers' good teaching of various effective mental strategies to help pupils calculate accurately and quickly. In the best lessons, teachers use resources well to help explain more difficult concepts and to engage pupils' interest. In a well taught Year 6 lesson, for example, many pupils made significant strides in their learning about how to rotate shapes. This was because the teacher made good use of an overhead projector and well prepared transparencies. Other aspects of good teaching include brisk pace, high expectations and secure subject knowledge. In a good Year 5 lesson, the teacher enabled pupils to become much more confident and accurate in their use of a protractor to measure angles because clear targets were set for pupils' learning and the teacher had high expectations of their ability to master the skills required.
42. The quality of teaching for pupils who find learning in mathematics difficult is very good and enables them to achieve well. Pupils' needs are identified accurately and class teachers and teaching assistants plan lessons very effectively to help the pupils overcome their difficulties, especially in basic number work and in increasing the number of calculating strategies at their disposal. Aspects of teaching which are less good, include the quality of marking of the pupils' work, which is often limited in its guidance upon how pupils can improve; a lack of match of tasks to pupils' needs and a lack of rigour in insisting that pupils complete tasks in the time allotted.

43. The subject is well led. Necessary improvements in the balance of the curriculum have been secured, which means that pupils now have more opportunities to carry out mathematical investigations in order to extend their knowledge and understanding in lessons and through homework tasks. Teachers have been provided with relevant training to improve their skills, some of which the subject leader has effectively led. Management is satisfactory. Although test data is thoroughly analysed, teachers do not consistently use the results of the analysis to plan work to address specific weaknesses in pupils' attainment. Lessons have been observed, areas for development identified and aspects of teaching improved as a result. However, there is no systematic procedure for sampling pupils' work. As a result, common weaknesses in pupils' attainment and in the quality of marking and pupils' presentation of work have not been sufficiently identified. Provision has improved satisfactorily since the time of the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

Pupils use their mathematical knowledge and skills satisfactorily to support their learning in other subjects. They apply measuring skills competently in science and history lessons and use their knowledge of graphs and tables to elicit geographical information. Teachers successfully make pupils aware of the different cultures, which have contributed to mathematical knowledge. Pupils' use of ICT to support their learning is satisfactory, but their use of computers is limited by a lack of access.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Investigative skills are well taught in Years 3 and 6.
- Assessments are not always used to plan further work in Years 3 and 4.
- Teaching is good in Year 6.
- Teachers' marking does not always help pupils understand how they can improve their work.

Commentary

44. Attainment in Year 6 is above expectations. Pupils' achievement by Year 6 is satisfactory because pupils' standards are above average when they enter the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a result of the good support they receive in lessons. Since the previous inspection, the school has a much more focused approach to investigative science and this is helping to maintain the above average standards.
45. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In lessons judged to be good, teachers have secure subject knowledge that enables them to use questioning effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and to encourage the development of correct scientific language. Pupils have good opportunities to devise their own investigations, such as in Year 6, where pupils investigated the effect of air resistance on spinners. As a result of their involvement, pupils are enthusiastic, work with concentration and show a pride in their work. In other lessons, there is a lack of challenge especially for the more-able pupils who learn less than they could. They are not given enough independence in devising and carrying out their own tests. The use of worksheets to record results does not give the more-able pupils the opportunities to decide how they could record results in different ways.
46. Numeracy is used well to support pupils' learning in science, but ICT is not used sufficiently because pupils have too little access to computers.

47. Teachers' marking is often restricted to a tick or a positive comment about how well the pupil has completed the work. It does not pose questions about the scientific processes that the pupils have been studying and pupils are not given guidance on how to improve their work. This reduces the progress that pupils make.
48. The subject leader provides good leadership and has succeeded in raising the profile of science in the school. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The analysis of past national test papers has been used well to identify strengths and weaknesses in science. However, there have been insufficient opportunities for the subject leader to monitor teaching and learning in all classes. Assessment procedures are not sufficiently developed in Years 3 and 4 to enable teachers to track individual pupils' progress and therefore ensure that work is suitable for pupils of all abilities and that it builds on their previous knowledge and understanding.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are good.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Standards are above expectation and pupils achieve well.
- Restricted time in the media-centre limits achievement in the use of ICT across the curriculum.
- Assessment is not effective.

