

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETER'S CE (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119416

Headteacher: Mr D Merritt

Lead inspector: Mrs C E Waine

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th October 2004

Inspection number: 266859

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	237
School address:	Meadowfield Fulwood Preston
Postcode:	PR2 9 RE
Telephone number:	01772 864550
Fax number:	01772 861269
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss C Bailey
Date of previous inspection:	19 th April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Peter's C of E Primary School is about the same size as most other primary schools and has 237 boys and girls aged from four to eleven years. There is a large imbalance between the genders in some age groups. Currently, even though the area served by the school has average social and economic indicators, fewer than five per cent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals, which is lower than in most other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below that in most schools but the percentage of pupils with a statement of their needs is well above the national average. This particularly affects Year 3, where the level of special needs is high. There is a wide range of needs, with the largest groups being hearing impaired, autistic and behavioural. There are about 18 per cent of pupils for whom English is an additional language, which is well above average. Movement of pupils into the school other than at the normal time of admission is below average overall but is increasing. It is particularly high in Year 4. The attainment of children on entry to the school in the reception year is wide ranging but average overall.

After a long period of stability in staffing, there have been several changes in the last school year, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other key staff, for reasons of promotion or retirement. At the time of the inspection, the new headteacher had been in post for six weeks and a deputy headteacher had not yet been appointed.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23081	Mrs C E Waine	Lead inspector	English Geography History
9884	Mrs M Roscoe	Lay inspector	
27591	Ms M Campbell	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Foundation Stage
18505	Mr D Matthews	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

peakschoolhaus
BPS Business Centre
Brake Lane
Boughton
Newark
Nottinghamshire
NG22 9HQ

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. It provides well for pupils' personal development in a caring Christian ethos. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and most behave well. Achievement is satisfactory, overall, but is more rapid for pupils in the upper juniors and this ensures that standards are above average by the time pupils leave the school. Good teamwork and governance have enabled the school to maintain the quality of provision during a period of significant changes in staffing. The new headteacher's very clear vision is now providing a sharp focus for future development. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average in English, mathematics, science, history and information and communication technology (ICT) when pupils leave the school but more able children should achieve more in science by the end of Year 2.
- There is consistently good teaching in Years 5 and 6 but teaching varies too much in quality in other year groups and does not always help pupils to understand how to improve.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language achieve well because of effective support.
- Strong leadership by the headteacher is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- Assessment is often used well to target and support specific groups of pupils but is not always used well to match work to all pupils' needs, particularly those who are more able.
- Pupils' personal development is good overall. Relationships and social harmony are good but in some lessons the behaviour of a few pupils slows the pace of learning for others. This is compounded by the small size of some classrooms.
- A good curriculum is enriched very well by interesting activities and links with the community. Directly taught lessons in the Foundation Stage provide well for learning but activities that children choose for themselves do not sufficiently promote skills of independent learning.

Since the previous inspection in 1998, there has been satisfactory improvement in standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 2, in identifying pupils needing support, and in developing curriculum policies and assessment. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen at the same rate as those nationally. There has been good improvement in the use of support staff.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

A - in the top 5% of schools nationally 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

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Children achieve satisfactorily in the reception year, and most are likely to meet the learning targets set for this age group. Achievement in personal, social and emotional development is weaker because children lack enough opportunities to become independent learners. In Years 1 to 6, achievement is satisfactory overall, but is inconsistent; pupils achieve most rapidly in the upper junior classes. Standards in reading and mathematics are above average in Year 2, reflecting the overall ability of the group. In Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. In English, the improvement on recent test results is because more pupils are achieving the level expected for their age in writing. The school has identified that pupils could achieve more in the younger junior years and that more able pupils and boys should sometimes be doing better, and is taking effective action to bring about improvement. There is presently no significant difference in the overall achievements of boys and girls by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well in ICT and history and standards are above average. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language achieve well because of effective support.

The promotion of pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good, overall. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. Most pupils behave well and develop good attitudes to school but the challenging behaviour of a few pupils sometimes affects the learning of others. Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are examples of good teaching across the school, but only in Years 5 and 6 is it consistently good. The management of a few pupils' behaviour slows the pace of learning in some classes and small classrooms have an adverse effect on this situation. The school has identified strategies to manage classes more effectively but has not had time to implement them. Assessment procedures are sound and used well to target groups of pupils for additional support, such as pupils with special educational needs. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are well supported. However, checks made on other pupils' progress are not used consistently well in informing pupils how to improve their work or to set them specific, challenging targets. The good curriculum is enriched very well by a very wide range of activities. However, in reception year, there is insufficient purpose or challenge in activities that children choose for themselves to promote independent learning. There is an effective partnership with parents, particularly in the Foundation Stage, and with other schools. Links with the wider community are very good and enhance learning and personal development. The school cares for its pupils well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the new headteacher is good. He has quickly identified areas for development and devised a good action plan that is starting to have a positive impact on provision and pupils achievement. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are met. Governors are very supportive of the school and its work. Management is satisfactory overall but is not yet ensuring an even quality of teaching throughout the school. Several key staff are newly in post and there is good potential for the senior management team to lead the school forward and raise standards further. Where there

is more established leadership and management, as in mathematics, there has been good improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school and appreciate all that it achieves for their children. Pupils' views are positive, although they identify some concerns about the behaviour of a minority of pupils, which were confirmed by the inspection.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in science by the end of Year 2, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- Improve teachers' use of assessment to match work better to the needs of all pupils, particularly those who are more able.
- Improve the use of accommodation and the strategies used to support teachers in managing the small minority of pupils who sometimes affect the learning of others.
- Improve curriculum planning for the children in the Foundation Stage to provide for the development of better skills in independent learning, making good use of new accommodation.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** overall and standards are **above average** by the time pupils leave the school but pupils' achievement is not consistent through the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics, science, ICT and history are above average when pupils leave the school.
- Standards in science at the end of Year 2 are not high enough, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- The rate of pupils' progress is inconsistent through the school, with the best progress being made in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or who have English as an additional language achieve well in all years.

