

INSPECTION REPORT

**GREATHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Greatham, Hartlepool

LEA area: Hartlepool

Unique reference number: 111673

Headteacher: Mrs J Tyerman

Lead inspector: Mrs J Morley

Dates of inspection: 15th – 16th November 2004

Inspection number: 266921

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 controlled
Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 99

School address: Egerton Terrace
Greatham
Hartlepool
Postcode: TS25 2EU

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mr K Wilkinson

Date of previous inspection: 28th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- There are 96 pupils on roll: 85 in Reception to Year 6, and a further 11 who attend the Nursery on a part-time basis.
- Almost all pupils are white British. A tiny minority are from different ethnic backgrounds. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- Twelve per cent of pupils (a below average proportion) have special educational needs. Of these, three have more significant difficulties related to speech and communication or have moderate learning difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is a little above the national average.
- There are no refugees, asylum seekers, travellers, or pupils in public care.
- Social and economic factors are broadly average, as is children's attainment on entry to the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2547 0	J Morley	<i>Lead inspector</i>	English Art and design Design and technology Physical education
9333	K Schofield	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
2918 8	G Ulyatt	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics Personal, social and health education and citizenship Geography History The Foundation Stage
2003 8	G Watson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science Information and communication technology Music Religious education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school, providing satisfactory value for money. It is recovering from several years of underachievement in Years 3 to 6, caused by factors linked to instability in staffing, which have now been resolved. The school is working hard to eradicate the legacy of below average standards and, while it has clearly turned the corner, work remains to be done. The numbers in year groups are small, and standards vary from year to year. In Year 2, standards are consistently above average, often well above or very high. In Year 6 they are average overall, but below average in English and science. Achievement is very good in Nursery and Reception, good in Years 1 and 2, generally good in Years 3 and 4, and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. The newly appointed headteacher has made a satisfactory start to leading the school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Two-thirds of teaching is good or better. A small proportion is unsatisfactory.
- The use of assessment to raise attainment is underdeveloped.
- Subject leadership is ineffective and responsibilities are unfairly distributed.
- Support for newly qualified staff lacks depth and rigour.
- Pupils are very well cared for.
- Attendance and punctuality are very good.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitude to work are good overall.

At the last inspection the school was charged with more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, and with taking appropriate action. There is no evidence as to whether or not this had been done prior to the appointment of the current headteacher (April 2004). Nevertheless, she has begun to address the issue and is drawing upon the expertise of the local authority. The school was also charged with revising its aims and using them as a measure of the progress it is making, and with improving the opportunities for science investigation, singing in assemblies, consistency of marking, and provision for multicultural education. These have been achieved. Standards in English and science are weaker now than at the last inspection. However, although they declined to well below average, they are now improving. Overall, improvement has been satisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall but variable between classes. Children's attainment when they enter the Nursery is broadly as expected nationally, but they achieve very well through Nursery and Reception. By the age of five, most reach the goals expected nationally in all six areas of learning, and a significant minority exceed them. Through

Years 1 and 2 pupils continue to achieve well. Current standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is satisfactory overall, but sometimes good in Years 3 and 4. The test results in the table above clearly do not reflect this. In English and science they reflect the very unsettled teaching arrangements of the past several years, which led to underachievement. In mathematics they reflect the fact that, over the same period, the former headteacher undertook much of the teaching in the subject. Currently, standards in Year 6 are below average in English and science, and average in mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and history meet expectations. So do science standards in Year 2. In all other subjects there was insufficient evidence to form secure judgements.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall. Overall, pupils behave well and have good attitudes to work. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Two-thirds of lessons seen were of good or better quality, and one third were very good or excellent. Teaching and learning are very good in Nursery and Reception, good in Years 1 to 2, and sound thereafter, although sometimes good in Years 3 and 4. There is a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 5 and 6, where guidance for the enthusiastic newly qualified teacher lacks the rigour that could make a real difference. **Overall, teaching and learning are sound.** The key factor that distinguishes the very good and excellent teaching from that which is good is the sharpness of focus on what pupils are to learn, and on how this can be achieved. Where teaching is satisfactory or unsatisfactory, there is insufficient focus on precisely what it is that a pupil will know/understand/be able to do at the end of the lesson that he or she couldn't at the beginning. In addition, there is sometimes not enough control over pupils' behaviour. Assessment is unsatisfactory at whole-school and classroom levels. The curriculum in Nursery and Reception is very good. Elsewhere it is satisfactory. Opportunities on offer outside lessons are good. Pupils are very well cared for, and the school has good partnerships with parents, other schools and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership by the headteacher is satisfactory; she has begun to put assessment data to good use and has sought help where she perceived weaknesses in teaching and learning. Nevertheless, support for newly qualified staff is inadequate. Leadership by other staff is variable. It is very good in Nursery and Reception but unsatisfactory across almost all subjects of the curriculum, where it is underdeveloped and the workload unevenly distributed. Governance is satisfactory. In appointing a new headteacher and in rewriting the aims, governors have helped to shape the direction of the school. They know its strengths but over the past several years have asked too few questions of its performance to be fully aware of its weaknesses. They fulfil all of their statutory duties.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think well of the school. Pupils like school and enjoy warm relationships with their teachers and other adults.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Eliminate unsatisfactory teaching and learning.
- Make rigorous use of assessment information to raise attainment.
- Develop subject leadership and ensure that responsibilities are distributed more equitably.
- Develop and put into practice a support structure of good quality for newly qualified and newly appointed staff.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Current standards are well above average in Year 2. In Year 6 they are average in mathematics but below average in English and science; this is the legacy of instability in staffing over several years. Achievement is satisfactory overall, but variable between classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in Nursery and Reception is very good for children of all abilities.
- Achievement is consistently good in Years 1 and 2 and sometimes good in Years 3 and 4.
- Instability in the recent past has had a negative impact on current standards, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Achievement in Years 5 and 6, while satisfactory, is not good enough to make inroads into pupils' below average attainment in English and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well because of the level and quality of support they receive.

