

INSPECTION REPORT

GORSEY BANK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wilmslow, Cheshire

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111013

Headteacher: Mrs M S Swindells

Lead inspector: Mr R Spinks

Dates of inspection: 27th – 30th September 2004

Inspection number: 266893

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	407
School address:	Altrincham Road Wilmslow Cheshire
Postcode:	SK9 5NQ
Telephone number:	01625 522699
Fax number:	01625 539675
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Alderman Alan Barnes
Date of previous inspection:	April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Gorse Bank Primary School is situated in Wilmslow, Cheshire. The pupils come from privately owned homes and most parents have managerial or professional occupations. On the whole, pupils come from very advantaged backgrounds. There are 407 pupils on roll, which makes this school larger than average. Pupils start in the Reception class in the September before their fifth birthday. There are 32 pupils on the register of special educational needs (8.1%) and nine pupils have a statement of special educational need; these numbers are both below the national average. The main need is for moderate learning difficulties but several pupils have hearing impairment and one has partial sight. There are a few pupils whose home language is not English but none are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Pupils on entry cover the full ability range; however, overall attainment on entry is well above the average for children of this age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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15522	Bernard Morgan	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
32612	Sue Gartland	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Information and Communication Technology; Design and Technology; Special Educational Needs.
33609	Mitch Moore	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Geography; History; Religious Education.
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	3
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	6
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	11
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	13
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school with many outstanding features. The **outstanding management** continues to ensure that pupils attain well above average standards, in a fully inclusive school. The school has continued to improve since the last inspection and gives **very good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership and management of the school are excellent.
- Pupils make an excellent start to their education in Reception.
- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and art by the end of Year 6.
- Very good teaching and learning lead to well above average progress.
- This is a totally inclusive school, where all pupils have access to an innovative and dynamic curriculum.
- The personal development of pupils is very good.
- The links with parents and the community are excellent.
- The care and welfare of pupils is excellent.

The school has continued to improve well since the last inspection. The issues identified then have been fully addressed and there have been further innovations within the curriculum. The **excellent governing body** monitors and challenges the work of the school and supports its continued development. Pupils are keen to come to school, with **excellent** attendance rates. They behave very well and this ensures that they develop quickly into confident learners.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A	C
Mathematics	A*	A*	A	D
Science	A	A	A	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.*

Overall pupils achieve well at all stages in the school

Pupils enter the school with well above average levels of attainment and by the end of Reception the majority of pupils have exceeded the goals set for them nationally. By the end of Year 2 standards are **well above** national averages, with over half the pupils attaining higher than average standards. By the end of Year 6 standards remain **well above** average. The similar school comparisons are affected by the numbers of pupils who attain the highest levels possible at the end of Year 2 and then go on to achieve the highest levels available at the end of Year 6.

Pupils' personal qualities develop very well. They have **very positive** attitudes to school and learning and their behaviour is **very good** in lessons and around the school. Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance levels are **excellent**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of education is excellent. Teaching is consistently very good throughout the school. The support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is **very good** and they are fully integrated into lessons. In response to the very good teaching, pupils of all ages work hard and learn well. Assessment procedures are **very good** in English, mathematics and science and teachers use the information gained to challenge pupils effectively and to encourage further learning. Assessment procedures are developing well in the other subjects of the curriculum.

The curriculum provided is excellent. It is innovative and provides a much broader range of learning experiences than is normally found, with the addition of both French and German for older pupils. There are **excellent enrichment opportunities** within the curriculum through visits and visitors and there is an **excellent range** of very well attended extra-curricular activities.

The care and welfare of pupils and the close working partnerships with parents and the community ensure **excellent support** for the personal development of pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are excellent. The headteacher provides **outstanding** leadership and is very well supported by the team of senior managers. The **excellent** work of the governors ensures that the school continues to develop, while ensuring that high standards and quality are sustained. They also ensure that the school constantly provides 'best value' for money. Subject leadership is **very good** for most subjects, with consistent approaches established.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are **very satisfied** with the education provided for their children. They are very knowledgeable about the work of the school and are very appreciative of the level of contact they have with the staff. They assist their children with their work and many provide first hand support as volunteers within the school. They are very positive about the very good start provided in the Reception classes.

Pupils like school and are happy. They work hard and are fully involved in all activities; over half the pupils in the school from Year 1 to Year 6 attend extra-curricular activities after school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are **no** major areas requiring improvement. There are areas, which the school has identified which, whilst at least satisfactory, are of relative weakness when compared with the very good and excellent provision elsewhere. These are: to continue to develop assessment procedures and processes in foundation subjects and to develop curricular provision in music and physical education further.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement throughout the school is **very good**. Girls and boys progress equally well. Pupils with SEN and those who speak English as a second language achieve well. Well above average standards are being sustained in a wider range of subjects than is usually found in primary schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Reception achieve well to exceed the expected standards by the end of the year.
- Standards were above average at the end of Year 2 in national assessments in 2004, after a fall in 2003.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science.
- Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are very well developed.
- Pupils with SEN achieve good standards.
- Pupils achieve above average standards in most foundation subjects, French and German.

Commentary

1. Pupils enter the Reception class with well above average levels of attainment, especially in language and communication skills. Teachers and support staff quickly establish good learning routines and pupils make good progress, achieving well, so that by the end of the year attainment is well above that normally seen in all the goals set for this age group.

2. In Years 1 and 2 pupils' achievement is very good, as they generally attain well above average standards in the national assessments for seven year olds in reading, writing and mathematics. The fall in attainment in 2003, especially in mathematics, has been fully addressed and the provisional results in 2004 show a significant improvement in all three subjects. This has been brought about by well-managed improvements to teaching and learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (17.7)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.2 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.3 (18.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is very good. During the inspection, evidence indicates that a significant proportion of pupils at the start of the school year are likely to attain well above expected levels by the end of the year in English, mathematics, science, ICT and art and design. Standards are above average in design and technology, geography, history, religious education, French and German and standards are in line with expectations for the age group in music and physical education.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.9 (29.5)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	29.4 (30.7)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.2 (31.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. In 2003 standards at the end of Year 6 in national assessment tests were well above national and similar school averages in English, mathematics and science. The numbers of pupils attaining the higher than expected Level 5 was very high in English and science. However, data based on prior attainment shows satisfactory progress in English and science with weaker progress in mathematics. This indicates that pupils attaining the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2 progress to the higher Level 5 by the end of Year 6, which is the expected average progress of two levels over these four years. Inspection evidence shows that pupils have a wider knowledge and understanding in these subjects than is indicated by the assessment results and attainment is well above that expected.
5. Pupils with SEN achieve very well. Individual educational plans (IEPs) identify appropriate targets and are reviewed regularly to evaluate progress.
6. The few children whose home language is not English achieve very well and attain similar standards to their peers.
7. Pupils have highly developed literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and teachers plan the use and extension of these skills in all subjects of the curriculum. This enhances learning and attainment in all respects, for example in a Year 6 geography lesson pupils used 'excel spreadsheets' to investigate river Nile water resources, presenting and analysing the data with regard to the impact on various national populations along the river.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They behave very well in lessons and around the school. Attendance and punctuality are excellent. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Overall, the provision for pupils' personal development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Pupils have a strong desire to learn.
- Pupils are very enterprising and willing to take responsibility.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Commentary

