

INSPECTION REPORT

FRIARSWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newcastle-under-Lyme

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124109

Headteacher: Mr T Selby

Lead inspector: Mrs D Bell

Dates of inspection: 4th - 6th October 2004

Inspection number: 266852

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:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	153
School address:	Abbots Way Newcastle-under-Lyme Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST5 2ES
Telephone number:	(01782) 297 345
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Brooks
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

With 145 pupils aged four to 11 on roll, and a further eight children attending the Nursery part time, Friarswood is smaller than most primary schools. The school is considerably undersubscribed due to the falling birth rate in the area it serves, which is very mixed in terms of socio-economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving at different times is well above that found in most schools, and a good number have particularly disrupted backgrounds due to home circumstances. Nursery and Reception children are taught in two classes and attainment on entry to the Nursery is as expected for pupils' ages. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught in single year group classes for all subjects. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in four classes for English, mathematics and science. For all other subjects, they are taught in three classes. The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is similar to most schools as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs fluctuates throughout the year because of the high levels of mobility, and the proportion with statements of special educational needs is above the national average. The main areas of special needs are social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, with smaller proportions of pupils having severe learning difficulties, autism or medical needs. Only a small number of pupils come from ethnic minority or mixed ethnic backgrounds. However, three pupils (Bangladeshi) are at the early stages of learning English. The school has had a new headteacher since the previous inspection; it does not have a deputy headteacher. It has achieved the Basic Skills Award and Dyslexia Friendly Status. Since its last inspection, it has twice received a School Improvement Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16413	Mrs D Bell	Lead inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs
9798	Mrs V Ashworth	Lay inspector	
30935	Mrs K McArthur	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography History Religious education
16761	Mr M Hemmings	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Physical education English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Good leadership and management and effective teaching have ensured that pupils achieve at least well by the time they leave the school, whatever their background or ability. The school successfully minimises the considerable barriers to learning faced by a sizeable proportion of its pupils, and develops in the pupils very good attitudes to learning. It provides **good value for money**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Leadership and management are good and have brought the school a long way since the previous inspection. However, the school improvement plan does not include the very clearly stated vision for long-term development.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. There is a very strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils learn as well as they can whatever their circumstances.
- The quality of teaching is good. Some very good and occasionally excellent teaching in Years 3 to 6 highly motivates the pupils and helps to accelerate their learning.
- Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). They are not yet fully in place in other subjects.
- The school supports and guides its pupils very well, personally and academically and provides very effectively for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Foundation Stage teaching and provision, though satisfactory overall, is not well enough structured to ensure the children's best progress.

IMPROVEMENT SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

Improvement is good. All of the key issues from the previous inspection in 1999 have been tackled well. The quality of teaching has improved as have standards overall. The resources for reading are much improved; pupils' progress is effectively tracked; good schemes of work are in place for all subjects, and all test and assessment outcomes are carefully analysed and used to inform planning. Under the headteacher's effective leadership, the school has successfully dealt with increasingly high levels of pupil movement and fluctuations in the levels of capability in each year group.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall achievement is good. It is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, and good in Years 1 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress because of the excellent provision made for them. Children in the Reception class are on course to reach the goals expected for the end of Reception (the early learning goals). In 2003, the results of the national tests for pupils in Year 2 were above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. They were well above those of similar schools in reading and writing and above in mathematics. Early indications from the unconfirmed results for 2004 are that standards in Year 2 have continued to rise, and standards in Year 6 are improving after a period of apparent decline during which there were major changes in the school's population.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003

English	B	C	D	D
mathematics	B	A	C	C
science	A	A	C	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.

Currently, standards are above the national expectation in English and in art and design in Year 2, and in history in Year 6. In all other subjects inspected, they are in line with national expectations in both year groups. There have been differences in the attainment of boys and girls in the past, but no significant differences were noted during the inspection. **The school provides very well for pupils’ personal spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and they behave very well. Attendance and punctuality are now satisfactory. Attendance is getting better as a result of the school’s very good procedures to improve it.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The quality of **teaching is good overall.** It is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. The limited direction given in some of the activities planned for this age group means that children sometimes flit around from one activity to the next without any real focus to their learning. This inhibits their progress. The quality of teaching is good in the rest of the school, with some very good and occasionally excellent teaching in Years 3 to 6. English and mathematics are taught well and literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are promoted effectively in other subjects. Using their good subject knowledge, teachers plan interesting and enjoyable activities that motivate pupils and make them want to learn. Teachers assess pupils’ work well, recording their progress and using the information to plan suitably challenging activities for all pupils including the few for whom English is an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the excellent provision made for them. Very well-trained, well-briefed support staff are very effectively deployed to make maximum use of their extensive expertise during the limited time they have in school. A very well-planned curriculum very effectively meets the needs of the pupils. Pupils are very well cared for, guided and supported, and relationships are very good throughout the school. Very good links with parents and the community, and good links with other schools and colleges contribute in good measure to pupils’ overall achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads and manages the school well, keeping it firmly focused on improving pupils’ achievement. An effective team of staff and governors support him effectively. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are met. Key staff lead and manage their subjects well. The provision for special educational needs is exceptionally well managed. The headteacher and governors state very clearly their vision for the future but they have not embedded it in a long-term strategic plan to help them move steadily towards it.

PARENTS’ AND PUPILS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have positive views of the school. The school in turn highly values what they have to say, and their contributions to school improvement. Relationships between pupils, parents and the school are very good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER ARE:

- Provide more structure in the Foundation Stage so that learning opportunities are not missed.
- Extend assessment procedures to all subjects.
- Establish a long term, strategic plan for the school that shows how the clearly stated vision for further improvement is to be achieved over time.
- Improve spelling throughout the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Pupils achieve well and standards are at least in line with the national expectation in all subjects by the time pupils leave the school. Boys, girls and pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Achievement is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the national expectation in English and in art and design in Year 2, and in history in Year 6. National expectations are met in all other subjects in both year groups.
- The school successfully minimises the disruption to learning caused by high levels of pupil movement in Years 3 to 6, resulting in all pupils achieving at least well by the time they leave.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the very effective support they receive from the teachers and teaching assistants.
- Progress is more limited in the Foundation Stage than in the rest of the school because activities do not always have a clear focus for learning.

Commentary

1. Children start school with levels of attainment that are broadly in line with what is expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. Those currently in the Reception class are on course to reach the goals expected for the end of Reception (the early learning goals) in all six areas of learning. However, their progress is limited by the lack of structure in some of the activities planned for them and the lack of a clear learning focus for their work.
2. In 2003, the national test results for pupils in Year 2 were above the national average in reading and matched the national average for writing and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.7 (17.8)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.1 (16.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.3 (16.2)	16.3 (16.5)

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

3. The results were well above those of similar schools in reading and writing, and above in mathematics. The teacher assessments for science showed that pupils' attainment was very high when compared to all schools and similar schools. Early indications from the unconfirmed results for 2004 are that standards have risen again this year. The trend in the average points score in this age group is below the national trend but this overall judgement must be treated with caution because of the well-documented changes in the spread of ability levels in each year group. The current Year 2 class has a large

proportion of pupils who are higher attainers, and a sizeable proportion of lower attainers, with few in the middle ability range. Overall, however, the standard of reading, writing, speaking and listening is good in this age group, but spelling is weak. Throughout the school, pupils make good use of their literacy skills in most other subjects. Good, practical activities in mathematics and science provide pupils with 'hands-on' experiences that they remember to apply when they are solving written problems or recording scientific investigations. They use their numeracy skills effectively in other subjects.

