

INSPECTION REPORT

AUDENSHAW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Audenshaw, Tameside

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106203

Headteacher: Mr J P Gray

Lead inspector: Ms L Read

Dates of inspection: 11 – 13 October 2004

Inspection number: 266341

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 231

School address: Ash Street
Audenshaw
Tameside
Postcode: M34 5NG

Telephone number: 0161 370 2504
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: (Acting) Mrs Doreen Peters

Date of previous inspection: 23 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Audenshaw Primary is the same size as most primary schools with 231 pupils on roll. It is situated in the town of Audenshaw, in the area of Tameside. Taking into account the full range of housing and employment, social and economic circumstances are average overall. Pupils entering the school have a range of learning experiences and attainments that are historically below average for the age group although they are average this year. The total percentage of pupils in school who have special educational needs (9 per cent) is below average; 1.3 per cent of the school population has a statement of special educational needs which is around the national average. Most of the special needs come under the learning or physical categories. Around 4 per cent of pupils claim their entitlement to free school meals which is below average. Most pupils are of a white, British background and a few have Asian or Caribbean heritage. There are no pupils who are in the early stages of learning English as a second language. In recognition of the work done, the school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Investors in People Awards.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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19343	Mrs M Howel	Lay inspector	
21910	Mr G Longton	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Physical education
29263	Mrs F Clarke	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Audenshaw Primary provides a satisfactory standard of education and has many good features. Standards are above the national average. Strengths include a good, broad curriculum and very good provision for personal development. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The percentage of pupils attaining the average level 4 in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is above the national average and matches that for similar schools. Standards in science are high. Attainment in religious education, history and physical education is above expectations.
- The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 5 in English and mathematics is below the national average at the end of Year 6 and well below that for similar schools.
- Provision in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2 is good and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching, learning and achievement in Years 3 to 6 in English and mathematics are variable; mostly they are good but a small proportion is unsatisfactory.
- The checking of teaching and learning and systems for setting challenging targets for the higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics in the junior years are unsatisfactory.
- Governors are not sufficiently active in monitoring the school's performance.
- There is very good provision for personal development and, as a result, pupils have very good attitudes to learning, very good behaviour and there are very good relationships.
- The curriculum captures pupils' interests well and there is very good enrichment for learning.
- Parents have a high opinion of the school and are very supportive.

Improvements

There have been some good improvements since the time of the previous inspection especially in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and science. All safety issues have been addressed. There is better progress for the higher attaining pupils in science but not so in mathematics or English. This key issue from the previous report is, consequently, only partly addressed. Overall, improvement is satisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils achieve well in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2. Standards seen during the inspection in Year 2, together with the unvalidated results for the 2004 tests, are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Over time, the percentage of pupils attaining the average level 4 by Year 6 in English, mathematics and science has risen and standards seen during the inspection are above the national average in the three subjects. The unvalidated

results for the 2004 tests reflect this judgement, showing a good improvement in writing from the 2003 tests. However, achievement from Year 3 to 6 is below what could be expected because too few pupils reach the higher level. The comparison with similar schools shows that attainment for this group is well below average in English and mathematics. Inspection findings are that pupils achieve well in most classes in the two subjects but that progress in one year group is unsatisfactory. Targets set for the higher attaining group are not challenging enough and do not provide a useful guide for teachers, pupils and parents. The school has improved the progress of pupils in science by introducing more emphasis on investigative and experimental work and this has been successful in raising attainment. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well and there are no differences in learning in the classroom between ethnic groups or boys and girls. By Year 6, pupils' attainment in religious education, history and physical education is above expectations.

The school promotes pupils' personal qualities including their **spiritual, social, moral and cultural development very well. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes and very good behaviour.** Relationships are very good. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory overall.

The quality of **teaching and learning is satisfactory overall.** In the reception class and Years 1 and 2 it is good across all subjects and has a direct impact on the high standards and good achievement. In Years 3 to 6 it is good in most classes. In one year group, a sample of lessons and evidence over time show that it is unsatisfactory in English and mathematics. Teaching and learning in the other subjects are good. Assessment information is used well by most teachers in English and mathematics, to set work at different levels of difficulty. However, this is not the case in one junior year group. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning.

There is a good, stimulating curriculum that successfully meets the interests of all groups of pupils. Very good enrichment for learning is provided through visits and visitors and out-of-school activities. Accommodation is generally satisfactory and resources are good.

There are good standards of care, welfare and safety. Guidance is satisfactory. There are very effective systems in place to promote good behaviour and to prevent bullying. The targets provided for the higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 are not sufficiently based on the higher levels of attainment. This is a flaw in the guidance provided for teachers, parents and pupils. Parents support pupils' learning well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governance is unsatisfactory. The headteacher and senior managers are effective in providing very good standards of personal development and maintaining an all round education for the pupils. There are weaknesses, however, in the checking of teachers' work and pupils' performance in English and mathematics. Governors are supportive and are fully committed to the aims and ethos of the school but there are weaknesses in checking standards at all levels and in ensuring that key issues are addressed.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have good levels of confidence in the headteacher and his staff. Pupils are proud of their school and they play a good, active role in influencing development through their elected council.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ? Improve the teaching of English and mathematics where it is unsatisfactory.
- ? *Improve the monitoring of teaching and learning in the juniors for English and mathematics to ensure that weaknesses are identified and acted upon.
- ? *Improve the setting of challenging targets for the higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics in the juniors.
- ? Improve the monitoring of the school's performance by the governing body especially in relation to addressing key issues and checking that the agreed targets are met.

*These areas are identified for improvement within the school development plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards are above average overall. The percentage of pupils attaining the average level in English and science is well above the national average by Year 6 and it is above average for mathematics. However, those pupils capable of higher attainment do not do as well as could be expected in Years 3 to 6 in English and mathematics. Achievement is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement across all areas of learning and subjects in the reception class and Years 1 and 2 is good.
- Achievement in Years 3 to 6 in English and mathematics varies between classes; in most it is good but in one year group it is unsatisfactory.
- Standards seen during the inspection at the average level 4 in English, mathematics and science are above average by Year 6.
- The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 5 in English and mathematics by Year 6 does not meet the school's targets.
- Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved well. Standards match national expectations and achievement is good.
- Attainment in history, religious education and physical education is above expectations.
- Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well in relation to their starting points and progress is good.

Commentary

1. When children enter the reception class, their skills and knowledge have been traditionally below those expected for the age group although for this year, they match expectations. By the end of the reception year, the children have made good progress and have reached the expected early learning targets. They achieve especially well in personal and social development and in communication, language and literacy. This is because the quality of teaching is very good and the stimulating curriculum places a very strong emphasis on these areas. Children are constantly encouraged to explore, investigate and ask relevant questions and so develop a sense of curiosity and a keenness to learn at this early stage.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.4 (15.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.8 (14.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.7 (17.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The results above were below national averages and those for similar schools. Teachers predicted the drop in standards on the basis of their own monitoring records and the fact that this year group's attainment on entry to the school was lower than usual. The unvalidated results of the 2004 tests better reflect the usual standards for Year 2, and, using the statistics from 2003, they are likely to be above average for writing and mathematics. In 2004 the school was disappointed with the numbers gaining the higher