8. The annual attendance rate for the school is very high compared with national averages; unauthorised absence is well below average. Parents recognise the importance of children's regular attendance at school. Pupils arrive punctually at school, ready and eager to take part in lessons and to take advantage of the very wide range of extra-curricular opportunities offered to them.
9. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Teachers and other staff show a great interest in their pupils' personal development. During registration a subtle code is used by children to let the teacher and their classmates know how they are feeling or how lunchtime has been for them. Teachers then follow this up with general comments to show that they appreciate the range of feelings in the class, and also make arrangements to address particular concerns with individuals later in the day. This system is very effective in helping children to get into the right frame of mind for learning, knowing that concerns will be addressed later.
10. The curriculum is built around first-hand learning experiences, with many opportunities for pupils to show enterprise and take responsibility. Collaborative work is a strong feature in lessons as groups of children work together to produce a common outcome. The skills needed in group

work are explicitly discussed with younger pupils and, by the end of Year 2, pupils can describe their own roles in group activities and explain the importance of co-operation, compromise and tolerance when working in a team. Consequently, relationships between pupils are very good.

11. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are actively involved in lessons, which results in a high level of interest and motivation in class. Around the school, pupils show a caring attitude to each other. The 'Friendship Bench' and 'Bully Buster' schemes are very effective strategies through which the pupils support each other in developing friendships and mediating between pupils when problems occur. There have been no pupils excluded from the school for many years.

12. Pupils with SEN or disabilities enjoy positive relationships with their peers and are confident in contributing to lessons. Pupils frequently have the opportunity to work together in mixed ability groups and demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively.

13. Social development is very good. The school promotes a high level of self-esteem amongst pupils. Children's endeavours in lessons are praised by staff, who also give very constructive points for further development. In personal, health, social and education (PSHE) and citizenship lessons, pupils are very confident about speaking in front of the class about sensitive issues and they show a great respect for each other's feelings. The innovative 'Up to Me' programme which Years 5 and 6 study as part of PHSE and citizenship is particularly effective in developing self belief, values and aspirations in older children.

14. Spiritual development is very good. There are many examples in classroom displays that encourage pupils to reflect on their own experiences, including 'I'm Special' boards, where each child can display items relating to their own achievement in or out of school. Lessons regularly include opportunities to reflect beyond the literal. In a literacy lesson on autobiographical writing, Year 6 pupils used drama to explore the inner feelings of an Egyptian slave on the death of his brother. This led to some excellent written work later in the week.

15. Pupils' moral development is very well encouraged. The school has clear expectations of pupils and they are taught to distinguish right from wrong in lessons that raise moral issues.

16. The school promotes pupils' cultural development through helping them appreciate their own cultural traditions and those of others. It provides many opportunities for pupils to develop and celebrate their talents, especially through the wide range of clubs on offer before, during and after school. The curriculum is enriched by many opportunities for pupils to visit places outside school and to gain from meeting visitors from a variety of backgrounds.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	3.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0
National data	0.4

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

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	307	0	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	15	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	6	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

Overall, the quality of education provided by the school is excellent. The teaching is very good in all age groups and this leads to very good achievement by interested and positive pupils. Teachers' planning and assessment in the core subjects is exemplary, and as a result all pupils make very good progress. Planning and assessment is developed to almost the same high level in all other subjects.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. It is very good in all sections of the school and pupils respond well and make very good progress to achieve very well, especially in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' subject knowledge is very good.
- Long-term, medium-term and lesson planning are very good.
- Teachers use their ongoing assessment of pupils' achievement so that lessons are planned to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Support staff make an outstanding contribution to the teaching and learning process.
- Teachers consistently promote equality of opportunity.
- Teachers ensure that pupils have the opportunity to work both independently and collaboratively.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 62 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
6 (9.5%)	26 (42%)	22 (35%)	8 (13%)	0	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.

17. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, which they use well to provide very good and challenging learning opportunities for pupils. They are able to lead question and answer sessions confidently and their expositions are clear and concise. This gives pupils the confidence to ask for clarification and to develop their own responses to learning.

18. The school's systematic approach to planning ensures that all aspects of the National Curriculum are delivered in full. The planning is very detailed and identifies many cross-curricular links and the use and development of key literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. In this way, lessons are planned to develop all aspects of learning coherently.

19. Teaching and learning are well planned to cater for pupils with SEN. Learning assistants are carefully deployed to ensure that pupils receive the support they need to make progress. The partnerships between class teachers and support staff are excellent and this has a positive impact on the progress pupils make.

20. Teachers use their ongoing assessment of pupils to identify what should be taught and learned next. Work is frequently provided at a range of levels to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils within the class. This promotes progress for all learners. Lessons are delivered at a very brisk pace, so that pupils continue to learn well.

21. In all lessons where there are present, support staff, whether employed or parent helpers, make an excellent contribution to pupils learning. The balance between in-class and withdrawal support is excellent. It is identified within lesson planning and is targeted to produce the maximum effect on learning. For example, in a Year 2 physical education lesson, a partially sighted pupil was supported by a parent helper and was able to take a full part in a gymnastics activity.

22. In all lessons teachers ensure that all pupils have access to all activities. The inclusive nature of all learning is a very strong feature of all classrooms.

23. Lessons are delivered using a wide range of different methods. This gives pupils many opportunities to work independently and in collaboration with others. They show the capacity to benefit from these approaches from the Reception classes to Year 6, showing increasing confidence as they mature.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Innovative development of the curriculum encourages inclusion.
- Cross-curricular links are excellent.
- Enrichment activities and extra-curricular opportunities enhance learning for all pupils.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with SEN.