Commentary

1. Children join the Nursery with skills and aptitudes that broadly meet those typical of three-year-olds. They get off to a flying start and progress very well through Nursery and Reception. Typically, by age five, almost all reach the standards expected and a significant minority exceed them. However, this can vary year-on-year, as numbers are so small. The key point is that all children achieve very well.

2. In the tests for Year 2 in 2004, standards were well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. When compared with those in similar schools, reading standards were very high (in the top five per cent nationally) and standards in

writing and mathematics were well above average. Again, these vary significantly from year to year, depending on the capability of the year group. (The table of results is not included in this report as there were fewer than ten pupils in the relevant year group.) Currently, pupils in Year 2 are attaining well above expected standards in all three areas. This represents good achievement through Years 1 and 2 for all pupils, including those with SEN.

3. In the tests for Year 6 in 2004, the picture was less pleasing. When compared with those of all schools nationally, standards were well below average in English and science but above average in mathematics. As is evident from the table below, this represents a decline in all three subjects since 2003.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.3 (27.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.3 (28.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.0 (28.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. This picture suggests that pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve significantly less well than they do from Nursery to Year 2. Certainly this has been predominantly the case for most of the last four years. The following table shows this clearly because it charts pupils' progress between Years 2 and Year 6, as compared with that made by pupils in other schools nationally whose Year 2 results were very similar. Note the difference between mathematics on the one hand and English and science on the other.

	2001	2002	2003	2004
English	well below average	below average	average	well below average
mathematics	above average	well below average	well above average	well above average
science	well below average	very low	average	well below average

5. Two key factors have contributed to this unusual profile. Firstly, for some time the school has been dogged with long-term staff absence. Supply teaching did not provide pupils with the consistent challenge they needed in order to achieve well. Realising the effect that this was having, and for the two years prior to his retirement, the previous headteacher undertook much of the teaching of mathematics to pupils in Years 3 to 6. The impact of his work is very clear. At the same time, however, pupils' progress in English and science was poor. Reference to the school's own data shows the extent of underachievement. In writing, for example, the current Year 6 pupils made less than three terms' progress over the six terms they spent in Years 3 and 4. For Year 5 pupils, progress was equivalent to less than one term over their two years in this class.

6. The current situation is different again. For the first time for several years, staffing is stable. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 generally achieve well and are building on the well above average literacy and numeracy standards with which they left Year 2. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, however, are attaining less well, with standards below average in English and science and average in mathematics. These lower standards are due partly to the fact that these pupils are the ones who have suffered most from instability in the school, and partly because the pupils themselves are less able than those currently in Years 3 and 4. When in Year 2, for example, the pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 attained below average standards in reading, average standards in writing, and above average standards in mathematics. They are achieving satisfactorily at the moment, but this is making no inroads into the below average standards in English and science and is not building on the average standards in mathematics. There is some challenge in the activities set for these pupils, but more is needed. Pupils with SEN achieve well because of the good quality of support they receive.

7. Standards in ICT, religious education and history meet expectations throughout the school. There was insufficient evidence to allow secure judgements to be made on other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance and punctuality are very good. The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents and carers ensure that the attendance of their children is very good.

- The personal, social and emotional development of children in Nursery and Reception is very good.
- The personal qualities of the great majority of pupils are good.

Commentary

8. Almost without exception, parents enthusiastically support the school by ensuring that their children arrive in good time for the start of the day. Attendance is well above the national average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.5	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

9. The great majority of parents follow the school's advice by avoiding taking holidays during term time, especially at the time when their children are preparing for and taking National Curriculum tests. Parents are also motivated to ensure good attendance by their children, and incentives for pupils themselves include such rewards as bronze, silver and gold certificates, and a prize voucher for full attendance over a year. On a weekly basis, pupils compete for a 'best attendance' trophy. This is celebrated in a special assembly where the winning class, who typically have one hundred percent turnout, show spontaneous delight.

10. Children in Nursery and Reception achieve very well. The great majority develop a high standard of personal, social and emotional development by the time they transfer to Year 1. Attitudes and behaviour are very good, and this is due to the high quality of the staff and the leadership of the teacher.

11. The great majority of the pupils have good attitudes and behave well. No exclusions have occurred during the last year. The younger members of the school community are particularly well behaved. However, a small number of pupils from Years 5 and 6 are not. The class teacher does not always use adequate control measures and this had an adverse effect on teaching and learning. The school has recognised the need for improved control with the pupils concerned, and it is well supported by a specialist group from the local education authority's Behaviour and Educational Support Team (BEST).