- The English results for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 were below, and the mathematics and science results in line with the national average. When their performance is examined against their prior attainment when they were in Year 2, the picture is exactly the same.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.0 (27.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.7 (28.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.8 (29.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- The trend in the test results for pupils in Year 6 is above the national trend. This is particularly impressive because high levels of pupil movement in and out of the school, and the increase in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, result in the make-up of each year group being very different. Almost half of the Year 6 pupils who took the tests in 2003 had not been at this school when they were in Year 2. In 2004, this rose to over half of the Year 6 group. The barriers to learning caused by these factors are effectively minimised by good leadership and management, effective teaching, a very well-planned curriculum, and the rigorous tracking of pupils' progress while they are at the school. Initiatives such as the 'Sunshine Group' also contribute to the pupils' good achievement. The effective work that takes place in this group successfully enables children who have experienced trauma in their personal lives to come to terms with it, and to learn effectively. Pupil mobility greatly affects the test results in Year 6, and the school's ability to reach the challenging but realistic targets it sets for its pupils. In 2003, for example, it slightly exceeded the target it set for English but narrowly missed the target for mathematics. One reason for this was that two pupils, who were clearly on course to reach the expected levels, left the school in the term prior to taking the tests. Early indications from the results for 2004 are that standards have continued to rise and that the school has exceeded the targets it set for English and mathematics for this year group.
- Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. This is because of the very good support they receive from well-trained, well-briefed teaching assistants. The excellent leadership and management of this group of people ensure that their expertise is used to maximum effect in the limited time they have in school. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve well because, although it does not receive direct support for these pupils, the school acts on the advice given by the Ethnic Minority Achievement team. The school's very strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils achieve as well as they can, whatever their background or circumstances, underpins all

of its work. Parents and pupils speak highly of the school's approach and parents are very pleased with their children's achievements and with the standards they reach.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and they behave very well. Provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has high expectations of pupils in terms of their attitudes and behaviour.
- Relationships are very good and the school is an open and friendly place in which to learn.
- Pupils are very effectively included in all activities.
- Pupils readily accept responsibility and make a good contribution to the daily life of school. The school highly values their contributions.
- Pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties are given very good support to enable them to fit into the routines of school life.

Commentary

7. Since the previous inspection, there has been good Improvement in this aspect of the school's work. The satisfactory provision for personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage ensures that children are happy at school and readily join in all of the activities prepared for them. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to encourage them to listen carefully to each other or to concentrate on a task. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 enjoy school and have very good attitudes to learning. This is an important factor in the good achievement and progress that most pupils make. A very caring atmosphere has been created, and relationships between adults and pupils are very good. Pupils' efforts are greatly valued and this gives them the confidence to tackle problems and to try new approaches. Pupils go through the school day happily and enjoy having visitors to talk to. They are friendly, polite and keen to talk about themselves and their school. They are successfully encouraged to be co-operative, trustworthy, and tolerant. The wide range of extra-curricular clubs and the many educational visits they can take part in, effectively develop their social skills beyond the classroom. These opportunities help pupils gain a better understanding of their place in the wider community.
8. Attendance was well below average in the latest complete reporting year. However, the school has worked very hard and has successfully improved attendance in the past year. Attendance and punctuality are now satisfactory. The school narrowly missed its target of 95 per cent attendance by the end of the school year because of some parents taking their children on holiday during term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	7.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.0
National data	0.4

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

9. Pupils gain a very good awareness of themselves and the world around them through the school's good programme for personal and social development, which permeates all of its work. Well-planned assemblies make a very good contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In lessons, the pupils experience stories, music and art from a range of cultures and are given good opportunities to work with visiting musicians, authors and poets. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are very successfully integrated into the life of the school. The school successfully encourages them to share their faith and their cultural traditions with other pupils. This, together with the good emphasis placed on learning about the beliefs and traditions of other faiths and cultures, for example, in religious education lessons, history and geography, develops in the pupils good levels of respect for others.
10. Behaviour is very good throughout the school. No pupils were excluded in the latest reporting year. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations and strong moral guidance offered by the school and demonstrated by the staff. They understand and appreciate the range of rewards and sanctions that are in place to encourage good behaviour. This has a positive effect on the quality of life within the school and on pupils' attitudes towards each other. There were no incidents of bullying during the inspection and pupils are fully aware of the procedures to follow if any form of harassment does occur. They take a keen interest in how their school works, taking on a variety of responsibilities that develop their confidence and self-esteem thereby helping them to gain a sense of belonging to and taking pride in their own community. Pupils have a genuine say in what happens in the school through the School Council. Council members talked with pride about the way they helped the school's 'buddy' system to come into being. They felt this helped new pupils to make friends and also encouraged pupils to share any concerns that they might have.
11. The excellent provision for pupils with special educational needs results in these pupils being very effectively integrated into the life of the school. This is a very important aspect of the school's work as its intake is changing and more pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are being admitted. Even pupils with severe behavioural difficulties develop good attitudes to learning and behave very well in class most of the time. This is because the school very successfully includes all of its pupils in everything it has to offer, raising their self-esteem and making them feel valued. High quality teaching assistants contribute very effectively to pupils' personal development. An added sense of responsibility, citizenship, caring and respect for others, whatever their circumstances, are very effectively fostered as pupils from a nearby special school attend lessons in two classes for part of each week. The local education authority described the school as a 'flagship' for this very worthwhile work.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Good teaching, a very well-planned curriculum, very good welfare, support and guidance for the pupils, very good links with parents and the community, and good links with other schools and colleges all help pupils to learn well.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good. It is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and consistently good in Years 1 and 2. It is often very good and occasionally excellent in Years 3 to 6. Assessment procedures are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is good in Years 1 to 6. It is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage but the planned activities sometimes lack structure and direction, thereby limiting progress in that age group.
- Support for learning is very good. Teachers make best use of the time and expertise of their highly-trained teaching assistants.
- The school's very strong focus on equality of opportunity manifests itself in challenging, practical activities that interest, involve and highly motivate pupils of all levels of capability.
- Assessment information is used effectively to plan work in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Assessment procedures are not yet fully embedded in other subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	5	11	6	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