Commentary

49. Standards by Year 6 are above expectations and pupils achieve well. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in ICT. The very good provision made to support their academic achievement in literacy and numeracy is helped by the provision of suitable software to help them make progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Standards have improved well since the last inspection. This is due to good leadership and management by the subject co-ordinator and the continued good use of the media centre.
50. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The co-ordinator teaches the majority of classes but has rightly begun to hand over the teaching of some classes to those teachers who are confident and competent in ICT skills and teaching. This means that the pupils experience teaching that is at least satisfactory and in the vast majority of lessons teaching that is good. All teachers have high expectations of pupils and give them responsibility and opportunities to try things out once they have given an initial introduction. As a result, pupils achieve well. For example, when preparing a 'power-point' presentation, pupils feel free to try different web-sites to assemble background information, edit, cut, crop, or import clip art. This ensures pupils have very positive attitudes and significantly helps them to consolidate their learning.
51. Leadership and management are good. This has ensured that the media-centre is used well throughout the week and that all classes have equal access to use it for ICT lessons. Effective support has been given to teachers and this means that increasingly teachers are taking on the responsibility of teaching their own classes. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' achievement when they work alongside individuals or groups of pupils in the media centre. The limitations imposed by the low ratio of computers to pupils have been recognised and plans and funding are at an advanced stage to provide a further ICT suite, doubling capacity.
52. Although, overall, the quality of teaching is good, assessment is not fully effective. There is no checklist for recording the skills pupils have mastered, or are having difficulty with, so that

future work can either build on these skills or seek to address problems. Pupils are, however, encouraged to be self-critical and to amend, adapt and improve their work. This promotes their evaluative skills well, contributes very well to their social development, is effective in raising standards and is a telling example of the school's successful promotion of personal responsibility.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning in other subjects. This is an area that the co-ordinator is seeking to develop further. Whilst pupils currently use computers to support learning in mathematics, geography, science, health education and religious education, opportunities are presently too limited due to a lack of access.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a very good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to citizenship.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Teachers have confidence and good resources to teach the subject.
- Assessment procedures are not used sufficiently.
- Teaching in Year 6 is good.

Commentary

53. Standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected for their age in relation to the Locally Agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Standards have been maintained because the subject co-ordinator has kept staff well informed of changes to the curriculum as they have developed.
54. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. Teaching was of good quality in two Year 6 lessons observed. In these lessons, teachers engaged the pupils well in lively discussion about aspects of Sikhism. In both lessons, resources were used effectively by both pupils and teachers to better explain the underlying principles of Sikhism. The open discussion and respectful debate that ensued promoted an understanding of the many different faiths represented in Britain today and did much to reinforce the very good relationships and racial harmony in the school.
55. The leadership and management are good and ensure that all teachers have the confidence and a good range of resources to teach the subject. The teaching programme is constantly updated to reflect the current thinking in the teaching of religious education. The subject contributes very well to spiritual and moral development as pupils learn about how the different faiths appreciate the world around us and how the rules of those faiths help the members to live their lives. It contributes well to social and cultural development and to citizenship in personal, social and health education, as the pupils learn to understand and respect the other faiths in their community. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but not used sufficiently to identify aspects of the curriculum that groups of pupils need to study to greater depth.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

There are no significant strengths or weaknesses.

56. Standards pupils attain are in line with the expectations for their age. This was observed in pupils' written work and in the understanding that they show in lessons. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
57. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In a good lesson in Year 5, pupils responded well to practical activities. Each year group carries out fieldwork, which makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development. In satisfactory lessons, there is a lack of challenge for the more-able pupils and a heavy dependence on worksheets. Links to pupils' work in ICT are under-developed.
58. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is a very good role model for other staff. Pupils' work is monitored but the system for assessing the progress pupils make is not being used effectively enough to raise standards.