12. Parents are confident that that pupils' behaviour is good at lunchtimes and in class, and feel that all the adults in school are good role models from whom pupils learn. Parents say that pupils are courteous and interact well with each other, and that older pupils often take care of their younger colleagues. With the exception of the example above, inspectors agree.

13. The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils get on well together and are clear about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Since the last inspection, there are more multicultural topics in lessons, such as those about the festivals and cultural heritage of other people. Pupils have lessons in personal, social, health education and citizenship, which are also represented in other subjects; this contributes to the pupils' mature development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory but improving quality of education. The majority of lessons are taught at least well, and often very well. Where there are weaknesses they relate mainly to the provision made for pupils in their final two years. Until very recently there have been no assessment systems in place that could help the school to raise attainment. Those now in operation need time to have an impact and to be extended into target setting for all pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory, and there are good opportunities for its enrichment. Pupils are very well cared for, and the school's links with parents, the local community and other schools are all good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although variable between classes. Assessment is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of teaching is good or better, but it is least effective in Years 5 and 6.
- Teaching is consistently very good in Nursery and Reception.
- The school's assessment procedures are very new and are not yet used rigorously enough to raise attainment.

Commentary

14. Two-thirds of the lessons seen during the inspection were of good or better quality, and one third were very good. There was significant variation in quality between classes: very good in Nursery and Reception, consistently good in Years 1 to 2, generally good in Years 3 to 4, and thereafter satisfactory but with some unsatisfactory elements.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 21 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactor y	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	5	8	4	2	0	0

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

15. Currently:

- Very good teaching in Nursery and Reception enables children to achieve very well. This has been the case since the last inspection;
- Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 enables pupils to achieve well and, by the end of Year 2, to attain standards that are at least above expectations and often well above. This has been the case for the last two years;
- The good teaching observed in Years 3 and 4 has just begun and is not, therefore, reflected in attainment by Years 5 and 6. Indeed, progress in Years 3 and 4 has been poor for several years and has contributed to the significant underachievement by Year 6. The instability in staffing that triggered this underachievement has now been overcome. There remains a need, however, to ensure that the work set always takes account of the range of age and ability in the class. In the lessons seen, this was the case. In the work in pupils' books, it was not always so;
- While teaching in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory overall, it is sometimes unsatisfactory. It enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily but not to make any inroads into their below average attainment in English and science. The school's systems of support for the newly qualified teacher lack rigour and impact.

16. There are a number of key factors relating to the quality of teaching and learning. Where the teaching is excellent, a number of factors are at work. They are the commendable similarity of approach between teacher and Nursery nurse, the skilful grouping of children so that the challenge of the activity is an exact match to their needs, and the clever links made between the activities organised in each area of learning. For example, the children enjoyed a number of activities based on the story of Goldilocks. They listened, engrossed, to the story and joined in with repeated phrases. They then

wrote to the three bears to invite them to Goldilocks's party, learned '*large, small and middle-sized*', painted bears of these sizes, and made 'Duplo' houses for them.

17. Very good teaching was seen from Nursery to Year 4. This was typified by the teachers' enthusiasm, and by very clear explanation of what pupils were to learn that built skilfully on what they already knew.

18. When teaching was satisfactory or less than satisfactory, it was not for the want of enthusiasm on the part of the teacher. Far from it. There were two weaknesses. When these were less prevalent, the lessons were satisfactory. When more prevalent, they were unsatisfactory. Firstly, although the objective of the lesson (what pupils should learn) was always made clear to them, it did not always build on what they already knew. Hence, at the end of the lesson, there could be no positive answer to the question 'What does this group know or understand now that was not the case an hour ago?' The focus was upon providing an engaging activity rather than upon devising one that would enable pupils to learn something new, and upon teaching rather than learning. Monitoring has not identified this issue and has therefore not produced the right kind of help for this enthusiastic newly qualified teacher. Secondly, and possibly as a result of this underlying lack of challenge, pupils' behaviour was satisfactory at best, and sometimes unsatisfactory.

19. There is one more key point about matching tasks to pupils' ability. While this was not an issue in the lessons seen below Year 5, careful scrutiny of books showed that there have been a number of occasions where the same task has been set for all pupils in a class. It is inappropriate, for example, for the oldest/most able pupil in Year 4 and the youngest/least able pupil in Year 3 to be asked to do the same work. Again, this is a monitoring issue that has passed unresolved. (See the Leadership section of this report.)

20. Finally, there is one issue that was not evident over the two days of inspection but became very clear from a scrutiny of the work pupils have recorded since September. Pupils have far too few opportunities to write at length, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and this has a negative impact on the writing standards they achieve. (This issue is dealt with more fully in the English section.)

21. Teachers work closely with the support staff, meeting regularly to discuss planning and other aspects of provision. This ensures that work for pupils with SEN is appropriate for them and matches the objectives of the lessons. There are times when pupils receive individual teaching that meets their specific learning and personal needs.

22. Arrangements for tracking pupils' progress are very new. Currently, data from past assessments are being collated to give an overview of pupils' achievement. There are several elements to put in place before assessment will be being used effectively to raise attainment. Currently, it is not used as a tool in the school's performance management cycle, not all teachers set appropriate tasks for all of the pupils in their class, and not all pupils know/understand/can do more at the end of a lesson than at the beginning. Teachers' marking, which was unsatisfactory at the last inspection, is now sound.