Commentary

24. The curriculum has been developed to provide pupils with an exceptionally broad and rich experience. The school is committed to a policy of inclusion. A good illustration of this is the provision of modern foreign language teaching for all pupils from Reception to Year 6.

25. There is a whole school emphasis on developing advanced learning techniques, such as problem solving. Curriculum provision is planned to assist this. It provides pupils with a wide range of first hand experiences and is built round the principles of pupils working together to investigate, analyse, plan, review and evaluate. This contributes to the very effective provision for personal and social development. It also enables the school to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils through the extension of 'thinking' skills.

26. All subjects, including religious education, are planned in a structured way, following or adapting national guidelines. Effective provision is made for health education, including sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. There is also provision for a daily act of collective worship that meets statutory requirements.

27. A seven-year curriculum plan identifies cross-curricular links and this results in a meaningful and coherent programme. Pupils are excited and motivated by the topics that provide a focus for their work and this contributes to high levels of achievement. Skills learnt in literacy, numeracy and ICT are used extensively to contribute to learning in other subjects.

28. The school provides an outstanding range of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities. For example, pupils from Year 2 onwards take part in a programme of annual residential visits. The curriculum is further enhanced by additional educational visits outside the school and by the large number of visitors who bring expertise into the school.

29. The provision of extra-curricular activities is a priority for the school and the majority of pupils take advantage of the exciting range on offer. Where activities are over-subscribed, the school ensures equality of opportunity by operating a rota system. The programme is carried out by a committed staff team and is enriched by the partnerships developed with local sports clubs and artists. During the inspection 20 different activities were observed, including football, netball, judo, lacrosse, drama, information technology, Spanish, choir, gardening and a range of craft activities.

30. The provision for pupils with SEN and for those with disabilities is very good. Where necessary, the school adapts the curriculum to ensure access for all pupils. Individual educational plans (IEPs) are well used by staff to inform the planned learning.

31. The curriculum is planned to prepare pupils well for the next stages of their education. For example, the school works closely with the High School to prepare and deliver transition projects in several different subjects.

32. Overall, accommodation is good. The building and the well-developed external environment are used effectively. At present space in the school hall and in the ICT suite is limited, but the school has plans in place to extend these areas in the near future.

33. The environment for learning is attractive, stimulating and well organised. Resources for learning are very good, although resources in music are weaker than in other subjects.

34. Teaching staff are very well matched to the needs of the curriculum. Support staff are well deployed and make a significant contribution to the progress of pupils, including those with SEN.

Care, guidance and support

Overall, the school takes excellent care of its pupils' welfare, health and safety, providing them with very good support, advice and guidance. The school's involvement of pupils in its work and development is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff build up very good relationships with pupils, providing each pupil with a very good, trusting relationship with one or more adults.
- Excellent induction arrangements give pupils a flying start to their life at Gorse Bank.
- The school council makes an effective contribution to school life. Pupils' views are valued and acted upon.
- Pupils with SEN are very well supported.
- Every child is valued and achievement is celebrated very well.

Commentary

35. This is a happy, caring community where pupils trust staff and take pleasure in friendships with each other. The welfare, support and guidance of pupils are very effective and are built on the very good relationships between staff and children. This mutual respect helps to create a clean, safe and secure atmosphere.

36. Teachers are very sensitive to the needs of all pupils and ensure that they are fully involved in class activities. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils very well and there are excellent contacts with parents to make sure effective arrangements relating to health and diet are in place. The headteacher has relevant training in child protection. She and her staff are watchful, know the procedures and are ready to implement them if necessary.

37. There are excellent arrangements for children joining the Reception class, which help them to settle in quickly and happily. Those children who join Gorsey Bank at times other than normal are befriended and swiftly made to feel valued members of the school community by all staff and pupils. Pupils take pride in welcoming others to school and helping them to feel happy and settled.

38. The school has well developed procedures for the diagnostic assessment of pupils with SEN. This is reflected in the early identification of need and the appropriate support provided for individuals.

39. Staff work together to try and make the school environment as safe as possible and in all respects the school has a very good record on health and safety. For example, first aid is administered effectively. Accidents and their outcomes are carefully recorded; safe practices are underlined in lessons and equipment is regularly checked and maintained. Particular care is taken with the arrangements for the many visits children make outside the school to ensure safety and well-being. Parents have complete confidence in all the external visits, knowing that the safety of their children is assured.

40. Achievement is rewarded with praise and celebrated in class. Staff very effectively monitor and support the personal development of pupils, using such means as formal and informal discussions and questionnaires. Teachers use assessment very effectively to plan the next stage of a pupil's learning in the core subjects. Pupils with SEN receive excellent support and consequently achieve very well throughout the school. Parents and external agencies are well involved.

41. The school's ethos supports the pupils' feelings of being valued members of Gorsey Bank very well. Pupils enjoy being involved in the life of the school. The staff take time to listen to their comments and teachers treat their views and suggestions with respect. This year's newly elected school council, representing all years from Year 1 to Year 6, acts as a formal channel for pupils' ideas for developing aspects of the school. Pupils' views are valued and acted upon.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Overall, the partnership with parents, links with the community and other schools are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The weekly newsletter to parents is excellent; it is very informative and very well written, with both its audience and purpose very much in mind.
- The work of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is outstanding and contributes greatly to the learning and development of all pupils.
- Reporting arrangements for parents, including annual written reports on progress, are very good.
- The school is held in very high regard by the overwhelming majority of parents.
- Links with other schools are very good.
- Very good use is made of a wide range of community and industrial links to assist pupils' learning and particularly their personal development.

Commentary

42. Written communication of all kinds is very good. It is very well written, complies with requirements, and is written with the reader very much in mind. The school's weekly newsletter is an excellent example of its type. It not only contains much routine information, celebrates achievements, provides a very clear picture of the school's work, but also, for example, serves to reassure parents about such matters as planned absences of staff, indicating who will be their replacements. Parents say very clearly that they rely on the newsletter and appreciate the care with which it is produced.

43. Parents hold the school in very high regard and say that they recognise the very significant efforts that all staff, led by the notable example of the headteacher, make on behalf of their children as, for example, in the very significant programme of regular extra-curricular activities provided. They also appreciate the accessibility of the headteacher and her staff. They note the considerable efforts made by staff prior to the induction of new pupils; these arrangements enable pupils to settle quickly to school life.

