

INSPECTION REPORT

BRINDLE GREGSON LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gregson Lane, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119203

Associate Headteacher: Mrs J Gray

Lead inspector: Mr A Margerison

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th November 2004

Inspection number: 266486

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: 204

School address: Bournes Row
Gregson Lane
Hoghton
Preston
Lancashire

Postcode: PR5 0DR

Telephone number: 01254 852381
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr D Foster

Date of previous inspection: May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Gregson Lane, near Preston in Lancashire. The locality is primarily an area of private housing, and most of the pupils live close to the school. However, it is a popular school and a few pupils are brought to the school by their parents from the surrounding area. Although pupils' backgrounds vary, overall their socio-economic circumstances are average. There are 204 pupils on roll aged between four and 11 years making it an average sized school. Most of the pupils have some experience of education before they join the school, many at one of the local pre-schools nearby. Overall, the number of pupils who join and leave the school during the school year is slightly below average. When children start school, on balance, their attainment is close to that which is typical for their age. However, a significant proportion do not have the skills and knowledge expected for their age and few have skills that are above those expected. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, mainly for moderate learning difficulties, is average. There are a below average proportion of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The majority of pupils are of White-British origin and the number of pupils from

minority ethnic backgrounds is very small, no pupils have English as an additional language. The school was awarded the School Achievement Award in 2003 and the Basic Skills Award in 2004. It is involved in other initiatives, including a project funded by the National College for School Leadership called the Network Learning Community.

In May 2001, the school and all its contents including policies, pupils' records and resources were totally destroyed by fire. Pupils were taught for two years in mobile classrooms on the school field whilst the school was being rebuilt on the site of the previous building. The quality of the design was recognised nationally as being of high quality. The new school was opened in September 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2166 6	Mr A Margerison	Lead inspector	English
			Geography
			History
			Special educational needs
			English as an additional language
1944 3	Mrs N Walker	Lay inspector	
3083 4	Mrs A Lowson	Team inspector	Science
			Information and communication technology
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Foundation Stage
2288 1	Mr G Halliday	Team inspector	Mathematics
			Music
			Physical education
			Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Brindle Gregson Lane Primary School is a good school that provides good value for money. From when they start in reception, due to good teaching pupils achieve well to attain good standards in Years 2 and 6.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good overall. There is a substantial amount of very good teaching.
- Pupils achieve very well in their speaking and listening and investigative science skills.
- The school is very well led and managed excellently by the headteacher and senior staff.
- Governors do not have sufficiently rigorous systems in place to monitor the effect of major new initiatives on teaching and learning.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently help pupils understand how they can improve their work.
- Pupils love coming to school, develop very good attitudes to learning and behave very well.
- Activities in all subjects are not used effectively enough to develop pupils' writing and mathematical problem-solving skills.

Since the last inspection, the school has improved well. At the last inspection the school was judged to be a good school. This is still the case and the issues identified in the last report have been successfully addressed. However, this is against the background of the fire in May 2001 that completely destroyed the building and all its contents. Since then the school has been completely rebuilt and all its procedures, policies and practices have been re-established. Most importantly, pupils have continued to achieve well and reach good standards despite teaching and learning taking place in temporary accommodation until September 2003.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	A	B	C
mathematics	A	A	B	D
science	A	A	B	C

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

Pupils achieve well as they move through the school. Due to very effective support, pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. In reception, children achieve very well to exceed the goals they are expected to reach in their personal, social and emotional development. Children achieve well in their communication, language, literacy, and mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical and creative development to reach standards in line with those expected for their age. In the

2004 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, the school's results in reading and mathematics were well above average and above average in writing when compared to all schools nationally. When compared to similar schools the results were above average in mathematics and average in reading and writing. Inspection evidence shows current pupils in Year 2 are achieving well to attain good standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 6, results were above average when compared to all schools, but below average in mathematics when compared to similar schools. This reflects the lower proportion of pupils who reached the higher than expected level than did so in English and science, primarily due to pupils' weaker skills in solving mathematical problems. Currently pupils are achieving very well and are well on course to reach very good standards by the end of Year 6 in their speaking and listening and investigation skills in science. Pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics is satisfactory because there are not as many planned opportunities in other lessons to develop these aspects of their learning. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils achieve satisfactorily in religious education to attain standards that are in line with those expected. Insufficient evidence was available to enable overall judgements on standards and achievement to be made in any other subjects.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and behave very well. Attendance is well above average and punctuality is very good. The provision the school makes for developing pupils' social skills is reflected in very good relationships throughout the school between pupils and with adults. Provision to develop pupils' understanding and knowledge of their own culture and traditions and those of other cultures are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good, with a substantial proportion of teaching that is very good, particularly in reception, where activities consistently challenge children of all abilities. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use ICT well to help pupils learn. Throughout the school teachers use questions very effectively to encourage pupils to join in lessons and to check their knowledge and understanding. Teachers also have very consistent expectations of pupils so they behave very well and learn to work together and on their own with little supervision. However, for those pupils who need extra help, teachers ensure that support staff provide them with very effective support which makes a very significant contribution to the progress they make. Assessment procedures are very effective, but teachers do not consistently make enough use of this information when marking pupils' work so they are not always clear on how they can improve their work.

The curriculum is good and the accommodation and resources are very good, particularly the outdoor area for children in the reception class and for ICT. These factors have a positive effect on how well children achieve in their physical development in reception and in ICT throughout the school. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good so that pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well cared for and supported. The school has established very good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well led by the headteacher and senior staff. Excellent management and team spirit amongst staff has ensured that standards have continued to be good whilst the school has been rebuilt since the fire in 2001. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and high aspirations for its future and works very effectively with senior staff who are very good role models for colleagues through the leadership of their own areas. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and ensure that the school fulfils its legal responsibilities well. However, their role in direct evaluation of the school's performance and the effect of initiatives on the quality of education provided is less well developed.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall, parents have positive views of the school. In most aspects of the school, they are very satisfied with the work it does. However, following the recent re-organisation of the school day, a significant proportion do not feel sufficiently involved or consulted about significant new initiatives that directly effect them. Pupils have very positive views of the school and are very effectively involved in its development.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Establish rigorous systems to directly involve governors in monitoring the effect of major new initiatives on teaching and learning.
- Ensure teachers' marking consistently helps pupils understand how they can improve their work.
- Develop teacher's planning to make more effective use of all subjects to develop pupils' writing and mathematical problem-solving skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

From when they start school in reception, pupils achieve well as they move through the school. As a result, standards in Years 2 and 6 are above those expected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening and investigative science are very good throughout the school.
- Pupils achieve well to develop good skills in number and reading skills by Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Pupils could achieve better standards in writing and mathematical problem-solving.