12. Whilst teaching is overall satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, staff are not always sufficiently alert to the many learning opportunities that present themselves throughout each session. This limits the progress the children make in this age group. For example, opportunities are missed to guide behaviour when these young children begin to lose concentration in whole-class sessions, or show reluctance to take turns or negotiate during independent activities. Equally, a lack of structure or direction in some activities results in the children moving from one activity or piece of equipment to another without staff intervening to make sure they are learning continuously.
13. Planning is good in the rest of the school. It is firmly based on the teachers' good evaluations of pupils' learning in lessons, and their overall good assessments in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Assessment procedures are not yet fully in place in all other subjects. In some subjects, end-of-unit assessments indicate which pupils have done better than, or not as well as expected, measured by their achievement against the learning objectives for the unit. Samples of work are kept in most subjects. However, they are not annotated to show the levels reached and this limits their usefulness as a means of determining whether pupils are making adequate progress. Nevertheless, pupils speak well of their teachers and how they help them and their views are echoed by the vast majority of parents. Pupils know their targets for English and mathematics, and eagerly point out in their work what they are doing to reach those targets. They have a good knowledge of how well they are learning and what they need to do to improve. Their work is marked regularly and encouraging comments help to develop their self-esteem. However, there are few comments that make it clear to pupils how they might improve their work. Homework is set regularly and helps pupils to consolidate what they learn in school. Parents and pupils are pleased with this.
14. Teachers take very good account of the targets in the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. The excellent guidance they receive from the

special educational needs co-ordinator assists them in this, and very effective use is made of the teaching assistants in all parts of lessons. Although their hours are few, the expertise they have gained from training in specific areas of need is put to very good use so that pupils with statements and those on the school's register for special educational needs, gain maximum benefit from their input and make very good progress. They provide very good levels of support during whole-class, group and individual work, underpinning the school's very strong drive towards ensuring the full inclusion of all pupils in all parts of a lesson. The special educational needs co-ordinator also has responsibility for gifted and talented pupils, and pupils for whom English is an additional language. Guided by her input, teachers plan suitable work for pupils who may be gifted and talented, and for the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language, ensuring their overall good progress throughout the school.

15. English and mathematics are taught well and teachers successfully promote literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. Very good emphasis is placed on practical activities that draw on the pupils' own experiences. This takes learning forward at a good pace for all pupils. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson, the very effective use of role-play demonstrated the pupils' good speaking and listening skills. Following this, the interactive whiteboard was used very effectively to introduce the story of Hamlet in a very accessible way. This prepared pupils very well for their written work based on their further discussion, in groups, of the feelings of the characters involved at each stage of the play. All pupils were highly involved, their different views valued and their learning extended through very effective questioning that encouraged them to think long and hard about, and respect each other's different points of view. A similar approach resulted in an excellent history lesson about conditions in the trenches in World War 2. The overall quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good. It meets statutory requirements and includes many very good enrichment opportunities that encompass a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Staffing is adequate. Accommodation and learning resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 has been adapted very well to meet the changing needs of pupils admitted to the school.
- Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is not sufficiently well focused on ensuring that learning takes place at all times.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent.
- A very good programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education promotes pupils' personal development very well.
- Pupils are prepared very well for the next stages in their education.

Commentary

16. The curriculum is much improved since the previous inspection. The headteacher has provided good leadership in helping the school to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of its changing intake. Throughout the school, good emphasis is placed on providing pupils with practical activities linked to their own experiences. In Years 1 to 6, this approach has captured and maintained pupils' interest in their work, resulting in

good attitudes to learning and good achievement. In the Foundation Stage, however, planning for some of these activities lacks focus and leads to children moving from one task to another, without learning as much as they could in each. In general, however, effective use is made of local and national guidance to raise standards in literacy and numeracy and these have had a positive effect on pupils' achievement. In science, pupils have well-developed investigational skills because of the many opportunities to take part in structured, practical experiments. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has greatly improved since the previous inspection, with the creation of a computer suite. This is used well to teach pupils basic skills in ICT, which they then use effectively to support their learning in other subjects. The very good planning for personal, social, health and citizenship education has been energised in the past year by a good policy and scheme of work that have raised teachers' awareness of this important aspect of the curriculum.

17. The provision for special educational needs is excellent. Every pupil is treated as an individual and the provision extends beyond learning and behavioural difficulties to encompass those pupils who have suffered personal and emotional trauma for whatever reason. Statutory requirements are exceptionally well met; records are meticulously kept and provision is kept under constant review to check that, as far as is possible within the budget available, pupils always have the best support the school can provide. Provision is greatly enhanced by the setting up of the Nurture Group, which relevant pupils attend to help them re-integrate into school following periods of difficulty in their personal lives. These pupils are very effectively re-integrated into class and helped to take a full part in all that the school has to offer them. Pupils with English as an additional language and those who are gifted and talented are supported well and so make good achievement and progress, both academically and personally. All pupils are prepared well for the next stages of their education, which culminates in the good links with the local secondary schools for when they transfer there. For pupils with special educational needs, these links often start in Year 5 so that the pupils' learning difficulties are fully understood by their receiving high school.
18. Opportunities for enrichment are very good. All pupils have equal opportunity to take part in a variety of rich experiences in art and design, drama and music to develop their creative talents. Effective use is made of visitors, such as artists and theatre groups, to develop a variety of creative skills. A wide range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities, such as computer, choir, recorder, drama, cricket, sporting and gymnastic clubs further enhance learning and give pupils the opportunity to indulge and extend their interests and talents beyond the normal school day. Whilst staffing is adequate, the good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum means that pupils' needs are very well met. There are good quality resources for teaching and learning in all subjects. The attractive displays of pupils' work in corridors and classrooms help to provide an interesting setting in which to learn. The opening of an environmental area, which pupils and staff may use for quiet, personal reflection, has recently enhanced the outside area.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of its pupils. It provides good support and guidance for all pupils, based on the effective monitoring of their personal and academic development. Pupils are very much involved in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of pupils, including child protection, are very good.
- The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are very good.
- The school has very good systems to ensure pupils are actively involved in the life of the school.

Commentary

19. The level of care, support and guidance is much improved since the previous inspection. Child protection procedures are very good. Almost every member of staff has received updated training and is fully briefed on their responsibilities. Routines for dealing with safety in the building and on outside visits, first aid procedures and procedures for dealing with and recording accidents, are very well established. The governors are very actively involved in ensuring that all health and safety requirements are met. Rigorous risk assessments are carried out regularly. The use of the Internet is closely monitored and only accessed with parental consent. The Internet safety policy is published on the school's website. Teachers know the pupils very well and they very effectively promote the pupils' personal development. The use of teaching assistants to support pastoral care and provide academic support for all age groups is very good. It is particularly effective in the Nurture Group where a small number of pupils are sensitively guided and supported to help them deal with the significant barriers to learning that they face. This work further underpins the school's determination to ensure that all pupils learn as well as they can, whatever their ability or circumstances.
20. Induction arrangements on entry to Reception are satisfactory. A very small number of parents expressed their concern at not being allowed into school in the mornings. This system has, however, helped the children to settle into school quickly by gaining confidence and learning the new routines. Very good care is taken of those who enter school, whatever their age or stage of learning. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported through teachers' planning, the very effective contribution made by teaching assistants and the support and guidance they receive through the very good relationships they have with other pupils and with staff. The school works very closely with external agencies to ensure that all pupils get all of the support they need. Staff readily make themselves available to parents and carers to discuss any issues of concern.
21. The school has effective mechanisms for involving pupils in its life and work. The School Council gives pupils good opportunity to show initiative and take responsibility and the councillors feel that they really can make a difference to the whole learning environment. The personal, social, health and citizenship programme gives opportunities for all pupils to share concerns and voice their opinions, and the school's approach to this sets an atmosphere in which pupils know that their ideas are welcomed and valued.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are very good. The links with other schools are good. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The vast majority of parents have a very high regard for the school.
- Parents receive good quality information about all aspects of school life.
- The school has developed very good links with the community.