level 3 in reading and took action to promote attainment at the higher level. Evidence from the inspection shows that this initiative has been successful, with a good number of pupils on track to achieve level 3 in reading by the end of the present Year 2. Inspection judgements confirm above-average attainment in writing and mathematics. Some especially good standards were seen in the Year 1 work and this is a promising indicator for the future. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good because pupils receive good teaching, the higher attaining pupils are well challenged and pupils have very good attitudes to learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (28.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.9 (28.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.2 (29.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The results for 2003 were well above the national average for science, above average for mathematics and average for English. When compared with schools where attainment at Year 2 was similar, they were well above average for science, below average for mathematics and well below average for English. The unvalidated results for 2004 indicate a similar trend in English and mathematics with attainment well below average when compared to similar schools. An analysis of the statistics for these two subjects shows that there is a difference between progress at the average level (which is in line with the average trend) and that for the higher level (which is well below the average trend). The inspection found two reasons for this. Firstly, progress in English and mathematics varies between classes in Years 3 to 6. In most it is good but in one year group it is unsatisfactory. Secondly, the yearly targets provided as guidance for teachers, pupils and parents do not take into account the fact that a good proportion of pupils entering Year 3 are attaining at a higher-than-average level. Most teachers in Years 3 to 6 overcome the difficulty by using their own skills of assessment to set challenging work for the higher attaining group. However, this is not consistent practice across all classes. The learning targets that pupils take home are based purely on the average level for the year group and do not provide enough challenge for the faster learning ones who should be aiming at the higher level.
4. In contrast, achievement for the average and below average pupils is mostly good and the school has been successful in its targets to improve attainment at the average level. Considering the strengths and weaknesses, achievement overall is satisfactory. The results for science were enhanced because the school was involved in a special project and an additional teacher was deployed to support progress. The added emphasis on scientific investigation and problem solving was a major factor that underpinned the improved progress and better attainment.
5. The school agrees targets for attainment by Year 6 with the local education authority. It met these stated targets for attainment in English and mathematics at the average level in both 2003 and 2004. However, the challenging targets for the higher attaining pupils fell short by 10 per cent in mathematics and 24 per cent in English in 2003. There was a similar picture in 2004. At the previous inspection, attainment in English was judged as well above average and this has dropped to average overall, largely because of the

issue with the higher attaining pupils. For mathematics and science it was average and has improved, largely due to higher numbers attaining the average level 4. The improvement of attainment at level 5 is a target within the current school development plan.

6. Attainment in ICT across the school has improved well and now matches expectations. Many good improvements have been made, especially in resourcing, which means that pupils have good access to computers and plenty of time to consolidate the skills that they are learning. In religious education, pupils attain above what is expected according to the locally agreed syllabus and the subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual, social, cultural and moral education. Attainment in history and in physical education is above expectations by Year 6 and meets the expected level in all other subjects that were fully inspected. The good standards and achievement across the subjects listed above are achieved through a broad and interesting curriculum and much good teaching. The specialist sports coaching effectively promotes good standards in physical education.
7. Those pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. They have individual targets that are based on their prior learning and help them to make progress. During the inspection, achievement was better when pupils were supported in class lessons rather than in the group work. This is because pupils benefit from the good class discussions and social interaction with their peers. There are no pupils who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language and pupils of different ethnic backgrounds make equal progress to the majority. In class lessons, boys and girls do equally well and teachers are careful to choose books and topics that are of interest to both.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their personal development is very good because there is very good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to learn and are attentive.
- Pupils work very hard and take great pride in their work.
- There is very good behaviour in classes, when moving around school and in the playground.
- Relationships are very good; pupils have high respect for each other and their teachers.
- The school enables pupils to develop a wide range of social skills and instils in them a strong moral code.

Commentary

8. The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are strengths of the school and have been maintained at a high standard since the previous inspection. Pupils show very good interest in their lessons and are very willing to take a full part in all activities. They collaborate very effectively in pairs and small groups. Through the wide range of sporting activities in the school, they develop a good understanding of the value of teamwork. They chat in a quiet and friendly manner in the dining hall and mix and play well during breaktimes. The children in the reception class behave in a very mature

manner whilst having their lunch and show that they are well settled at this early stage in the year. During lessons, teachers spend hardly any time dealing with inappropriate behaviour, and the pupils live up to the high expectations of which they are well aware. Comments from teachers, governors and parents indicate that pupils behave equally well when on trips and outings, and the school has received many letters congratulating the pupils on how they conduct themselves.

9. The personal development of the pupils is very good. They are self-confident and mature in their attitude to their work. During many lessons there are good opportunities for the pupils to join in role-play, and they do so with enthusiasm. They are polite and courteous and very willing to offer their views and opinions. They listen well to their friends and show consideration for others. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to benefit from a week's residential visit. This happens at the start of the year and the team building activities help to develop a supportive ethos in the class.

10. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. There is a very strong emphasis on personal and social development in the reception class and this leads to the very good attitudes seen in Years 1 to 6. Spiritual development is very good. Through religious education lessons and assemblies, pupils learn to recognise and respect different faiths. They explore feelings and emotions in their discussions and show a very good level of empathy and compassion. Pupils appreciate the plight of those less fortunate than themselves and engage enthusiastically in collecting for charities.

11. The ethos of the school very effectively underpins the social and moral development of the pupils which is very good. The teachers are very good role models in providing a high standard of care. The pupils have a clear awareness of rights and responsibilities and understand how these contribute to the smooth running of the school community. They share ideas and resources effectively and readily offer good support to those who need extra help when working in groups. Cultural development is good. Pupils have a secure awareness of citizenship, the principles of which are taught through projects that often cross subject areas. The work done towards achieving the Eco School status has effectively raised the pupils' awareness of environmental issues. They benefit from a good range of visits and visitors to extend their cultural knowledge. Subjects such as geography, music and art and design allow pupils to explore both local and world-wide traditions. The school makes good use of local museums and places of interest, and the pupils are given good opportunities to take part in community events. However, pupils have few opportunities to engage with others from different cultures, either through direct contact or by using e-mail. This is an area that could be developed further.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.7
National data	0.4

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

The attendance rate at the school is broadly in line with the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is slightly above average due to a few families taking time for holidays

that is longer than the period allowed. The school tries hard to discourage this practice. Punctuality is good, with very few pupils arriving late to school.

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	217	4	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	5	0	0

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

There are very few instances of exclusion at the school. During the last reported year there were four fixed period exclusions involving two pupils. The school worked closely with the families, and provided support for the pupils when they returned to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall with many strengths. There is a good, broad curriculum and very good enrichment for learning. Care and welfare are good and parents are very supportive of the school's work.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **good** in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and pupils learn well. Teaching is variable but **satisfactory** in Years 3 to 6 and pupils make sound progress. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers generally have a good range of subject knowledge across the curriculum, including a thorough understanding of the needs of children in the reception class.
- The teaching of English and mathematics in one year group is unsatisfactory.
- Teaching assistants are well briefed and provide good support for learning.
- Teachers use a good range of strategies and resources to challenge, motivate and encourage pupils. They have high expectations of behaviour and endeavour.
- Staff ensure that pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved in lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 51 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	13 (25%)	31 (61%)	4 (8%)	2 (4%)	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.

12. Most of the teaching observed during the inspection was good and much was very good. However, the judgement for teaching is also based on a scrutiny of work over time and an analysis of the records of pupils' progress. From this evidence, it is clear that teaching and learning for English and mathematics in one year group within the juniors is unsatisfactory. When this weakness is balanced with the strengths, the overall judgement is that teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 and good elsewhere. This is not as good as at the previous inspection and is largely due to flaws in the systems for monitoring and evaluating teachers' performance and for tackling weaknesses.
13. The teaching in the reception class is good with very good features. Children have an inviting range of activities where they can explore and investigate. Adults encourage them to be independent learners and place a strong emphasis on developing their communication skills. Thorough records of progress are kept and these are well used to plan the next steps in learning. As a result of the good provision, children settle quickly to their tasks and achieve well.
14. In Years 1 and 2, the vast majority of teaching seen was good and a significant percentage was very good. Other evidence from completed work and records confirms that teaching over time is good. Teachers focus on developing a solid foundation in

literacy and numeracy. Recent targets for improvement have resulted in more pupils reading at the higher level and better writing skills in both Years 1 and 2. During guided reading sessions, pupils learn to use a good range of strategies to help them tackle new texts and in mathematics lessons, they try out different approaches to problem solving. This prepares pupils effectively for the more demanding curriculum in the junior classes. The teachers have developed targets for different groups of pupils based on assessments of their learning. As a result, pupils are well supported or challenged in lessons. These specific goals are not shared with parents, however, who receive only the general class targets.

