

INSPECTION REPORT

CASTLEFORD PARK JUNIOR SCHOOL

Castleford

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 108234

Headteacher: Mrs K Levey

Lead inspector: Mr J Atkinson

Dates of inspection: 25th - 28th April 2005

Inspection number: 266575

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 7 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 364

School address: Medley Street
Castleford
West Yorkshire
Postcode: WF10 4BB

Telephone number: 01977 722995
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr W Clift

Date of previous inspection: May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Park Junior School serves an area of Castleford that has experienced social and economic disadvantage in the past and is facing many changes as a result of regeneration. The school buildings have been improved over recent years and the accommodation has been refurbished. Currently there are 364 pupils on roll, making this a large school. This figure has been consistent over the past five years. Mobility is low, 99 per cent of pupils are British white and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. There are 71 pupils identified as having special educational needs of which five have statements of their special educational needs. There is a lower than average percentage of pupils with free school meals, standing at 15.3 per cent and a lower than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The Local Education Authority provides additional support for one pupil from a travelling family. The pupils' attainment on entry is in line with the expected level for seven year olds. The school has experienced significant staffing difficulties in recent years with staff absence through illness and staff leaving the school resulting in four new appointments in the past two years. This is acknowledged in the Local Education Authority review in 2005 when it refers to the headteacher's great resilience 'in a very turbulent period in the history of Park Junior School'.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18819	John Atkinson	Lead inspector	English
			History
			Geography
			Music
			Special educational needs
			English as an additional language
31718	Denise Shields	Lay inspector	
2041	Val Reid	Team inspector	Mathematics
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Religious education
			Personal, social and health education
20326	Peter Clark	Team inspector	Science
			Physical education
			Information and communication technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Park Junior School is a satisfactory school and gives satisfactory value for money. Teaching is satisfactory and effective target setting in English and mathematics is improving the achievement of pupils. The leadership of the school needs to focus on raising achievement now that staffing difficulties have been resolved. There is a good school ethos resulting in pupils being well cared for and developing good relationships with each other and adults.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the school has not had a strong enough focus on raising standards.
- Teachers are now making good use of the Local Education Authority advisers and consultants to help raise standards in English and mathematics.
- The ethos of the school is positive and results in a good level of inclusion.
- The good personal development and very good spiritual development of pupils.
- Though satisfactory, subject leadership is very limited and needs considerable development.
- Standards in art and design are very good.
- The standards in science are below average by the end of Year 6.
- The marking of work is good in English but inconsistent in other subjects.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection of 1999 and has successfully addressed most of the issues identified in its previous inspection. Although standards in English and mathematics have declined since the last inspection the school is working collaboratively with the Local Education Authority to address this in a systematic manner by driving up the quality of teaching and learning. There are more regular extra-curricular activities. The school site now has better protection from the dangers of cars. The school has retained its good ethos and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are now good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Overall, achievement is satisfactory for all pupils including those with special educational needs. In the 2004 tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, results were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science when compared to all schools. When compared to what the pupils achieved when they were seven, their achievement was very poor in English, mathematics and science. However those Year 6 pupils experienced a disrupted education over a prolonged period due to significant staffing difficulties, including long-term absence through illness. Currently in Year 6 pupils are attaining standards that are in line with the national average in English and mathematics, representing satisfactory achievement and the Local Education Authority has given good support to reach these standards. Standards in science are unsatisfactory due to the insufficient attention to investigations and the lack of leadership in the subject. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory and improving. Standards in art and design are very good because of the good teaching. In religious education standards match those prescribed in the syllabus used in schools.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils' behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes and work hard in lessons. Attendance is improving but unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment is satisfactory. In English teachers set clear targets for pupils to improve and pupils know exactly what to do to reach the next level with the outcome that pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well. However this practice of target setting is not as well developed in other subjects. The marking of English work gives pupils very clear advice on their strengths and areas for improvement. In other subjects the marking lacks detail and pupils are not sure what it is that they need to concentrate on to improve. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and have good relationships with pupils and as a result pupils work collaboratively and ask for help when needed. Therefore pupils' personal development is good and pupils feel fully included in lessons. Where teaching is good it is because the lessons are well structured, there is a good pace and pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson. Where teaching has weaknesses it is because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas and pupils are not active enough. This is the case in some science teaching where pupils do not have enough chances to carry out and record their investigations.