Commentary

1. As at the time of the previous inspection, children in the Foundation Stage achieve satisfactorily and most reach the learning targets for this age group, in all of the areas of learning. However, in their personal and social development, children's achievement in the development of skills of independent learning is not as good as it should be.
2. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall and standards are currently above average in Year 2 in mathematics and reading, and average in writing. Standards have improved significantly in mathematics since the previous inspection because the effective action plan the school put into place has improved the quality of provision; similar action is now being taken in English, with an effective focus on writing. Standards vary from year to year, depending on the overall ability of cohorts, but are currently better than those noted in the results of national tests in 2003 and much better than in 2004, where a natural variation in the year group caused a sharp fall in results. Standards in science in Year 2 are below average and some pupils should achieve more, particularly those higher attaining pupils who are sometimes insufficiently challenged.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.2 (15.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (14.2)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	16.9 (17.3)	16.5 (16.2)

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

3. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall, but better in Years 5 and 6 than in the earlier years. Standards are above average in the current Year 6 in English, mathematics and science and this represents improvement in mathematics and science

since the previous inspection. Standards in English are similar to those at that time. Current standards represent satisfactory achievement for these pupils from their results in the national tests at the end of Year 2. It also represents an improvement on the test results in 2003 and 2004 in English, because more pupils are now achieving the levels expected for their age in writing. Current standards in mathematics and science are not quite as high as in the test results of 2003 or 2004 because of a natural yearly variation, with fewer pupils who are higher attainers. The school analysed its test results in 2003 and 2004 very thoroughly and found that, although standards in writing were much lower than those in reading, there was no common area of weakness between pupils. Over time, pupils make inconsistent rates of progress from year to year because assessment information is not being used effectively enough to match work well to the needs of all pupils. The school has instigated an action plan to improve standards through better use of assessments, with the support of the local education authority (LEA). A similar plan has been very effective in raising standards in mathematics, which are now higher than at the last inspection. Standards in science are much improved from the previous inspection. The school is now focusing on ensuring that information is used more effectively. The school did not achieve the targets it set in 2003 or 2004 but was close to them in 2004.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.6 (28.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.0 (28.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.0 (29.0)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Standards in ICT are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils are achieving well and apply their skills well in research and recording in other subjects. The employment of a specialist teaching assistant contributes well to the good progress that pupils make through good support to small groups and individuals.
5. Pupils achieve well in history and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. In physical education, pupils achieve satisfactorily and standards are in line with those expected for their age. Standards are average in art and design and achievement is satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on achievement or standards in design and technology, geography and music.
6. The pupils with special educational needs are provided with well-targeted support that enables them to take a full part in lessons and helps them to achieve well. Those who are learning English as an additional language receive good support, both in lessons and in small withdrawal groups. This enables pupils from each of the ethnic groups present in school to achieve well and attain similar standards to other pupils. The school has identified a small number of pupils who are potentially very high attainers. Although there is no specific extra provision for them, the quality of teaching and learning in the older classes means that their achievement is satisfactory overall by the end of Year 6.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good** overall because of the school's **good** provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance and punctuality are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of pupils are highly motivated and have positive attitudes to their work.
- Pupils are friendly and often show kindness to younger children. Promotion of these good relationships by staff encourages this affinity between all pupils.
- Most pupils take their responsibility as members of the school community seriously and behave well but the behaviour of a small minority of pupils sometimes affects the learning of others.
- Provision for spiritual development is very good and promotes pupils' self-awareness very well.

Commentary

7. Pupils of all ages and abilities have good, lively attitudes to school, and as the pupil survey suggests they "like everything, every day". This reflects the positive attitudes reported at the previous inspection. Well above average attendance levels and minimal lateness reflect pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.6	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

8. Provision for pupils' personal development is good overall and is firmly based in the school's Christian faith. Moral, social and cultural development are promoted well. Pupils are increasingly reflective because of the very good spiritual dimension that permeates the school, which is strongest in the thought-provoking daily assemblies. These often stress the qualities of others or the importance of acting as a 'good Samaritan'. Pupils are encouraged to become reflective on their own lives and in their dealings with others. Pupils explore cultural heritages and learn to accept that the faith and traditions of others are as important as their own. Evidence suggests pupils absorb these oft-repeated values because pupils from all backgrounds get on well.
9. As at the previous inspection, most pupils behave well, often very well, in lessons and can be relied upon to be equally self-assured at play and lunchtimes. The majority are helpful to each other and to adults; they recognise that harassment is wrong and tell adults when it occurs. One outcome of good modelling of social skills by staff is that older pupils actively seek out the younger ones when they appear to be shy or overwhelmed by others at playtimes. Parents describe this as a particular strength of the school. Staff discuss social and moral issues with pupils effectively in specific lessons and also in subjects such as history, when they consider events from different points of view.
10. A recent survey of pupils highlighted that a few expressed some concern about minor disruptions by a few pupils that affect their concentration. Inspection observations confirm

that there is a small minority of pupils who find it hard to control their behaviour, particularly in younger junior classes. This sometimes slows the pace of learning for other pupils. It is compounded by the fact that these classes are in smaller classrooms, which makes it difficult for both staff and pupils to move about freely. The classroom provided for Year 3 pupils is particularly small and has a significant adverse effect on learning. Older pupils are used effectively to model and support good behaviour for these pupils, both in classrooms and at breaktimes.

11. The number of exclusions is low because behaving responsibly is a natural way of life for most pupils, who undertake important tasks sensibly. For example, a team of Year 6 pupils attends to telephone calls in the office at lunchtime.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	152	1	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	24	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	4	0	0
Any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British - Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but good, sometimes inspirational, for the older pupils. There is a good curriculum, which is greatly enriched by a wide variety of activities. Pupils are cared for well and there is a good partnership with parents, who have very positive views of the school.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The direct teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good in the Foundation Stage but insufficient challenge and structure are planned into some independent activities.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is consistently good and pupils achieve well in these year groups.
- In some classes, the time taken in long introductions or in managing behaviour sometimes slows the pace of learning.
- Assessment information is used well to identify groups of pupils for extra support but is not always used effectively to plan lessons that meet the needs of all pupils or to inform them how to improve their work.
- Those pupils with special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English have good support that helps them make good progress towards their targets.
- The use of a specialist teaching assistant for ICT promotes good progress in the subject.

Commentary

12. Satisfactory improvements have been made in teaching, although the overall quality is similar to that at the previous inspection. Improvements have been made in the teaching of numeracy and in the use of support staff and plenary sessions but there is too much variability in the quality of teaching in most year groups.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2.5%)	3 (7.5%)	16 (40%)	19 (47.5%)	1 (2.5%)	0	0

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

13. The teaching of reading, numeracy and ICT skills is good and helps pupils in their learning in other subjects. Good improvements have been made in the teaching of numeracy as a result of the school's concentrated focus on the subject and standards have risen as a result. Similar action is now being taken to improve teaching and learning in literacy and improvement is already becoming evident in pupils' written work.

14. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is consistently good and engages pupils' attention very well; some teaching observed in Year 6 was inspirational. The quality of teaching for these older pupils makes a strong contribution to pupils' achievement and the above average standards. In Year 6, high expectations are often reflected in exciting lessons that not only engage pupils' attention and motivate them to give of their best, but also contribute very effectively to their personal development and self-esteem. In some other year groups there is not enough effective teaching, which is partly due to the recently increased proportion of pupils with difficulty in controlling their own behaviour, particularly in the large classes in small classrooms. Teachers spend a long time managing pupils' behaviour, particularly in the lower juniors, which detracts from their teaching and distracts other pupils who are trying to work. The school has recognised these points and the headteacher is already drawing up an action plan to:

- improve the behaviour policy to provide a greater range of strategies for managing particularly difficult pupils;
- increase the number of support assistants to support the implementation of positive management strategies; and
- make better use of available space.

15. Teachers have a sound understanding of the subjects they teach and plan well to provide interesting and well-structured lessons. Time and resources are used well in good lessons, to engage attention and give an urgency to pupils' work. The pace of introductory sessions in some satisfactory lessons is too slow and as a result pupils become restless. Explanations are clear and pupils are often involved in discussing and demonstrating their ideas. The use of plenary sessions has improved since the previous inspection and these are now mainly used well to share work and involve pupils in evaluating its quality, which helps them understand how to improve their work. As their confidence grows, teachers are making increasingly effective use of the recently installed interactive whiteboards in explanations and demonstrations and this engages pupils effectively in learning. Teachers make good use of homework to extend learning across the curriculum.

16. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall, whereas teaching was judged to be good at the previous inspection and learning satisfactory. This reflects the fact that the independent activities that children choose for themselves are not always purposeful or challenging enough to promote learning effectively or to develop skills of independent learning sufficiently. They sometimes simply result in noisy play. Teaching of mathematical development is often good and challenges pupils of all abilities appropriately. Direct teaching in whole-class sessions in each area of learning is often good in that it provides good levels of interest and engages children well in learning.
17. Support for pupils with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of learning to speak English is good. Classroom support staff are used effectively with targeted children or groups, enabling them to take a full part in lessons. Good support is also provided when staff withdraw these pupils to concentrate on developing their speaking skills and practise their skills on computers. For example, the bilingual assistant provides lively sessions, which help pupils not only to speak English but also to gain a good understanding of the vocabulary they learn. The use of a specialist support assistant in ICT is good and enables pupils to have concentrated attention in developing their skills. There has been good improvement in the use of support staff since the previous inspection.
18. Assessment is satisfactory overall and there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Improvement in the way that information is used to highlight groups and individuals for additional support and to set year group targets is good. However, the information is not used as consistently well to target individual needs in lessons or in setting group or personal targets so that pupils can understand their next steps in learning. Marking is regular and always rewards success but, again, there is inconsistent practice through the school in helping pupils understand how to improve their work. The best quality marking is seen in Year 6, where clear guidance is given that helps pupils improve. Teachers have begun to involve pupils in some self-evaluation of work but again this is not consistent throughout the school. Early baseline assessment enables staff to identify areas that may need greater support, especially for the youngest children but information is not used as effectively to challenge higher attaining children.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** and there is **very good** enrichment of learning through a wide variety of activities. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links between subjects, to develop skills in a meaningful way.
- The teaching of French, a wide range of extra-curricular activities, expert visitors and educational visits enrich pupils' learning and personal development very well.
- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, but some independent activities lack structure and challenge.
- There is good access to the whole curriculum for most pupils and support staff are used well to support learning.
- Some classrooms are small for the number of pupils and this impacts on the quality of learning.

Commentary

19. There is a good broad and balanced curriculum, covering all required areas of the National Curriculum. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and policies and schemes of work are in place in all subjects to guide teachers in planning and assessing pupils' work. The emphasis on numeracy and ICT in the last few years is now reflected in better standards. Literacy is now identified as the next focus subject. Some good links are made between subjects to maximise the use of time and develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils made good use of a word-processing program to create newspaper articles on Tutankhamun, incorporating text and pictures, and younger pupils used the Internet for research on magnetism in science. A sound programme of personal, social and health education caters appropriately for sex education and education on the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Sound opportunities are taken to raise pupils' awareness of aspects such as relationships and how feelings change as they grow, and their knowledge and skills are developed at appropriate levels for their ages.
20. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory; it incorporates all six areas of learning with sound emphasis on the development of speaking and listening, and early literacy and numeracy skills. There is currently a correct focus on personal and social education in order to help children settle quickly into school and its routines. However, this is not promoting skills of independence or high standards of behaviour as well as it should. Lessons are interesting and suitably practical but some activities lack purpose and challenge. There is no separate, secure area for outdoor play and, as the classrooms are quite small, this limits the range of larger-scale activities that can be offered. This impacts particularly on children's physical development and on their opportunities to develop independence through choosing to work outdoors. However, building development is imminent that will create enhanced outdoor and indoor accommodation, not only for the Foundation Stage but also pupils in Years 1 and 2.
21. Visits, visitors and after-school clubs add much to the richness of curriculum provision, promoting not only individual skills and talents but also pupils' social development. The range of activities to enrich subject teaching brings learning to life and helps pupils develop positive attitudes. For example, pupils visit museums and also a local mosque, which promotes cultural awareness and celebrates diversity. Work in numeracy is supported effectively by a whole school 'Maths Day', and older pupils work with younger ones on a 'Maths Trail'. Visiting speakers, theatre groups and musicians also make a valuable contribution to pupils' education. After-school clubs, such as gymnastics, games and 'High Fives', help to develop pupils' sports skills and contribute very well to their personal development.
22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language is good and this is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was satisfactory overall. Pupils' personal targets are carefully woven into lesson planning and focus well on their individual needs. Support assistants are used more effectively than at the previous inspection and there are more of them. They are well briefed and ensure all groups of pupils have access to the curriculum. They work discreetly in classrooms or in small groups, helping pupils to take a full part in lessons. However, there is limited support for the pupils in the larger classes who need greater guidance on their behaviour. The school is already increasing staffing levels to provide better for this.

23. Although the school accommodation is adequate overall and has improved since the previous inspection, some classrooms are still too small, particularly for the reception year and for the larger classes in Years 3 and 4. This impacts on the quality of activities and learning that can be offered, particularly for more practical subjects, when it is difficult to organise enough space for resources and for pupils to move freely about the room. It also has an impact on the management of pupils' behaviour when lack of space leads to friction between pupils. Space is not used as effectively as it might be; the ICT suites are quite small and in corridors, which can be distracting for pupils. The use of accommodation is already under review and building work is now in progress to improve provision for children in the reception year and in Years 1 and 2.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. The provision of support, advice and guidance is **good** overall. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong personal relationships and effective support staff help to promote a family atmosphere where pupils are respected and cared for well.
- The behaviour policy is not effective in supporting staff in the management of the behaviour of a small minority of pupils.
- The school is vigilant when looking at site security and overall maintenance. A good system for identifying potential hazards is in place.
- Pupils receive good personal support and guidance but those for their academic guidance are not consistently good for all pupils.