15. In Years 3 to 6 there are strengths in the teaching and learning but also some areas for improvement. In most classes, pupils receive good teaching and make good progress. In one year group however, work in English and mathematics is not sufficiently matched to the different levels of prior learning and progress is unsatisfactory. Most teachers develop group targets based on assessments of completed work and this sometimes overcomes the lack of clear, school guidance. However, the practice is inconsistent across the year groups and pupils capable of higher attainment do not always have the challenge that they need. As in the infants, parents only receive general class targets for learning. This is an area for development.
16. Most teachers pay good attention to developing speaking and listening skills and extend this skilfully into class and group discussions. Reading and writing skills are generally well promoted, except in one year group. By Year 6 pupils write using various styles but too many pupils are working at the average level rather than the higher one. In the past, opportunities for independent writing when studying other subjects have not been fully exploited and too many worksheets have been used. This situation is now improving, under the direction of the English manager. The teaching of skills in mathematics is good in all but one year group. Pupils are taught to have quick recall of number facts and they learn different mathematical strategies for problem solving. The 'dip' in the quality of teaching and learning in one year group means that the pattern of achievement varies over the four years and is satisfactory overall.
17. Throughout the school, most teachers share the aims of the lesson with the pupils and then review the success achieved at the end. This is helping pupils to evaluate their own progress and to become independent learners. During lessons in Years 1 and 2, teachers check pupils' learning very carefully in English and mathematics. This work provides the essential information for teachers' planning on a day-to day basis and ensures a good pace to learning. For this age group, assessment and the use of information gathered is good. Throughout school, teachers keep detailed assessments of pupils' work. In Years 3 to 6 the information is generally well used when planning lessons but this is not evident in one class where insufficient attention is given to ensuring a good match between prior learning and new work. As a result, the higher attaining pupils do not consistently have additional challenges to support their attainment at higher levels. Across the school, considering the strengths and the weakness, assessment is satisfactory.
18. Very good relationships are an important feature in lessons. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and most have high expectations. Pupils rise to the challenges set for them because they know that their efforts are valued and will be rewarded through praise and encouragement. This is helping them to develop good industrious habits and an intrinsic love of learning. There is a good level of teachers' subject knowledge across the

curriculum and this underpins some good achievement in subjects such as religious education or history. Teachers often make learning fun by including role play, drama, practical activities, visits and visitors into their lessons. This motivates pupils very well. The teaching assistants take advantage of training opportunities to enhance their expertise and work in effective teams with the class teachers.

19. There have been good improvements in the teaching of ICT since the previous inspection. Teachers now have better subject knowledge and make good use of the much improved resources. The electronic whiteboards are used effectively in lessons and there is good use of ICT for research and recording. Teachers' subject knowledge for science has improved and the school benefits from the expertise of the subject manager and links with industry. These factors are strengths in the teaching.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in classes is good and they achieve well relative to their starting points. Pupils who require additional help are identified as soon as possible when they begin school. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the class teachers discuss and develop pupils' individual education plans. Teachers use skilful questioning to ensure that pupils are fully included in lessons, so enabling them to make consistent gains in their learning. Teachers celebrate ethnic diversity and the fact that some pupils speak other languages as well as English. This helps to maintain good self-esteem across all groups of pupils. Teachers are mindful of the fact that boys traditionally do less well than girls in the Year 2 tests and they plan work that will appeal to both genders. The success of motivating the boys is seen in the fact that many have caught up and some accelerate past the girls by Year 6 and this is a further strength of teaching in the school.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** and there is very good enrichment for learning. As a result, pupils have a good range of worthwhile learning opportunities, successfully meeting their interests and firing their enthusiasm for learning. Accommodation is **satisfactory** and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides its pupils with a balanced and interesting curriculum, which prepares them successfully for the future stages of education.
- There are useful plans for teachers in all subjects based on the latest national guidelines.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The curriculum is very well enriched with many opportunities for pupils to visit places of interest, to listen to specialist speakers and to engage in out-of-school activities.
- The development of personal, social and health education and citizenship is especially good.

Commentary

21. The provision for children in the reception class is good and provides a secure structure for working towards the early learning goals. The National Curriculum is fully in place in Years 1 to 6 and religious education lessons follow the locally agreed syllabus. All statutory requirements related to the curriculum are met. Through Years 1 to 6 good planning ensures that teachers are provided with a range of suitable topics and guidance upon which to base their lesson plans. The national strategies for numeracy and literacy are firmly in place. Since the previous inspection, the curriculum in science

has been improved with much more attention now being paid to investigative work. The curriculum for ICT has also improved well and there are many valuable opportunities for pupils to use their computer skills when studying other subjects. In recognition of the work done, the school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2004.

22. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. The targets set for them are closely based on prior learning. These are reviewed and revised regularly to make sure that they remain appropriate to current needs. In most cases, recording tasks are carefully adapted to ensure success, but this is not always so in one year group. Most support is provided in class and is successful in allowing pupils to make good progress. Some group sessions are based on basic skill development but these lack the good quality of social interaction seen in most lessons. They therefore provide less input into the development of pupils' personal and speaking and listening skills. All pupils, regardless of any disability, have the same opportunities to take part in every aspect of school life.
23. The school puts special emphasis on its policy to develop personal, social and health education and an awareness of citizenship. The curriculum in this area provides pupils with many opportunities to develop positive attitudes and has a significant impact on behaviour and relationships. There is a good programme of study, including sex and relationships education and guidance about the dangers of misusing substances. The principles of the Eco-school are well taught through topics such as healthy eating, conservation and preservation. The school council enhances pupils' understanding of citizenship; members recently visited the town's Council Chamber to learn how democracy works. Pupils in Year 6 take advantage of an annual residential visit which helps to develop a good team spirit for the year group. The curriculum is also enriched by specific academic initiatives during the year and a good range of visits and visitors. For example, the school holds an annual science day and several on-going visits are arranged to the museum of science and industry.
24. A very good range of sporting activities both in lessons and after school is provided and pupils have the benefit of professional coaching to refine their skills. There are many opportunities to participate in competitive sports with other schools and this helps to develop good principles of sportsmanship and fair play.
25. Since the previous inspection there have been good improvements made to the building. A secure play area has been provided for children in the reception class and the new ICT suite provides a good resource for this subject. Both have had a positive impact on learning. However, the mobile classrooms are small and poorly ventilated. Pupils have to cross the playground to access facilities such as the library, the ICT suite and the hall. Governors fully recognise this as an unsatisfactory situation and are anxious to secure funding for permanent accommodation. The teachers and pupils have done very well to cope with the emergency building work now taking place. Teachers have found some inventive ways to minimise disruption to learning and pupils act very sensibly where space is restricted. This is illustrated very well in the reception class where the full range of activities is still provided over the week even though the class has lost some 50 per cent of floor space. Between them, teachers provide a good level of expertise across the curriculum and they share their skills effectively to benefit lesson planning. However, the managers for English and mathematics do not have enough opportunities to influence the practice of their colleagues through support in lessons.

26. Teachers celebrate pupils' work by creating attractive displays throughout the building and this provides a very pleasant and stimulating environment. Resources are good, especially for the reception class, mathematics, science, religious education, ICT, history, music and physical education.