The curriculum is satisfactory and opportunities for enrichment are good. The accommodation is good and an attractive learning environment exists. The care, guidance and support for pupils are good and the ethos of the school is fully inclusive. The school has satisfactory links with parents and with other schools and very good links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The leadership team has not had a sufficiently strong focus on standards but is currently tackling the decline in standards of recent years through the good support of the Local Education Authority with the teaching and learning of English and mathematics. Governance is satisfactory because it supports the school enthusiastically and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. However it is not rigorous enough in monitoring the achievement of pupils. The leadership of key staff is satisfactory and the management of the school is satisfactory, although the leadership of science is unsatisfactory. The leaders of English and mathematics are new and inexperienced and they need significant development to carry out their roles in raising achievement. The staff work effectively as a team to ensure that the school is inclusive for all pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views of the school. They value highly the ethos of the school and how it cares for their children. They are very pleased with the high expectations of behaviour and the support given to children with special educational needs. Pupils like going to school and speak enthusiastically and positively about what they learn. They like knowing what their targets are and some would like to work harder.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in all core subjects but particularly in science.
- Be consistent in the marking of pupils' work so that pupils know how to reach the targets set.
- Ensure that the leadership team and governors retain a high focus on monitoring standards.
- Develop the role of subject leaders.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards in the current Year 6 are in line with the expected level in English and mathematics and below the expected level in science. Considering that pupils' attainment on entry to the school is at least in line with the expected level, the achievement of the pupils by the age of 11 is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the school has not had a strong enough focus on ensuring that standards are high enough.
- Achievement in English and mathematics is improving due to effective target setting.
- Standards in ICT are improving.
- In science there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils.

Commentary

1 Results in the Year 6 national tests declined in 2003 and further declined in 2004 with pupils reaching below the national standard in English and well below the national standard in mathematics and science. The effect of this was that the trend in the school's national curriculum points for pupils aged 11 was below the national trend. Moreover in 2004 when comparing pupils' results at 11 with those attained at seven, pupils' achievements were very poor. The reasons for this were twofold. First, there were very significant staffing difficulties resulting in Year 6 pupils having different teachers over an extended period of time that led to a very disrupted education. Second, the leadership of the school focused on the staffing problems at the expense of keeping a sufficiently strong focus on standards. Staffing problems have now been resolved and currently the attention to standards is better but it is essential that it be sustained over a prolonged period of time.

2 Currently English standards are improving because of the very clear process of target setting and the very structured approach to writing. The outcome is that more pupils are writing in an imaginative manner using a good range of vocabulary, with good attention to punctuation and handwriting. Teachers do not encourage pupils sufficiently to express their opinions and discuss different views and this leads to pupils lacking in confidence as speakers. Reading is a high priority. Pupils are listened to on a regular basis and there are good links between home and school. This has a good impact on achievement, particularly pupils with special educational needs. They are assessed carefully and given appropriate books that enable them to improve their standard of reading. Overall, pupils are attaining standards that are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6 and this represents satisfactory achievement. There are now improved procedures in place to track if pupils are achieving as well as they should be doing in junior classes and pupils clearly understand what they have to do to reach the next level.

3 Currently standards in mathematics match those expected nationally by Year 6 and this represents satisfactory achievement. The standards in junior classes have been affected by staffing changes. These are now resolved and standards are rising, helped significantly by the effective use of target setting. Current work indicates most pupils in Year 6 attain the Level 4, with around a quarter of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 and this is an improvement on previous years. With support from the Local Education Authority the school is much more focused on raising standards resulting in better lesson planning and higher expectations. Pupils make steady progress in all years and in Year 3 make a good start by learning to handle numbers, measures, shape and space confidently and gain a good range of mathematical vocabulary.

4 Standards achieved in science in the 2004 national tests by the Year 6 pupils were well below average and have fallen in each of the last three years. This is as result of unsatisfactory teaching and leadership and management due to the significant staffing difficulties that led to unchallenging work and very little monitoring of the subject. Currently the proportion of Year 6

pupils working at higher levels is below average because there is insufficient challenge for such pupils and the result is that standards by the end of Year 6 are below expected levels. However, standards are rising because teaching is improving due to better curriculum planning. Achievement across the school is satisfactory, but presents a mixed picture. Achievement in the current Year 3 is consistently good with pupils achieving well in their understanding of scientific knowledge and having good opportunities to record their own scientific investigations. The school is aware that pupils undertaking, planning and recording investigations in a variety of ways remains a weakness in most other years.

5 In ICT standards are in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Year 6 and all pupils achieve satisfactorily. However, analysis of pupils' work in Year 4 clearly indicates that pupils are working above levels expected for their age. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils. Pupils clearly enjoy ICT and work independently and collaboratively. By the end of Year 6, pupils have continued to develop a basic understanding of different aspects of ICT including multi-media packages. Achievement is restricted by the facts that the classroom-based suite is barely satisfactory as a teaching room and computers in classrooms remained unused for much of the time.

6 In religious education pupils' standards match those prescribed by the syllabus used in local schools and in art and design are well above those expected by Year 6. It was not possible to make judgements on standards or achievement in other subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.0 (25.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.6 (26.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.7 (28.1)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 90 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils like coming to school and have good attitudes to learning. Pupils' behaviour is good. They make good progress in their personal development and learning to behave in a responsible manner with politeness and consideration. Pupils develop good personal qualities, maturing into helpful children who are well prepared for their later stages in education. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. Attendance is improving but is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good, caring relationships are a strength of the school.
- Pupils say how much they like school and value the opportunity to learn alongside friends.
- Most pupils listen well and try hard to do their best in lessons.
- Behaviour in lessons is good for the great majority.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory. A small but significant minority of pupils take their holidays during term time.

Commentary

7 This aspect is a strength of the school and creates a framework within which most pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils say they like school, especially art and design and extra-curricular games and can think of few ways in which to improve it. Staff monitor and manage behavioural problems well. Pupils have consistently good attitudes to school and their willingness to learn enhances their achievement.