History

It was not possible to make a secure judgement about the provision in history. Pupils' work and displays were sampled and discussions held with a group of pupils

Analysis of the pupils' work showed that the school makes good use of visits to enrich the curriculum. Year 5 visit a Tudor Manor House (Sulgrave Manor) to learn about life in Tudor times and this makes a very good contribution to developing their understanding of their own culture. Pupils in Year 3, use pictures of Ancient Greek pottery to find evidence of how people lived then. Good links are made with pupils' literacy skills especially when pupils retell Greek myths and write letters pretending to be a Roman soldier serving in Britain.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

No lessons were observed in art and design and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement about provision.

It is evident from the work on display and sampling the work in pupils' folders that standards are in line with expectations for pupils of this age. They experience a range of media in two and three-dimensional work including watercolours, pastels, charcoal, collage and clay. They study the work of artists such as Picasso and Mondrian. This helps pupils to increase their understanding of different techniques and makes a good contribution to their cultural development.

Design and technology

No lessons were observed in design and technology and, therefore, it was not possible to make a secure judgement about provision. Standards were in line with expectations in the limited sample of work analysed. This shows that pupils are aware of the process of design, make and evaluate and they write notes to suggest ways that they could improve their designs or amend the processes they used. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Curricular plans indicate that coverage of this subject meets National Curriculum requirements.

Music

Provision in music is **very good** and is a strength of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above expectation and pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching is very good.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The music room is a good resource.

Commentary

59. Standards throughout the school are well above expectations and pupils achieve very well. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good because they are fully included in all musical activities and are very well supported in their learning. Standards were not reported at the time of the previous inspection, but progress was reported as satisfactory so there has been good improvement. This is due to the good leadership and management of the subject leader.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The co-ordinator ensures that in every lesson all elements of the programmes of study are taught. This means that all pupils have the opportunity to listen to music, apply what they have previously learnt to what they hear and then further develop that knowledge, through performing, composing and appraising their own and others' work. This regular structure means that pupils' understanding of the integrated nature of music develops very well and represents a significant feature of their very good achievement. The wide variety of activity in each lesson results in pupils having very good attitudes and contributes very well to all pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
61. Good leadership and management ensure that music plays a significant part in school life, encouraging a good number of pupils to have additional instrumental teaching from outside specialists. The school has a very good range of instruments available and very good arrangements for pupils to hire instruments from the local education authority. Pupils take part in many school functions including assemblies, plays and a major performance each year in a local theatre. The music room though restricted in size, offers a good resource that is acoustically clear. Assessment procedures are good, but have not been in place for long enough to make a judgement about the effectiveness of their use.

Physical education

In physical education insufficient lessons were observed to make a secure judgement about overall provision. In those lessons that were observed, pupils in Year 3 attained expected standards in hockey skills and pupils in Years 5 and 6 reached expected standards in gymnastics. In all three lessons observed, pupils' achieved satisfactorily overall. Pupils, in lessons and in discussions, indicated a keen interest in the subject and their enthusiasm extends to the various sporting out-of-school clubs provided. The planned curriculum is broad and balanced and provides good opportunities, through sporting fixtures and residential visits, for enrichment and for pupils to development their personal, social, moral and cultural skills and understanding well. Discussion with the subject leader indicated satisfactory leadership and management.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

It was not possible to make a secure judgement about provision in personal, social and health education. However, it is possible to say that it makes a good contribution to the very good behaviour and positive attitudes of the pupils. Lessons are timetabled in every class and pupils say that they find them helpful in understanding how to live and work together. Pupils in Year 3 learn about the importance of fair play and by Year 6 they understand a range of strategies for dealing with arguments and diffusing escalating situations. Pupils make good use of their acquired understanding of relationships in their work as peer mediators in the playground, helping others to resolve conflicts. Year 4 pupils talk knowledgeably about how to keep themselves fit and safe. Their learning is reinforced well by visiting a centre where they are confronted by real-life emergencies to which they have to respond. The school council helps pupils to understand how a democracy works and what it means to be a citizen.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
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	4

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