Care, guidance and support

There is **good** provision for the pupils' care, safety and welfare. Guidance is satisfactory overall. Pupils' views are sought regularly and used effectively to help in the running of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's ethos provides pupils with a happy and secure environment.
- The good induction arrangements help children to settle quickly into the school.
- Pupils know they can trust their teachers and readily turn to them for help.
- Guidance for personal development is good.
- Guidance to support the higher attaining pupils' academic progress in English and mathematics is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

27. There is a caring and secure environment within the school. Parents and pupils have confidence in the staff and feel very comfortable with the 'family' atmosphere that is generated. All pupils are known and valued as individuals, and there is mutual respect between them and their teachers. The care and consideration for others is evident in all aspects of school life and the pupils react well to the good role models that adults provide. The lunchtime supervisors ensure a good standard of care at midday and the caretaker maintains a high standard of cleanliness throughout the building. The teachers and the cook work hard to promote an interest in healthy eating. Great care is taken to order good quality fruit for the infants which is very popular and much enjoyed. This helps to instil good habits for the future. Junior pupils appreciate the fact that nothing on their school dinner menu is fried. Many make positive choices for fruit and vegetables and there is very little waste at the end of lunchtimes. The health and safety issues mentioned in the previous report have all been fully resolved.
28. The well-established induction arrangements for children starting in the school help them to settle happily and quickly into their new surroundings. All parents are invited to meet their child's teacher during the first half term when valuable information is shared. This helps the teacher to understand the needs of the particular child and also helps to develop the good relationship between home and school. Right from the start, parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's learning and are given information so that they can help at home. This first, very positive experience that parents have of the school forms the basis of the very successful home-school partnership that lasts until the end of Year 6.
29. The personal development of pupils is monitored informally and, in this respect, pupils receive good guidance. The teachers have good knowledge of their pupils and are sensitive to any concerns or worries they may have. Pupils know they can turn to their teachers for help and are confident that they will be listened to. They fully understand the school's policy on bullying and know that oppressive behaviour will not be tolerated and that any incidents will be dealt with promptly. The new school council has been formed

from the established Eco-council and includes representatives from each year group. Through the planned programme of meetings with staff, members of the council are actively involved in making suggestions for improvement and expressing the views of their friends. This provides a good voice for the pupils and also provides them with a sound awareness of citizenship.

30. The school sets targets for attainment in English and mathematics and these work well in Years 1 and 2 for all groups of pupils. However, in Years 3 to 6 the targets do not take enough account of the good percentage of pupils who have already achieved at a higher-than-average level on entry to Year 3. Most teachers overcome the problem by setting their own targets based on assessments of pupils' learning but this is not a consistent practice. Targets given to pupils and sent home to parents are general and there are no separate, challenging goals for the higher-attaining group. As a result, some pupils who might be expected to attain the higher level 5 by Year 6 do not achieve it. A similar situation in mathematics was reported at the previous inspection and the issue has not been fully addressed. However, some good improvements have been made to the higher attaining pupils' achievement in science.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership between the school and parents is **good**. There are good links with the community, and satisfactory links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- Parents are provided with good information about the school and their children's progress.
- Strong links with the community enhance pupils' experiences and promote their progress.

Commentary

31. The returned questionnaires show that parents are very pleased with the provision in the school and the fact that their children are expected to work hard. Comments on the returned questionnaires confirm that children like coming to school and parents consider that they make good progress. These positive views were endorsed by the parents at the well-attended pre-inspection meeting. Parents appreciate the fact that teachers are available and approachable and feel there is very good communication between them and the school. They like the learning environment and are confident that their children are well cared for. This close involvement with the parents contributes well to the home-school partnership and consequently to learning. The good links reported at the previous inspection have been successfully maintained.
32. Members of the Parents, Teachers and Friends Association raise substantial funds which are used well to provide additional resources. The school is planning more formal methods of seeking parents' views to ensure that they have representations from all year groups. The information provided for parents is good. Consultation evenings are very well attended and parents say that they feel well informed about their children's progress through meetings with teachers and the annual written report. The regular newsletters ensure that everyone is informed of school events and news.
33. Through its links with the community, the school provides pupils with good opportunities to broaden their experiences. The good variety of visiting speakers, together with the

visiting musical and theatrical groups, helps to broaden pupils' experiences and to widen their perspectives on life. The visits to local museums and places of interest enhance the curriculum provision and add an extra dimension to pupil's learning. Pupils take part in a variety of local events including music and art festivals. Personnel from two nearby football clubs are involved with the school and help to raise the profile of sport within the curriculum and also to enhance the work done on personal education.

34. Pupils transfer to a number of nearby high schools and staff maintain satisfactory links with all of them. It works as closely as it can, and ensures that all pupils are well prepared for their new school. Pupils are confident about moving on and parents say they do well in their chosen high school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is **satisfactory** overall. Management at the school is **satisfactory**. Governance is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher and senior managers is effective in promoting pupils' very good personal development and a broad, interesting curriculum.
- There is some good leadership for the subjects but management systems for checking the quality of teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.
- The management system for tracking and target-setting does not provide enough information to devise different and precise targets for the higher attaining pupils.
- Governors are supportive but are not sufficiently involved in monitoring attainment and improvement.
- Staff and governors are committed to providing full access for all pupils to all areas of school life.

Commentary

35. The headteacher is well regarded by parents, who value his approachability and commitment. At the same time, leadership is successful in promoting an all-round education where creative, aesthetic and physical skills are valued. The strong caring ethos of the school is reflected in the very good standard of pupils' personal development, their enjoyment of lessons and their willingness to work hard. The school seeks out specialist equipment and advice where needed to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs can take full advantage of lessons and extra-curricular activities. All statutory requirements are met and school policies are regularly reviewed and updated. Some subject leadership, for example in religious education, is good and leads to good standards. Staff, including the non-teaching personnel, reflect the school's aims through their work and there is good teamwork. These factors form the strengths in leadership at the school. There are, however, some areas for development. One key issue from the last report relating to the attainment of the higher attaining pupils has been partly, but not fully, addressed. The subject managers for English and mathematics do not have all the information that they need to drive standards up. Overall, therefore, leadership is satisfactory.
36. There are strengths in management and areas for development; overall it is satisfactory. The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis and staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The school improvement plan forms a good guide for managers

and teachers and priorities are clear. The headteacher knows staff, parents and pupils well and monitors the provision for personal development effectively. All staff are included in regular performance reviews, where a programme of training and development needs is established. Teachers are deployed satisfactorily to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and to maintain good provision for the children in the reception class. The school administrator has a good deal of expertise and covers a varied range of duties to provide good support. She uses ICT effectively and efficiently. The accommodation and resources are used efficiently. The governors are fully aware of the accommodation problems in the mobile classroom and are anxious to re-house those pupils in the main building, as and when funds allow. Best value is routinely sought when making purchases.

37. There are, however, some weaknesses in management systems. The cycle of self-evaluation includes some monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher. However, the key subject managers of English and mathematics have very little opportunity to evaluate provision and progress by visiting classes. They therefore rely heavily on checking work in books, monitoring planning and talking to colleagues and this does not provide them with a secure overview of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. The improvement of monitoring is an area identified for improvement in the school development plan. The school collects a good amount of information about pupils' progress but this is not analysed sufficiently by either the senior management team or the key subject managers to highlight where problems may be occurring. As a result, one key weakness in teaching and learning has not been addressed.
38. Targets for learning are set for each age group. These are successful in ensuring that the number of pupils reaching the expected level 4 by the end of Year 6 is above, and often well above, average. They do not, however, provide enough challenge for the pupils who are capable of attaining the higher level 5, nor do they provide useful guidance for their teachers. Most overcome this by setting work at higher levels but this is not a consistent practice. Consequently, progress for the higher attaining pupils is below what could be expected in Years 3 to 6. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory. Within the brief given, the co-ordinator shares in the writing and reviewing of individual education plans and checks pupils' progress along them. She does not, however, have release time to monitor the actual teaching of the programmes or to evaluate how it ties in with classroom provision.
39. The governors are supportive of the school and have the interests of the pupils at heart. They ensure that statutory requirements and a good range of policies are in place. There are link governors in place for literacy, numeracy, ICT and special educational needs and those governors who work in school have a sound overview of everyday practice. Recently some members have left and this means that there is an acting chairperson at present and no permanent chairmanship of the committees. There has therefore been a considerable loss of expertise and experience. In meetings with members of the inspection team, the remaining governors showed a keenness to succeed and were working on measures to attract new members and to appoint the essential chairpersons. At the moment, governors are not sufficiently informed about standards at the higher level and rely heavily on the headteacher and staff to compile the school improvement plan. One key issue from the last inspection is not fully addressed. At present, governance is unsatisfactory.