Commentary

22. Those parents who completed the questionnaire and those who attended the pre-inspection meeting, have overall, very positive views of the school. Parents at the meeting voiced some concerns about certain aspects of communication, homework and behaviour. The school provides very good quality information on all aspects of school life starting with a welcome pack, which is given to all new parents, and continuing through newsletters, letters home, the governors' annual report and a well-written, informative prospectus. Parents are free to approach the school at any time if they have concerns and they greatly appreciate the approachability of the staff and the headteacher. Regular surveys of parents obtain their views, which the school greatly values and acts upon. The pupils' annual reports vary in quality across the school but are always at least satisfactory. They do not always contain specific information about what pupils need to do to improve in each subject. Although they contain targets, these are often too general to be of help to parents who want to assist in their children's learning.
23. Parents are very supportive of the school. A number of volunteers assist on school trips, and some have become teaching assistants, supported by the school in their efforts to do so. They contribute well towards their children's learning, both at home and at school and are keen for their children to succeed. The various courses offered to parents in school support them in this work. An extremely thriving parent-teacher association has contributed large sums of money towards the cost of computers, and money and manpower to the creation of the new recreational area. Although some parents do not feel they have much contact with the governors, few attend the annual general meeting that the governors hold for them. The parent governors welcome contact with parents.
24. The school has good links with other schools and colleges, readily accepting work experience pupils and initial teacher training students. There are good arrangements in place for transfer to the two main secondary schools. Links with the community are very good and continue to be positively promoted by the school. The school website and links with the local newspaper continue to be important in communicating with the world outside of the school. The school is let to sporting clubs and there are many visitors to the school. Older residents are invited to the end-of-year production and the school choirs sing in the local church.
25. The school makes every attempt to involve all parents of pupils with special educational needs in helping their children to learn and make progress, and every effort to encourage all parents to sign the individual education plans. The ways in which parents can help is clearly set out in those plans. Parents' views on their children's progress are regularly sought and they are invited to attend school to review progress with the staff. Parents of pupils with statements attend all reviews of the statement provision. The school's very effective contact with parents whose children may have learning difficulties begins before they start school, when the special educational needs co-ordinator attends the induction

meetings and invites parents to share any concerns they may have. The parents greatly welcome this early support they receive from the school. It again demonstrates the school's very good determination to give all pupils the best possible chance to succeed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are effectively met. The leadership provided by the headteacher and key staff is good and effective management systems support learning well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher sets a very clear educational direction, very firmly based on ensuring that all pupils are given the best possible chance to do as well as they possibly can. However, this is not articulated in a long-term, strategic improvement plan.
- The governors know their school well. They successfully ensure that the school receives best value from all spending.
- The management of special educational needs is excellent.
- The staff responsible for English, mathematics, science and ICT carry out their roles effectively. Management of other subjects is less well developed.
- Financial management and control are good.

Commentary

26. The headteacher's good leadership and management skills have successfully carried the school through a challenging period when numbers have fallen, the budget reduced, levels of pupil mobility have risen and more pupils with special educational needs have been admitted. His very clear sense of purpose and educational direction is embedded in the school mission statement: 'Achievement means happy children, caring relationships and high expectations.' The headteacher is very well respected, and has good support from senior management, all staff, parents and governors, all of whom show strong levels of commitment to the aims of the school and to its pupils. The headteacher and governors are very clear about how they want the school to improve and develop in future years but have not articulated their vision in a strategic plan that shows how they intend to achieve it.
27. Governance is good. The governors have good knowledge of their school. They support the senior management team well and have a good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have sufficient knowledge to question and challenge the headteacher confidently, for example, on staffing issues and difficult budget decisions. They are equally committed to raising standards and providing a caring environment in which all pupils can develop academically and personally, whatever their background or ability. Effective links between governors and some subject co-ordinators contribute to their good understanding of the school's performance. Governors bring a good range of expertise and experience to the school, which is used effectively through a system of committees that meet regularly. The premises committee is particularly active in planning adaptations and improvements to the spacious building.
28. The management of the school is good. This year's improvement plan is comprehensive and detailed. It is very firmly based on ensuring that all pupils have the best possible chance to succeed. The school thoroughly analyses all assessment information and uses

it effectively to respond to pupils' learning needs by improving and developing teaching and by adapting the curriculum. Priorities are appropriate, for example, further development of the Foundation Stage outdoor area. The headteacher's monitoring of teaching is perceptive, and has contributed to the improved standards and achievement since the previous inspection. Subject co-ordinators clearly understand their management roles. The staff responsible for English, mathematics, science and ICT carry out their roles effectively. Other subject co-ordinators are knowledgeable, but their role is not as well developed because time and budget constraints prevent them monitoring teaching and learning to gain a clear overview of standards. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator works on a part-time basis, which limits day-to-day leadership and management in this developing area. The professional development of all staff is managed well. Good performance management systems follow school priorities and help to improve the quality of education offered to every pupil.