Commentary

24. Pupils and teachers get along well together. As at the time of the previous inspection, personal guidance is a strong feature of school life and pupils have confidence in their teachers. Adults are positive role models because of the way they approach pupils and engage them in friendly conversations. This makes it easy for pupils to turn to adults for help and when they do so they are supported very well. Parents are justifiably satisfied with this aspect of the school's work. Induction arrangements are good and securely promote pupils' well-being so that they quickly become accustomed to class routines and settle in well.

25. Health and safety procedures are good. First aid provision is good because of the expertise of trained staff. The school takes good care of pupils; for example, there are risk assessments for outside visits and for pupil activity at various times of the school day.

26. Good systems encourage positive behaviour in lessons, which is then acknowledged by a scheme of rewards but currently these systems are not proving as effective as at the previous inspection. The policy is now being reviewed. A few parents expressed some concern about the levels of lunchtime supervision. This has improved recently, with an increase in the adult-child ratio and changes in the deployment of staff, and is satisfactory overall.

27. Staff check regularly if groups are learning at the appropriate rate and good support and guidance are provided for most pupils. However, this has not been effective enough in

ensuring that pupils in all classes understand what they need to do next to improve their work or in providing for a consistent rate of progress in each year group.

28. The school provides a satisfactory forum for pupils' views through the school council. Its work impacts appropriately on school life; for example, improvements to play facilities suggested by pupils have been brought about.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and other schools are **good**. The school enjoys **very good** links with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents work with school to ensure very high levels of attendance.
- Parents get good information about their children's progress and aspects of school life but they do not receive enough information about what is taught.
- Parents have very positive views of the school but would like to be consulted more often on school policies and have their opinions taken into account.
- The school has very good and beneficial links with the community, particularly the parish, and good links with other schools that benefit pupils' learning and personal development.

Commentary

29. As at the previous inspection, parents play an important role in helping and encouraging their children to value what the school provides. They support their children well by ensuring that they attend school regularly and on time, and by encouraging them to take a full part in all activities. The headteacher and staff are fully committed to an 'open door' policy, and warmly welcome parents to a range of well-attended events. This facilitates a comprehensive two-way sharing of information, and promotes the 'family feel' that smoothes the induction process well and enhances pupils' personal development.

30. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress at formal meetings and on an informal basis, as they are welcomed into school to discuss any concerns. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept informed and involved. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed about school life. However, the school does not routinely provide parents with information about what is to be taught in each year group, to help them to support and enrich learning at home.

31. Parents express strong levels of approval for the quality of education and most of the school's provision for involving them in its work. They take a keen interest in their children's all-round development, and achieve a good working relationship with the school's dedicated staff. Several parents help in classrooms on a regular basis and most support their children well with homework. A few are unsure about the way in which rewards and sanctions are applied in and out of lessons and would welcome greater consultation about policies such as behaviour.

32. Links with the local secondary schools ensure that Year 6 pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. Work with a local school increases pupils' knowledge of French and educational links with other schools are effective. For example, when the new outdoor area for the Foundation Stage was being planned, staff visited a school with

specific expertise to see how they could best resource and use the new area. A teacher with Foundation Stage expertise has provided training to support a review of the curriculum for the reception year.

33. Regular visits out of school and visitors from the community bring learning to life. As at the time of the previous inspection, the very close links with the church, which shares the school building, add much to pupils' social and spiritual development. Many church and community groups use the facilities and these offer many learning and social opportunities for pupils and their families. Links with local business and an adjoining care home also enrich pupils' learning and pupils learn about their responsibilities by supporting local charities and their contacts with the home.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. Leadership by the headteacher is **good**. Key staff provide **satisfactory** support. Management is **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school's development, based on thorough analysis of pupils' performance. This is providing a sharp focus for development.
- Good leadership and management in mathematics have led to good improvement in provision and standards.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well and supports pupils' good achievement.
- Governors have a good impact on the school's work and growth.

Commentary

34. The new headteacher has developed an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set out an action plan to raise pupils' achievements still further by raising the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good throughout the school, building on current strengths in Years 5 and 6. He has made a very good start in using test results to find out where action needs to be taken and on which groups of pupils teaching needs to focus. Thorough analysis of the results of different groups of pupils, including those from the range of cultural backgrounds in the school and the relative performances of boys and girls, has led to effective action plans for improvement. The careful tracking of children's progress from reception through the rest of the school has pinpointed areas where the school needs to focus more attention, such as pupils' achievements and equality in teaching and learning between year groups. These are now being closely monitored to check that improvement is being made. The headteacher has set out some well-thought out measures which are beginning to have a positive impact on learning.

35. Leadership and management by other key staff is satisfactory overall. The headteacher has already established a climate in which the staff are engaging more effectively in monitoring provision and contributing to self-evaluation. A programme of well-focused and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning has now begun, in order to identify what works well and what needs to be improved. For example, steps are being taken to address the implications for pupil management and the use of existing accommodation. The school has addressed the weakness at the last inspection for co-ordinators to monitor the

effectiveness of schemes of work but, partly as a result of staff changes, some co-ordinators have had insufficient impact on the quality of teaching. At the time of the previous inspection, the quality of monitoring was not rigorous enough to promote improvement in provision. Whilst this has improved in mathematics over time, it is only just now being improved sufficiently in other subjects, such as English and science. Good leadership and management of mathematics have had a significant impact on standards and achievement throughout the school. Leadership of English is now satisfactory but a recent focus is promoting improvement through a good detailed action plan to raise achievement in writing.

36. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. Support staff are well informed and deployed well to meet pupils' needs. The school is currently in the process of enhancing the levels of teaching and support staffing to meet the behavioural needs identified in younger junior classes. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is also managed well and the bilingual assistant is deployed effectively to meet the needs of pupils across the whole school.

37. Governors impact well on the school's development and their influence in guiding the direction of the school has improved since the previous inspection. Governors have done well to steer it through a time of significant change in senior staff. They showed great determination to find a new headteacher who met their requirements in order to secure the best available person to support the school's religious affiliations, build an effective teaching team and raise achievement. Governors now have a better awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses than at the previous inspection. For instance, they know about the analysis of test results and that pupils' achievements in writing have not been good enough recently. They are supporting the school's actions to improve by providing the necessary financial resources to implement the action plan. Governors act on identified areas for improvement, such as by planning to develop both the outdoor and indoor space for the youngest children following a visit to a nearby Beacon school and by providing additional staffing resources where necessary to support the needs of individuals effectively. As well as giving good support, the governors challenge the school, as when questioning the effectiveness of the health and safety policy.