40. Staff work hard to identify and overcome any barriers to learning. Two remaining barriers are the standard of accommodation in the mobile classrooms and wasted time as pupils have to travel across to the main building to access facilities. The main aids to learning are recognised as a dedicated staff, very good relationships and supportive parents.
41. The school provides satisfactory value for money taking into account:
- the good numbers of pupils who attain the average level 4 in English, mathematics and science by Year 6;
 - the variable quality of teaching that is satisfactory overall;
 - the variable achievement between classes and groups of pupils that is satisfactory overall;
 - the good breadth of the curriculum;
 - the strengths in leadership and management and the areas for development;
 - costs that are around average.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	563,260
Total expenditure	556,530
Expenditure per pupil	2,473

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	6,730
Balance carried forward to the next	27,983

The balance is around 5 per cent of income which is within recommended limits. Some of this money is allocated specifically to capital projects and some to developing further the provision for ICT in school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (reception class) is **good**.

Most children have some pre-school experience and they enter the school with a broad range of abilities and experiences, though, overall their attainment is generally below that expected of this age group. In the current year however, attainment is closer to average than is usual for this school. Provision has improved further since the previous inspection because there is now a greater emphasis on children learning through play and first-hand experiences. Accommodation has improved with the provision of a secure outside area. Leadership and management are good. The teacher and teaching assistant have a very secure understanding of how young children learn and the well-planned curriculum provides a rich range of stimulating activities. Children achieve well, especially in personal and social development and in communication, language and literacy. By the time they leave the reception year, most reach the standards expected in all six areas of learning. Assessment procedures are very good and are well used to keep a close track of each child's learning, to plan new work and to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision. Children are introduced to the school very sensitively and there are many good strategies for including parents in their children's education. For example, parents are involved in the initial assessment process which contributes to the teacher's understanding of each child's particular needs. At the time of the inspection there were no children identified as having special educational needs in the class.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between staff and children are very good.
- Teaching is very good and the children are provided with a rich curriculum with exciting and stimulating activities to encourage their enjoyment of learning.
- Staff support children well and help them to develop self-confidence and independence.

Commentary

42. Teaching and learning are very good and most children achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. There is a very strong emphasis on personal development and this permeates throughout all areas of learning. The class teacher and other staff build very good relationships with the children and create a warm, safe and exciting environment. Children's responses are valued and care is taken to show that all their efforts are appreciated. The provision of well-planned, exciting first-hand experiences motivates learning well. Children's positive attitudes towards learning are demonstrated by their good behaviour and their keen participation in the many activities.
43. The inspection took place four weeks into the term and the children had already become familiar with the class routines. They work with adults and each other in a happy, confident and relaxed manner. Children choose from a selection of interesting

activities and this is helping them to become independent learners. Opportunities, such as encouraging them to respond to stories, are provided for children to develop a sensitivity and awareness of others. Children are beginning to take on responsibilities such as tidying up or taking the register to the school office. The very good provision lays a secure foundation for future learning and makes a very important contribution to pupils' enjoyment of learning as they move through the school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy listening to stories and these sessions are used well to promote language and literacy skills.
- Many good opportunities are provided for language development, particularly through purposeful, structured and imaginative play.
- Early reading and writing skills are very well promoted.

Commentary

44. Teaching is very good. There is an appropriate balance between lively, focussed, direct teaching in group sessions and rich opportunities for children to practise the skills taught through purposeful play. Children achieve well and reach the early learning goals in this area by the end of the reception year. A major strength in the provision lies in the wide range of stimulating experiences and activities including many good opportunities for children to engage in role-play. Adults regularly intervene to develop and extend children's language and literacy skills. The relevance and importance of reading and writing is continuously emphasised and consolidated through the other areas of learning. Children select their own name card as they register their presence at the start of a session and thoroughly enjoy 'writing' their stories with the teacher or classroom assistant.
45. Most children make good attempts at writing their own name. As a result of very good teaching, most children recognise some letters by sight and sound and some are beginning to use this knowledge in their own writing and reading. All the children listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, rhymes and poems, often following the text in a 'big book' shared with the class. Books are taken home regularly to share with parents and this has a very positive effect on children's progress in learning to read. Very good use is made of picture books to promote the full range of reading strategies rather than simply decoding the text on the page.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children engage in an interesting range of activities which promote mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- Children make good progression in number recognition and early counting skills.

Commentary

46. Teaching is good and children achieve well. They reach the expected learning outcomes by the end of the reception year. Lively whole class sessions and regular counting activities are enhanced with rhymes, games and stories that add interest and enjoyment. Most children count accurately and recognise numbers up to 10 with higher attaining children going beyond this.

47. Children participate in a wide range of planned practical activities to develop their confidence in mathematics. They arrange numbered objects in order, working out if any are missing. Skills of estimation are developing well. Staff use the opportunities provided by other activities very well to extend the children's mathematical ideas and vocabulary. For example, they develop language relating to shape and comparative size as children work on a collage. Staff also extend the children's understanding of numbers by giving them problems to solve. In this way children are beginning to understand how to add on or count back.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of interesting activities enables children to explore, observe and discuss their findings.
- Staff support children's learning well through effective questioning.

Commentary

48. Achievement is good and children attain the early learning goals. Good teaching and planning ensures that there are a good number of first-hand experiences to engage the children's interest and curiosity. The teacher uses both the indoor and outdoor environment when providing a wide range of stimulating resources and activities. Children are encouraged to observe and communicate their findings and explain their ideas. For example, they have fun with balloons, noting the effects of blowing air into them and predicting what will happen when they are let go. Using junk materials, children make models such as a rocket or 'an ocean ship', developing their early technology skills. Most are confident in working through ICT programs which involve using the mouse and on-screen prompts. They operate the listening centre confidently so that they can enjoy their favourite story.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a good range of activities both indoors and outdoors to promote the development of control and co-ordination.
- Children use a good range of small tools to develop their manipulative skills.

Commentary

49. Teaching is good and there are many opportunities both indoors outdoors for children to develop their skills in this area. Children attain the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year. They learn to use tools such as scissors, paintbrushes, pencils and glue spreaders safely and effectively and with increasing dexterity. Several children showed great expertise in using construction kits to make models. The work involved careful manipulation of the parts, including nuts and bolts. Staff are deployed effectively so there are opportunities for children to move spontaneously between indoor and outdoor environments. The provision of a secure outdoor play area is a good

improvement since the previous inspection. Children have access to a range of wheeled vehicles which helps develop their awareness of space and sense of direction. In the school hall they demonstrate their skills in running, jumping and hopping and moving in time to the music.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children engage in a lot of very imaginative role-play.
- Children have time and opportunity to follow through their own ideas using their own choice of resources.

Commentary

50. Good teaching and learning ensure that children achieve well and most achieve the goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. During the inspection week some emergency building work was taking place. Consequently, the children did not have access to their usual spacious classroom with its specially designated areas. However, the teacher was very inventive and the change of accommodation was not allowed to restrict participation in creative activities. Children enjoy exploring a wide range of media, materials and techniques and this stimulates their imagination. Stories about characters such as the Gruffalo and the Hungry Giant delight the children and promote collaborative role-play, which is actively supported and extended by adults. This is laying a good foundation for later story-writing. Children choose from a very good range of resources, which include hand puppets, dressing up clothes and toys to engage in imaginative play.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and achievement is good.
- Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are variable; most is good but, in one year group, they are unsatisfactory.
- The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level 4 in English by Year 6 is well above the average for similar schools.
- The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 5 is below the average for similar schools.
- Assessments of pupils' work are well used by teachers in Years 1 and 2 and by most in Years 3 to 6 to set work that builds accurately on prior learning. However, this is not the case in one year group.
- The subject manger does not have the opportunity to monitor or support colleagues in class.

Commentary

51. Attainment levels seen during the inspection in Year 2 are above the national average in reading, writing and speaking and listening and pupils make good progress. The unvalidated results of the 2004 tests generally reflect this judgement and, in the present group of pupils, a good number are already reading at the higher level. In Years 3 to 6 pupils make good progress in most classes but, in one year group, progress slows and is unsatisfactory. Attainment overall is above average but there is a weakness. A higher-than-average and an improved percentage of pupils attain the expected level 4 by Year 6. However, too few pupils who are targeted to attain the higher level 5 actually do so. These two factors account for the fact that standards overall are lower than at the

time of the previous inspection when they were judged as well above average by Year 6. There have been some good improvements in Years 1 and 2 in English since the previous inspection, especially in reading at the higher level and in writing. Considering the strengths and weaknesses, improvement overall is satisfactory.

52. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good. Lessons take into account the needs of the more able pupils and those with special educational needs. The good standard of teaching, combined with the pupils' very good attitudes and willingness to succeed, ensures that achievement for all groups of pupils is good. Assessments are used well to identify areas for future development and teachers set challenging targets for progress that are shared with pupils.
53. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching seen during inspection was mostly good although there was a small amount of unsatisfactory practice. Overall, teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory for this age group. An analysis of pupils' work over time and of the tracking of pupils' progress shows that whilst teaching and learning are mostly good, in one year group they are unsatisfactory. This is because work is not matched accurately to prior learning or to challenging targets. In the unsatisfactory lesson seen, the higher attaining pupils had the same task as the average group and this did not provide enough challenge. The pupils with special educational needs had a very basic task that was not related to the lesson introduction. As a result, they made an unsatisfactory amount of progress.
54. Marking and the feedback given during most lessons helps pupils to improve and to evaluate their own work. Learning is enhanced by the support of the teaching assistants and through the use of ICT. Throughout the school, teachers create a stimulating environment through displays of books and pupils' written work to produce an environment that is rich in literacy.
55. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils are attaining standards in speaking and listening that are above national expectations. Pupils become confident communicators by the end of Year 2. They demonstrate good listening skills and respond eagerly to the teacher's questions. By Year 6 pupils participate confidently in discussions and are able to justify and illustrate their point of view. Drama is used very well in English lessons and other subject studies. As a result, pupils adapt their speech well to convey meaning. They are confident to take the 'hot seat' as a character from a story or to represent a famous person in history.
56. Reading is promoted strongly in the school and pupils demonstrate a keen interest in books from an early stage. Standards are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. The numbers attaining the higher level 5 is better than in writing but there is still a shortfall from what could be expected in consideration of the Year 2 results. The younger pupils know about the different types and structure of books and the roles of an author and illustrator. They persevere well when, for instance, sounding out unfamiliar words. They make good use of the meaning of the text, picture cues and their knowledge of grammar when they are reading new work. Pupils regularly take their reading books home and parents provide good support. The older pupils express their preferences for certain authors and justify their views. The reading of a playscript by younger juniors was of a high standard, with pupils employing a good range of voices to portray feelings or characterisation.

57. The improving standards seen in writing for the average pupils show that the action taken by the teachers to improve this aspect of literacy has been successful. There are too few, however, who attain the higher level 5. Pupils are able to write for a wide range of purposes and using different styles. However, there is little use of extended sentences or imaginative vocabulary that would take the writing to a higher level in many cases. The infants and younger juniors have specific, challenging targets for learning that are displayed on their desks as a constant reminder but this good practice has not yet been extended to the older juniors. Across all ages, only the general, average targets for the class are sent home. As a result, parents are not informed where the teacher is working on more challenging ones for the higher attaining pupils. By Year 6 most pupils are able to produce a fluent, joined style of handwriting but the standards of presentation in books across the year groups is variable.
58. Overall, the progress of pupils who have special educational needs is good and they receive good support in the classroom. The subject manager provides good support for colleagues in planning and promotes a high profile for English. There is a good amount of assessment information that is used to plan improvements to the curriculum, including the extended use of writing skills and the setting of more focused targets. Management systems, however, are unsatisfactory. The tracking of pupils' progress is well organised but the results are not analysed sufficiently to identify where there are shortfalls in expectations. The manager does not have the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in classrooms on a regular basis and so does not have a thorough view of provision.
59. Library provision is satisfactory and teachers have been inventive in ensuring that pupils have access to a suitable range of fiction and non-fiction books during the emergency building work. Overall, resources are satisfactory for the subject but the reading books and learning materials for the older pupils who have special educational needs are outdated and uninspiring.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. The pupils' speaking and listening and reading skills are well applied and improved across the curriculum. Skills in writing are well consolidated in Years 1 and 2 through the topics that are studied. A similar system is currently being extended to the junior classes to replace the worksheets that have previously been a prominent feature in Years 3 to 6. There are good links with ICT and these enhance learning well. Pupils word process their work to make reviewing and editing easier and enhance their presentation using borders and graphics.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment by Year 6 are above average.
- An above-average percentage of pupils attain the expected level 4 by the end of Year 6 but fewer pupils than expected reach the higher level 5.
- The majority of teaching is good but some is unsatisfactory.
- The good assessment data is not used effectively to provide the higher attaining pupils with sufficiently challenging targets aimed at the higher levels.

Commentary.

61. Pupils' attainment in the 2003 national tests was well below the national average at level 2 and 3. This result is explained by the low level of attainment in mathematics in this particular group of pupils as they entered the school. In 2004 the results at the end of Year 2 were much improved and matched the better standards of previous years. Early indicators show that the number of pupils reaching level 2 and the higher level 3 is likely to be above the national average and that for similar schools. Teachers have worked very well with the 2003 group of pupils who are now in the lower juniors and reaching the average for their age.
62. Results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 and indications for 2004 show a similar trend. The percentage of pupils attaining the average level 4 is above the national average and that for similar schools. However, the numbers reaching the higher level 5 in both years match the national average but are well below that for similar schools. Many pupils who reach above-average levels at the end of Year 2 do not reach the higher level 5 at the end of Year 6 and the school's targets are not met in this respect. The need to improve attainment at the higher level was a key issue from the last inspection. This has not been fully addressed and overall improvement is unsatisfactory in this subject.
63. Pupils' learning is good in the infant classes as a result of good quality teaching. Pupils cover a wide range of topics with particular attention given to the development of number work and mathematical language. In the juniors teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Lower juniors count confidently in tens and hundreds and are able to identify many two- and three-dimensional shapes and measure accurately. The older ones work accurately on decimals and percentages and use a range of strategies for problem solving.
64. Most teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good but in one year group it is unsatisfactory. Generally speaking, the pace of most lessons is brisk, expectations are high and pupils are very well managed. Teachers make very good use of praise and encouragement which helps boost the pupils' self esteem and encourages effort. In most lessons teachers set interesting tasks which pupils enjoy. For example, in a very exciting lesson in the lower juniors the teacher challenged pupils to measure a variety of objects of both regular and irregular shape. The open-ended task engaged the class in some very good problem solving activities. As a result, the pupils learned very well and thoroughly enjoyed the challenge. However, in the unsatisfactory lesson seen in the juniors, there was a lack of pace and the level of challenge in the questions set was too low considering the prior attainment of the pupils. Several were confused about what was expected of them as they tried to correct work from the previous lesson.
65. By Year 6 most pupils are on track to attain the average level 4 by the end of the year in all aspects of mathematics. Standards overall are therefore above average. However, the gains made by the higher attaining pupils at the end of Year 2 are not sustained throughout each class in the juniors. This means that the numbers attaining the higher level 5 are lower than projected in the school's targets. The 'dip' in learning in one year group means that work has to be revised in the next year and this wastes the time that could otherwise be devoted to extending attainment at the higher level.
66. Staff are well supported by the subject manager who is a leading teacher of mathematics. Many innovations have been introduced into the curriculum. For example,

an annual mathematics day is organised and much enjoyed by the pupils. The manager has developed some effective systems to identify weaknesses in the subject. For example, recent action planning was focused on the development of mathematical language and aimed at improving pupils' understanding of shape, space and measures. However, the subject manager has insufficient opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in classes. Although the school has good systems for tracking pupils' progress, they are not yet used effectively to provide specific targets at the higher level. Nor are they analysed to identify where any weaknesses may be occurring. There are therefore strengths and weaknesses in leadership and management and they are satisfactory overall. Resources are good and readily available in lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Mathematics is developed appropriately across the curriculum in subjects such as history, geography and design technology. Time lines in history help pupils sequence important events. In design technology pupils measure accurately when making models. Pupils' knowledge of co-ordinates is well used in their geography lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in science is good across the school.
- Standards seen are above average.
- Pupils' very good attitudes have a positive effect upon achievement.
- The school very effectively develops pupils' scientific investigation and understanding of scientific method.
- Good leadership and management have a strong effect on achievement.