29. The leadership and management of special educational needs are excellent. The co-ordinator has a very wide range of expertise, which she uses exceptionally well to gain all possible support for the pupils. Having made the professional development of the teaching assistants a major priority, she uses the expertise they have jointly gained in an exceptionally effective way by matching it to the pupils' specific learning, behavioural or personal needs. Their work is very carefully planned, and the special educational needs co-ordinator meets regularly with them and with teachers to review the provision and its impact on pupils' learning. The school management places very strong emphasis on the provision for special educational needs and the co-ordinator is supported very well in her work by the headteacher. Regular meetings with the governor responsible for this aspect of the school's work ensure that governors too are well informed. The funding available for special educational needs is very carefully targeted to ensure the best possible provision for the pupils. The co-ordinator's superbly clear view of how best to help all pupils to succeed is clearly articulated in the action plan for special educational needs and extends to ensuring that higher-attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged and that pupils for whom English is an additional language are equally well supported. There has been very good improvement in the provision for special educational needs since the previous inspection as the school moved swiftly and very effectively to deal with its ever-changing population.
30. Financial management and control are good and day-to-day management and administration are efficient and effective. Shrewd and stringent management of a diminishing budget has enabled the headteacher and governors to accrue a small surplus to help maintain smaller classes and a good team of staff. The spending per pupil appears high but includes funding the school receives to help it cope with the high levels of pupil mobility, and the increasing proportion of pupils with learning and personal difficulties. The finance committee provides valuable advice on spending, and governors keep a close eye on the impact of spending on pupils' achievement. They have a good understanding of the principles of best value, which they apply in all of their work. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	544,650	Balance from previous year	1,060
Total expenditure	524,080	Balance carried forward to the next year	21,630
Expenditure per pupil	3,255		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Children enter the Nursery with levels of attainment similar to those normally seen at their age. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and the children make steady progress through the Nursery and Reception classes. At the time of the inspection, the youngest children had been in school for just a few weeks. The standard of work seen in the Reception class is as expected for the children's age. The great majority are on course to meet the goals expected at the end of Reception Year, which represents satisfactory achievement in all areas of learning. A suitable curriculum, planned to cover all areas of learning, emphasises the importance of investigational and practical activities. However, some activities have limited structure and direction. Children tend, therefore, to move quickly from one to the other and do not always learn as well as they could. Good provision is made for the individual needs of each child, including those with English as an additional language or whose progress may be causing concern. Every child is included in all activities.

The procedures that prepare children for starting school happily are satisfactory and suitable information is provided for parents to guide them through this process. There are useful links between home and school as staff meet parents when they bring their children to class each day. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, and ensures that both classes run smoothly. However, the co-ordinator is part-time and cannot provide day-to-day guidance and leadership. At present, there are few occasions when the Nursery and Reception classes link together. The classroom assistants work well with groups or individual children. They observe and record children's progress during lessons, for example, which letter sounds they know. Their assessments of the children's progress build into the individual profiles of each child, but are not always used to plan the next steps in their learning.

Accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory. The roomy classrooms offer plenty of space for all activities. The spacious outdoor area is now equipped with suitable wheeled toys, and the children enjoy riding them on the marked-out road. This is an improvement from the previous inspection, and the school has published plans for further development. The Nursery children use the outdoor area regularly, but spend most time in free play, rather than in activities designed to help them learn. The Reception class has some physical education lessons in the outdoor area but otherwise does not have regular time or learning activities there. The rooms do not have computer facilities at present, but all children use the ICT suite each week. The Reception classroom does have its own computer, and the school was awaiting its connection to the network at the time of the inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory but opportunities are sometimes missed to reinforce behaviour and good listening skills.

- There are good relationships between children and staff, but the children find it hard to share and take turns and these skills are not always given enough attention in lessons.
- The children show good attitudes to school, but often lose concentration and flit from one activity to another.

Commentary

31. Children have good attitudes to school, and the youngest ones come into school happily each morning. Staff form good relationships with the children and join in with many activities to help them to play and work together. They emphasise good manners, taking turns and sharing, but many Reception children are still finding this hard. A significant proportion of the children in Reception have not attended Nursery or pre-school, and some are less mature than might be expected, and do not find it easy to be part of a group, or to sit and listen. These skills are not always given specific enough attention during lessons, and this hinders the children's personal development and their learning overall. Children quickly learn to tidy up and put the equipment away. They get themselves ready for physical education sessions, and most Nursery children do so with very little help. However, activities in all areas of learning sometimes lack direction or structure, and children quickly lose concentration and flit aimlessly from activity to activity so they do not always learn as well as they could. The children showed empathy for others during an activity to help make the class puppet happy. An awareness of others and the world around is promoted through regular religious education lessons, and contributes well to the children's spiritual development. The Reception children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to meet the early goals by the end of their time in the Reception class.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory but opportunities to increase children's knowledge and use of language are sometimes missed.
- The children are encouraged to talk about their activities.
- Most Reception children can write their own name, but make little use of the writing table to experiment and practise writing.

Commentary

32. The staff join in the children's activities to encourage them to talk, widen their knowledge of language and listen to each other. Sometimes, opportunities to introduce new words in a meaningful way are missed, for example, when Nursery children ride their bikes in all directions rather than being asked to turn right or left, stop or start. Regular handwriting practice means that most Reception class children write their name legibly. The mark-making tables in each class have only basic equipment, and the children do not often use them independently to practise writing skills, nor are they encouraged to do so. The children enjoy the way letter sounds are taught using hand symbols, and this has helped them learn the sounds for the letters 'a', 'p', 't', 'e' and 's' quickly. More able children recognise many of the words they meet frequently, and they can put the main events of a

story into the right order. They enjoy learning to read and take books home to share with their parents. Achievement is satisfactory and the children are on course to meet the early learning goal in communication language and literacy by the end of Reception.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory.
- Children are given a variety of activities and resources that make learning practical.
- Most Reception children can count to ten but are only just starting to calculate and combine different amounts correctly.

Commentary

33. The staff use all available resources to provide meaningful opportunities for the children to investigate concepts and to count, measure and make patterns. For example, when giving out pens and whiteboards, the teacher asked the children to match the number of pens to the number of children, and they counted accurately to ten. They are not yet secure about adding different numbers together or calculating one more or one less. Simple opportunities for them to do so are not always taken, for example, counting how many children are present at registration or calculating how many are absent. The children recognise and accurately name circles, triangles, squares and rectangles. Most Reception class children recognise the difference between two-dimensional, 'flat' shapes and three-dimensional, 'solid' shapes, and use 'larger' or 'smaller' correctly when comparing sizes. Bright displays of numbers, shapes and equipment support the children's learning well. The children are on course to meet the early learning goal in mathematical development by the end of Reception. Achievement is satisfactory.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory.
- Practical activities, visits and visitors are used effectively to support learning.
- Many children have limited general knowledge and experience of the wider world and classroom displays do not readily stimulate their interest and curiosity.

Commentary

34. Practical activities, inside and outside, provide opportunities for children to investigate the world around them. For example, in an activity linked to '*Snow White and the seven Dwarfs*', the Nursery children chose different fillings and made sandwiches for the dwarfs' picnic lunch. They handled the knives safely as they spread butter and cut the bread. However, staff missed opportunities here to encourage the children to talk about the tastes and smells of the food and the children rushed through the activity without adding

a great deal to their knowledge and understanding. They did, however, enjoy eating their products. The road safety officer visited school and used the outdoor area to teach the children to stop, look, listen and be safe when walking about. The outdoor area and school grounds have space for the children to dig and observe the life cycle of plants and this is planned for later in the year. However, while displays show examples of what the children have done so far, for example the road safety work, none are specifically aimed at stimulating the children's curiosity, for example, about the natural environment. The unexpected appearance of a helicopter overhead excited the Nursery children. The staff used this opportunity well to encourage the children to discuss where it might be going and how high it was. Both classes use the computers in the ICT suite each week. They enjoy this, and their skills of manipulating the controls are developing appropriately for their age. The children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to reach the early learning goals for this area of learning by the end of Reception.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory.
- Children's physical skills are good.
- They use the hall and outside area for PE lessons and change their clothes competently.