38. Finances are carefully targeted at identified areas for improvement. Governors give good consideration about how effectively the money will be used; for example where to place support assistants to best meet the pupils' needs. The recent large surplus in the school's budget was partly due to circumstances beyond its control. For example, after much of the surplus from the previous year had been allocated to enhance resources and support staffing, there was an unexpected late influx of money. Funds have been used to provide interactive whiteboards in all classrooms to enhance teaching and more funds are being allocated to further enhance staffing and accommodation and provide resources for the new outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage. Governors have taken steps to ensure that the school does not carry forward an unacceptable surplus in the next financial year.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	618003
Total expenditure	605780
Expenditure per pupil	2657

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	60606
Balance carried forward to the next	72829

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** overall.

39. Children in the reception classes are given a sound start to their education. Most children are of average attainment in all areas of learning when they start school. Their achievement is satisfactory as it was at the time of the previous inspection, and by the time they enter Year 1, most attain the learning targets for their age group. This achievement is due to sound teaching overall and some good direct teaching in numeracy, literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. At the time of the previous inspection, teaching was good overall, whereas it is currently satisfactory. This is because staff do not always plan sufficiently to provide enough purpose to children's choice activities to guide them in developing skills of independent learning.

40. The satisfactory curriculum provides children with an appropriate range of experiences. Planning discussions take place to ensure that children in the two classes have similar experiences. There is a judicious blend of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities, which are appropriate to the age and abilities of the children. However, some of the activities that children choose for themselves lack purpose and challenge and sometimes there is insufficient adult input to promote better progress in learning. Children enjoy their experiences but, as some of these are insufficiently structured to guide children on what they are supposed to be achieving, they are not fully engaged in learning. This results in either passive behaviour or some noisy and unfocused play. This is compounded currently by the difficulties of the accommodation but building work is now improving facilities. Knowledgeable and enthusiastic support staff add well to the quality of experience that the children receive and all adults support children's language development well in both classes. Those children with special educational needs are provided for well and make good progress towards their learning targets. There is good support for those who are learning to speak English as an additional language. They make good progress in speaking and understanding English so that they can take a full part in lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Expectations of children's behaviour and skills of independence are not always high enough.
- Good relationships exist between staff and children in the reception classes.
- Induction procedures are good and help ease children's transition from nursery or playgroup.

Commentary

41. Children achieve soundly and most are likely to reach the learning targets for this age group by the end of the reception year because there is satisfactory teaching and learning in this

area of development. Relationships are positive throughout the reception classes and children have the opportunity to develop effective working relationships with one another and the adults who work with them. Adults set good examples for the children to copy, and interactions are positive; this plays an important part in the children's learning. There is patient, caring and appropriate support and much of the teaching in personal, social and emotional development underpins the work in the other areas of learning. Once in school, valuable time is spent settling children and they get to know daily routines and procedures. They show interest in their tasks and are beginning to share resources. For example, children play happily in the 'den', reconstructing the 'Baby Owls' story or dressing up and take a trip to outer space. However, expectations of children's ability to be independent learners and work quietly are not always high enough when they are working on tasks of their own choice. Children take part willingly at 'tidy up time', because they have learnt that working together makes the task easier.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff promote children's talk and early reading skills well.
- Assessment information is not always used well to ensure that higher attaining children are sufficiently challenged.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to write unaided.
- Parents support the teaching of reading well.

Commentary

42. Teaching and learning are sound and lead to satisfactory achievement. Most children are likely to reach the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes and a few may well surpass them. Good direct teaching is characterised by secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and well-organised activities that motivate them. However, assessment information is not used effectively to plan work that meets the needs of higher attaining children. Children develop confidence in speaking and listening because staff engage in conversation with them, encouraging children to extend their vocabulary and their confidence in using the spoken word. The youngest and least mature children benefit from good support from the nursery nurse who works effectively to develop their language skills.

43. Staff take every opportunity to develop children's early reading skills and parents provide good support for this at home. Children practise phonic skills, which helps them to write new words. A few already recognise individual letters and use these in recognisable form in their writing. Teachers provide a satisfactory range of activities to encourage children to explore writing. For example, they write on the large whiteboard, leaving notices for the 'space travellers', they use the writing corner for mark making and practise writing patterns to develop the correct motor skills. Children see the purpose of writing because activities are often linked to work in other areas of learning, such as knowledge and understanding of the world.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good direct teaching provides challenge for children of all abilities.
- Mathematics lessons are lively and practical but some follow-up activities are not challenging enough to reinforce learning.
- Some purposeful links are made between mathematical development and other areas of learning.

Commentary

44. Achievement is satisfactory and most children will reach the standards that are expected by the end of the reception year. Teaching is satisfactory overall but direct teaching of mathematics is good and all groups of children are challenged appropriately by questioning. For example, higher ability children were asked in one session, “Can you see a pattern in adding one to a number?” and teaching used mathematical terms such as ‘counting up’ and ‘counting down’. A good range of attractive resources stimulates and focuses learning well in lessons, such as the use of props when counting, arranging large number cards into the correct order and children having the opportunity to use the interactive whiteboard. However, some follow-up activities are not as challenging and do not consolidate learning sufficiently. Teachers make satisfactory links between children’s mathematical development and other areas of learning. For example, in music children sing counting songs using teddy bears. Children with special educational needs receive good support, especially with mathematical language work. Their work is planned in appropriately small steps that build in success, and children show great pleasure in their achievements.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Direct teaching of the whole class is good but related activities are insufficiently challenging to consolidate learning and skills.
- Enthusiastic support staff enrich the quality of teaching and learning.
- Good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich learning.

Commentary

45. Achievement is satisfactory and most children are likely to reach the learning targets set by the end of the reception year. Staff plan good whole-class lessons to help children learn about the world around them and help them develop an appropriate vocabulary. For example, they go for autumn walks, collecting leaves and looking for similarities and differences in the leaves. Such activities provide chances for children to draw on their own experiences and develop an awareness of themselves and others. Support staff are used well to develop learning. For example, the nursery nurse makes chocolate nests for the baby owls with the children, focusing on the language of touch, smell and taste. Expert visitors enrich learning, such as when children learn about toys from today, yesterday and long ago and have a try at playing marbles, conkers and cup and ball. However, the range

of independent activities does not always provide a strong enough focus on what children are expected to learn.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of apparatus for outdoor play is currently limited but facilities for outdoor activities are about to be developed which will enhance the quality of provision in this area of learning.
- There are good opportunities for developing manipulative skills.