23. In summary, therefore, there is much to praise about the quality of teaching in this school, but there are issues to address in Years 3 to 6, particularly in Years 5 to 6. These relate to:

- ensuring that the tasks planned enable pupils of all ages and abilities to know/understand more at the end of a lesson than at the beginning;
- ensuring that behaviour is at least good;
- ensuring that writing activities in all subjects are designed to improve to improve pupils' writing skills;
- using assessment, both at whole-school and classroom level, to raise attainment;

- and – very importantly – ensuring that monitoring is regular and rigorous, and that it focuses sharply on the gains in learning made by each group in the class rather than on the performance of the teacher.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment are good. The accommodation and resources are good and support learning well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Teachers and support staff complement each other very well.
- The school has made a promising start to provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE).

Commentary

24. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements, including provision for religious education and worship. Planning for English, mathematics and science provides worthwhile learning opportunities for all pupils. Literacy and numeracy strategies are used to support teaching. The school uses national guidance to ensure breadth and balance across all subjects. The school has a new scheme of work to support science, and this runs alongside other schemes currently in place. Pupils benefit from the peripatetic music programmes, and they learn to play a range of instruments. Opportunities for after-school activities are good and include a range of seasonal sporting activities. The school also has 'Booster Classes', art classes, and some music sessions. Older pupils play in a local football league.

25. Planning for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Staff make very good use of the *Stepping Stones* based on national guidelines. This means that the curriculum supports the needs of all children in Reception and Nursery, irrespective of age or ability. The range of learning opportunities is extensive and children learn well, both indoors and out.

26. The school has very good systems to support children starting school for the first time. Nursery-aged children are invited on several occasions with parents. During the term before the children start full-time, parents stay with them while they have their first lunch in school. This helps them to settle well into the environment. Teaching staff from the local secondary school visit Greatham School and work with pupils, supporting their learning across various subjects, including design and technology. There are also master classes in mathematics on Saturday mornings, from which five Year 6 pupils benefit. This means that pupils and teachers get to know each other well and the transition from primary to secondary school is relatively smooth.

27. There is very good teamwork between teachers and support staff. The latter have a good range of skills and experience. For substantial parts of the school day, pupils work in smaller groups and are well supported. Pupils with SEN benefit from work that matches their capability in all areas of the curriculum. They receive extra literacy support, which includes the use of a computer application to support spelling. In the Foundation Stage, the Nursery nurse and teacher work very well as a team. They mirror each other expertly and interact sensitively in children's play, offering good extension to learning.

28. The school accommodation is spacious, safe and attractive. The grounds are spacious, and part of them face onto open countryside. Nursery and Reception children are now accommodated in the Foundation Stage unit. This means that the youngest children in the school have plenty of space in which to move freely and to engage in practical activities both indoors and out.

29. Provision to encourage pupils to take on responsibility and show initiative has recently been introduced. The new co-ordinator for PSHE has begun to develop a curriculum. 'Circle time' is being used to highlight emerging issues, both on the personal and the social level. The school encourages a healthy lifestyle, and at lunchtime older pupils label the foods that are healthy to help

younger ones with choices. Pupils have opportunities to talk with a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils (the Healthy School Group) about any difficulties they may be experiencing. Pupils are given responsibilities, on a regular basis, to support the smooth running of the school. The school nurse visits to deliver sessions on personal and health matters.

Care, guidance and support

A caring environment is maintained for everyone in the school, and all aspects of provision for pupils' health and safety are very good. Support, care and guidance are satisfactory, as are the school's efforts to involve pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Pupils have a very good and trusting relationship with at least one member of staff.
- Induction arrangements for entry to the Nursery are very good.

Commentary

30. Pupils are safe and secure at school, and very good attention is paid to their care, welfare and safety. Health and safety requirements meet statutory requirements. Child protection procedures are well established and known to be effective. Parents are particularly pleased with the way that the school places much emphasis on their children's happiness, and agree that this helps them to learn. Favourable comments from parents were heard during the inspection, such as 'We are lucky to have a school like this'.

31. New pupils arriving at the school soon make friends and are quickly helped to settle into their surroundings. Most pupils know that if they have any problems or worries there is an adult in whom they can confide. The caring ethos of the school's community extends inclusively to all pupils. For example, there is support for an older pupil who could speak English when first admitted to school but could neither read nor write it.

32. The support and guidance for pupils who have SEN is good. Support assistants are skilled and knowledgeable. They know the pupils well and show genuine concern for their welfare. The work they do has been planned to match each individual's targets. These targets are reviewed each term, or more frequently if a class teacher notices any unexpected change in progress or behaviour.

33. Pupils know that their views matter and that the school tries to act upon what they say. Although there is no school council at the present time, the voice of the pupils can be heard through the Healthy School Group. The four pupils in the group are eager to take on the training of others, in order to set up a school council.

34. Pupils of all ages who transfer to the school are made welcome. For instance, before a child joins the Nursery class, the Nursery teacher or her assistants visit the family home to make personal contact and to form an initial assessment of the child's needs. Parents and children are then invited into school so that everyone is well prepared for the child's admission into the Nursery. Progressively, children are eased into the new lifestyle.