Commentary

1 When children start school in reception, their level of skills, knowledge and understanding is broadly typical for their age. However, there is a significant proportion whose skills are below those expected and few are working at levels that are better than expected. They achieve well in reception so that the vast majority of the children, irrespective of their ability, reach at least the expected levels in their communication, language, literacy and mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. In their personal, social and emotional development children achieve very well to reach levels that exceed those expected for their age.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.1 (16.3)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.3 (15.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.9 (17.4)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2 In the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 2, the schools results were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Overall, these results were better than in 2003, but results vary from year to year depending on the group of pupils. As a result, the trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national pattern. When compared to similar schools these results again were better than 2003 and vastly improved on the results in 2002, particularly in mathematics when they placed the school in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. This improvement was recognised nationally in 2003 with the school being awarded the School Achievement Award. In 2004, they were average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. This gradual improvement in standards reflects the action the school took following the very disappointing results in 2002 to develop the teaching in Years 1 and 2 of basic literacy and numeracy skills. The awarding of the Basic Skills Award in 2004 was additional vindication of the school's effectiveness in this area. Inspection evidence shows that the school is

maintaining the good standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science in which pupils are achieving well. Pupils are also achieving well in ICT, although standards are broadly in line with those expected.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (29.5)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.8 (29.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.9 (31.1)	28.6 (28.6)

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

3 Due to the fire in 2001 when all records were lost and the school did not take part in the national tests in Year 6, it is not possible to judge the trend in the school's results against the national trend. However, in the 2004 national test for pupils in Year 6, the school's results were above average in English, mathematics and science. Although these results were not quite as high as in 2002 or 2003 when they have been well above average in all three subjects, this partly reflects the variations in year groups. When compared to similar schools, the results were average in English and science, but below average in mathematics. This was directly due to a lower proportion of pupils reaching the higher than expected level in mathematics than did so in English or science. Although pupils' basic numeracy skills were strong, their weaker ability to use these skills to solve problems meant that a few pupils missed reaching the higher level by a few marks.

4 Inspection evidence shows that this continues to be the case for the current Year 6 pupils. This group's results in their Year 2 national tests were well below average in writing and mathematics and very low in reading. Overall, they are achieving well and reaching good standards in reading, number skills and most of the aspects of science. They are achieving very well and working at very good levels in their speaking and listening and scientific investigation skills. However, standards of writing and of mathematical problem-solving are broadly in line with those expected, primarily due to the fewer opportunities they are provided with in lessons other than in English and mathematics to use, practise and develop these skills. In addition, in mathematics lessons, teachers place a very strong emphasis on developing basic numeracy skills, but do not provide enough activities for pupils to use these skills. There is no evidence that girls and boys achieve differently. However, pupils with special educational needs achieve very well relative to their ability, particularly in developing their basic literacy and numeracy skills in which most of these pupils have the most difficulty.

5 Pupils are achieving well in ICT so that the vast majority of pupils reach the expected levels for their age by the end of Year 6. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in religious education with standards being in line with those expected.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities are very good. Pupils' attendance is well above average. They have very positive attitudes to school and behave very well. Pupils' punctuality is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils want to come to school, develop a very strong desire to learn and take a very keen interest in all the activities the school provides.

- The school has very high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct so they develop a very clear understanding of what is right and wrong.
- Relationships between pupils are very good.
- Provision to develop pupils' appreciation of their own and others cultural traditions and beliefs is very good.
- Children in reception achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development.

Commentary

Attendance

6 From discussions with pupils and according to parents, most pupils are very keen to attend school and are punctual. The school has established very good procedures to promote and encourage pupils to attend. As a result, attendance is well above average and the school is well supported by parents, most of whom ensure that their children attend school as much as possible.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.6%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

7 Pupils develop a very strong desire to learn and want to succeed. This is partly due to the positive support they get from their parents, but also due to the quality of teaching. Most lessons are interesting and stimulate in pupils a desire to be involved. The key strengths of the teaching are intrinsically linked to pupils' attitudes. However, even when teaching is not as effective as it is in most lessons, pupils are very patient, diligent and complete tasks to the best of their ability. This begins in reception, where the adults place a very strong emphasis on developing children's personal skills. As a result, they achieve very well in this aspect of their learning and develop the core personal skills that enable them to succeed as they move through the school. In addition, pupils are given increasing opportunities to take responsibility as they get older. From simple tasks in Years 1 and 2, to more important jobs in Year 6. For example, the oldest pupils are involved in listening to younger ones read and completing their reading journals. Another important factor is the good range of activities outside of lessons and after school. These cater for pupils of all ages and interests so all pupils feel that they are valued and that the school has something to offer them. In assemblies and lessons, teachers value pupils' opinions and, particularly in the final part of the school day, give them good opportunities to reflect upon what they have learnt and what they need to develop further. However, teachers do not consistently build on these opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development in a systematic way.

8 At the time of the last inspection, behaviour in the school was very good. This continues to be the case and is reflected in the lack of exclusions in the last year and in the views of parents. Almost unanimously, they feel that behaviour is good. Pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6 do not agree as strongly, but very few actually feel that behaviour is a problem. The school has very high expectations of behaviour and they are consistently reinforced by teachers, support staff and lunchtime supervisors. Posters in most classrooms extol the importance of working well with others and respecting the views and feelings of others, irrespective of their traditions or culture. Art and music lessons are also used well to develop pupils' appreciation of different cultures. This includes curriculum 'theme' weeks. As a result, of this very strong emphasis on developing pupils' cultural, moral and social development, relationships between pupils are very good, they have a very clear understanding of what is right and wrong and they have a very good appreciation of the contribution other cultures make to modern British society.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education, founded on effective teaching, is good. The accommodation and resources are very good. The school places a very high priority on involving pupils in the work of the school and has established very good links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' use of questions is very effective in encouraging pupils to contribute their ideas in lessons.
- Teachers and support staff have consistently very high expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- Teachers' planning is good and they make very effective use of support staff in lessons to work with small groups and individual pupils.
- Teaching and learning in reception is very good.
- The school has very effective procedures to assess the progress pupils' are making.
- In a few lessons, the pace of lessons is too slow.
- Not all teachers use their marking of pupils' work effectively enough to reinforce pupils' understanding of how they can improve their work.
- Teachers make very effective use of the resources for ICT in lessons.