Commentary

35. Children show good control of the wheeled toys, and they turn, pedal and stop well. Nursery children showed developing hand-eye co-ordination when rolling a ball to each other, but were not given enough direction to help them form a circle correctly so that they could take turns and aim accurately. Reception class children ran along zigzag lines and followed changes of direction accurately. They are taught to handle scissors, pencils, small tools and knives safely and correctly. Staff encourage the children to dress themselves before and after physical education sessions and even the Nursery children do this with reasonable success, showing developing independence and an ability to look after themselves. Achievement is satisfactory and the children are on course to meet the early learning goal by the end of Reception.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

36. No direct teaching of this area of learning was observed, so judgements about the overall quality of provision cannot be given. The children enjoy painting, and use colours well. Printing with their hands is popular as they experiment with the texture of thick colours. Models of 'lollipop' men and ladies were made following the Road Safety Officer's visit, and the children cut out, glued and coloured their models well. The Nursery children imagined they were '*the seven dwarfs*', and eagerly crawled along the 'tunnel'

into the mine (a tent). Staff participated well in the role play and helped the children to play freely and talk about what they were doing as they hung washing out or prepared a meal. The party theme in the Reception class was carefully linked to the current story, and extended to preparing (and eating) food for '*Spencer's birthday*'. The children recognise familiar songs such as '*A handsome prince came riding by*' and perform the actions satisfactorily, but are reluctant to sing the words. The children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to meet the early learning goals for the end of the Reception Year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the national expectation in Year 2 and speaking and listening skills are good in Year 6.
- Handwriting, punctuation and grammar are good but spelling is weak throughout the school.
- Teaching is good and a very well planned curriculum meets the needs of the school very well.
- Pupils with special educational needs, learning or personal, achieve very well because of the excellent provision made for them.
- Individual targets are used effectively to move learning on for all pupils and overall, assessment procedures are good. However, teachers' marking comments do not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

37. Pupils achieve well. Throughout the school, they listen carefully and attentively to each other and to their teachers. Because they know the staff very much value what they are saying, and will help them to express themselves more clearly, they confidently offer ideas and opinions using a satisfactory range of vocabulary. The teachers' very good management of the pupils and their learning creates a very secure learning environment in which pupils all value each other's contributions and develop very good attitudes to learning. This work makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good emphasis is placed on developing speaking and listening skills through drama, debate and discussion. As a result, by Year 6, pupils use a reasonably wide vocabulary, demonstrating some very logical thinking as, for example, they consider the emotions that each character in Hamlet might feel in the different situations in which they find themselves in the play. The teacher very successfully extended their thinking skills through questioning that was specific to each pupils' stage of learning and through explanations of the text at a level the pupils could understand.
38. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading. They read fluently, listen carefully, and express themselves clearly when giving ideas and opinions. Pupils in Year 3 were particularly eager to share their love of books, describing what they had read, who wrote it and the enjoyment they get from reading fiction and non-fiction books. This love of

reading is successfully fostered throughout the school. Although the pupils' experiences vary, by Year 6 they are already reading Shakespearean plays with a developing understanding of the meaning behind the text, gained from acting it out and discussing the different uses of language to convey meaning. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to make good use of this knowledge and understanding in their writing.

39. Writing skills are well developed by Year 2. Here, pupils have a good understanding of punctuation and use it well in their writing. It extends beyond the use of capital letters and full stops to include the accurate use of speech marks. The very good attention given to teaching grammar and sentence structure results in pupils setting out instructions accurately and writing increasingly imaginative stories that include an increasing wide range of adjectives and descriptive verbs. However, whilst spelling is usually justifiable in terms of the sounds of the words, it is often incorrect. The weakness in spelling is also evident in the work of pupils in Years 3 to 6. By Year 6, pupils write for different purposes using a wide range of structures with due regard for who will be reading their work. However, despite constant reminders from their teachers, their writing does not always contain enough descriptive vocabulary that really grabs the reader's attention. Nevertheless, this is well taught, as was seen in a very good lesson with pupils in Year 4. Here, the teacher's very good modelling of writing, and the very effective use of planning books really pushed the pupils to think very carefully about how to describe a friend. They used previous learning well as they picked out adjectives and similes and tried very hard to use them in their own work.
40. Teachers' planning is good. Based on their good knowledge of the pupils' capabilities, gained from effective assessment procedures, it effectively matches pupils' learning needs and ensures that all pupils have the same good opportunity to succeed. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the teachers' very effective use of very well-trained, very well-briefed classroom assistants. This ensures the pupils have every opportunity to reach the targets in their individual education plans. All pupils have targets for learning, which they were proud to explain to inspectors, and all work is regularly marked. However, marking comments are not used consistently well to move pupils' learning on. Homework is used effectively. It is regular, and of the right range and amount to foster a love of learning outside of the normal school day and consolidate work in class.
41. The subject is well led and managed. A perceptive action plan identifies the right areas for development. The co-ordinator provides very good support for staff, leading workshops and supporting them throughout the school. She works closely with the special educational needs co-ordinator, ensuring that all pupils' needs are effectively met in a very well-planned curriculum that is kept under close review. Teaching and learning are checked at regular intervals by the headteacher, the co-ordinator and the local education authority. Areas for development are clearly identified and effective action taken to bring about further improvement. There has been good, overall improvement in English since the previous inspection, despite the major barriers to learning presented by the high levels of pupil movement and the disrupted backgrounds of a sizeable minority of pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

42. The school places strong emphasis on developing literacy skills throughout the curriculum. A major focus this year has been to strengthen the links between literacy and

history, and this has resulted in the very good promotion of reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in that subject. Pupils are also successfully encouraged to use their literacy skills in mathematics, science, religious education and ICT. Teachers and pupils make good use of ICT to promote literacy skills through, for example, word processing, drafting and editing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, with a strong emphasis on learning through practical activity, which helps pupils to achieve well.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the extra help they are given.
- Marking is not used consistently well to help pupils improve their work.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work, which has a beneficial effect on their achievement.