35. On balance, support, guidance and advice for pupils are satisfactory. In fact, support for developing personal qualities is good, because adults know their pupils very well. However, academic support is less well managed and there is a lack of target setting that could enable pupils to recognise what they need to learn. The school has identified the need to make improvements. To this end, in the class with the oldest pupils, a system of feedback has recently been introduced to enable target setting between pairs of pupils who constructively criticise each other's work. The school also intends that annual reports to parents will provide more guidance on the ways in which they can help their children.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents have positive views of the school and of the education it provides. The partnership between school and home is good, and it plays an active part in supporting pupils' learning at school and home. Links with other schools and with the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures to ensure satisfaction and to deal with any concerns and complaints are very good.
- There is a good partnership with the secondary school to which almost all pupils transfer.
- The information that parents receive on their child's progress in the subjects of the curriculum falls short of expectations.

Commentary

36. Teachers and other staff make themselves readily available to parents and carers who need to resolve any concerns. Almost all the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire said that they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, a problem, or a complaint. Although no formal complaints have been received, it is well known that some parents are concerned about the congestion that occurs at the beginning and end of the school day in the lane leading to school. The lane is narrow and vehicle access is poor. The school is certainly aware of the circumstances and appears to have taken all reasonable precautions to minimise risks. The school expects to invest in other safety measures, when funds become available. For example, there are plans to add bicycle storage to encourage more pupils to travel to school without the need for parents to use cars. A scheme for pupils to gain cycling proficiency qualifications is already in place. Further plans to reduce congestion include adding more parking spaces for staff.

37. The partnership with the local secondary school is very good, particularly for the older pupils, who can attend master classes on Saturday mornings for mathematics. Also, a number of secondary school tutors visit the primary school on a weekly basis to teach other subjects, for example design and technology. In their last year at Greatham, pupils have been able to use the on-line conferencing and e-mailing service, which operates from the secondary school's internal computer network (intranet). Using the intranet, pupils can access a range of subjects, such as music and design technology. They can progress through different levels of learning, so that they are able, seamlessly, to continue with the learning experience after they transfer to the secondary school. The secondary school presents an annual achievement award for computer skills to the most successful pupil in Greatham Primary. It also helps to organise the primary school's annual sports day.

38. The school has a good relationship with the wider community, and this strength provides many spiritual and social benefits for the pupils. The parish community contributes to the Christian life of the school by supporting the children in various ways. For example, the parish priest leads collective worship in school every Tuesday. Pupils attend church at the time of liturgical festivals, such as Easter and Christmas. One of the very special events is the celebration of the parish saint's day of St John the Baptist, which coincides with the Greatham Feast. This weeklong festival starts with the pupils parading around the village proudly displaying the school banner.

39. The pupils and local farmers work together to collect Harvest Festival gifts, which are distributed to the senior citizens in the village. Pupils also present a concert at the end of each term to entertain the village's older members, and residents from the local hospice. Pupils go to the hospice around Christmas time to sing for the residents. In return, the hospice generously funds the presentation of a bible to each pupil leaving school and also pays the cost for the same pupils to visit Durham Cathedral.

40. The school publishes attractive newsletters which provide day-to-day information for parents. However, parents expect to receive more information about what their children learn and about targets that will help their children to improve. For instance, annual reports to parents about academic progress contain few, if any, targets. Some parents at the pre-inspection meeting said that the reports lacked individuality. Inspectors agree. The school is aware that it needs to establish a meaningful target setting system and to review its style for reporting pupils' progress to parents. As a first step, there are now three parent-teacher consultations per year to advise parents about the progress of their children. On the other hand, in recent times there have been no meetings to explain to parents the school's approach to teaching specific subjects in the curriculum.

41. Parents of pupils with special needs are invited to meetings in relation to their child's progress and are given guidance on how they can contribute to their child's learning. Those parents whose child has given the teacher concerns are involved at an early stage.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The leadership and management of the headteacher are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school development plan is strategic, though its cost is not established.
- Leadership in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Co-ordinators do not fully understand the extent of their role.
- Early monitoring and support are not secured as part of staff induction.

Commentary

42. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school, particularly at a pastoral and community level. They have some understanding of the school's weaknesses but are not sufficiently aware of the extent of pupils' underachievement over the past several years. Governors are actively involved in the annual cycle of school improvement and performance management. They are keen to learn and to extend their understanding of teaching quality, attainment, achievement and 'value added'. Currently, they are as well informed as the information they receive allows them to be. In this regard the headteacher has made a good start by increasing their involvement and understanding, though there is more to do. Governors have a clear vision for the school they wish to see, and have actively pursued this vision in the recent appointment of the headteacher.

43. Since taking up her post only a term and a half ago, the headteacher has made good progress in devising a strategic plan that is capable of moving the school forward in line with its aims. However, the costs associated with individual priorities have not been established, and this makes the overall viability of the plan less certain. The headteacher has recognised the need for teachers' performance management to be more rigorous and for it to play a fundamental part in the development of the school improvement plan. Indeed, at this early stage, a training day has been used for all staff to work on that important link. Further professional development to support the achievement of school priorities, such as the use of ICT as a teaching and learning medium throughout the curriculum, has been carried out or is planned for the near future. The headteacher has a very inclusive approach to all who are involved in the school; she is particularly aware of

the positive contribution of the support staff and is currently organising courses to further their professional development.