Commentary

46. Achievement is sound because teaching is satisfactory. Most children are likely to achieve the learning targets for this age group by the end of the reception year. At present, the outdoor areas are under-developed but work is beginning on re-development of a discrete, secure area that children use independently, rather than having to be taken by a member of staff at available times. At the moment, resources for outside, especially large equipment, are limited and this impacts on the development of children's skills in controlling their movements and making choices. Children use the hall for physical education lessons, using small apparatus. They run, jump, try to skip and make good attempts to throw and catch a bean bag, showing satisfactory control of their bodies. Staff provide children with good opportunities to develop their manipulative skills by rolling and moulding dough, using scissors and tools, and playing with small toys. Children also have access to a range of construction equipment, which enhances their physical development further.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is insufficient learning in some creative activities.
- Staff develop children's vocabulary and understanding well through discussion.

Commentary

47. Children achieve satisfactorily and by the time they move into Year 1, most are likely to reach the learning targets set for the age group. Satisfactory teaching ensures that children have a sound understanding and that skills are developed securely because children have access to daily activities such as painting, collage and role-play. Children learn appropriately to express their feelings through a range of materials and media, music and movements, story making and imaginative play. Conversations with adults in these activities are a strength of teaching, and expand children's ideas and vocabulary. In music, children sing with confidence and enthusiasm, make musical instruments and compose autumn music. They clap rhythms such as 'Gi-ant ted-dy-bear' and play instruments, creating a musical sequence linked to a picture line. They enjoy role-play activities in an exciting bear's den or a class rocket but this sometimes lacks sufficient guidance or sufficient adult input to consolidate learning. Purposeful links are made between creative work and other areas of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the time that they leave the school, pupils attain standards that are above average because teaching is good, and sometimes very good, in Years 5 and 6.
- By the end of Year 6, most pupils are articulate speakers and avid readers.
- Support staff are effective in promoting good progress for their target pupils.
- Assessment is used well to highlight groups of pupils for additional support but less well in ensuring that all pupils make consistently good progress through the school.
- Some marking is very effective in helping pupils improve their work but some offers insufficient guidance to pupils.
- There is now a clear focus for future development.

Commentary

48. Pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 6 and are now attaining standards that are higher than those found in most schools, particularly in reading, because they are taught consistently well in Years 5 and 6. Pupils in Year 6 are often inspired by their work.

49. Speaking and listening skills are average by the end of Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall because they have sound opportunities to discuss their ideas in whole-class sessions and to express themselves through drama. Pupils make good progress in Year 6, where they are challenged to explain themselves precisely and develop a wide range of descriptive vocabulary to help them express themselves in their writing. Those pupils who have English as an additional language are helped to take a full part in lessons by sensitive support and the good use of a bilingual assistant, who helps them make good progress in learning to speak and understand English. Pupils who have special educational needs are also included fully in lessons through sensitive guidance from support assistants.
50. Reading skills are currently above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. Pupils make sound progress in Years 1 and 2 and apply their skills appropriately, for example in using alphabetical skills to look up words in an index or dictionary. However, the range of reading books is somewhat narrow and some pupils have few opportunities to select these for themselves, although average and higher attaining pupils have free choice of library books. Year 6 pupils are avid readers and tackle a wide range of challenging texts, such as works by Tolkien and books on issues such as racism, with enjoyment and understanding. They express their preferences confidently and discuss the merits of various authors and types of texts.
51. Standards in writing are average in Year 2 and Year 6 and already, at the start of the year, show clear signs of improvement. This represents an improvement in Year 6, where standards have been below average until recently. Documentation shows that over time pupils have made uneven progress through the school and the subject leader has drawn up an action plan to improve the situation, with support from the LEA's literacy consultant. However, this is only just being implemented and has not had time to make an impact on learning. The school has sought to strengthen the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 5 and better progress is now being made in Year 5, with a strong emphasis on establishing good basic skills. This provides a higher starting point for Year 6 pupils who are now writing at length, using sound skills and applying them well in recording work in other subjects. The content of their work engages and holds the reader's interest. Whilst the standard of handwriting is satisfactory, presentation throughout the school is sometimes untidy and detracts from the quality of work.
52. Teaching is satisfactory overall because teachers' knowledge and understanding are sound and they plan well-structured lessons that mostly match work well to individual needs, although sometimes higher attainers could be better challenged. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is consistently good and that in Year 6 is sometimes inspirational, when the teacher's knowledge and understanding of both the subject and the pupils are demonstrated in high, but realistic, expectations of their work and behaviour. In some less effective lessons, the pace of learning is slow in introductory sessions, because either too much time is spent in explanations or a lot of time is taken managing the behaviour of a few pupils. Closing sessions are usually used well for the teachers and pupils to evaluate work. Teaching makes some good links with other subjects, such as ICT and history, to make learning relevant and interesting.
53. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and there have been recent improvements. The subject has taken a back seat for some time, whilst mathematics was the main focus for development, but a new action plan has begun to change the way in which literacy is being taught. Assessment information is used very effectively to highlight pupils for support but, until recently, has not been used rigorously enough to ensure that

consistently good progress was being made throughout the school by all pupils. The school identified achievement in writing as a priority and introduced a clearly focused improvement plan and is working successfully to bring about change. Test result data has now been closely analysed and the information gained forms the basis of the new action plan.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Pupils have sound opportunities to apply their skills across the curriculum and they display good levels of competence in doing so. Pupils' speaking skills enable them to explain and discuss their work clearly. They apply reading skills well in independent research using books and computers, accessing the knowledge they need quickly and efficiently. Pupils have some good opportunities to write in various styles, such as reports and letters, in lessons in other subjects, for example, when Year 6 pupils studying 'Britain in the Thirties' in history write detailed diaries or autobiographies of the Jarrow marchers. However, this is not planned systematically into the curriculum to ensure that all different styles of writing are developed in a meaningful way.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent lesson on biographies and autobiographies in Year 6 inspired pupils to learn. Very high expectations were conveyed by the teacher in the way that he challenged different groups of pupils by skilful questioning and exhortations to do their best, or have a try. "It's alright to be wrong," was the clear message. When pupils were right they were rewarded by enthusiastic praise. When they were wrong, they were guided gently towards the right answer and then publicly praised. The quality of relationships was excellent and promoted pupils' self-esteem very well. Pupils not only took responsibility for their own learning but also supported their peers, such as when one pupil stepped in as scribe when he saw a classmate having difficulty in writing down his thoughts. Pupils with special educational needs were very skilfully and sensitively supported by the learning support assistant so that they could take a full part in all activities. Such was their enthusiasm for writing that when one lower attaining pupil was asked to work on reading for a short spell with a volunteer, she said, "Oh no! I can't leave it now, I am just at an important bit." In a very good lesson in history, these same pupils developed their skills further when writing an account of the Jarrow March from the viewpoint of a marcher.