8 Overall behaviour is good. A few pupils have difficulty in developing self-control at lunchtimes and this can be annoying to their friends, although the school manages these pupils well. As a result of the school's effective policies on discipline, provision for moral and social development is good. Pupils have good relationships with one another and with members of staff. Promotion of good behaviour is an overt feature of lessons and assemblies and pupils are proud of their successes. Exclusions are rare and are only used to reinforce the message that aggressive anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated. There have been no exclusions in the current school year.

9 Attitudes to school are good and pupils learn to be polite, trustworthy, helpful and self controlled. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy the opportunity to take an active part in lessons and assemblies, for example, the Year 6 audiovisual assembly related to the Rain Forests.

10 Pupils make good progress in their personal development. They learn to be considerate of others, develop in confidence and are given the opportunity to think about how they feel and how others might feel as well. As they grow older they mature into helpful children with a strong desire to learn, which prepares them well for their secondary education. Pupils of all ages understand the differences between right and wrong, thanks to the school's good provision for moral development. Its code of conduct is effective in promoting fairness and consideration of others. The school successfully teaches pupils to share, take turns and to work collaboratively. Pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibility at lunchtime for example, assisting younger children to play games in the playground and this improves pupils' social development.

11 Pupils' cultural development is well promoted, a good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils study customs and beliefs other than their own in religious education lessons and subjects such as art and design, geography and history. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to meet and work alongside the rich diversity of people and places on their doorstep within their local heritage. Multi-cultural education is clearly promoted by members of staff's first hand experiences of visiting far away places, providing an exciting introduction to living in a multi-ethnic society. Residential visits give pupils a good insight into other areas and locations where people live as a direct contrast to their own.

12 The school is working hard and effectively to improve attendance and is upbeat about its ability to improve attendance further and bring it up to national levels. However, a small minority of parents take their children on holidays during term time and this has a negative effect on the overall improving picture.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.2%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	School data	0.0
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.

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	355	2	2
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and pupils' learning are satisfactory and assessment procedures are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and pupils benefit from participating in additional activities, particularly sporting activities. There is good care and guidance of the pupils and very good links with the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Target setting is used particularly effectively in English and mathematics lessons.
- There are high expectations of behaviour.
- There are good relationships and pupils collaborate well.
- Opportunities for discussion and investigative work are limited.

Commentary

13 A strength of teaching in English is that teachers set clear targets for pupils to improve and pupils know exactly what to do to reach the next level. As a result, teachers and teaching assistants are focused in the support that they give to individuals and groups and this leads to pupils making good progress. The outcome is that pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well, remaining motivated and interested. However this practice of target setting is not as well developed in other subjects and therefore the teaching is not as effective in enabling pupils to achieve what they are capable of. For example, the marking of English work gives pupils very clear advice on their strengths and areas for improvement. In other subjects the marking often only makes comments such as 'well done' or 'try harder' and pupils are not sure what it is that they need to concentrate on to improve their achievement.

14 Teachers have high expectations of how pupils will behave in lessons and this results in a good climate for learning with the majority of pupils having positive attitudes and working collaboratively. Teachers do not always exploit the success of their effective behaviour management and too often play 'safe' in their teaching with the effect that learning is sometimes too slow and pupils lose interest. Where teachers do exploit the pupils' good behaviour then lessons are interesting, fun and pupils are challenged with work that requires imagination and thought.

15 Teachers and teaching assistants have good relationships with pupils and this leads to pupils being comfortable in asking for help and support. As a result pupils are very willing to work in groups and carry out tasks collaboratively. Therefore pupils' personal development is good and pupils feel fully included in lessons. Teaching assistants and teachers work well together and this has a positive influence on pupils' attitude to learning because it demonstrates the sort of collaboration and team spirit that is expected from them.

16 Where teaching is good it is because the lessons are well structured, there is a good pace and pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson. This leads to appropriate tasks being set for groups of pupils of different abilities. Where teaching has weaknesses it is because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas and opinions and develop them in the light of other comments. This means that pupils listen for too long in some lessons and are not active enough. This is the case in some science teaching where pupils do not have enough chances to carry out and record their investigations. The outcome is that pupils' learning is limited and they do not achieve as well as they could.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (8%)	17 (44%)	18 (46%)	1 (2%)	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school provides its pupils with a satisfactory breadth and balance of learning opportunities generally well matched to their needs. There are good opportunities for enrichment in the curriculum, the accommodation is good and the resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils have good access to the curriculum on offer.
- There are good opportunities to extend, enrich and enhance the curriculum outside the school day.
- High quality displays excite pupils' interest and celebrate their achievements, particularly in art and design.
- Curriculum development is not yet a priority.

Commentary

17 The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and of the literacy and numeracy strategies. All statutory requirements are in place. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Personal, social and health education is explicitly planned for and taught in Year 3 using the 'Circle Time' approach, here, teaching and learning are good. Elements of sex and relationships and health education are taught appropriately in science lessons. Teachers and support staff ensure that pupils of all abilities are generally actively involved in lessons and so have good opportunities to access the full curriculum.