44. Leadership and management of SEN are good. The linked governor makes a good contribution drawn from his own teaching experience. The headteacher is the co-ordinator of provision and makes good use of the expertise of external agencies, especially that of the

educational psychologist's department. There is a termly review of the SEN register by all staff, at which time they can discuss pupils' specific needs and modify their individual plans. The headteacher recognises the need for professional development to support her as co-ordinator, as it is a role that is new to her.

45. Leadership in the Foundation Stage is very good. The co-ordinator is a consistently very good teacher and an excellent role model for staff and students working in the unit. She inspires all who work with her and has created a highly motivated team who challenge children and make their learning a truly enjoyable experience.

46. The leadership by other key staff is unsatisfactory because it is not sufficiently well developed. They do not, generally, carry out their roles with sufficient rigour, especially in the use of assessment data to track pupils' progress and standards. This is one of the school's current priorities, and appropriate plans have been made for improvement in this aspect of its work. Subject leaders do not monitor teaching and learning in their subjects, which further denies them essential information upon which to plan for improvement. The number and nature of the responsibilities of individual members of staff are inequitable. The headteacher plans to correct this imbalance as soon as possible.

47. The newly qualified teacher has attended courses, and on one afternoon per week she works on her planning and preparation, out of the classroom. However, there are no regular, formal meetings with a trained mentor on the staff. Though her teaching has been observed, there has been little effective action, beyond arranging her attendance at a course, to help her develop strategies for the management of some challenging behaviour in Years 5 and 6. This means that the school is not getting the full benefit of her subject expertise in science, with a corresponding effect on pupils' achievement.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	406,159.00	Balance from previous year	37,303.00
Total expenditure	394,867.00	Balance carried forward to the next	48,595.00
Expenditure per pupil	4,135.00		

48. The large carry over figure of almost 12 per cent is due to a long-term determination to maintain high staffing levels, especially with regard to the support staff.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

49. Provision has improved greatly since the last inspection. The Nursery and Reception classes operate as a very good early years' unit and all children generally get off to a very good start. Children benefit well because the setting is inspirational. Standards are at the expected level when children enter the unit, although in these small cohorts they do vary from year to year. All achieve very well, and a significant majority exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. This is because staff provide an extensive range of interesting and challenging activities, both indoors and outside, and make sure that all take part. The staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn. Assessments are detailed. As a result, staff know each child well and address individual needs in their plans. Leadership is very good because the Foundation Stage curriculum is managed enthusiastically on a day-to-day basis and led with good, clear knowledge and direction.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn at an accelerated rate because teaching is consistently very good.
- Children value each other, and play and learn together well, because adults are very good, caring role models.
- Children are very well behaved, confident and relaxed because relationships at all levels are very good.

Commentary

50. All adults in the school adopt a clear and consistent approach in all they do. As a result, children feel safe and secure. In this supportive environment children achieve very well and reach standards above those expected. Staff place great emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional skills. They quickly assess children and plan activities that match their stage of development. Children are therefore challenged and enjoy their work. The youngest Nursery-aged children are supported in very small groups, and staff actively encourage those older children who lack confidence. Adults encourage children to show high levels of concentration in all they do. They teach children in small supported groups, so that each child experiences a clear sense of achievement. Children show great pride in their work. Many eagerly showed staff and visitors the invitation cards and the musical shakers they had made. They discussed the activities of *Goldilocks* in role-play with true expression. Many children actively seek out friends with whom to share equipment and take turns, even when not closely supervised by adults. Staff have high expectations of behaviour, which is consequently very good. Children follow rules and routines very well, lining up sensibly when walking around the building. Reception children attend worship, where they sit quietly and listen carefully. This helps them to feel part of the school

community. Children know they are valued at school, so they show high levels of self-esteem and confidence. They are very friendly, and easily engage staff and visitors in conversation.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff place very good emphasis on speaking and listening skills.
- Children enjoy writing, because it has a clear purpose.
- The approach to teaching basic reading and writing skills is systematic, challenging, and enjoyable.

Commentary

51. Teaching is very good and children achieve very well. By the end of the Reception year the majority are likely to exceed the expected standard. This is because the staff devise interesting play-based activities. Children are developing very good speaking and listening skills, and this has a significant impact on their learning. Staff take very good account of children's stages of development. For example, two very young children listened to the story of *Goldilocks* with an adult and used magnetic characters to develop concentration and understanding, whereas older children listened in a larger group. When children talk to the group about their news, staff helps them to elaborate and to use adjectives in their speech. One child explained that he had been to the swimming pool and the teacher said 'Was it a big pool or a deep pool?' The majority of the children speak in good, clear sentences and express their ideas well. Writing has a clear purpose, so children enjoy the challenge. They are motivated to learn how to write down their ideas, and new words are clearly written to support them. For example, they pretended to be Goldilocks and wrote party invitations for the bears. They make models and draw them, and staff scribe their ideas. Children enjoy writing on the large white board indoors and on the blackboard outside. Staff make the learning of letter sounds fun, and this focused teaching has resulted in most children already recognising and being able to write many letters. All children handle books well and enjoy stories. They use picture clues to make sensible predictions about what might happen. Some already use their knowledge to sound out new words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because staff know exactly what they understand and can do, and build systematically on it.
- All mathematical activities are planned in ways that captivate children.
- Adults provide a very good range of play activities to enhance children's understanding of shape, space and measure.