44. The PTA has made, and continues to make, an outstanding contribution to the life of the school and, in particular, to pupils' learning and their wider personal development. The very considerable sums that it raises have led to major projects being successfully undertaken and completed, for example, in the provision of specially designed and built adventure play facilities. Pupils derive much pleasure from these. The Association's activities also serve as a very successful link with the wider community, who attend and support them. All this is the result not only of the work of an able and dedicated committee of parents, but also the active support of many. The school is very fortunate to have such support.

45. Parents are helped to assist their children's learning through the school's regular workshops on various curricular and other matters, as well as through pupils' homework. Parents and pupils say clearly that this is regularly set and marked; they value the contribution it makes to pupils' learning.

46. A strong partnership is developed with parents of pupils who have SEN and disabilities. Communication is very good and the majority of parents regularly attend review meetings. The school also has positive links with outside agencies such as health services and specialist organisations. The quality of these partnerships is reflected in the very good progress made by individual pupils with specific needs.

47. The school has extensive links with other schools to deal with routine processes, such as the transfer of pupils. These work very well, as do the significant contacts made to help to develop curricular and other organisational matters. The school makes very good use of the wider community in developing pupils' learning and particularly their personal development through its provision of the opportunity of residential visits to all pupils from Year 2 to Year 6. Discussions with pupils show how much these are valued.

48. The school values the views of parents and pupils and takes steps to obtain them, considers them systematically and to respond as appropriate. Discussions with members of the school council show that pupils are very aware of the importance of their role. They take it seriously and point to changes to school life that have followed previous discussions, such as work on anti-bullying.

49. This aspect now shows further improvement on the high standards noted in the previous report and is now a very significant strength of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are excellent. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and the senior managers assist in providing excellent management of the school. The governing body carries out its work in an exemplary manner. Governors are well informed, knowledgeable and monitor all aspects of the school's work closely.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent leadership and management by the headteacher.
- Outstanding governance.
- Very effective monitoring of the work of the school.
- Excellent provision for staff development.
- A total commitment to being a fully inclusive school.

Commentary

50. The headteacher has very high aspirations for the effectiveness of the school, which she has developed into a shared vision with the whole staff. The strategic plans for continued school improvement are securely based upon extensive and thorough evaluation of the current work of the school. The staff of the school are a strong team, in which all are valued and have a part to play in providing a very good education for the pupils.

51. The governing body has a very clear and detailed understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. They monitor the work of the school in detail, observing the work of the school directly as 'governor of the month', attending subject specific meetings with subject co-ordinators and serving on the additional committee which monitors the implementation of the school development plan.

52. The school has established excellent systems for monitoring its work, which involve both managers and governors. They analyse data and compare the effectiveness of the school with that of other schools, using a wide range of measures from attainment data to spending patterns. Any action that needs to be taken to sustain improvement is therefore shared between the senior managers of the school and the governors. An example of this is the identification of the reasons for the small drop in mathematics standards in Year 2 in 2003, which was addressed through staff training and additional resources and monitored by the numeracy governor.

53. The school development plan identifies training needs, as does the performance management process. The school meets these needs fully and ensures that staff are kept up-to-date with the latest developments, both whole school and in individual subjects. The school has excellent systems to support newly qualified teachers, teachers on the graduate training programme and those doing initial teacher training.

54. Financial management is excellent. The budget is set and monitored very effectively to support the continued development of the school. The senior managers and governors are very well aided by the financial and administrative staff.

55. The provision for pupils with SEN is well managed. The teacher with responsibility in this area provides very good support for the staff team and ensures that appropriate training is available. She works closely with colleagues to monitor and review progress.

56. The governors and managers have worked well together to establish the aspirational goal of being a fully inclusive school where pupils and staff both have the maximum opportunity to develop their potential; this pervades the whole school ethos.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	847,427.00
Total expenditure	829,742.00
Expenditure per pupil	1,989.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	15,895.00
Balance carried forward to the next	17,685.00

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Reception class is **excellent**, enabling all children to achieve very well. It is one of the school's strengths. The children enter Reception in the September before they are five, and at the time of the inspection there were 55 children on roll. These children had only been in school for three weeks and the week of the inspection was their second full week in school. There were two children with SEN.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent leadership and management ensure that children receive a flying start to their education.
- Achievement is very good because children are keen to learn and their needs are effectively met through an excellently planned, exciting and enriching curriculum, which includes a strong programme of outdoor activities.
- Teaching is consistently very good and results in very good learning.
- Excellent induction arrangements in Reception, together with excellent links with parents, enables children to settle quickly and happily into this very secure environment.
- Very comprehensive and analytical assessment procedures are organised precisely to give the school a very clear insight into children's progress and the achievements of children with SEN.
- The provision for SEN is excellent.
- The classroom celebrates all areas of learning. It is bright and welcoming, stimulating and spacious. It is used well to support learning.
- There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The outside area has been improved and is now very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good because of the very good teaching and high expectations of the staff.
- Every opportunity is taken to encourage children's confidence and independence.
- Relationships are excellent with both adults and peers.
- Behaviour is very good at all times.

Commentary

57. Teaching is always very good and as a result children make very good progress and achieve very well in their social development. All children are on course to achieve more than might be expected, far beyond the Early Learning Goals. This reflects the emphasis the school places on developing the whole child. All the adults have established good routines, so that children feel safe and confident. Children have many opportunities to work alone and in small groups, '*Deciding what to work at*'. Staff use every opportunity to praise children, constantly reinforcing the excellent relationships and rewarding them with stickers. Staff have very high expectations of children's

behaviour. They set clear boundaries and the consistent role models set by adults ensure that children are clear about what is expected of them. Assessment and record keeping for this area of learning are excellent. Pupils with SEN receive the best possible care. All children have developed their independence in dressing and undressing and in taking care with their personal hygiene.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good because very good teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through an interesting curriculum and in classrooms that celebrate language.
- The excellent teachers and teaching assistants take every opportunity to develop children's language skills.
- Very high expectations ensure all children take great care with the presentation of their work.
- Children enjoy handling books and are making very good progress in starting to read and write.