Commentary

43. Standards match the national expectation in Year 2 and Year 6 and all pupils achieve at least well because they are taught well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise, which they use effectively to explain and demonstrate new mathematical ideas to pupils in a confident manner. As a result, pupils are very clear about what they are to learn and what is expected of them during lessons. Good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 on learning about decimals. The teacher made good use of the interactive whiteboard to help pupils visualise decimal fractions in a variety of ways and so deepen their understanding of how to use them to solve problems involving decimals. The introductions to lessons are brisk, and this results in pupils making good progress in their quick mental recall skills. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their mathematical vocabulary as they explain the methods they have used to solve the problems they have been set. Teaching assistants are of a high quality and the extra help they provide for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Learning objectives are frequently checked and re-visited throughout the lessons, keeping pupils' learning on track by involving them in assessing how well they are doing. Conclusions to lessons are used well to review and consolidate pupils' learning. However, there are inconsistencies between classes in the way marking is used as a means of suggesting to pupils how they might improve their work.
44. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator's work has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The thorough analysis of test results and other assessment information has led to a change in the school's approach to written computation. This is now taught in a consistent way in all classes and pupils are making better progress as a result. The co-ordinator's teaching is a good role model for others. She has a clear view of areas for further development, such as providing more opportunities for pupils to be involved in problem solving activities. The close liaison

between teachers and the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs means that the pupils' individual needs are very effectively met. The curriculum is very good, having been adapted in recent years to meet the changing needs of pupils entering school. Strong emphasis is now given to pupils learning through practical activities that are often linked to their own experience. Planning procedures are successful in ensuring that all pupils are given work that builds on previous activities, so they are able to develop their learning in a progressive manner. Assessment arrangements are thorough. Teachers have a clear view of how well their pupils are doing and what is needed next to improve their performance in the subject. Pupils show very positive attitudes to their work in mathematics, especially enjoying the practical activities. Consequently, their behaviour is good and they are able to maintain their concentration for lengthy periods of time. They work well together in pairs and small groups, which makes a positive contribution to their personal development. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, with planning, resources and pupils' attitudes and progress all being better.

Mathematics across the curriculum

45. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise their numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, in science, pupils in Year 6 have taken a variety of careful measurements during investigations into friction. In history, timelines have been created to help them develop their knowledge and understanding of chronology.

SCIENCE

The provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and as a result, pupils achieve well.
- There is a very good curriculum, with many opportunities for pupils to learn through practical investigations.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Pupils make conclusions that describe, rather than evaluate, what they have found out during their experiments.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good and help them make good progress through the school.

Commentary

46. Standards are at the national expectation for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, and the pupils are taught well. Teachers use questioning well, targeting it carefully to find out what pupils know. They build successfully on what they find, developing and extending the pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding well. Teachers' planning is effective in giving pupils work that builds on their prior knowledge and experiences. As a result, pupils use their prior scientific knowledge and understanding effectively to support their learning of new ideas. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 5 on learning about the structure of flowers in relation to pollination. Pupils used what they already knew to help them research information and make close observations of fresh flowers to further their understanding of this aspect of science. Good opportunities are presented to pupils to learn through structured, practical investigations. Consequently, most pupils are competent at devising a test, making sure it is fair and then carrying it out independently of the teacher. They are not as proficient when drawing conclusions from their

experiments. They tend to describe what they have done rather than evaluate the outcomes. Pupils use accurate scientific terminology when answering questions and communicating their ideas, which extends their personal, as well as their scientific, vocabulary. The teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work rate means that the majority of lessons proceed at a good pace because pupils work hard and concentrate well. Teaching assistants very effectively support pupils with special educational needs, so that they are fully involved in all scientific activities and achieve very well.

47. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator provides good quality support and advice to colleagues and this helps them to plan interesting lessons. Assessment information is analysed well to give a clear picture of the subject's strengths and areas for further development. The curriculum is planned very well, enabling pupils to develop investigational skills to build up their scientific knowledge and understanding. The curriculum also makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development. For example, when they are given the opportunity to show initiative and take some responsibility for their own learning when working collaboratively during their investigations. A good example of this was when pupils in Year 6 were working together to make a movie of their investigations into simple electrical circuits. This lesson also highlighted how ICT is used well to support learning, with pupils showing confidence in using digital cameras to record their findings. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills as they write up their investigations or take careful measurements during investigations. Pupils spoke with a great deal of enthusiasm about their work in science, especially when it involved practical investigations. In all lessons, pupils showed good levels of interest and curiosity in what they were doing. This has a beneficial effect on the quality of their work and the standards they achieve. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good, with a better scheme of work being introduced and closer monitoring of teachers' planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and therefore pupils achieve well.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to use ICT to support their learning in other subjects.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work, which has a positive effect on the progress they make.
- The ICT suite is used well to develop pupils' basic skills in the subject.

Commentary

48. Most pupils in year 2 and year 6 reach the nationally expected standards, having achieved well because they are taught well. Teachers make good use of the ICT suite for whole-class teaching, to help pupils build up their basic skills in the subject. The training teachers have received since the last inspection has improved their expertise and confidence in explaining and demonstrating new ideas and techniques to pupils. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 1, as they learned how to use a computer to

assemble text. The task was explained precisely so that pupils made good progress in their ability to use the *caps lock* key when creating captions to help people keep safe in a park. Lessons are planned well with activities that maintain the pupils' interest and concentration and result in good levels of pace and productivity. The way that teachers successfully encourage pupils, when appropriate, to work collaboratively in pairs on the computers, makes a good contribution to their personal and social development. The co-ordinator teaches ICT to all pupils in Years 3 to 6. His good subject knowledge and expertise have a positive effect on their achievement and progress. Teachers effectively plan for pupils to use ICT to support their learning in other subjects. For example, in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 6, the teacher used the interactive whiteboard well to develop their understanding of decimal fractions. This enabled the pupils to visualise different ways of presenting these fractions and helped them make good progress in solving problems involving decimals. Pupils with special educational needs are given extra help from teaching assistants, which enables them to achieve very well.

49. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator's teaching of ICT to pupils in Years 3 to 6 gives him a clear view of the quality of teaching and learning in the subject in these classes. The quality of his teaching provides a good role model for other teachers, and he uses his expertise well to provide good support and advice for them. The curriculum is planned very well so that all strands of the subject are covered. Assessment procedures are successful in giving a good picture of pupils' attainment and the progress they make. Pupils behave very well and show a great deal of interest and enjoyment when working on computers, which helps them to make good progress. They treat computers with respect and share them fairly when working with a partner. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, with the creation of the ICT suite and better teaching leading to improved achievement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

50. There is good use of ICT to support and enhance learning in other subjects. Pupils are confident in their ability to use their word processing skills to help add interest to their writing in English. They use the Internet well as a means of researching information, particularly in history and science. They are competent in using multimedia software to create good quality presentations of their work across a range of subjects.

HUMANITIES

Geography was sampled. History and religious education were inspected in full.

Geography

51. No geography lessons were observed during the inspection, so it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. From the work seen in pupils' books, standards are at the national expectation in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve well and learn about people, places and environments locally and further afield. The well-planned curriculum is covered through a variety of interesting approaches that show teachers know the subject well. The geography co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership, and has clear aims for future development. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

History

The provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are good overall, and some very imaginative teaching brings history alive for the pupils.
- Standards are above the national expectation in Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and their attitudes are very good.