18 Schemes of work clearly define what pupils will learn year-on-year. A strong emphasis is given to learning the basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Appropriate time is, however, given to the study of the other subjects. This often successfully links together subjects such as literacy, ICT, geography, history, and art and design, for example, in their study of rainforests. The school's staffing difficulties and consequent key focus on raising standards have delayed further development of the curriculum, for instance in taking full account of the Primary Strategy - 'Excellence and Enjoyment' element. Pupils talk readily and knowledgably about different subjects and are clear on their preferences, mostly linked to interesting teaching.

19 A good range of well supported after school clubs, visitors, visits, including a residential experience for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 enhance and enrich pupils' learning the curriculum. Specialist violin, woodwind and brass tuition is available. Good use is made of visits to places of interest as a starting point for learning. Very good use of the local community, particularly for history, sports and leisure further enhances the curriculum because this interests pupils and motivates their learning. Pupils show great pride in their involvement and awards in sports and the arts.

20 Additional class accommodation, external fencing and car park arrangements mean that the accommodation is now good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Resources adequately support the learning. One classroom, however, provides a less than good environment for learning because of unresolved roof leaks. Outdoor spaces are used well for physical education and sports activities. The careful use of displays in classrooms supports numeracy and literacy learning. The halls, corridors and entrance celebrate achievement in art and design and recent learning. These attract interest from all age groups, provide models of high quality work and shows progress in learning.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are well cared for and receive good support and advice throughout the school. Effective strategies are used to promote pupils' personal development but there are limited opportunities for involving them in decision making and taking account of their views. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good arrangements to provide a healthy and safe environment for pupils.
- Teachers and support staff develop good relationships with pupils in their care.
- There are limited ways for the pupils to contribute to the school's development.

Commentary

21 There are good arrangements to promote pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school has robust procedures for health and the good displays in classrooms and corridors promote a sense of pride amongst the pupils that fosters their commitment to the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to improve their health and exercise regularly through sports activities and games.

22 Support, and advice are good because there are good procedures in place to identify and ensure that pupils' needs are met. Pastoral support is good and the school seeks the help and guidance from a good range of external agencies to support individual pupils, including pupils with special educational needs. Pupils receive good advice on how to reach their targets in English and mathematics so that they can increase their levels of achievement with as much independence as possible.

23 The absence of a school council limits the opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school's development. Pupils recognise that adults are friendly and always available if they are facing difficulties. However pupils have much to offer the school and are very keen to put forward their views. Therefore the school should exploit this by engaging pupils more in the decision making process.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with parents, very good links with the local community and satisfactory links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' curricular experiences are enriched through the local community.

- Parents like the ethos of the school.
- Parents are pleased with the work of the school and are positive about how it develops their children.
- Good links with the infants and high school ensure pupils transfer to and from the school smoothly.

Commentary

24 The links with the local community are very good and this contributes effectively to pupils' personal development as well as enriching their curriculum. This results in pupils taking part in a good range of sporting events and a substantial number of visitors to the school to supplement the curriculum; for example, theatre groups and the local professional rugby team have worked successfully in the school. Links with the infants and high school are thoughtfully organised so that pupils know the staff well; particular attention to the quiet and shy pupils prevents undue disruption to learning as they transfer from school to school.

25 Parents have positive views of the school. They feel that it looks after their children well, care for them well and has a good ethos to it in ensuring that behaviour is good. Parents are not kept sufficiently well informed about what is taught and what the expectations of homework are. This is a missed opportunity for the school in raising the achievement of pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school is currently tackling the underachievement of recent years with the additional support provided by the Local Education Authority. Governance is satisfactory because it has given solid support in the recent turbulent staffing difficulties and helped to improve the school buildings and security. It is not sufficiently rigorous in its monitoring of the achievements of pupils. The leadership of key staff is satisfactory and the management of the school is satisfactory. The school deals with aids and barriers to learning well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The previous years' limited focus on raising achievement of pupils by the leaders of the school.
- The school's commitment to being an inclusive school is high.
- Governors do not analyse data systematically.
- The management of the English and mathematics is improving but science is unsatisfactory.
- The school management's use of data is improving rapidly.

Commentary

26 The headteacher and governors have devoted much of their energy in recent years to achieving stability in staffing due to the significant problems created by the illness and extended absence of key staff. This has resulted in a lack of focus on the standards that pupils were achieving and led to an overall decline in pupils' achievements in 2003 and 2004. Since September 2004 the leadership has worked effectively with the Local Education Authority resulting in the achievement of pupils in English and mathematics being tackled rigorously through the emphasis on raising the quality of teaching and learning and the setting of pupil targets.

27 The school's commitment to inclusion is good and this means that all pupils and adults have a high level of respect for and trust in each other. As a result pupils feel that they have equal opportunities to take advantage of what the school offers and this illustrated by the very positive contribution that pupils give to the varied additional curricular opportunities and the positive ethos of the school.