Commentary

9 Overall, teaching is good and leads to good learning. The standard of teaching is very similar to that seen at the time of the previous inspection, but the proportion of very good teaching seen during the inspection was greater. Considering the different demands placed on teachers since then, such as the introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, the increased use of ICT in lessons, and the difficulties the school has had to deal with in the wake of the fire of 2001, this reflects the very good leadership of the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	8	10	8	1	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.

10 Teaching in reception is consistently very good in all the areas of learning. The very effective teaching of children's personal skills is at the heart of the very good learning that takes place in all the areas of learning. It is based on very strong relationships between children and adults and teachers' very high expectations of children's behaviour. As a result, children learn how to behave very well and respond positively to each other and adults when they are working together as a class or in small groups. As a result, the teacher can provide a very challenging range of activities throughout all lessons irrespective as to whether children are working with an adult or on their own. A very good range of interesting activities stimulates and motivates children so their curiosity is captured, they concentrate hard and apply themselves well to the tasks they are given. Classroom support staff make a very important contribution to these aspects of children's learning by working with groups and individuals, encouraging them to talk about what they are doing and gently prompting them to extend their understanding. Underlying the day-to-day teaching are very effective assessment procedures that provide very detailed information

for the teacher to use to ensure that activities in lessons match very closely the learning needs of children of all abilities.

11 Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is good with several of the strengths of the teaching seen in the reception class mirrored throughout the school. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and reinforce them very effectively. As a result, behaviour is very good and a very positive learning environment is the norm. Clear explanations and explicit instructions mean that pupils are very clear what is expected of them and, at the start of most lessons, teachers make it clear to pupils what they are aiming for in the lesson so they understand what they are learning about. One of the consistent strengths of the teaching that makes a significant contribution to the pace of pupils' learning is teachers' very effective use of questions. Although, in a few lessons, teachers do not target questions enough to those pupils who are not volunteering an answer, in the main this is done well and ensures that no pupils can be complacent or allow others to do all the work. Most teachers also use additional questions well to follow up pupils' first answer, this challenges higher attaining pupils well and enables teachers to gauge the depth of pupils' understanding. Teachers also make effective use of the very good ICT facilities in classrooms as 'teaching tool' to illustrate examples for discussion and to involve pupils in the opening parts of lessons or the closing plenary section. As a result, the first parts of most lessons are brisk and well-paced. However, in a few lessons where teaching is not as effective, the pace drops when pupils are working in groups and the activities teachers have planned are not sufficiently challenging or extensive enough to make the best use of the time available. In addition, mathematics lessons do not consistently provide enough opportunities, particularly in Years 3 to 6 for pupils to use their good number skills to solve problems which has a negative effect on the standards of mathematics overall.

12 Teachers make very good use of classroom assistants, mainly to work with lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs. In lessons, the classroom assistants work very effectively with these pupils, prompting them in discussions and helping them to complete their written tasks. In addition, in many lessons, particularly in English and mathematics, teachers plan specific activities for pupils with special educational needs that are linked directly to the targets in their individual plans. As a result, these pupils achieve very well relative to their ability and are fully included in all lessons and activities.

13 The school has developed very good procedures to assess the progress that pupils are making, particularly in English, mathematics and science at the end of each year, and subject leaders analyse test results carefully to identify specific areas of weakness for teachers to work on. However, individual teachers are not systematically sufficiently involved in taking this information and using it in their planning and work with pupils on a daily basis. For example, the school has established potentially effective procedures to involve pupils in setting their own targets for learning. In the whole class sessions that take place at the end of each day. Most teachers ask pupils to record in their 'Learning Diaries' what they have learnt during the day and what they want to work on. However, individual teachers do not make sufficient use of the 'Learning Diaries' to discuss systematically with pupils what they need to learn next or to link their marking of work to these targets. As a result, although pupils have a general idea of what their targets are, teachers marking is frequently rather general and does not refer back to the areas for improvement the pupils themselves have identified. As a result, the very strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy skills in English,

mathematics and science is not consistently carried through to other subjects in all classes and there are missed opportunities in lessons to extend these skills. This particularly affects pupils' achievement in writing and the problem-solving aspect of mathematics. For example, even pupils in Years 5 and 6 are not expected to write in pen in any lessons or to reproduce the high quality of presentation, in for example, their geography work, seen in the main subjects and this does affect the standards of handwriting towards the upper end of the school. In addition, this does not prepare pupils well for moving on to secondary school.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. The opportunities for enrichment are good. Accommodation and resources are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Children in reception are very well prepared for moving into Year 1.
- The school is very innovative in its approach to developing the curriculum.
- Activities out of lessons give pupils very good opportunities for them to extend their interests in sports, creative and performance arts.
- The resources for ICT and in the outside area for children in reception are very good.

Commentary

14 The curriculum overall is good. It is broad and balanced and provides a good range of activities to ensure that pupils of all abilities extend their skills in most subjects. Children in reception get a very good start to their education. This is primarily due to teacher's very effective interpretation of the national guidance for the Foundation Stage as the basis for the planning of lessons. As a result, children are provided with an extensive range of interesting and challenging activities both indoors and outside and staff make sure all participate and they are very well prepared for moving on to more formal learning in Year 1. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 has developed well since the last inspection and provides pupils with a good range of activities to develop their skills across all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.

15 The school is very innovative in its approach to developing the curriculum. Recently, the school radically altered the times of the school day and introduced an end of day 'plenary' session to give teachers the opportunity to review with their class what they had learnt during the day. Whilst for some subjects such as English, the highly structured timings of the school day have a positive effect on lessons and pupils' learning by ensuring that lessons are brisk and pacy, in other subjects, such as religious education, the structure is too inflexible to allow teachers to be creative in their use of time and the pace of lessons sometimes suffers because teachers try to extend activities beyond the scope of the topic. In addition, although the plenary sessions are potentially very valuable, currently these are not planned in sufficient detail and, as a result, opportunities are missed to extend pupils' learning and to fully exploit the time pupils spend on evaluating their own learning.

16 Overall, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, but the main strength in the provision is that for pupils with general learning difficulties. These pupils form the majority of those pupils identified as needing additional support. Their individual plans are very good and identify clear targets for improvement. Pupils' work and individual pupil sessions show that teachers use these plans well as the basis for aspects of lessons. Support staff play a particularly important role in the achievement of pupils with special educational needs. They have a very clear understanding of pupils' needs, are well briefed by teachers and provide very effective individual and small group support to pupils.