Commentary

58. Early indications are that all the children will exceed the expectations in speaking and listening, reading and writing by the end of the year. Already children are making very good progress, as a result of the many opportunities they are given to talk and listen. All staff take every opportunity during all activities to develop the children's vocabulary through very good probing questions and a consistent insistence that children answer in sentences. For example, when the children were answering in mathematics, the teacher insisted the pupils used the correct terms in a sentence rather than giving one-word answers. Focused texts, structured activities and music lessons are developing listening skills well and giving the children confidence in answering questions. Children enjoy books and when a story is read to them, for example, when the teacher read the story of, '*This is the Bear*,' the children were listening attentively, hanging on to her every word. Although it is only the beginning of the year, most children can recognise *mummy* and *pushed*, hear the rhyming words in the text and point out speech bubbles. All can hold their pencils properly, attempt to write their first name and are making good progress with their writing, making good progress from mark-making to starting to write. Bookmaking activities are developing each child's confidence and self-belief very well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to encourage children's mathematical development.
- Children achieve very well because they are given many opportunities to develop mathematical skills across all areas of learning, inside and outside the classrooms.

Commentary

59. Most children enter Reception with levels above those expected for their age. This area is very well taught, with a focus on first-hand practical activities. Children will easily exceed their learning targets by the end of the year. Children are already beginning to count to 30 and can work out the

number present by subtracting the number absent on that day. Staff take every opportunity to reinforce and extend children's mathematical skills and language. For example, children daily take an active role in practising mental strategies, counting and recognising numbers. Practical activities prepare the way for future learning. When making porridge, the children carefully counted out the correct quantities and filled in an investigation sheet highlighting their choice of topping before filling in a pictograph of their findings. This reinforced recognition and use of numbers. The introduction of Numicon raised standards in mathematics considerably last year. Children learn from action, learn from seeing, and develop a strong sense of pattern. They learn to manipulate, to observe and notice. Teachers sustain children's interest very well.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of very good teaching which is focused on developing children's skills through a practical, imaginative curriculum.
- Children have many opportunities to use computers.

Commentary

60. When the children enter Reception they have good experiences to draw upon. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well. There is a good variety of appropriate, interesting activities planned to stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. For example, the use of the story '*We're going on a bear hunt*' served as a basis for exploring the senses of smell, touch, hearing and sight, using magnifying glasses to explore properties of materials, understanding floating and sinking and finding out how many bears will fit in a boat before it sinks. Computer skills are very well taught on a daily basis. Staff build up children's confidence in using the computer. As a result, they have positive attitudes and display equally good skills. For example, they have learnt new skills to draw a bear for their T-shirts using the '2 simple' paint program. In music, children are already being introduced to music from across the world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**. Outdoor facilities are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan very well for learning outside the classroom.
- Children enjoy their physical education lessons.

Commentary

61. The newly acquired outdoor area and adventure playground facilities mean that the standards the children achieve are far higher than they were at the last inspection. Children will have exceeded the Early Learning Goals by July. Teaching and learning are very good. The children show a good awareness of space, of themselves and others. They experiment with different ways of moving, are aware of their bodies, watch, copy and describe what others have done, well. The very good records kept by the teacher show that the children are achieving very well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve because they are taught very well and experience a wide range of creative activities.
- The imaginative play area is used well to encourage children's creative response.

Commentary

62. This area of learning is particularly well planned. There are daily opportunities for children to develop creativity. Children have access to a good range of materials, with many opportunities to paint, draw and make models. Teaching is very good. The children will exceed their learning goals by the end of the year. Children really enjoy their music lessons. They enjoy using their body parts to make loud and quiet sounds. The very attractive mature drawings and paintings of teddy bears on display show that teachers respect the children's efforts and help to stimulate further learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very good.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The co-ordinator provides very good leadership.
- Literacy skills are developed well across the curriculum.
- Assessment is used very well to meet the needs of individuals.
- The use of the library by pupils has increased.

Commentary

63. Standards in English are very good. When compared with all schools nationally, the performance of pupils at the end of Year 2 had dropped slightly in 2003 to be above average. However, the school has successfully addressed this issue and the provisional 2004 results show that standards have now risen significantly. This was confirmed by the standards of work seen during the inspection, which show very good pupil achievement. The school has successfully sustained standards that are well above average by the end of Year 6 over recent years. This again was confirmed by the standard of work seen during the inspection, with a significant proportion of Year 6 pupils already working at Level 5 at this early stage in the school year. This represents very good achievement.

64. The quality of teaching in English lessons is very good. Teachers have a very good understanding of the subject and the National Literacy Strategy is well embedded into the school's work. Skilled and experienced teaching assistants make a very good contribution to learning, particularly through supporting pupils with SEN. Through the sensitive use of additional resources, extended explanation, well-crafted questions and encouragement, teaching assistants ensure that children with SEN are fully included in lessons and make good progress.

65. English lessons provide many opportunities for pupils to be involved actively in their learning. They are encouraged to talk in pairs and small groups and to use drama to explore feelings prior to writing. In a Year 2 lesson, groups of pupils worked independently, using a range of storybooks, to investigate and identify vocabulary used to describe settings in African stories. They then presented their findings to the rest of the class and these were used as the basis for their own writing later in the week.

66. The quality of the curriculum is enriched through the strong cross-curricular links and first-hand learning experiences that are planned. Authors are regularly invited into school to discuss their work with pupils. The recently acquired interactive white boards are also used very effectively to enrich the English curriculum by providing pupils with access to a range of very high quality texts.

67. The assessment of work in English is very effective. The analysis of national and optional end of year tests is used by the co-ordinator to set targets for all classes. These targets are then used by teachers in setting individual pupil targets and in lesson planning. Clear lesson objectives are set and these are shared very effectively with pupils. In lessons, pupils of all ages are encouraged to evaluate their own performance against the lesson objective. Older pupils also have a list of target statements for reading and writing which they use to evaluate their own work and that of their peers. The marking of written work by teachers is very good, with focused comments identifying strengths and development points related to the objectives. Younger pupils also receive verbal feedback on their work. There is clear evidence that this feedback is understood and acted on by pupils in future work.

68. The co-ordinator is very effective in leading development in this subject. She monitors the subject through analysis of test results, scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson planning and observations of lessons. The information from this monitoring is used to identify future priorities for the subject action plan. The impact of the co-ordinator's work can be seen in the increased confidence staff have in delivering the English curriculum as a result of their secure subject knowledge and the continual rise in standards. However, staff are not complacent and are committed to raising standards even further.

69. The use of the library was an issue at the last inspection. All classes now have an allocated time to use the library each week. Volunteer parents provide the support for these sessions. The fiction books have been arranged into genres, which is a very effective way of encouraging children to broaden their reading. A range of displays makes recommendations for 'good reads' and these include contributions from other children. The library environment is welcoming, with an appropriate mix of formal and informal furniture, background music and high quality displays. The library is now used well as an independent resource by pupils.