28 The governors continue with the good level of support that they were giving in the last inspection. However they have a limited understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the

school because the analysis of the performance data of the school is not systematic enough. They recognise that they now need to work closely with the headteacher to tackle the vision of the school in raising standards and ensuring that pupils achieve as well as they can. The governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

29 The leaders of English and mathematics are new to their posts and they are very committed to raising pupils' achievements by improving the planning, teaching and learning in both subjects. They have worked closely with the Local Education Authority and as a result the target setting process has improved greatly and all teachers are now much more of what they should expect from all pupils. This is not the case in science where many changes of leader over recent years have left the subject vulnerable and this is reflected in the standards being achieved. There is still much to be done if pupils are to achieve what they are capable of over a sustained period. The leadership and management of other subjects such as ICT and religious education are also underdeveloped and as a result standards are not rising sufficiently quickly.

30 The school has worked effectively with the Local Education Authority to develop an effective system to track the progress of pupils in each year group. The deputy headteacher is now using this information to monitor whether pupils are achieving what they are capable of. As a result teachers are now more conscious of how to plan effectively and use support appropriately to enable specific groups of pupils to reach their targets in English and mathematics. This approach has not been extended to other subjects and this is a weakness of the leadership and management.

31 The significant aids to learning are the recent focus on raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching through the support of the Local Education Authority. A clear barrier to learning has been the staffing difficulties that led to weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning. However these difficulties have now been addressed.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	889573
Total expenditure	875212
Expenditure per pupil	2404

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	45790
Balance carried forward to the next	60150

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

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are very clear in setting targets to help pupils improve.
- Writing and reading are taught well.
- The marking of pupils' work is good.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking skills.
- The subject leaders are helping to raise standards.

Commentary

32 The school has been successful this year in improving the achievements of all pupils and it is now satisfactory. This is because the subject leaders have worked closely with the Local Education Authority to plan and implement a clear action plan designed to raise standards. This has led to teachers setting very clear targets for pupils to improve and then giving them the right support to reach these targets. As a result pupils know exactly what they have to do to achieve the next level leading to them being highly motivated and working hard with a very positive attitude. This is very influential in that pupils enjoy English lessons, feel that they are making good progress and are determined to do their best. Standards are in line with what is expected of junior pupils.

33 Teaching is satisfactory overall although there are strengths in the teaching of writing. Teaching does not always plan sufficiently well for pupils to contribute their ideas and opinions to the lesson. Pupils are limited in their ability to orally express forward views and justify them with good arguments and this is because the opportunities to do so are restricted. Teachers often dominate the discussion and their questions do not give enough chances to pupils to think about their own ideas and voice them. In the best lessons the teacher is very interactive with pupils, generating a confidence and enthusiasm amongst pupils, resulting in pupils' speaking skills flourishing.

34 Teachers have worked hard this year to develop and implement a highly structured approach to the teaching of writing. Pupils are taught a strict framework for writing and this has led to pupils using vocabulary and punctuation more effectively resulting in fluent and creative writing. For example, in Year 6 pupils were able to write persuasive and powerful letters of complaint that used good techniques to convince the reader of their argument. Pupils are given many opportunities to write for different purposes and teachers are effective in developing pupils' skills to achieve good writing. Lessons have a clear sequence and what pupils are expected to learn is made clear at the start of the lesson. As a result, pupils are attentive and interested in what they are doing and their achievement is improving all the time. This is also the case in reading where pupils are listened to on a regular basis and given the support and encouragement to improve their reading skills.

35 In English, unlike other subjects, teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and use it as an opportunity to reinforce the progress that pupils are making towards their targets. This means that pupils know what they are doing right and what they need to concentrate on if they are to get better. This has led to pupils taking a pride in their work and presenting their work carefully. For example, the handwriting of most pupils is good although those pupils who find writing difficult need to work even harder to improve their presentation of work.

36 Standards in the past two years dropped dramatically due to significant staffing difficulties resulting in the leadership not having a sufficient focus on standards. This year new subject leaders are providing satisfactory leadership and management and have approached the task of raising

standards with commitment and enthusiasm. They have worked very closely with the Local Education Authority to achieve this objective. There is now more consistency amongst teachers and the expectations of what pupils will achieve is higher. As a result planning, marking and target setting have all improved and this has led to an improvement in the standards and achievements of pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

37 Links with other subjects are satisfactory and pupils put their writing skills to satisfactory use in areas of the curriculum such as history, geography and design and technology. In some lessons such as science in Year 3 good opportunities are taken to foster pupils' speaking skills by getting to make predictions and discuss in groups.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The recently established planning and systems for tracking pupil progress are already improving the quality of learning.
- The teaching now has a greater emphasis on using and applying mathematics to solve problems.
- Pupils learn to think clearly about their mathematics and this leads to improvement.
- The quality of teaching, although satisfactory, is not sufficiently demanding enough in some classes.