17 The school provides a very good range of extra curricular activities in computers, French, creative and social events. After school sports clubs are provided by school staff. However, the school also provides good opportunities for pupils whose aptitudes lie in the creative and performance arts. This includes activities for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Peripatetic music teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils who wish to extend and develop their skills in keyboards and brass instruments.

18 The accommodation and the resources available for pupils are very good. The current building that opened in 2003 following the fire gave the school a very high specification and provides particularly good resources for outside activities for children in reception and for ICT. Further improvements are currently being considered to expand the area for reception children. The whole site is very well maintained by the caretaking staff so it has retained its original 'gloss' which helps pupils respect and look after their school. In addition, teachers use displays very well to celebrate pupils' achievements and work so it is a bright and stimulating place for people to work and learn.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. Support and guidance for pupils are good. The school has very good procedures to involve pupils in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures to settle children into reception are very effective.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are very good.
- Procedures to monitor the learning targets pupils set themselves are not rigorous enough.

Commentary

19 The school has good policies in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils and, on a day-to-day basis, the care of pupils is good. Governors take an active role in ensuring all health and safety requirements are thoroughly adhered to including ensuring that risk assessments are made for any activities that take place in and out of school. Parents are confident that their children are cared for well. This begins in reception where most parents are visited at home and good links are in place with the local pre-school providers. As a result, the children settle into school very quickly and soon learn the routines. Lunchtime supervisors and support staff have very good relationships with pupils, and as a result, pupils feel confident that if they have a problem, there is an adult that they can go to for help and support. The school has established an effective system to discuss and monitor with pupils' their personal development. Each year, the school has a 'Milestone Week' when class teachers sits with each pupil and discusses how they feel about school and how they are doing. This is a good basis and is followed up during the year, but in an informal way.

20 The school fully values the views of pupils and has established very good procedures to involve them in its work. The School Council is organised by the pupils themselves, under the strong direction of a very articulate and well-organised Year 6 pupil. They have a clear understanding of the role that the School Council plays in the school and ensures that its work is focused and effective. Consequently, the group has made significant contributions to several aspects of the school's work, such as the organisation of activities at lunchtimes and represents the views of pupils well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established good links with parents and the community. Links with other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The information provided for parents about the work of the school are very good.
- Procedures to ensure that parents feel fully involved in the development of the school are not effective enough.
- Links with other schools make a very important contribution to the quality of education provided for pupils.

Commentary

21 The school provides a wealth of high quality and valuable information to parents about the work of the school and how they can help their children at home. For example, curriculum letters are sent home regularly and a weekly surgery for parents to come and discuss their children's progress, although end of year reports vary in quality and are not consistently individual enough. Most parents are pleased with the quality of education provided for their children, support the school and their children very well through fund-raising and attending school events. However, there is a significant group of parents who, whilst they continue to support the school through, for example, the parents, teachers association, do not feel that they are involved sufficiently or consulted well enough about significant changes to school procedures. This concern links back directly to the recent change in the school day. Governors are confident that the correct procedures were followed and the required consultations were made. However, there is a group of parents who have lost confidence in the school leadership to listen and do not feel that that the school takes sufficient note of their views. Whilst not being able to make comment on the justification of these views, the inspection team does feel that the school has, as one parent stated at the meeting before the inspection, 'Got some serious bridges to build'.

22 The very good links with other schools are based on its desire to take a full part in sharing good practise and learning from other schools. This is one of the key factors that contribute to the excellent management of the school. Whilst, it would have been very easy to have become introverted and focussed on its own problems, management has encouraged senior staff, such as the subject leader for science, to enhance their experience and professional development. For example, the school is a lead school in CHIP Networked Learning Community which includes ten schools in which heads, deputies and co-ordinators work with a community of primary schools on common themes to enhance learning. In addition, due to strong relationships with local high schools, means that the sharing of staff and resources is increasingly common.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well led and managed. Governance of the school is good. The headteacher's leadership of the school is very good. She is very well supported by senior managers in the highly effective management of the school. Consequently, despite the barrier to learning created by the complete destruction of the previous building by fire, the school has succeeded in the last three years in re-establishing all procedures, policies and practices in a new building and, against the odds, maintained good standards and achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teamwork and commitment of staff to each other and the school is excellent.
- Senior leaders have very high aspirations for the school and are very good role models for other staff.
- Highly effective procedures to identify its immediate priorities and to manage change have ensured that the school has continued to be effective despite the destruction of the building and all its records and resources.
- Governors are very committed to the school, but do not have sufficiently rigorous systems in place to monitor the effect of major new initiatives on the quality of teaching and learning.

Commentary

23 During the inspection, the headteacher was a temporary appointment – a new permanent headteacher will take up the role at the beginning of the spring term 2005. However, the associate headteacher gives very good leadership to the school. In a very short space of time she has established herself and gained the respect and confidence of staff, pupils and the vast majority of parents. In addition, she has ensured that the very high level of teamwork and the commitment of the staff to the school and each other, which enabled the school to rise from the ashes of the fire whilst maintaining good standards of achievement for pupils, have continued. The high level of teamwork has resulted in a school that works together and is prepared to take on new ideas in a proactive and imaginative way. Underpinning this is the very good leadership of the senior staff. They have worked tirelessly to support the headteacher with a very clear vision for the school and provided very good role models for other staff so that the school has been able to re-introduce all its procedures, policies and practices effectively.

24 However, none of this would have been possible had the school not had excellent systems in place to manage its resources, to identify immediate priorities and to ensure that the staff's efforts were being focussed on the correct priorities. These systems link to both analysing the academic performance of pupils to identify areas of strength and for development and to ensuring that practical aspects of re-building the school did not overshadow its primary responsibility – that of educating the pupils in its care. Subject leaders for English, mathematics, science and the Foundation Stage are central to this. They very carefully analyse test papers and pupils' performance in tests to track their progress and to identify specific areas for development. As a result, the school improvement plan very accurately provides the correct foci for improvement.