Both lessons contributed significantly to pupils' personal development by enabling them to develop a sense of self-awareness. In the history lesson, pupils also gained a deep understanding of the moral and social implications of events in the past.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and particularly so in Years 5 and 6, where it is sometimes very good.
- In some classes, the behaviour of a small group of pupils hinders the learning of others.
- Leadership and management are good and have led to good improvement in provision and standards since the previous inspection.
- Some marking is of good quality and informs pupils how to improve their work but this is not consistent throughout the school.

Commentary

55. Standards in Year 2 are average overall; most pupils achieve soundly although there is sometimes insufficient challenge for higher attaining children in Years 1 and 2. Standards are above average in Year 6 and pupils are achieving well. This is because teaching is good overall and good examples are seen in most classes throughout the school. Teachers plan interesting lessons and expect pupils to behave well, and consequently there is a positive atmosphere for learning. Very good teaching occurs more regularly at the top end of the juniors because teachers develop pupils' thinking skills in a series of logical steps and there is continuous expectation for pupils to work at the peak of their understanding. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were continuously challenged by the teacher, who used humour and lots of praise and encouragement to raise esteem and give confidence. Pupils were on task throughout the lesson and were greatly enthused by their learning. All staff make effective use of interactive whiteboards in their lessons, and this gives pupils the opportunity to be actively involved in their learning. Where there is very good teaching, teachers help pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to do next. This is reflected in the quality of marking in some classes, which helps pupils understand what they need to do next. However, this is not consistent throughout the school and some marking just provides praise for success.

56. Teaching in lower junior classes is not always as effective because the time taken to manage behaviour sometimes impacts on the quality of teaching and learning that takes place. However, the school has identified this problem and extra support is being introduced.
57. Most pupils who have special educational needs receive consistently good support and achieve as well as their classmates. The school recognises some pupils as being potentially gifted and is beginning to make additional arrangements for them but these have not yet had time to impact on their achievements.
58. The quality of leadership and management is good. The school has focused effectively on improving provision in mathematics, with the support of the LEA. Although only in an acting capacity, the new co-ordinator has worked effectively to maintain the focus on raising standards. Detailed data-analysis and tracking of pupils' progress have provided a clear understanding of what needs to be improved further. Monitoring of the quality of teaching has given a clear insight into the strengths and weaknesses across the school. As a result of the focus, provision has improved and resulted in better achievement and higher standards than at the previous inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. The school makes sound links with mathematics in its planning for other subjects. In history, teachers reinforce the concept of time through the use of time-lines and older pupils learn how to draw graphs and tables in their science work about the movement of the sun. Younger children create poetry about counting and good use is made of ICT in numeracy lessons throughout the school.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in Years 5 and 6 helps pupils to achieve well by the end of Year 6.
- Some pupils, particularly the higher attainers, do not achieve well enough by the end of Year 2.
- There are shortcomings in the teaching in some classes.

Commentary

60. The attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is above that expected for their age at this early stage in the school year. Given their attainment when they left Year 2, they are achieving well. The good teaching in Years 5 and 6 contributes significantly to pupils' good achievement. With the good teaching in Year 6, pupils of all abilities are set to do well in their tests at the end of the school year. Since the last inspection there has been a marked improvement in the achievements of pupils by the end of Year 6. Not all pupils do as well as they might by the end of Year 2, with too few reaching the higher level 3 because the school does not rigorously adapt its long-term plans for learning to match pupils' differing levels of ability.
61. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good and it is satisfactory in other classes. In Years 5 and 6 the teachers have high but realistic

expectations of what they want pupils to learn. They secure good learning by managing pupils well and through very good relationships that engender respect and a keenness to learn. While teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 it is, just occasionally, less effective when it does not secure the good behaviour of all pupils. The satisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2 is partly as a result of curriculum planning in a two-year rolling programme of work. The work that teaching requires of current Year 2 pupils is sometimes based too much on the long-term plans and does not always enable higher attaining pupils to move on quickly to higher levels of attainment. For example, in a lesson on recognising a range of sounds and their sources, higher attaining pupils had little opportunity to achieve at the level they were capable of by comparing the loudness or the pitch of sound. Throughout the school, teachers use homework well to develop learning and enhance enjoyment. Teachers are good at questioning pupils and using discussion to extend their understanding, for example of gases, liquids and solids in Year 5. Lessons are generally well planned and make good use of support assistants to enhance learning.

62. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, having effectively supported the rise in pupils' achievements by the end of Year 6. There is, however, currently little systematic observation of teaching to find out, for example, why some pupils do not perform as well as they might by the end of Year 2, or what can be done to remedy any weaknesses or to provide support for teaching. Teachers assess pupils' learning, and record what they have and have not achieved. However, the assessments are too general to help teachers to specify exactly what individual pupils need to do next. The co-ordinator is aware of these issues and has written plans to address some of them but these have not yet been implemented. The school has improved the links between science and ICT, which are now sound.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6.
- The impact of specialist teaching means that teaching is good overall.
- The good curriculum enables pupils to achieve well across all aspects of ICT.

Commentary

63. Infant pupils, including those with special educational needs, reach the standards expected for their age and their achievement is satisfactory. Because of the well-focused teaching, junior pupils, including those from the school's range of minority ethnic backgrounds, reach standards that are above those expected by the end of Year 6. Given their attainment at the end of the infants and their good progress in lessons, they achieve well.

64. Teaching is good overall. It is very good in lessons where the specialist support assistant focuses clearly on teaching specific skills to small groups, as in a Year 4 lesson where pupils were challenged to amend text without using the mouse. This ensured that they had to explore the full use of the keyboard. Satisfactory lessons have effective features, as in a Year 2 lesson where the teaching made good use of the interactive whiteboard to help pupils to learn how to use a range of keys including 'shift' and 'delete'. The lack of

opportunity for these young pupils to practise these skills there and then prevented learning from being better.

65. Although resources are satisfactory and sufficient to support the good teaching there are times when limited access to computers, as in a Year 2 lesson, means that pupils have to wait to develop their skills. This resulted in the very good attitudes to ICT that are typical throughout the school being lessened.