Commentary

38 Standards attained in national tests in 2004 were well below average in Year 6, and have declined over the last three years. Evidence from current work indicates most pupils in Year 6 attain the expected level, with around a quarter of pupils attaining the higher than expected level and this is an improvement on previous years. In Year 6 pupils are taught in four groups of different ability and this has enabled teachers to set clear targets for all pupils. The recent tracking of progress confirms that pupils are meeting these targets. The school is benefiting from the external support of a Numeracy Consultant working alongside teachers and, as a result, the school is wholly focused on raising standards, leading to more specific lesson planning and higher expectations. More able pupils are well supported by additional challenging work, including the use of specific ICT programmes. In Years 3, 4 and 5, most pupils attain the level expected for their age and make steady progress. They get off to a good start in Year 3, learning to handle numbers, measures, shape and space confidently and gain a good range of mathematical vocabulary.

39 Teaching is satisfactory although there is good teaching in some classes. Very high expectations of behaviour and good relationships are apparent in all classes and this creates a good environment for learning. The best teaching has clear planning to meet the specific needs of all abilities and high expectations of all. During such lessons, pupils are encouraged to discuss their thinking clearly and to use correct mathematical vocabulary. Pupils are asked to think constructively, share their thinking and so they refine their learning. In these lessons mathematics is fun and pupils achievement is higher. In less effective lessons, pupils are given too much direction, too many worksheets and not enough chance to discuss and share their learning.

40 The effective application of the teaching methods and whole school targets specifically aimed at improving pupils' skills are evident in all teaching. Pupils have accelerated their learning in solving problems in everyday situations and in mental methods of calculation, such as using a number line. In this way, pupils are more confident in rapidly calculating using methods such as doubling, halving and knowing how to state fractions as decimals. This is helping them to gain confidence and accuracy in number, shape and space, measurement and data handling. In all classes, there is insufficient attention given to the recognition of pattern in sequences of numbers to

help pupils to make generalisations and to justify their reasoning. In the same way, pupils recognise problems but lack the confidence to think of a variety of ways of tackling problems without adult support.

41 Most pupils respond eagerly to challenge, try hard and most achieve as well as they can. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support individually and in groups but not in whole class sessions.

42 Management and leadership are satisfactory. The subject is led and managed by a new co-ordinator who is gaining confidence as a result of the additional support provided by Local Education Authority advisers and consultants. Pupils' attainments are assessed and their progress is tracked systematically as they move through school. A clear action plan for improvement is being followed diligently and the actions taken have led to rapid improvement over this academic year. Leadership is not sufficiently rigorous in the monitoring and tracking of pupils' achievements in all year groups.

Mathematics across the curriculum

43 Pupils use their mathematics satisfactorily in other subjects but well in science and design and technology where measurements and the representation of data in tables and graphs are frequently needed.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average and few pupils are working at a higher level.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good in Year 3 and satisfactory in all other years.
- More rigour in assessment, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and standards is required as the school strives to raise achievement.
- Work is insufficiently planned to consistently challenge higher attaining pupils so that they undertake and record their own investigations.
- The absence of targets in teachers' marking and the lack of involvement of pupils and parents in a regular review of pupils' progress is a weakness in provision.

Commentary

44 Standards achieved in the 2004 national tests by the Year 6 pupils were well below average. Inspectors' evidence clearly reflects that standards are steadily rising from Year 3 upwards. The proportion of Year 6 pupils working at higher levels is below average and standards by the end of Year 6 are below expected levels. Factors that contribute to the rising standards include good teaching, implementation of recent subject guidelines to aid progression and continuity, good relationships both between pupils and teachers and amongst pupils. Achievement across the school is satisfactory, but presents a mixed picture. Achievement in the current Year 3 is consistently good. Pupils achieve well in their understanding of scientific knowledge, and good opportunities are well planned for pupils to record their own scientific investigations. The school is aware that pupils undertaking, planning and recording investigations in a variety of ways remains a weakness in most other years. Lesson observations have gone some way towards identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning but the leadership and management are not sufficiently focused on raising standards, pupils' achievement, the rate of progress of pupils of differing abilities or the subject coverage of the same year group. Turbulent staffing problems over a two-year period clearly have had an adverse effect on standards achieved in the 2004 tests.

45 Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In Years 4 to 6 teachers are not planning work that meets the needs of pupils of different abilities. While good and very good examples of teaching were observed in Year 3, it remains patchy and, as a result, work set is not

matched closely enough to pupils' different levels of attainment. In good lessons, teachers' confident subject knowledge and enthusiasm engages pupils' attention and the practical use of equipment keeps pupils motivated and on task. As a result, good amounts of interesting work are completed on time incorporating good levels of presentation including recording observations in a variety of ways. ICT is used at regular intervals to support pupils' learning in science for example, access to the Internet to research information. However, in discussion with pupils they clearly indicated that science was their least popular subject, with comments like "work is far too easy" and that most of the time was spent filling in blanks from copied work written on the board by the teacher. Assessment procedures need tightening up and at present are unsatisfactory. Work in books is regularly marked on completion of a specific task. However, it fails to suggest to pupils how they can improve to reach higher levels. Target setting is at an early stage of development and as yet fails to provide sufficient information on overall achievement based on prior learning levels.