25 Governors play an important part in this process and ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities well, including ensuring that the school has a race equality policy and that its aims are promoted. This has a positive effect on the personal skills of pupils, who develop a very keen respect and appreciation for all people irrespective of their cultural or ethnic background. Financial control is good. The table below suggests that the school has a very high carry-over figure, but this is totally distorted by the inclusion of insurance payments and the school is currently looking at various ways to further develop the building such as extending the provision for the reception class. Governors challenge the leadership to explain the principles behind suggested developments and have effectively overseen the re-building of the school. However, now that this task is completed, their contribution to the direct monitoring of the effect of radical changes to school practices, such as the restructuring of the school day, is limited. At present, they do not have rigorous systems in place to evaluate the effect of these developments on the quality of learning. As a result, they are dependent upon the information they receive from other sources to ensure that best value is being gained from these developments and to decide how the money available for further expansion could be used.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	610232
Total expenditure	631278
Expenditure per pupil	3094

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	169708
Balance carried forward to the next	148662

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

26 The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. Overall, children enter school with skills that are typical for their age, although a significant proportion do have weaker skills in their language, social and independence skills. In addition, very few children start school with skills and knowledge that exceed the expected levels. The quality of teaching is very good. Learning support staff are very experienced and make a significant contribution to both the classroom management of activities and the overall achievement of the children. Children achieve well in the reception class and almost all children reach the standards expected of them in all areas of learning. Children with special educational needs are very well supported and this helps them to achieve well against the targets set for them. Parents are made very welcome and are seen as partners in the education of their children. Induction procedures are very good, which ensures that children settle down quickly to the new routines they encounter.

27 The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is very good. The very good teaching found at the previous inspection has been maintained. The co-ordinator leads an effective team of staff to deliver a well-planned curriculum, with learning activities matched effectively to what children know and can do. Children's work is checked daily and staff use the results of this monitoring to plan the next steps to learning. This helps children to learn new skills and gain new knowledge quickly. The transition arrangements between the reception class and Year 1 vary each year, depending on how well children have done. This liaison with the Year 1 class is good and ensures that children move on to new learning when they are ready. Resources are mainly new and are very good, particularly the resources for role-play, which help children's personal, social and emotional development. The accommodation outdoors is very good and is a key improvement since the previous inspection. However, the reception classroom is small for the number of children and makes the organisation of activities much more difficult than it needs to be. Staff do very well with the space they have, but the freedom to organise the classroom into the areas of learning needed for the Foundation Stage is not available to them and this is an area for future improvement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given very good opportunities to work with others and act responsibly.
- Rules and routines are few, but children are encouraged to be considerate to others in all they do.

Commentary

28 This area of learning is taught very well and by the time they leave the reception class, most children are likely to exceed standards above those expected for their age. Children achieve very well in this area of learning. They learn to act responsibly and to be independent because they are given many opportunities to do so. Children know that they will be directed to some activities, where they will work with the class teacher or a member

of the learning support staff. However, they also have the opportunity to choose from a range of self-directed activities, mainly based on the extension of social, creative or physical skills. Children respond very well to these choices and show a growing maturity as they take part in role-play activities with others. Children demonstrate good social skills as they work and play together and in more formal sessions.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults make very effective use of questions to extend children's speaking and listening skills.
- Very good resources are used to teach reading.
- Children are effectively taught how to use new technology to identify words and to help them to write for a purpose.

Commentary

29 Most children are likely to reach standards that meet the expectations for their age by the time they leave the reception class. Higher attaining children however, reach standards above those typical for their age. Teaching of basic skills in language is very good and children achieve well. Very positive relationships mean that children are happy and this gives them confidence to answer questions during activities when all the children are working together. Most children speak clearly and have the vocabulary to make their thoughts and feelings clear. All adults constantly engage children in conversation and this extends their language development. The teacher uses resources very effectively to teach early reading skills; for example, during a story about the Gingerbread Boy, a range of puppets helped children to follow the story. Children enjoy stories and are fully engrossed. Higher attaining children are able to observe the wry humour in a story; for example, they were not fooled when the fox offered to take the gingerbread boy across the river! Many children can point to, or read, simple words in a book.

30 The teacher uses the new Interactive Whiteboard and lap-top computer as an effective learning tool as she highlights key words from the story, or shows children how to write a simple sentence. Children know that they can write directly onto the large whiteboard using the computer and already identify the "print" icon, knowing that this will give them a copy of their writing. Higher attaining children can independently write their names in clearly legible print and are achieving very well in their writing skills after a very short time in the reception class. Children who have less well developed skills are given very good support, as adults sit beside them to guide their early attempts at writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are used very well to teach new concepts and to deepen knowledge and understanding.
- Lessons are planned very well so that children learn about number from a good range of practical activities.

Commentary

31 Children achieve well in their mathematical ability, particularly in their ability to use correct mathematical vocabulary and to use practical activities to solve problems. Teaching is very good and as a result, most children are likely to reach the standards expected for their age by the end of the reception year with a good proportion exceeding the expected levels. At the core of the teaching is the very effective planning of a range of activities, many of which involve practical tasks, so that children of all abilities are effectively challenged. Higher attaining children reach standards above those expected, because they are given good opportunities to take part in more challenging activities well matched to what they are capable of. At this early stage of the school year, most children recognise the numbers from one to five and some can count up to eight at least. The teacher links learning activities very well to what children are doing in literacy, so, for example, children count the number of toys in "Kipper's" toy box. The use of Kipper's toys when counting not only increases children's enjoyment and interest in the activity, but also serves to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Higher attaining children are encouraged to work out what would be "one more than" a given number, and they are able to succeed with this task. Children are taught positional language well, particularly when working outdoors, so for example, they can place an object "behind" another one.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Early science skills are taught very well, so children learn key concepts thoroughly.

Commentary

32 Teaching is very good and most children are likely at least to reach standards typical for their age by the end of the reception year with a good proportion exceeding the expected levels for their age. Children achieve very well, particularly in their knowledge and understanding of science. What the teacher does very well is to use questioning to probe what children already know. This has a clear effect on the rate of learning in lessons and how well children achieve overall, because the teacher quickly takes children on from what they already know and understand. In addition, learning activities are very well planned and organised, which makes the best use of time and learning support staff. As a result, children develop very good attitudes to learning and have enormous fun as they observe how toys move. They answer questions well; for example, when asked if they would take a soft toy in the bath, they give logical answers..."No, it is a soft toy and would get very wet", or they observe that some toys have batteries and switches, which would be destroyed when wet. They are able to sort objects into two criteria and identify how a range of toys move – with batteries, switches or control devices. One child identifies a toy that has very long arms and notes: "these are used to help it balance". Children are beginning to ask searching questions, for example, "How does the power get into a battery then?". They appreciate that batteries "run out" of power, and ponder where the power goes! In design and technology, children use a good range of resources to construct models and information and technology skills develop quickly as children adeptly use the mouse to move objects on the screen. Children learn about other cultures and beliefs through their many role-play activities. For example, they made Divali cards and dressed up in ethnic clothes whilst playing Asian music.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are very good and activities are well planned.