Commentary

52. Teaching is very good and children achieve very well; standards are likely to be above the levels expected by the end of the Reception year. Staff use every opportunity during daily routines to promote mathematics. Hence, children see that mathematics is all around them and is an important facet of everyday life. In taught sessions, adults focus closely upon what they want each child to learn. They place strong emphasis on number skills, and children learn to count up to 50 by

rote. Many manage to count forwards to 20 and back again. All Reception children recognise numbers to ten, and some beyond that. Adults provide challenging games to teach children how to add. For example, each child is given a number card and the teacher sets problems. The child who has one more than six has to stand up, or the child who has the number before or after a given number has to stand up. This very good strategy ensures that all concentrate and calculate to see if the number required is theirs. Real objects such as fruit and ribbons are used to help children sort by size and length. Throughout each game children are encouraged to use the correct mathematical language. One child confidently explained that the red ribbon was shorter than the blue one, so the blue one was longer than the red one. The youngest children sort bowls, spoons and bears, matching sizes correctly. Outside, they are encouraged to use positional language as they crawl through tunnels or under objects. When painting, they count the arms, legs, eyes and ears as they work. In water play they learn that containers are full or empty. Photographic evidence and assessment shows that by the end of the Reception class many children competently record simple addition and subtraction sums. Staff plan a good range of practical and interesting activities for children to engage in themselves.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an extensive range of activities both indoors and outside for children to develop good co-ordination and fine finger skills.

Commentary

53. Teaching is very good. Children achieve very well and standards are above the expected level. Working in the hall, they learn good body control, and most manage to start and stop quickly in response to the teacher's voice. They learn to hop, skip and jump, as well as to negotiate their way safely round each other when running vigorously. They handle balls and small equipment with increasing skill, because adults teach them each step in easy stages. Children who achieve well or who improve their skills are encouraged to show others, and this further develops confidence and encouragement for all. Staff plan activities both indoors and outside to help children improve their climbing and balancing skills. Children are learning to manipulate objects, such as construction equipment and small items, and they handle dough to make large, medium and small bears. They control paintbrushes and glue spreaders well and have daily opportunities to use felt pens and chalk. They peel off sticky tape, with limited support, to decorate their shakers. Several children have good finger control, and this is evident in the way they handle pencils with consistent accuracy. Children enjoy their snack of fresh fruit and milk each day and know that good food makes you healthy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good play opportunities both indoors and outside for children to express their feelings and ideas.
- Reception children achieve particularly well in art.

Commentary

54. Children have very good opportunities to use their imagination during a wide variety of activities, including role-play. They dress up and pretend to be many different characters, for example placing pieces of fabric on their heads and turning into bears, or into 'mummy'. Staff encourage their play and sensitively help them to develop their story lines. When reading with children, adults often ask what might happen next, and this helps to develop the children's use of their imagination. Children improve their skills well in art, and staff value their work and display it to full advantage. Children's work adorns the walls, and the good progress they make is very evident. They learn to mix paint and to print, and when they paint houses, for example, they add good detail of windows, doors and roofs. Similarly, their portraits show good facial detail. Adults show children how to use instruments and then support them well as they make their own. Children test the sound that different objects make when shaken in plastic containers, and then make their own shakers with the sound they prefer. Some children clap the syllables of their name with accuracy.

55. In **knowledge and understanding of the world**, adults plan very good play opportunities, both indoors and outside, for children to explore, investigate and learn about the local and natural environment. The children are taken on visits. For example, they go out to the local shop to buy ingredients to make gingerbread men, and record the whole process photographically. They find out about the jobs people do, for example when the school cook offers to bake their biscuits in the oven, and they see how heat changes ingredients when making vegetable soup. Animals, including rats, guinea pigs, gerbils and a giant tortoise, visit the setting, and children learn about the different foods they eat. The children visit the garden of a staff member and see patterns and changes in nature. Children are confident users of the computer and the cassette player.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- English skills are well developed in Years 1 and 2.
- Throughout the school, pupils speak with confidence.
- Opportunities to write independently are too limited in Years 3 to 6.
- Leadership is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

56. Standards in Year 2 are well above average. This represents very good achievement. Standards in Year 6 are below average. This is an improvement on last year, when they were well below average, but it also reflects the legacy of underachievement from the past several years.

When in Year 2 (2001), these same pupils were below average in reading and average in writing. Progress through Years 3 to 6 has therefore been satisfactory at best. At the time of the last inspection, standards were average in Year 2, and have subsequently improved. They were average in Year 6, and have declined. Overall, therefore, improvement has been unsatisfactory. However, the school has reversed the downward slide that led to well below average standards in the tests in 2004.

57. In Years 1 to 4 pupils listen very attentively to their teachers and remain engaged in their tasks for the duration of the lesson. This was very well demonstrated in Years 1 and 2, where the pupils, as a result of careful listening, were able to work well independently for at least 20 minutes. In Years 5 and 6, they showed their teacher less respect; some 'switched off' and others talked amongst themselves while their teacher was talking. All pupils in the school have good speaking skills; relative to their age, they speak with confidence and use a broad vocabulary.