46 Leadership and management of the subject are ineffective. Over the previous five years the subject has been managed by different subject leaders, therefore continuity of approach has been fragmented. A recently appointed caretaker subject leader has so far had limited opportunity for the monitoring of teaching, learning and standards. A suitable comprehensive subject action plan is in place as the school strives to raise standards. Limited analysis of national test results has given the school a more accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses and this is a positive step forward.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in Information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent improvements in resources have significantly boosted the quality of provision.
- There are gaps in levels of available software to fully support all parts of the National Curriculum.
- Pupils like ICT and they work well.
- Assessment, monitoring and evaluation of the quality of education are areas for improvement.
- Year 6 pupils produce good quality multi-media presentations.

Commentary

47 Standards are in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Year 6 and all pupils achieve satisfactorily. However, analysis of pupils' work in Year 4 clearly indicates that pupils are working above levels expected for their age. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils. Effective staff training is enabling teachers and support staff to make good use of computers and other resources such as digital cameras. Provision has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

48 The school has done a good job to improve the ICT resources in recent years. However the classroom based suite is barely satisfactory as a teaching room. Furniture is inferior in quality, a wide variation in tables and their low height makes screen vision difficult and a lack of ventilation makes whole class teaching extremely uncomfortable with pupils, on some occasions, working three to a monitor. Achievement for most is therefore restricted. The need to network all computers throughout the school and to incorporate control and modelling aspects more robustly into the curriculum are agreed areas for future development. The regular use of the computer suite in the main hall area by all year groups plus regular use of the computers in the classrooms by pupils lacks a cohesive policy. Computers in classrooms remained unused for much of the time during the inspection. It is clearly evident that if ICT became a central plank to underpin skills across all areas of the curriculum, levels of attainment have the potential to rise from their present status.

49 Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Most teachers' subject knowledge is good. Teaching assistants are used effectively to promote children's learning. Good

teaching was observed in a limited number of lessons. In these lessons, good use of questioning and the choice of appropriate tasks meant that pupils, including special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, were challenged and supported suitably. Pupils clearly enjoy ICT and work independently and earnestly at their computer-based tasks. Good levels of co-operation and collaboration were much in evidence. By the end of Year 6, pupils have continued to develop a basic understanding of different aspects of ICT including multi-media packages. However, experiences do not build into a broad curriculum especially in terms of control and modelling. The school plans to address this problem in the near future.

50 Leadership and management are satisfactory. Monitoring of teaching and learning is necessary in the subject to ensure that the best use is made of resources and that a real grasp on standards throughout the school is realised. The assessment of skills and pupils' knowledge is at present unsatisfactory. There is therefore insufficient insight into how each group of pupils is learning to assist staff to give potentially higher achieving children more challenge.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

51 The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. While some teachers use computers and other equipment to support learning in other subjects well, this is not the case in all classes. Confident teaching takes full advantage of chances to use ICT to enhance pupils' learning, for example, numeracy skills. This is allowing pupils to learn at their own pace and gain independence and use their skills to a satisfactory level.

HUMANITIES

52 It was not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of provision or pupils' achievement in **geography** and **history** as too few lessons were observed during the period of the inspection. An analysis of planning, pupils' work and displays indicates that the curriculum is covered appropriately in both subjects and pupils study a wide range of topics. In geography a range of activities based on work in the local area and environmental change captivates pupils' interest and this led to Year 6 pupils showing their PowerPoint presentations on rainforests to the whole school in assembly. In history pupils have studied topics such as Greece, the Ancient Egyptians and the Victorians and this has led to pupils having good opportunities to contrast the lifestyles of people from different times with their own life styles. A strength of the work in history is the effective links with literacy and the pupils' development of the ICT skills through the research undertaken on the Internet.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a secure understanding of different world religions and faiths.
- The limited use of artefacts, visits and ICT does not enliven the subject sufficiently.
- Teaching, using discussion as a way of learning is the most successful.
- Assessment and the monitoring of teaching and learning are not sufficient in each year group to know levels of achievement and progress.

Commentary

53 Pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily and consequently, standards match those prescribed by the syllabus used in local schools. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Between Years 3 and 6 pupils gain a satisfactory grounding in different world religions and faiths such as Christianity, Muslim and Hinduism. In Years 3 and 4, pupils reflect on important human values such as respect, sharing and caring when thinking about the value of social services and people's needs. Similarly in Year 5, pupils became engaged in the discussion and mapping of the 'Journey of Life', because they had personal experience to draw on. These

approaches are very appropriate for the nature and needs of the pupils and make an effective contribution to their moral and social development. Pupils know many stories told by Jesus and know they are called parables. They enjoyed the story of 'The Talents' to help explain the theme of 'Work to the best of your Ability'.

54 Teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good. Planning is clear, lessons are well prepared and the limited resources are used effectively. However, there is limited use of artefacts and ICT to enhance and enliven the subject and this has an impact on pupils' interest and enjoyment and prevents standards from being higher. The best teaching demands active listening and participation in discussion and debate. Teachers and assistants help pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, to speak confidently and to justify their opinions. Pupils generally have good attitudes to learning. In this way the subject makes an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

55 Leadership and management are satisfactory. Assessment systems are clear, but are unsatisfactory in that they are not used by all staff and the management of the subject has not identified this. They are used in the co-ordinator's class, but not in other classes. Little work is recorded and so it is difficult to show progress and levels of understanding over time.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

56 Pupils' work in **music** was sampled and no judgements have been made on provision or standards. The quality of pupils' singing is good and it is obvious that pupils enjoy singing and like working in harmony with other pupils. The curriculum is planned to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to play musical instruments and create their own musical sequences. The school uses specialist music teachers to teach pupils how to play musical instruments. Each year musical concerts feature as a way of celebrating pupils' progress and sharing with parents the pupils' enjoyment of making and performing music.