66. Staff changes mean that there is presently no co-ordinator for the subject. However, the new headteacher and the ICT support assistant are providing satisfactory leadership. The school is wisely considering how to improve its level of resources and how best to improve pupils' access to these to make progress even better. Notably the headteacher is considering the possible benefits of a computer room, whilst maintaining computer access in classrooms. The very knowledgeable support assistant is aware of the opportunities to enrich resources for control technology. As yet there is no whole-school system of assessing what pupils have learned and what they have not, in order to inform teachers what pupils need to do next and so make teaching even better.

67. The curriculum is well structured so that pupils make good progress across all aspects of the subject. As a result Year 6 pupils talk competently about the use of ICT in the wider world, they use a search engine competently and they can describe clearly what they have achieved in control technology. Pupils' good achievement by the time they leave the school is an improvement on that at the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. Pupils are competent in using computers to enhance learning in other subjects and there are good links with other subjects that support learning well. Particularly effective links with history, for example, foster good progress in both subjects, as when Year 5 pupils used the Internet to find information about Egyptian gods. The good links with English include multi-media work when, for example, Year 6 pupils effectively combined text and pictures to make a 'slide show'. The school is aware that there is the potential to develop the links with other subjects including science.

HUMANITIES

It was not possible to observe any lessons in **geography** and very little work had been completed at the start of the year. Therefore no judgements can be made on the quality of provision or on standards achieved. Planning and displays of work in Years 1 and 2 show that there is a sound curriculum in place and conversations with Year 6 pupils indicated that they have good attitudes to the subject.

Religious education was subject to a separate inspection by the diocese.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Year 6.

- Pupils learn good historical skills and gain a good understanding of life in the past.
- Good teaching provides lively and interesting lessons that engage pupils' attention.
- Pupils' literacy skills are used and extended well through research and recording.
- Good use of resources, expertise and visits enrich the curriculum.

Commentary

69. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have a sound bank of historical knowledge and those in Year 6 have gained a good understanding of life in the past. Pupils build up good skills when investigating history from a very good range of historical artefacts and from books and the Internet. For example, in a good lesson in Year 2, pupils played games from the past and learned to understand some of the similarities and differences between their own lives and those of children the past. Pupils in Year 6, whose teacher is a local historian, develop a particularly good understanding of and empathy with people in by-gone eras. For example, when learning about 'Britain in the Thirties' they wrote diaries or autobiographies of the Jarrow marchers that showed how they understood the hardships faced by the marchers and their families.

70. Teaching is good and lessons are lively and sometimes exciting, which motivates pupils to learn and do their best. Resources are used very well and teachers plan activities and visits to bring learning to life. For example, a local historian led lively sessions on old and new toys for pupils in Years 1 and 2. A very wide and interesting range of resources engaged and held pupils' attention very well.

71. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills, such as for research and for writing in different styles, such as letters, diaries and reports. Even more successful are the occasions when this is linked to their writing in literacy lessons, such as when Year 5 write newspaper reports and Year 6 write autobiographies on historical events.

72. The subject is well led and managed and the good provision noted at the last inspection has been maintained.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. Art and design, design and technology and music could only be sampled and therefore no overall judgements could be made about the quality of teaching and learning.

74. In **art and design**, evidence from two lessons, examination of pupils' work and discussions with Year 6 pupils indicate that the school offers a broad curriculum that is well enriched by expert visitors and that pupils have good attitudes to the subject. Standards in the work seen were in line with those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. There is some good quality painting and pastel work in the two classes where the co-ordinators teach.

75. In **design and technology**, no lesson was seen during the inspection and insufficient work could be seen to make judgements on standards. However, other evidence shows that the curriculum is broad and balanced and that the school makes good use of visitors with particular skills, for example when pupils work with textiles. Year 6 pupils appreciate the value of designing what they want to make. One said, for example, "I then know what I am doing". Teachers make good use of homework as when pupils evaluated different types of container including a vase and a tissue box. One Year 6 pupil wrote, "The vase is functional and decorative".

76. In **music**, no lessons were observed during the inspection so no teaching or achievement judgements are possible. Planning indicates that all the required elements of the curriculum are taught, with specialist music lessons taught by outside staff. Talented musicians are well supported by the school and visiting musicians enrich the music curriculum. Concerts and performances and singing for local charities contribute to pupils' overall musical experiences. In assemblies, children's enjoyment is singing hymns is obvious and contributes very well to their spiritual and personal development. Staff use a published scheme of work combined with national guidance, which helps teachers to ensure that pupils build progressively on their skills year on year. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enrichment of the curriculum is good.
- The pace of work in lessons is sometimes too slow.

Commentary

77. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils reach the expected standards for their age. The achievement of pupils is sound across the different aspects of the subject, including swimming, and the majority of pupils can swim the expected distance of 25 metres by the end of Year 6.

78. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good teaching was seen in Years 2 and 5. Where lessons were good, they were purposeful and demanding and moved along at a good pace. Pupils' attitudes were very good; they enjoyed the lessons and developed good understanding of what they were learning. Good specific guidance helped pupils to improve

the quality of their work, such as employing tactics in games or improving their symmetrical balances in gymnastics by holding shapes quite still and stretching more. Teachers are generally good at using praise to motivate pupils but opportunities are missed in some lessons, where a shortage of really successful control strategies meant that pupil management is satisfactory rather than good and the pace of learning is slower. Pace also drops occasionally when pupils have to wait a long while for a turn on apparatus.

79. Leadership of the subject is good because the co-ordinator has a good impact on the school's wide-ranging additional sporting activities. These include numerous after-school sports clubs, competition against other schools and the use of professionals who visit to improve pupils' skills. Management has effectively acted on the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. As a result, for instance, teachers' confidence in teaching dance has been enhanced through training. The co-ordinator's enthusiasm is reflected in action, for example in taking part in national initiatives that require, amongst other things, after-school clubs. The useful observation of teaching in some classes has yet to be extended throughout the school in order to share with teachers what is working effectively and to tackle areas for development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

80. Insufficient lessons were observed to make overall judgements on the quality of provision.

81. The school provides a sound curriculum to support the progressive development of pupils' skills and knowledge, in specific lessons and as part of other subjects. For example, pupils learn about the impact of a healthy lifestyle on their bodies in science. In lessons such as personal, social and health education and class discussions, called 'circle time', pupils have sound chances to share ideas and talk about their experiences and feelings in a supportive and secure environment. Most pupils listen to others with respect but a small minority find it hard to listen or to express their own thoughts clearly. The school promotes healthy eating and helps pupils develop good social skills. For example, at lunchtime, there is family service, where older pupils serve younger ones and set good models of table manners and behaviour. There is a suitable programme for sex and relationships education and drugs education. Overall, most pupils develop a sound understanding of how their decisions affect their own and others' lives and learn to be responsible members of a community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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