70. Since the last inspection, well above average standards have been sustained, as have pupils' very good attitudes to the subject. The quality of teaching has improved still further and the quality of leadership given by the co-ordinator is now very good. The issue related to the use of the library has been successfully addressed.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

71. Language and literacy are developed very well across the curriculum, which enriches both the teaching of English and that of other subjects. Speaking and listening activities are practised across the whole curriculum and skills in these aspects of language are highly developed. Pupils of all ages are given many opportunities in lessons to discuss in pairs and small groups prior to reporting back to the whole class. This ensures that all children are engaged in the lesson and are active contributors. Drama devices such as 'hot seating' are also used extensively and effectively. Children are confident when speaking in front of the class and show through their responses that they listen well.

72. The school's cross-curricular approach to curriculum planning provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in a range of contexts. There are excellent examples of written work in religious education, geography, history and science. The writing is particularly effective where it was stimulated by an educational visit or other 'active' experience.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average throughout the school.
- Teaching of mathematics is very good.
- Very good leadership and management of the subject.
- High quality resources.
- Frequent opportunities to apply mathematical skills across the curriculum.

Commentary

73. Pupils are now achieving very well in mathematics. There was a dip in the performance of Year 2 pupils in national tests in 2003. The school responded by implementing a whole school improvement initiative in mathematics, and this has proved to be successful. Provisional results in the national tests in 2004 indicate that standards are well above the national average for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. This was confirmed by evidence collected during the inspection.

74. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good in both Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. Particular strengths are the clarity of teachers' explanations and the use of carefully sequenced questions to consolidate understanding and extend learning. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure that pupils are actively engaged in learning. Pupils in Year 1, for example, were observed using the interactive whiteboard to create a visual representation of the value of coins. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and to apply problem-solving approaches. Pupils respond well and are able to work with a high degree of independence. They are motivated by the activities provided and concentrate for extended periods of time. Year 6 pupils worked in small groups to order fractions and decimals on a number line. They were confident in exploring strategies for working out equivalents. Pupils' positive attitudes contribute to the very good progress they make.

75. Teachers use assessment information effectively to plan lessons and, consequently, all pupils are challenged at an appropriate level and are offered support where necessary. Pupils evaluate their own learning and are encouraged to identify personal targets for improvement.

76. The leadership and management of mathematics are very good. The subject plan shows a commitment to sustaining improvement and to raising standards further in the use and application of mathematics. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, classroom delivery and pupils' assessments. Progress made by pupils is tracked and appropriate areas for improvement are identified.

77. Following an audit of resources, the school has now purchased a comprehensive range of materials to support teaching and learning in mathematics. This has helped teachers in raising standards and continue the improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

78. Planning identifies frequent opportunities for using mathematical skills in other subjects and this assists learning. For example, Year 5 pupils were required to use their numeracy skills in order to produce a scale diagram of an Anderson shelter on the computer. Year 2 pupils were observed measuring in centimetres when constructing wheeled vehicles in design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well above average standards.
- Consistently good teaching.
- Well-planned curriculum delivered to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Very good links with industry and other schools.
- Very good management of the subject.

Commentary

79. Pupils' achievement is very good in Years 1 to 6. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in national assessment tests in 2003 were well above national averages. Year 6 results are also well above the average for similar schools. However, comparisons with prior attainment show satisfactory achievement from Year 3 to Year 6, which is due to the significant number of pupils who move from the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2 to the higher Level 5 at the end of Year 6. Inspection evidence indicates that at least half of the pupils currently in Year 6 are already attaining the higher Level 5 standard at the start of the year.

80. Teachers' planning of both the science programme and lessons are excellent. The investigative approach used builds upon pupils' ability to work collaboratively and activities are particularly well matched to the needs of the pupils. Lessons are delivered at a brisk pace, despite the challenging nature of the activities. Lessons also link well with other subjects and help pupils develop their key skills. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson investigating human development, pupils measured their hands and feet and discussed the comparative sizes to show that human variation is the norm and that humans are not all the same. The lesson built upon their numeracy skills, with more able pupils measuring to half a centimetre and discussing variation to this level of accuracy.

81. Teachers' lesson planning takes account of the ongoing assessment information from the pupils' work, so that the planned activities meet the pupils' needs to move their learning forward at a brisk pace. This is particularly so for pupils with SEN, but the very able are also challenged with well-planned extension activities. The details of these activities are recorded within the planning.

82. The school has established links with several companies as well as with the local high school. These links provide opportunities for older pupils to recognise the wider implications and uses of science beyond the confines of the National Curriculum. All these are practical learning occasions where outside expertise is used to good effect.

83. The subject is very well managed. The co-ordinator monitors the work of colleagues closely to ensure both consistent delivery and appropriate standards. There has been significant work with all staff to establish consistent approaches to written tasks as well as the moderation of teachers' assessment of pupils' work, which has sustained improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average.
- Teaching of ICT is very good.
- A wide range of opportunities are planned for using ICT across the curriculum.
- Leadership and management are effective.

Commentary

84. Information was gathered by observing pupils at work in the computer suite. In addition, pupils were seen using ICT to assist their learning in the classroom. Examples of current and past work were evaluated. Discussions were also held with the co-ordinator, the link governor and the pupils.

85. Overall standards are well above average in all six year groups, showing very good achievement by pupils. Since the time of the last inspection the school has continued to regard the subject as a priority and there has been considerable investment in resources and staff training. This has been instrumental in raising standards significantly. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are confident in loading and saving work and are able to use word processing facilities to amend work by deleting or inserting text. They can alter the size of lettering and use bold and italic type and underline appropriately. Older pupils are able to enter data into a spreadsheet using rows and columns and use the rotation facility on a graphics package to create a diagram.

86. The teaching of ICT is very good overall. This reflects the high levels of expertise among the staff. The school conducts a regular audit of staff skills in order to ensure that appropriate support and training is available. Teachers carry out half-termly assessments of pupils' work and track progress using a skills matrix. The school has appropriate plans to further refine the assessment process and to introduce target setting.

87. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and this contributes to high levels of achievement. They are confident and enjoy responding to the work set by their teachers, especially when it is presented as a challenge to be completed within a given timescale. Pupils with SEN are supported and tasks are adapted to enable them to achieve well.

88. Leadership and management of the subject are very good and this is having a positive effect on standards. The co-ordinator is currently leading the drive to earn external validation of the quality of provision and the school is close to achieving the NAACE award.