57 No lessons were seen in **design and technology** and so no judgement can be made about overall provision or standards in this subject. Discussions with pupils, and an examination of teachers' planning, indicates that the curriculum is well-planned allowing opportunities for pupils to explore and use a good range of materials and appropriate links are made with skills learned in other subjects. Pupils' work in Years 4 and 5 shows they have a good knowledge and understanding of the required range of skills and techniques. For example, they use mechanisms to make pop-up books and toys that move and they know how to assemble and join different materials in a variety of ways. When talking about what they know, understand and can do in the subject, pupils in Year 6 recall previous work readily, using specific vocabulary such as 'examine' and 'features'. They show much enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils show a good understanding of the processes of designing and making and are clear about the difference between a picture and a design drawing. Pupils enjoy the practical nature of the subject and commented, "We always make interesting things". Consequently they show real pride in their achievements and a desire to learn more.

58 Only a limited number of lessons were seen in **physical education**. It is therefore not possible to make a firm judgement about overall provision or standards. From viewing planning and discussions with teachers and pupils it is evident that all the strands of the subject, including outdoor adventurous activities, are regularly taught. Pupils benefit from regular swimming lessons and records show that most pupils are on track to meet the requirements to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities is good and pupils participate well in these activities. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are regularly coached during extra-curricular games. Good use is made of the spacious playing field and hard surfaces which benefit all pupils. In the extra-curricular session observed, the majority of pupils made good progress in their catching and throwing skills. The clearly planned activities provide good opportunities to practise and consolidate skills in games of football and netball. These activities contribute well to pupils' personal, social and moral development because of the emphasis on taking part and being part of a team that pervades much of the work of the school. Assessment is an aspect of provision that requires further monitoring to ensure physical activities are matched to the needs of pupils. The school harnesses

the support of sports coaches for a range of activities and these add good value to pupils' physical education.

ART AND DESIGN

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high value placed on the subject ensures that sufficient time is given to develop pupils' skills.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teaching is confident, knowledgeable, thorough and enthusiastic, consequently learning and standards are of high quality.
- High quality displays enliven the learning environment and show high standards for pupils to work towards.

Commentary

59 Standards in Year 6 are well above average and pupils of all abilities achieve very well. This is because they have had a very good grounding in art and design, learning techniques such as colour mixing, texture, tone, print and use a good range of media, such as, paint, pastel, print, clay and one example of ICT print design. Studying different artists and craftspeople, for example, Henry Moore, William Morris, Jackson Pollock and the Impressionists, help pupils to build their knowledge of styles, techniques and different art forms. Visits to view sculpture stimulates learning, for instance, the work of Henry Moore, further engages pupils' interest and led to the production of high quality observational drawings. Their attitudes towards art and design are very good; they have high expectations and use the very good examples around school to aspire to high quality.

60 A very good feature of the teaching is that pupils are encouraged to use sketchbooks to try out a variety of techniques, media and materials, building up knowledge and skills to draw on. They show a very good understanding of design, plan their work carefully and know how to develop ideas to a set brief. For example, in Year 6, pupils used these skills when, following a study of Henri Rousseau, they continued to practice techniques and learned about colour, shade and tones as they developed their work towards making large scale mixed media pieces as part of their work on rainforests. When discussing their work, pupils confidently use vocabulary such as 'create', 'study', 'technique', 'effect' and 'subtle brush strokes'. Year 5 pupils show very good knowledge of working in clay as they create tiles using their chosen design of a sea creature. They manipulate the clay well, using good moulding techniques to ensure that their models will withstand being fired in the kiln.

61 Teaching is consistently very good and promotes high quality learning. Teachers' enthusiasm and confidence is caught by all the pupils. Consequently they love art sessions, are eager to make art, learn more and improve. Lessons are demanding and no time is wasted. The subject is used well to enhance and show work in other subjects, for example in Year 4 pupils created wonderful thread and fabric paint work following a lesson in science where they observed the changes in ice balloons.

62 Leadership is very good as it provides very comprehensive curriculum with rigour and very good enrichment. Management is satisfactory because there is no formal monitoring or evaluation. However, portfolios of work and displays in school clearly show individual and year group progression.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

63 Only one lesson was observed in **personal, social and health education and citizenship** and so no judgement could be made about overall provision in this subject. Personal, social and health education are under development this year. A good start has been made in Year 3, where

two of the year group teachers have taken leadership responsibility. Two new subject leaders began in September 2004 with a clear action plan for development, already successfully implemented in Year 3 in planned sessions. They have attended training and made contact with a specialist local teacher. A School Council is to be set up in the near future. In the observed lesson Year 3 pupils responded well, showing a good understanding of feelings linked to loneliness.

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	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
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).