Commentary

33 Teaching is very good and activities are very well planned to support children's physical development and at this early stage of the school year, their skills in tackling physical tasks with a degree of independence are already developing rapidly. As a result, most children achieve very well and virtually all are likely to reach the standards expected by the end of the reception year. There have been very good improvements to the provision of physical development for young children since the previous inspection because the quality of resources and accommodation is so much better. Children are only just learning to work in the large hall, but they use the hall space well as they weave in and out of other children. Most children follow a series of instructions as they "put your bean bag on the floor, go for a walk, then find it again!" Most were able to do this well. Children are developing good co-ordination and control skills. Learning support staff help those children who are less independent to get undressed for physical education lessons and to put on their kit, but most are learning to be responsible for their own things.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to explore and experiment with a wide range of media.
- Very good opportunities are given for children to develop their imagination through drama and role-play.

Commentary

34 With few exceptions, children are likely to reach the standards expected by the end of the reception year. Children achieve well in their creative development because they are given very good opportunities to use a very good range of resources. Teaching is very good, with activities carefully planned to enable children to use their creative skills and their imagination. Children have explored collage techniques as they illustrated one of their favourite stories about "Percy the Park Keeper". They have mixed paints to paint self-portraits, trying to match the colours of their clothes, so there are lots of little red jumpers painted! Children explored printing techniques as they put their bare feet into paint to make footprints. They used words such as "squidgy", "slimy" and "tickly" to describe how the paint felt on their toes. The teacher gives children very good opportunities to develop their imagination as they dress up and use props to make a puppet theatre, then give a performance to the rest of the class.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader has a very clear understanding of the areas for development in the subject.
- Pupils develop very good speaking and listening skills.
- Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and use support staff very effectively in lessons.
- Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not help them understand how to improve their work.
- Other subjects are not used enough to promote pupils' writing skills.

Commentary

35 Pupils achieve well in English so overall standards are above those expected in Years 2 and 6. This reflects the pattern of recent years where standards have consistently been at least above average in the national tests in Years 2 and 6. However, there is variation between the degrees of achievement in the different strands of the subject. In Year 2, standards are above those expected in reading, writing and speaking and listening reflecting the strong emphasis teachers place on developing pupils' basic skills. As a result, they have a good understanding of letter sounds and read basic books fluently, they are confident speakers, listen well to adults and each other and write neatly and legibly.

36 In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve very well in developing their speaking and listening skills due to the very effective use of questions by teachers in lessons. They continue to achieve well in reading so they become confident and fluent readers and have good research skills. However, in writing achievement is satisfactory. Even in Year 6, most pupils write mainly in pencil. This affects the quality of their presentation, does not prepare them well for moving on to secondary school, but most importantly, prevents pupils from developing a consistent individual style of joined writing. The content of their writing is also variable in quality. Their punctuation, spelling and grammar are good and they can write well when dealing with factual topics, such as describing a science investigation or preparing a biography about an author they have researched. However, they are not as good at structuring their writing appropriately when either writing more imaginatively or presenting an argument balancing two points of view. This reflects the fact that teachers use English lessons very effectively to develop pupils' basic skills, but do not give them a broad enough range of extended opportunities, including through other subjects such as history to practise and extend their skills.

37 Overall, teaching is good. Teachers are very consistent in their expectations of pupils' behaviour so lessons are well managed, structured and positive learning experiences for pupils. They use the ICT facilities in classrooms well to set clear objectives and to involve pupils in the lessons. Most lessons are brisk, and the opening whole class parts of lessons are particularly good. This is due to teachers' very effective use of questions to challenge pupils of all abilities. In most classes, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved in lessons and draw pupils who are rather less forthcoming to contribute.

Questions are asked of pupils with special educational needs that link well with their learning needs, teachers also follow up pupils' initial answers well with supplementary questions to challenge higher attaining pupils. Teachers plan a good range of activities for pupils to do in groups, but these tend to be focussed heavily on developing their basic grammar and punctuation skills, rather than their ability to use and apply their knowledge to different styles of writing. Teachers also use support staff very effectively to work with individual pupils and small groups. The support staff are well briefed before lessons, teachers use pupils' individual plans well as the basis for planning activities and, as a result, pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.

38 The subject leader has a very clear understanding of the subject, and although she was only in school on a temporary basis during the inspection had made a few important changes to the way the school taught reading, in Years 1 and 2, that was already having a positive effect. Since the last inspection, the subject has developed well. As a result, standards have been maintained against gradually improving national standards. An important factor in this are the very effective assessment procedures in place to track the progress of individual pupils and to identify areas for development through the very careful analysis of pupils' test papers. However, although pupils' set targets for themselves and in most classes review what they have learnt on a daily basis, teachers' marking does not capitalise on this to help pupils know how they can improve their work further. For example, teachers' comments are generally praise and few link back the pupils' work to the lesson objectives or the targets the pupils have identified for their own improvement. This is particularly the case for written work in English and other subjects. As a result, pupils frequently continue to make the same basic errors.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

39 The school makes good use of subjects such as science to develop pupils' writing and research skills. Speaking and listening is encouraged very well across the school through the lively question and answer sessions at the beginning of most lessons. However, there are missed opportunities to give pupils enough activities to practise their writing in different styles in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. Too many of the activities tend to be similar, answering questions or basic research rather than asking pupils to compare their own lifestyle or to the past or a different culture or to use their imagination to describe events from a different view point.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader has a very clear understanding of the strengths of the subject and what needs to be done to develop it further.
- Assessment systems are very good.
- Pupils who have special educational needs get very good help.
- Marking does not show pupils how to improve.
- There is not enough emphasis on problem solving and investigative work.

Commentary

40 Although most pupils in the current Year 6 do not reach more than average standards, they have achieved well since they were in Year 2 when the year group attained well below average standards in the national tests. Standards in Year 2 are good and satisfactory in Year 6. This is a similar picture as seen in the previous inspection. Pupils are particularly good at calculation, because there is an emphasis on this. However, many find difficulty in applying their knowledge to solving problems and undertaking investigations. This is because most teachers do not plan this aspect systematically into pupils' work. However, the subject leader undertook a detailed analysis of pupils' 2004 national test papers and identified this as the most important area for development. The subject action plan for the current year reflects this well and outlines a clear plan to improve this aspect of the school's work.