89. Resources for learning are very good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

90. It is the school's policy to use ICT to enrich learning in all areas of the curriculum. Planning is evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that the school is meeting this expectation. During a geography lesson, older pupils were observed using a spreadsheet to record information about the volume of water in the River Nile. The use of ICT in art and music lessons is relatively underdeveloped when compared with other subjects.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very good.
- The history curriculum is enriched through the use of artefacts and visitors.
- Planning is innovative, with a strong emphasis on enquiry skills.
- The co-ordinator provides very good leadership.

Commentary

91. The planning of the history curriculum has been thoroughly reviewed since the previous inspection. There is very good coverage of the National Curriculum requirements through a major history based topic each term for all year groups, together with cross-curricular links to other subject topics.

92. Overall, the quality of teaching seen during the inspection was very good. The curriculum is delivered through an enquiry-based approach. The lesson plans clearly indicate how pupils will be introduced to knowledge, encouraged to apply that knowledge and make connections with other aspects of learning before evaluating what they have learnt and using it create something new. This has resulted in very good progress and achievement for all pupils in historical knowledge and skills.

93. History lessons are enriched through high quality first-hand experiences. Pupils in Year 1 studying the Victorians had a visit from a member of staff at the local museum. The children dressed as Victorian children and played with Victorian toys. They were able to describe at length what conditions were like for rich and poor Victorians and to compare the games and pastimes of that era with their own. Year 5 pupils studying World War 2 spent a day as evacuees at a local education centre. On returning to school, still in period dress, the children investigated 'Digging for Victory' through using the interactive whiteboard to look at original posters and source material before planting vegetables on the front lawn of the school.

94. The school is developing systems for assessing progress in history. A skills matrix has been produced which is used to assess pupils at the end of each unit of work. This is being further enhanced through the development of self-evaluation statements for pupils to complete.

95. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership of the subject. She has undertaken a range of monitoring activities, which has informed the action plan for the subject. The enquiry approach which she has initiated is well established and is leading to improved standards of achievement and motivation in pupils.

96. Progress since the last inspection has been very good. As a result of the innovative planning of the curriculum, progress is much more consistent and standards have improved.

GEOGRAPHY

It was only possible to observe two lessons of geography in Year 6, so no overall judgement of provision is made. Inspection evidence identified some key strengths in provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good.
- Work in geography is enhanced by strong cross-curricular links and very good resources.
- Geography teaching makes a very strong contribution to cultural development.

Commentary

97. The planning of the geography curriculum has been thoroughly reviewed since the previous inspection. There is good coverage of the National Curriculum requirements through a major geography based topic each term for all year groups, together with cross-curricular links to other subject topics. For example, while studying Ancient Egypt as a history topic in Year 6 pupils consider water use of the River Nile. This means that there is a much more secure framework for the development of hierarchical skills, which was an issue in the previous inspection.

98. Pupils' achievement is good and standards in geography are good overall. In a Year 6 lesson on rivers, pupils were able to identify physical features from maps and explain their characteristics. They commented on how human processes affect the environment and demonstrated an awareness of environmental issues.

99. The geography curriculum is enriched through the strong cross-curricular links and the very good resources. It makes a particularly strong contribution to pupils' cultural development. In Year 2 pupils study Africa. Classrooms contain vibrant displays of African art and design, maps and reference materials and a very wide range of artefacts, including musical instruments, items of clothing, ornaments and toys. Children spoke enthusiastically about visitors who had been into school to describe their experiences in Africa. African literature is used to stimulate reading and writing activities in English lessons.

100. In a Year 6 geography lesson pupils used a spreadsheet programme to collect and analyse information about water use in the Nile region. They were confident using a range of geographical data and through the use of ICT were able to identify patterns and hypotheses for future investigation.

101. The school is at an early stage of formalising assessment in geography. A skills matrix has been produced which is used to assess pupils at the end of each unit of work. This is being further enhanced through the development of self-evaluation statements for pupils to complete themselves.

102. The co-ordination of geography is good. Although fairly new to the responsibility, the co-ordinator has undertaken a range of monitoring activities and plans to extend these further. She is able to identify the impact of the improvement strategies already undertaken and has a thorough action plan for further development.

103. Since the previous inspection the issue of hierarchical skills not being built on has been successfully addressed through the planning. Standards have risen and the co-ordinator offers good leadership, including the monitoring of the curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The religious education curriculum is enriched through the use of visits, visitors and cross-curricular links.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils produce very good pieces of writing connected to their work in religious education.
- The co-ordinator has started to develop assessment systems for the subject.

Commentary

104. The programmes of study used by the school are well matched to the local Agreed Syllabus and make good use of the QCA optional scheme of work for religious education. On the basis of inspection evidence standards are above expected levels.

105. In the lessons observed and work analysed there is evidence that pupils show good achievement in developing a good understanding of Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism and Islam. This work is enriched by visitors to the school from these faiths, who share in collective worship and religious education lessons.

106. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan effectively and deliver lively lessons. They make effective use of resources to bring lessons to life and this ensures positive responses from pupils.

107. Pupils undertake a range of visits to places of worship including the local church, where younger children enact a wedding ceremony. This is complemented by the very good resources and artefacts that are available in classes. For example, Year 1 pupils looked at clothing and customs connected with Divali with a member of the local Hindu community.

108. There are good examples of cross-curricular links to religious education work. The co-ordinator has compiled a portfolio of work produced by pupils which includes some very good examples of writing produced during religious education lessons, such as letters, invitations, recounts, reports and narrative. The subject also makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

109. The subject has progressed well since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on the responsibility, but provides good leadership. She is developing systems for assessing pupils' progress and plans to further develop the monitoring of the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen since the last inspection and are now above average.
- Design and technology is effectively linked to work in other areas of the curriculum.
- Work in design and technology is helping personal and social development.
- Assessment and the progressive development of skills are under-developed.

Commentary

110. Good achievement by pupils leads to standards in design and technology that are above average throughout the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are able to generate a range of ideas for designs and produce annotated sketches which show great attention to detail. They also use the information gained from exploration sessions to adapt their plans. Discussions with older pupils confirm that problem-solving skills are well developed and that pupils have the ability to evaluate the outcomes of their work. Pupils show an awareness of social and economic considerations.

111. Teaching in design and technology is good overall. Teachers plan design and technology as an integral part of cross-curricular topics. They are successful in linking the subjects so as to benefit learning in all areas. In the lessons observed, the work was introduced in a meaningful context but included clear objectives that were specific to design and technology. This project based approach catches the imagination of the pupils, who are enthusiastic and eager to apply themselves to the task. This makes a positive contribution to good levels of achievement.

112. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively and were seen discussing their ideas and negotiating roles and responsibilities. Work in design and technology fosters positive attitudes and makes an effective contribution to the development of personal and social skills.

113. Assessment and the progressive development of skills have been identified by the school as a focus for further improvement. Some good procedures have been introduced, but they are not as yet used consistently throughout the school.

114. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has identified an appropriate action plan and is committed to sustaining improvements and raising standards still further. Resources for learning are very good and at times are enhanced by materials provided and prepared by parents.

ART AND DESIGN

Provision is **very good**. Art and design is **a strength** in the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Art and design has a high profile in school, resulting in the production of very good quality work.
- Achievement is very good and standards are well above national expectation in Year 2 and Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The art and design curriculum is enriched and enhanced through the use of blocked time, planned opportunity for art and design on residential visits, art and design clubs and the very good use made of visiting artists.
- Procedures are in place for assessing pupils' work at the end of each year, but there is little evidence of their use.
- Limited use of ICT.

Commentary

115. Pupils' achievement is very good. Their observational skills and their ability to use a wide range of techniques are developed effectively from an early age. Pupils use their sketchbooks well to practise their skills. Drawings are detailed and often imaginative as pupils put their own interpretation on what they observe. When the ideas are translated into larger pieces of work, the very good emphasis placed on the direct teaching of skills and techniques results in imaginative drawings, paintings, print and collage work, in which techniques such as colour mixing and matching are executed well.

116. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. Lessons are well planned to be challenging and delivered at a brisk pace. This results in significant gains in pupil's learning and the development of their skills. The procedures teachers use for assessing and monitoring pupils' work are satisfactory, but not as effective as in other subjects.

117. The curriculum is effectively enhanced and enriched by art and design clubs, blocked curriculum time, residential visits, visits and visitors, including the opportunity to work with very good artists-in-residence. Pupils experience observational drawings from artefacts, painting, printing, sculpture and representing their work in collage. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these activities, all having contributed to the colourful murals in the school. Work is also closely linked to the areas of work being studied. Particularly good is the work linked to Africa in Year 2, painted in the style of Gakonga, the art and design in nature display looking at the environment in the style of Andy Goldsworthy, the 'Dig for Victory' work connected to World War Two in Year 5 and the excellent sculpture work on display in the corridor.

118. The new, very well qualified, enthusiastic co-ordinator is working hard to maintain the good provision established by her predecessor. Her very good displays around the school value and celebrate pupils' work very well. The detailed curricular planning shows clearly the good coverage of all aspects of art and design, and also what is to be assessed throughout the year. However, there was little evidence of these assessments being used by teachers to promote learning. Pupils use an appropriate range of art and design software to draw and paint on the computer. However, they do not yet make effective use of ICT to research and extend their knowledge and understanding of art and design from different cultures.

MUSIC

119. In music no lessons were seen in Years 1 and Year 2. There was very good evidence from a lesson in Year 2 that the planned musical links to the topic on Africa were working well. The well-qualified, very able co-ordinator, newly appointed to the school this term, has quickly reviewed music, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The numbers in the choir doubled in a week to 40. The enormous enthusiasm from the staff involved led to enthusiastic participants, eager to please and attentive to instructions. There were very high expectations of posture, speaking, and articulation. The numbers of pupils learning instruments has also improved this term. Four lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 being taught by a supply teacher, a very able musician, were all excellent. The hour-long lessons were very well planned and classroom teachers now feel more confident about teaching the follow-up lessons. Each lesson met the needs of the musically able pupils very well. The teacher has excellent classroom management and very effective ways of establishing the highest performance. Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils with SEN. Thus all pupils are fully included in all musical activities and are making equally good progress.

120. There was little evidence seen of formal procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress through the school. The use of ICT is underdeveloped in music. The school has addressed the staffing issues very well. However, some resource issues remain unresolved. Inspectors thoroughly explored the concerns expressed by some parents about the longer-term standards in music resulting from staffing changes and illness. They are confident that music now has a higher profile and that standards in all areas will improve.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning of the curriculum and lessons.
- Very good range of curricular experiences.
- Good teaching.
- A good range of opportunity for competitive sport.
- Good links with sports clubs and organisations.

Commentary

121. The physical education planning is detailed and ensures that the full National Curriculum is covered. There are well-planned activities, which provide pupils with many learning opportunities across a wider range of sports than is normally found. The opportunities for adventurous activity are particularly good for younger pupils, using the well-planned and constructed school adventure playground, and for older pupils through residential visits for climbing and canoeing.

122. Within the school-based curriculum pupils are able to learn the skills of invasive games through football, netball and, in addition, lacrosse, with the help of coaches from a local club. All pupils in Year 3 have swimming sessions at a local leisure centre and most pupils achieve the expected standard by the end of Year 6. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards seen during the inspection were typical of those normally seen, with younger pupils showing increasing body control in gymnastics and dance. Older pupils showed the normal range of ball control skills, catching and throwing in lacrosse and passing skills in football.

123. Teaching is good overall. Lessons were well planned to promote the development of pupils' control and skills. They always began and ended with appropriate 'warm-up and warm-down' activity. The main parts of lessons proceeded at a brisk pace and pupils were generally very active. They showed above average fitness levels, which enabled them to take part fully. Teachers made good use of pupil demonstrations to exemplify teaching points, such demonstrations eliciting applause from other pupils.

124. Within the wide range of extra-curricular sporting activity the school has open access teams who play against teams from other schools. All pupils have the opportunity to take part. During the inspection more than half the pupils in the school were observed practising football, rugby, netball and lacrosse after school.

125. The school has well-developed links with the local high school and sports clubs. The high school hosts a football tournament for local primary schools, providing student referees and support. Many local clubs provide coaching expertise within the curriculum for lacrosse and as extra-curricular activities for rugby and judo. These links with clubs provide additional opportunities for those pupils who are gifted or talented to receive support, advice and coaching.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

126. Only three lessons in this area were seen and so no judgements can be made about overall provision. The school considers this aspect to be a very important part of its work. Parents indicate that they consider it to be a strong feature of the school's work. The programme of lessons includes work on diet, health, sex education, drug abuse and personal safety. Pupils develop an increasing awareness of the world around them; they gain in self-confidence and develop good relationships with adults and their peers. The school council provides pupils with the opportunity to be involved in decisions about matters, which affect them directly, for example the planning and building of the adventure playground.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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