Commentary

68. Pupils now develop a good understanding of science as they move through the school. In the present Years 1 and 2 pupils acquire a sound understanding of a wide range of topics and standards of attainment are above average by the end of Year 2. Since the previous inspection the school has been successful in raising pupils' standards of attainment by the end of Year 6. In 2003 the results were well above average with a high number of pupils reaching the higher level 5. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection and addresses the key issue about higher attainment for the older juniors. The improvement was due to the school's initiative in providing the subject manager's support for the older junior lessons and the deployment of a specialist science teacher.
69. Overall, good teaching and learning ensure that pupils are enthusiastic about their work and learn and achieve well. Teachers are careful to meet the needs of pupils with differing attainment levels and those with special educational needs are well supported in class. Pupils enjoy the subject and work hard because teachers make the lessons interesting and exciting. For example, in one lesson in the infants pupils investigated why ice melted at different rates in different places around the school. Every pupil was totally involved and they were all very excited as they listened to the different theories.
70. Teachers now give good attention to developing learning through investigation. They encourage pupils to ask questions and to find things out for themselves. Pupils develop good skills in planning, carrying out experiments and in recording their findings. They make reasonable predictions and understand the importance of fair testing. Pupils work very well together, sharing their ideas and discussing the validity of their results. The subject makes a very good contribution to the development of speaking and listening skills. For example, older pupils used scientific vocabulary well when they explained why light bulbs shone with different intensity according to the number of batteries connected. Teachers make effective use of ICT to support learning, either for research or recording work. Digital cameras are often used to record progress in experiments which is a useful means of reviewing and editing work. Pupils present their results well in charts, tables and graphs, linking effectively with their mathematical skills. They produce written reports on how they carried out their experiments and this helps them to consolidate their literacy skills.
71. The subject is well led and managed by a very enthusiastic and knowledgeable manager. Very good links with the science museum enrich learning well as classes visit on a regular basis to complete their assignments. Comprehensive assessment systems are in place to help teachers plan future work and higher attaining pupils are provided with more challenging tasks. Resources are good and well organised into topic boxes. The school is in a good position to maintain the improvements in science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved and are in line with expectations.
- Resource provision has improved well since the previous inspection.

- Teachers' good subject knowledge and well-planned lessons lead to a good quality of learning.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

72. Standards reached by pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. This represents good achievement for the pupils, especially the older ones, who did not have access to a full range of facilities as they came through the school. Pupils with special needs are well supported and also achieve well. The development of the computer suite, the training of teachers and better planning have improved provision significantly and have led to improved standards.
73. Teaching is good overall with examples of very good teaching. As a result, pupils learn well and use computers with confidence across the programme of study for ICT. Work is planned carefully and integrated in a relevant way with other aspects of the curriculum. Lessons are based on teaching specific techniques and then pupils have opportunities to apply their new skills. For example, some younger junior pupils used their presentation techniques, including re-arranging, enlarging and reducing text and pictures. The work was linked very well with their history topic as they produced annotated pictures of Roman soldiers. Teachers are confident in the knowledge and understanding of the subject and their expectations are high. They use interactive whiteboards well to provide clear explanations and demonstrations both in the suite and when in class.
74. An analysis of pupils' work, as well as discussions with teachers and pupils, shows that curriculum planning is consistent with national guidelines and ensures that skills are taught in a progressive way. This leads to a good rate in learning and a good level of confidence as topics are re-visited and extended. As part of their recent, residential visit, Year 6 pupils had the opportunity to extend their skills in control and monitoring. They are now ready to use these skills in for example, their technology or science lessons.
75. The subject is well managed. Improved assessment procedures are now in place and a portfolio of pupils' work is being collected to aid teachers in judging standards. The subject leader has worked hard to ensure that the ICT suite operates effectively and that other computers and items, such as smart boards, are deployed around the school to maximum effect. Resources are good and the school is now in a strong position to improve standards further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. Teachers use information and communication technology well as a tool for learning in other subjects. This is a strength in the teaching. Opportunities for ICT have been identified within the planning of most subjects. Pupils use word processing skills to present their writing in English. They know how to change aspects of text and merge graphics to illustrate their writing. Pupils confidently use the Internet to research information for projects, for example in art and design, geography and history.

HUMANITIES

Geography

77. During the three days of the inspection, it was only possible to observe geography being taught in one age group. It was therefore not possible to make overall judgements on provision and teaching.
78. Pupils cover the full range of study for the subject. Pupils' completed work shows the correct usage of terminology and a good emphasis on mapping skills. In Years 1 and 2 teachers often link work on geography and history into topics such as houses and homes. This allows pupils to apply the new knowledge they are learning and provides good opportunities for writing. By Year 2 pupils are able to compare and contrast features of their locality with a seaside area. They draw and follow simple plans and, using a world map, they match foods to the country of origin. In Years 3 to 6 pupils study a variety of places, comparing aspects such as weather or physical features. They use a wide range of sources for research including maps, photographs and the Internet. They are interested in current events around the world. Some younger juniors enjoyed finding out about a volcano that is expected to erupt shortly and showed a good understanding of the social and economic impact of such an event. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development through the study of different cultures around the world.
79. Teachers place a good emphasis on field work and the curriculum is very well enriched by visits. One class interviewed a local resident which gave them a good insight into changes over time. Younger pupils investigate the local area and older ones visit places of geographical interest such as Chester. Pupils develop a keen interest in environmental and conservation issues. As members of an Eco-school, the pupils are well aware of the impact of litter, they are careful to save energy and they re-cycle materials. This is helping their awareness of citizenship. The subject manager has a sound overview of teaching and learning across school and keeps a detailed portfolio of pupils' work to keep a check on standards. Leadership and management are good for this subject.

History

Provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well due to good teaching.
- Standards in Years 2 and 6 are above expectations.
- There is a good emphasis on teaching the skills of enquiry and interpretation.
- Educational visits help bring the subject to life and enrich learning.

Commentary

80. The lessons observed, evidence from teachers' planning, an analysis of pupils' work and photographic evidence, plus discussions with staff and pupils, indicate that attainment is above expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
81. Teaching is good and includes a good element of drama which helps pupils to gain a better understanding of the past. For example, in Year 2 the pupils improvised the story

of Grace Darling and were then able to explain how the survivors and rescuers might have felt. Some junior pupils 'became' Roman soldiers and experienced the rigours of marching and fighting in formation. They were later able to talk in detail about the clothing, tactics and organisation of Roman armies. The good, broad curriculum includes some innovative approaches to capture pupils' interests. Younger juniors had 'excavated' some pieces of pottery and acted as archaeologists in putting them together. They then worked out what the objects had been used for and by whom. Classroom museums are a common feature in school and pupils talk in detail about the artefacts on display. During a rainy lunchtime, some pupils were exploring the items, thus extending their experiences beyond their lessons. This practical approach is very effective in promoting a desire to learn and underpins the good standards in the subject.

82. Pupils are adept at finding information from different sources and this extends their skills of interpretation. They research topics using the Internet, printed material and documents of the past. The older juniors used census information from early and late Victorian times to find out what changes had occurred over the period. This 'detective' work was much enjoyed and showed some advanced skills of deduction and inference. The emphasis on research helps pupils to develop an interest in the subject, and many said how much they enjoyed history lessons. Visits to places such as Chester allow pupils to explore changes over time and provide a good link between their history and geography work.
83. The leadership and management of the subject are good and successful in maintaining a high profile for history throughout school. Displays of pupils' work are of a very good standard and there is good use of ICT in the subject. Resources are good. Standards are higher than at the previous inspection and progress has improved.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning covers all elements of the subject and includes a good emphasis on world religions.
- Lessons support pupils' personal development very well.
- There is good leadership and management for the subject.