41 As a result of the strength of leadership and management, important improvements in provision have been implemented recently. For instance, assessment systems are very good. Teachers take good advantage of them to set good challenges matched well to pupils' ability, though more effectively in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. A useful innovation is the setting of individual targets for pupils and regularly checking their progress towards them. This is not followed up to the maximum, however, because when teachers mark work they do not refer to the targets or make constructive comments. The subject leader monitors teaching and learning closely and prioritises action needed to put weaknesses right.

42 Teaching is good overall and as a result pupils are currently achieving well and standards in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 are above those expected for pupils' ages. On the whole, teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and this brings pace and interest to lessons. They are skilful at asking questions and getting pupils to explain and understand strategies. Pupils respond with very good attitudes and behaviour and this contributes positively to their rate of learning. The strength of teaching in the school is in Years 5 and 6. This improvement is due to the strength of teaching they have received over the years. The quality of teaching in Year 6 gives pupils the capacity to reach higher standards by the time they leave for high school. Few weaknesses in teaching were seen in lessons. In two otherwise good lessons, the teacher did not leave enough time towards the end to draw the threads of learning together. In another lesson, the pace was slow and pupils' interest waned. This led to a significant fuss and some inappropriate behaviour, with a subsequent slowing of learning. As a result, most pupils made no more than satisfactory progress, and a few learned little.

43 Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well and make good progress. This is because teachers plan carefully to ensure pupils work at the right level and teaching assistants follow this up with good help.

Mathematics across the curriculum

44 This is an area that the school recognises as in need of development. Teachers make good use of ICT to help pupils learn, but links with other subjects are not systematically planned. There are missed opportunities in subjects such as science and geography for pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve problems and to present and analyse data which has an effect on the standards they reach in mathematics overall.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent leadership of the subject is helping to drive up standards, particularly in pupils' experimental and investigative work.
- Teachers use the new ICT resources in their classrooms as a very effective learning tool.
- Links with the local high school are used very effectively to provide challenging learning activities for older pupils.

Commentary

45 The subject leader, who has excellent subject knowledge and has been recognised with a national award for her innovative work in science teaching, has been instrumental in raising standards throughout the school. For example:

- Staff training has been rigorous and based on careful observations of what teachers already could do well. Weaker areas were identified and these were addressed through the provision of training courses, either led by the subject leader or provided by external trainers.
- The subject leader was released to act as a specialist teacher throughout the school, so all children were taught by her at some stage over the period of a year. This enabled her to recognise what the pupils could do well, but more importantly, to identify where their skills or knowledge was not secure. A teaching programme was then put into place to tackle these weaknesses.
- A clear focus was placed on developing teachers' skills in investigative and experimental work and this now features prominently in lessons.
- The subject leader recognises that the key to progress depends on constantly monitoring and evaluating the subject. As a result, pupils' work is frequently checked, as is teaching, and test data is rigorously scrutinised to pick up any emerging weak areas.
- New resources have been purchased. These are very well organised and older pupils have been given the responsibility to get out resources and ensure that they have what they need to carry out their investigations.

46 As a result of this work, improvements since the previous inspection have been very good. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are now much improved, pupils' achievement in their experimental and investigative work is much better, the quality of teaching has improved considerably in the juniors and higher attaining pupils are given much better opportunities to take on more challenging work. Pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are likely to reach standards that are above national expectations in their science knowledge and understanding and to reach standards that are well above national expectations in the quality of their experimental and investigative work. This represents good achievement for these pupils. They are achieving very well in their ability to plan investigations and record their results in a variety of ways, which is a key scientific skill.

47 The quality of teaching is good overall and is often very good or excellent in Years 5 and 6. Key strengths in teaching are the very good use of questioning to probe what pupils already know and can do so the teacher can build on this, and the use of new technology. All classrooms benefit from new Interactive Whiteboards and computers for the pupils to use that are linked to the Internet. Teachers use this new technology very effectively as a tool for learning. For example, in one lesson, older pupils were challenged to predict whether yeast was a living organism. A sample of yeast was placed on a microscope linked to the Interactive Whiteboard so all pupils could observe it carefully. Pupils predicted that yeast was not a living organism. The teacher then added sugar to the yeast and pupils were able to observe the formation of carbon dioxide bubbles, as the yeast became active. Pupils observed this process and were then able to conclude that yeast is a dormant organism until activated by another substance. Special educational needs children receive very good support in lessons, which enables them to work at a good pace and achieve very well against the targets set for them.

48 The subject leader has made very strong links with the local high school and older children benefit from visits in the late summer term to work in the laboratories at higher

level tasks. Occasionally, staff from the high school will visit the school to work with children on special tasks and activities. This provides very good opportunities for older pupils to be well prepared for their next stage of education and also enables gifted and talented pupils, or those who are higher attainers, to work on independent, research-based activities that challenge them.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership and management of the subject is helping to raise pupils' achievement, particularly in how well they use new technology to support their learning in other subjects.
- There are very good procedures in place to check what individual pupils know and can do and older children in particular are being involved well in planning their next steps to learning.
- There is scope for the portfolio of pupils work in the subject to be better organised.

Commentary

49 Considering that until recently, teachers have not had the present high level of resources available to them, the school has done well to ensure that standards in the current Year 2 and Year 6 match the national expectations for the subject. However, pupils throughout the school are learning new skills very quickly and they are now achieving well so that standards are set to improve and to be above those expected by the end of the current year. A key strength of the school's provision for the subject and one that is having a positive effect on how well pupils are doing, is the quality of leadership and management. The subject leader has:

- Implemented a substantial programme of staff training over the past three years to keep up with the extensive purchase of new hardware and software. All classes have Interactive Whiteboards and all staff have received full training in how these can be used to increase learning opportunities in the classroom. As a result, teachers are quickly developing their own skills and make effective use of new technology as a teaching tool. The quality of teaching is consequently good and key skills are being taught well. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.
- All teaching in the infants has been checked through direct classroom observation and pupils' work has been scrutinised in the juniors. This has allowed the identification of where weaknesses are and teaching programmes have been changed where necessary.
- The computer technical assistant and a senior teaching assistant have been involved in the delivery of a highly structured programme of learning for pupils in Years 3 to 6. This is still at an early stage of development, but an early evaluation of this work is showing an improvement in pupils' skills. In discussions, older pupils say that they value and appreciate this support.