Commentary

52. Two history lessons were seen during the inspection. The evidence from these, together with the work in the pupils' books, indicates that standards are at the national expectation in Year 2, but above the national expectation in Year 6. Achievement throughout the school is good. Good curriculum coverage ensures that pupils gain good knowledge of people and events in the past, and begin to interpret evidence and understand differing viewpoints. The pupils' very good attitudes show that they enjoy their lessons, and this is due to the good quality of the teaching and the interesting activities that teachers plan to make history relevant to the pupils.
53. In both lessons observed, pupils' imagination was fired because history was made meaningful due to imaginative teaching and very well-utilised resources. Teaching was excellent in the Year 6 session where history was brought to life in a trench on the school field. This muddy, water-filled trench, dug by the teacher and some pupils gave first hand experience of the awful conditions suffered by soldiers in World War 1. Pupils concentrated intently and asked perceptive, thoughtful questions that showed great empathy with the troops, asking, for example, whether the soldiers suffered diseases, and discussing how they must have felt. The suggestion of planting spring daffodils on the site of the trench captured their enthusiasm and they commented *'When we see them grow, it will remind us of the people who died in the war'*. Back in the classroom, pupils worked very well together to produce short and often moving dramas enacting life in the trenches. Many showed concern for both armies, realising that they all had families and believed they were fighting for the right cause. The lesson made a particularly strong contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Very good teaching in the second lesson observed during the inspection gave pupils good opportunities to consider two sides of a historical situation. They wrote exciting accounts either as Boudicca's warriors, or as Roman soldiers, showing a clear understanding that both sides had a very different viewpoint of the battle. The links between history and literacy have been one of the school's priorities in the past year. As a result, throughout the school, pupils write clear accounts, create dramas, present reports and information well and research using books and the Internet.
54. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator gives her colleagues good, knowledgeable support, and her enthusiasm is conveyed to both staff and pupils. The scheme of work provides a good planning framework, but systems to assess pupils' progress are still being developed. Overall, however, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and the locally agreed syllabus is covered well.
- Religious education makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

55. Two lessons were observed, one in Year 2 and one in Year 6. Evidence from these lessons and from the work seen shows that the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. A varied range of activities ensure pupils learn about religion and respond to the themes and concepts laid down in the locally agreed syllabus. Attitudes are good and pupils willingly consider the ideas and opinions of others. In both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils meet the levels expected for their age as defined by the local syllabus. Achievement throughout the school is satisfactory.
56. The syllabus and useful scheme of work provide teachers with a secure framework to plan activities, and they ensure good coverage of all aspects of religious education. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are developed gradually as they consider more complex concepts and ideas and become more mature. In addition to studying Christianity, pupils learn about other major world faiths. This also gives them useful insights into other cultures. Visits to a local church, and visits to school by the local vicar enrich pupils' experiences. The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development by encouraging them to respect the needs and values of others and consider issues of right and wrong. Year 2 pupils thought about friendship, and sat in a circle to talk about how their friends help them, for example *"My friend looks after me when I fall over"*. This lesson provided a very good example of the school policy of including all pupils in all activities when a pupil from a nearby special school joined the lesson and was given a warm welcome. Year 6 pupils showed respect and thoughtfulness when discussing people who were important to them and to the community. Good teaching ensured that each pupil felt their opinion was valued, and that no answers were right or wrong. Pupils listened carefully to each other in both lessons observed, showing that an important element of the school aims, to respect others, has been achieved in practice.
57. The leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory. The policy has been updated, and the co-ordinator ensures that the syllabus is carefully followed. The system of assessing pupils' progress is under review and not yet fully developed. Parents willingly send material for display to support themes, showing good links between home and school. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were observed in **art and design or design and technology** and only two short sessions were observed in **music**, one each in Year 1 and Year 2. No overall judgements are therefore made about provision or about standards or the quality of teaching in any of the three subjects.

Art and design

58. The portfolios of pupils' work that are kept for each year group show that pupils achieve very well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. They make very good progress in observational skills throughout the school and by Year 6, pencil drawings are carefully shaded to show texture, using a good range of relevant techniques. Standards are above the national expectation in Year 2 but there was not enough evidence to make a secure judgement about standards in Year 6. The very rich curriculum that pupils in Years 1 and 2 experience narrows somewhat in Years 3 to 6. Nevertheless, all aspects of art and design are covered well and very good links are made to other subjects, for example, history, geography, religious education and literacy. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed and pupils' work is adequately assessed against the learning outcomes stated in teachers' planning. However, teachers have little support in this, as the portfolios are not annotated to show the learning objectives and the level that the work demonstrates. The co-ordinator checks teachers' planning and pupils' work but there are currently no plans for her to check teaching and learning in the classroom.

Design and technology

59. Teachers' planning, photographic evidence and work that was included in the art and design portfolios show that the full range of design and technology activity is covered well. Designs are carefully drawn and annotated to show materials and methods of working, and pupils state clearly what they have changed and why as they have made their artefacts. However, no examples of pupils' evaluations of their work were seen. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed although the co-ordinator does not yet have a secure view of standards or achievement, and there are currently no plans for him to check teaching and learning in the classroom.

Music

60. Pupils are offered a rich music curriculum, which includes the opportunity to play musical instruments, sing in the choir, attend concerts and musical events, listen to visiting musicians and take part in a range of school productions that give them good opportunities to perform in front of an audience. The quality of singing was very good in assemblies. Pupils stood upright to sing, clearly very aware of the effect of good posture on their ability to sing well. The school orchestra played very well in an assembly where it accompanied hymn singing, staying in time and maintaining a degree of sensitivity that ensured the instruments did not drown the singing. The subject is well led and managed and the pupils benefit from the good range of expertise available on the staff.

Physical education

61. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a broad and balanced curriculum, with good opportunities for enrichment that make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development. A good number of pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and they work with professional coaches to develop their skills in a variety of sports. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have sessions in the local swimming pool to promote their swimming skills and develop their knowledge and understanding about water safety. By the time they leave school, almost all pupils can swim the nationally expected 25 metres. There is good involvement in competitive sports with other schools because of affiliation to the Newcastle Primary Sports Association.

Assessment procedures do not give a secure picture of pupils' attainment or the progress they make. The accommodation is good, with a spacious hall and extensive outdoor hard surfaces and grassed areas for developing pupils' physical education skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

62. The school plans very well for this aspect of its work. It has been a priority in the past year and the development of a good policy and scheme of work has raised teachers' awareness of it. Although no discrete PSHCE lessons were observed, very good attention is paid to promoting PSHCE in almost all lessons and in assemblies, resulting in the very good attitudes and behaviour observed throughout the school. Even pupils with severe learning difficulties work very hard in most lessons, relating well to others and participating well in class and group activities. The very effective use of well-trained teaching assistants to support pastoral care and provide academic support in all age groups ensures the full inclusion of all pupils in all lessons and school activities. Sex and relationships education is covered well and pupils have good opportunities to learn about the dangers of drug and substance misuse. Pupils are given a voice in the school through the School Council and through circle time and PSHCE lessons. They very much appreciate the opportunity to improve their school and speak highly of it. This school works very hard to ensure that all pupils are given the same opportunities to do as well as they possibly can, personally and academically, so that they leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education and life beyond school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
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	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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