Commentary

84. The curriculum meets fully the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and is effectively adapted to meet the aptitudes and interests of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those capable of higher attainment. The provision and the quality of teaching have been maintained at a good standard since the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment is above the expectations and the subject supports pupils' moral, social, cultural and spiritual development very well. Achievement is good.
85. Across the age groups, pupils have a sound understanding of Bible stories. There is a strong emphasis on learning about world religions. The scrutiny of work showed some in-depth studies of Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Work extends into exploring how faith influences the way that people dress, what they eat and how they organise their everyday lives. In conversations with pupils it is apparent that they have a good respect for other people's beliefs.
86. The teaching is good and pupils learn well. There are good links with personal, health, social and citizenship education. For example, some older pupils discussed rights and responsibilities in the community. They listed rights as 'being able to feel safe' or 'knowing that people will help you'. Their list of responsibilities included 'allowing people to express an opinion' and 'being respectful'. This lesson illustrated the pupils' mature approach and their ability to see things from other points of view. Teachers include a good amount of drama and practical work into their lessons and this fires pupils' interests. Some younger pupils, for instance, improvised a wedding ceremony and the junior pupils made their own Torahs and wrote 'their most important laws'.
87. Leadership and management are good. The subject manager has made some good changes to the curriculum. These include regular re-visiting of topics so that pupils' knowledge and understanding is re-activated and progressively developed. Resources are good and well used in learning. Pupils know which items are special and need to be handled with care and respect. Displays of work are of a very good standard and help to promote a high profile for the subject within the school. There is good enrichment for learning through visits to places of worship.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology

Design and technology was not a focus during the inspection and it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of the provision. No lessons were observed and as most classes

are concentrating on art and design during this part of the current term, there were very few examples of pupils' present work available for analysis. However, the portfolio of work and photographs that have been put together by the subject manager show that design and technology is well represented in the curriculum and pupils have good opportunities to build skills and knowledge in the subject. They have made a variety of products which they have designed and evaluated. There are good links between subjects. For example, in a topic linking design and technology, science and healthy eating, Year 3 pupils had tested types of bread before making their 'healthy sandwiches'.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about music and enjoy their lessons.
- The school has a very good range of musical instruments.
- Pupils participate in a good range of activities both in and outside of school time.

Commentary

88. Standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 are above those found nationally. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about standards in Year 6, but observations of pupils practising for a school production indicates that standards in singing for the older pupils are above national expectations. In all lessons observed pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
89. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are knowledgeable and their own confidence inspires the pupils who are prepared to perform individually when asked. In one very good lesson, some infant pupils worked hard to create a class composition. Very good classroom management skills ensured that all pupils stayed on task throughout the lesson. Each pupil selected an appropriate percussion instrument to represent a particular sound or mood and each aspect of the performance was successfully brought together in the final performance.
90. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject is well resourced with a good selection of instruments, including those from world-wide cultures. The programme of work is newly introduced and provides a very good guide for teachers' planning. The level of interest and expertise among the staff is a key factor in the good level of provision. The strong commitment of the school to ensuring that music thrives is commendable and there is good enrichment for the subject. For example, older pupils visit Bridgewater Hall to listen to a youth concert and there are many opportunities for pupils to take part in musical events and performances. Visiting musicians and groups regularly perform for, and work with, the pupils.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links between art and design and other subjects.
- Pupils enjoy their work and engage in interesting activities.

- Sketch books could be used more extensively.

Commentary

91. It is evident from looking at pupils' work that there is a satisfactory range of interesting, planned activities and a broad range of resources for pupils to use. Pupils are developing skills and control over a good range of media, materials, tools and techniques. This is reflected in the variety of drawings and paintings around the school. Pupils, including those with special needs, achieve soundly and reach standards in Years 2 and 6 which are broadly average.
92. Pupils' work is often successfully linked with other subject studies. For instance, in a link with design and technology, some junior pupils produced designs inspired by Indian patterns and Hindu artefacts. They subsequently made print blocks which allowed them to use their designs in the making of some attractive T-shirts. In a link with history, older pupils have studied the Bayeux Tapestry and are currently experimenting with different media and materials to make story pictures of their own.
93. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Teaching in the lessons observed was good. Teachers plan their lessons well and use an interesting selection of resources which are appropriate to the task. Lessons start with a discussion about the expected learning outcomes so all pupils have a clear idea of what they need to do. Pupils enjoy their art and design activities and their attention and attitude to learning are very good. The use of sketchbooks has been promoted across the school but they could be used more effectively to develop and evaluate design ideas. This is an area for development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average.
- Pupils are interested in lessons and work hard.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good with the result that achievement is good.
- There are good opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

Commentary

94. Standards of attainment are good and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve well across a varied range of activities, and develop good skills and understanding in all areas of physical education. A common thread in all aspects of physical education is the systematic teaching of skills. The programme ensures that, over the seven years, all pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum. Those pupils who are gifted and talented at sports achieve well and are encouraged to develop their skills. Provision for swimming is good and pupils achieve well. They are encouraged to improve their style and have a secure understanding of water safety.
95. Pupils are keen to join in physical education lessons and are mindful of safety issues. When performing their sequences to a very good standard in Year 6, pupils received

generous applause from their friends. This illustrates the very good relationships which exist throughout the school and pupils' well-developed skills of evaluation.

96. Teaching is consistently good. Teachers have high expectations and provide considerable challenge. They use praise and encouragement very effectively which helps boost the pupils' confidence. The school has close ties with the local authority's coaching development group. During the inspection, visiting sports coaches collaborated well with class teachers to provide high quality tuition in hockey and tennis. This is a strength in the provision. All the pupils enjoyed their lessons immensely and made good progress in improving their skills. A good range of after-school activities enriches the provision for the subject. There are good opportunities for the pupils to play against other schools and teams are often successful in local competitions.
97. The subject manager provides good leadership. The resources are good and well organised in the small space available. Assessment is in the early stages of development and provides a basic but sound overview of pupils' progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PHSCE)

98. Judgements were made on the basis of two dedicated lessons for PHSCE, by talking to pupils, and gathering evidence from completed work and displays in school.
99. The school makes good provision for the teaching of personal and social and health and citizenship education. Themes are taught in PHSCE lessons and are very well integrated into other subject areas, such as science, geography or religious education. The school is working to achieve the Eco Green Flag award and, as a result, pupils have a very good awareness of environmental issues.
100. A good amount of work is done on the topic of diet and healthy lifestyles. Teachers adopt a fun approach to learning and this is evident in the display which illustrates the good health of the 'super snacker' and the potential problems of the 'naughty nibbler'. Junior pupils study pollution and energy issues. In their science lessons they gain a good grounding about the delicate balance of nature and of the interdependence between living things. They apply this understanding as they learn about acid rain and investigate the effects of oil spills or the dumping of litter. They are thus able to consider the long-term effects of issues and several posters around school warn of the 'Danger to Wildlife' or encourage others to 'Protect our Planet'. This illustrates pupils' very positive and responsible approach to citizenship.
101. The very strong ethos of the school and the caring attitudes of adults are reflected in pupils' attitudes and promote mutual respect effectively. This enables teachers to plan lessons around complex issues because they know that pupils listen attentively and are able to empathise with people in difficult situations. This means that they get the best out of the work done on emotional development and real-life problem solving. Parents are very appreciative and supportive of this area of the school's work. They play a good part in the school's drugs education programme which takes place in both the infants and the juniors. There is good attention to sex and relationships education which is geared closely to the pupils' level of understanding.

102. Leadership and management are good. The strong links with religious education and the Eco project means that several managers are involved in developing and evaluating provision.
103. There are good opportunities for pupils of all ages to take responsibility, to act as monitors and to take the initiative. All adults in school praise good actions and conduct and this underpins the very good behaviour and the very profitable relationships. On the few occasions where pupils overstep the mark, staff encourage them to reflect on their actions and to consider what they might do if the situation arose again. This is a highly successful strategy in helping pupils to think through situations and in helping them to develop their own moral code.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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