50 Procedures have been put in place to monitor and check how well individual pupils are doing. These are very good and teachers, learning and technical support staff, and the

pupils themselves have a clear understanding of what they can do well and what the next steps to learning are. A senior teaching assistant has been very effectively deployed to work in the junior classes. For example, she works in the classroom with the teacher and pupils as a new unit of work, or a new skill is taught. The following day, she works with groups of four children at a time to check how well they have understood the task and gives further teaching and support to take this learning further. This is working very well and when asked, pupils have a very good knowledge of what they need to do next to improve their skills. Older pupils in Year 6 can independently plan a multimedia presentation and they can animate their graphics. Those pupils with special educational needs receive very good support, so they are able to achieve well and work with a fair degree of independence. Higher attaining pupils are given research-based tasks and activities, often linked to their work in other subjects, which provides further challenges for them.

Information and communication across the curriculum

51 This is a good feature of the school's work. Teachers make very effective use of the new technology as a teaching tool and in particular, Interactive Whiteboards make a significant impact on how well pupils of all ages are stimulated to learn. Pupils are skilful in their use of computer skills to draw graphs and charts to support their work in data handling in mathematics and to present the outcomes of their investigations in science. They are able to produce graphs in different formats, tables and charts, which enables them to organise their work systematically. In literacy, key words and technical vocabulary linked to each subject is projected on the Interactive Whiteboard, which pupils can change and add to during the course of a lesson and this is having a positive effect on their acquisition of new words. Digital cameras are used extensively to record pupils' work, so both pupils and their teachers have a clear record of their achievements.

HUMANITIES

52 There was very limited evidence available in **history** and **geography** to enable judgements to be made on standards or the quality of provision. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils study a range of topics that reflect the national guidance. However, pupils work in books is not consistent. Teachers' insistence on high standards of presentation is not consistent in classes so in a few examples, the quality of the pupils' work was not comparable to that in English and science, for example. In addition, teachers' marking makes few comments on how pupils could improve their work or reflect the targets pupils have identified for themselves.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes better.
- The subject leader has a secure understanding of the subject and has laid sound foundations to develop the subject further.
- Visitors make a positive contribution to pupils' understanding.
- The school does not provide opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship.

Commentary

53 Standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This is the same as seen in the previous inspection. The main focus is on learning about the Christian tradition, as well as other faiths such as Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory knowledge of parables. They have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and have a good understanding of the concept of forgiveness.

54 Teaching is satisfactory overall, as seen in pupils' books and in three lessons observed. The best lesson seen was very good, in Year 2. The teacher gained a really enthusiastic response from pupils as they explored in role-play how the news of Jesus' birth was transmitted and interpreted in different ways. However, this is not consistently the case and many of the strengths seen in most lessons are not always apparent in this subject. For example, in one lesson the learning objective was not made sufficiently clear and pupils lost interest when they could not see where the lesson was leading and the pace fell.

55 The strength of leadership has laid the basis for raising standards. The variety of strategies used to raise pupils' interest in lessons has increased since the previous inspection and includes role-play and drama. The school benefits from regular visits from a local minister and recent contacts have been developed with representatives of other faiths. However, these links are in the early stages of development and as yet there are no opportunities made for pupils to visit places of worship of other faiths.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

56 Work was sampled in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education so no overall judgement on the school's provision in the subjects has been made. No lessons were seen, so judgements cannot be made about the quality of teaching, but inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work, looked at examples of pupils' current work on display and previous work was scrutinised if available. Subject leaders provide effective support, advice and effective professional development to their colleagues when needed.

57 In **art and design**, the evidence seen indicates that pupils have a good curriculum, which supports the schools very good work in cultural development. For example, a Multicultural Week held in school to explore cultural diversity enabled pupils to explore the styles and techniques of artists from Japan, Africa, South and North America

and Europe. Art and design is used well to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum and these links are not superficial, but are explored in some depth and therefore provide the pupils with a meaningful extension to their learning. Art and design in school is used as a vehicle to bond classes together, as they often explore similar themes or topics. This was particularly relevant as the new school opened following the fire. Pupils worked together to produce a high quality display to decorate their new school, which had the effect of bringing the school together as all children took part in an enjoyable, shared task.

58 In **design and technology**, little work was available for scrutiny, but the work that was available shows that pupils are provided with a broad range of activities in which to develop their skills in the subject. For example, in Year 2, pupils have used a range of materials to make "Recycled Robots", whilst pupils in Year 5 have made pop-up books using a range of devices after looking at how fiction and non-fiction books make use of pop-up pictures to provide interest to the reader.

59 In **music**, evidence from one lesson, a scrutiny of documentation and discussions with pupils and the subject leader indicate that the school is making satisfactory progress in developing the provision. In the one lesson seen, teaching was satisfactory and pupils showed a suitable understanding of pitch. However, due to the length of the lesson, one hour, pupils' concentration drifted and lessened the effect of the learning opportunities provided on their learning. In addition, to activities in lessons, pupils benefit from occasional performances from visitors and take part in musical performances themselves. Teachers also offer extra-curricular lessons in recorder and the school choir meets weekly and peripatetic teaching is available for brass, keyboard, woodwind and strings. The numbers of pupils who take advantage of these opportunities is good.

60 Evidence seen in documentation, one lesson and from a discussion with the subject leader indicate that provision for **physical education** continues to move ahead well and the range of activities is good and continues to broaden. For instance, outdoor and adventurous activities in school complement the focus on physical activities during an annual residential week. Weaknesses are identified and prioritised for attention, such as gymnastics and dance. In the one lesson seen in Year 6, very skilful teaching enabled pupils to improve their skills in volleyball. In particular, their sense of fair play and determination to improve and succeed were impressive. Swimming standards remain high. The subject leader actively promotes the subject in and out of school and has placed the school in a prominent position in the local family of schools.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

61 No lessons were seen during inspection because of the timetabling arrangement. Evidence from talking to the member of staff responsible for this aspect of the school's work indicates that the school is very committed to developing pupils' understanding and awareness of issues surrounding drugs, sex and the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Discussions with pupils and their good personal development indicate that the school is successful in developing pupils' sense of responsibility to themselves and each other. The School Council is a strong voice for pupils, initiates them in the democratic process and teaches them how they can contribute in a positive way to their community. The school ensures that pupils are involved whenever possible in its work and they have made good contributions to discussions on developing playground facilities.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	1

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