58. Reading standards are well above expectations in Year 2. In class, pupils read with fluency and remarkably good expression, and express preferences when talking about books and poems. They take reading books home regularly, and parents make a valuable contribution to their children's progress. By Year 6, standards are below those expected. While most pupils are on track to achieve Level 4, few are currently close to Level 5. They lack both the fluency and expression that are the hallmarks of the reading in Year 2.

59. Writing standards are well above expectations in Year 2 and below them in Year 6. A complete analysis of pupils' writing opportunities across all subjects of the curriculum indicates that there are significantly too few opportunities, for older pupils in particular, to write independently and at length. In Years 1 and 2, about two-thirds of writing takes place in subjects other than English. By Years 5 and 6, this has diminished to about one third. More importantly, too much writing is heavily supported, either by way of worksheets or because it simply takes the form of a question and answer exercise. There is no whole-school plan to ensure that pupils' writing experiences are those most likely to enable them to build on their existing skills.

60. The teaching seen during the inspection ranged from very good to barely satisfactory. It was satisfactory overall. The very good teaching was in a fast-paced lesson in which the work set was skilfully matched to pupils' ability and in which the teacher made excellent use of pupils' comments to promote incidental learning. Her time, and that of the teaching assistant and parent volunteer, was used to best advantage. In the weakest of the three lessons the teacher taught enthusiastically but was not rewarded with pupils' full attention. In addition, the tasks set for some pupils contained insufficient challenge and resulted in limited progress.

61. Leadership in the subject is unsatisfactory, a reflection of the school-wide weakness. The co-ordinator has no informed view of standards, or of what needs to be addressed and how it might be done.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are given good opportunities to write in subjects other than English, though in a number of cases the opportunities do not allow much independence, i.e. to write 'from scratch'. In Years 3 to 6 there are fewer writing opportunities in

subjects other than English and, again, too few of them simply start with an idea, a pencil and a blank sheet of paper.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils get off to a good start in the infant class, but progress slows down in Years 5 and 6.
- Support assistants work well with teachers.
- Some pupils are not clear about what they have to do to improve.
- The subject is not led rigorously enough.

Commentary

63. At the last inspection, standards were average in Years 2 and 6. Currently, they are well above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Hence, there has been an improvement in Year 2. Pupils achieve well in infant classes and steadily in junior classes. Pupils with SEN are well supported by teaching assistants and achieve as well as their classmates.

64. Most pupils start Year 1 with mathematical understanding that is above average. They make good progress through Years 1 and 2 because teaching is consistently good. The majority are working at levels above the expected range for their age. They are developing a good knowledge and understanding of place value and are recalling addition and subtraction number facts beyond 20. The more able pupils easily understand numbers up to 100. They are taught different strategies to solve number problems, such as recognising and using quick methods to add and subtract numbers. As pupils move up the school the speed and range of their mental calculations increase. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn patterns in numbers and see the relationships between

addition and multiplication. They use tables and number patterns to identify multiples of 2, 5, and 10, up to at least 1,000. By Year 6, most are clear about fractions and show a sound understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and simple division. The more able pupils work with numbers up to 10,000.

65. Teaching ranged from satisfactory to good and was sound overall. In good lessons, teaching focuses very closely on what pupils are intended to learn. Activities are practical and match pupils' stages of development. As a result, all learn well. For example, Year 2 pupils play games with pairs of frogs or socks, and develop a good understanding about the links between repeated addition and multiplication. Teachers devise extension activities with 1p, 2p, 5p coins, so that more able pupils can make multiplication links with higher numbers. Older pupils also benefit from practical activities. They hold number cards and make numbers above 10,000, and they move their position when asked to divide or multiply by 10 or 100. In this way they learn place value and where the decimal point features. However, the pace of the lessons is sometimes too slow because the teacher's knowledge is not as secure as it should be. At times pupils are unsure about how to present their work because this has not been explained and demonstrated clearly for them. The support assistants and teachers work very well as a team, and the result is that pupils are well supported when engaged in activities. Support assistants are good role models, encouraging and praising pupils as they work. Throughout the school, however, there are missed opportunities for pupils to collaborate and discuss problems with a partner during whole-class teaching sessions.

66. Assessment does not support teaching and learning well enough. Teachers mark pupils' work but at times incorrect work is marked as correct. There is too little guidance for pupils to help them understand what they need to focus upon next to improve their work. There are times when all the pupils in a class do the same work, irrespective of ability, with the result that the work given is too difficult for some and too easy for others.

67. Subject leadership is unsatisfactory, because the co-ordinator has not analysed the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning with sufficient rigour. Assessment systems are not used well enough to analyse strengths and gaps in provision. There has been little monitoring of teaching and learning. Targets for pupils, linked to key objectives, have not been set.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. The range of work that pupils are given in each class effectively covers the National Curriculum, and teachers are beginning to consider links between different areas of the curriculum. The use of mathematical skills is evident in aspects of science and geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good level of scientific reasoning.
- Too few pupils attain the higher levels.

- Pupils have worthwhile opportunities to evaluate their own understanding and skills.
- Planning for mixed age groups does not always guarantee that work will match pupils' ability.

Commentary

69. Overall, achievement is sound. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards that are in line with expectations overall; they achieve satisfactorily. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average, and below those reported at the last inspection. They have, however, improved since the 2004 tests, when they were well below average. The group of pupils who are currently in Year 6

have experienced a great deal of disruption through long-term staff absence and its inevitable effect on continuity. The conclusion to be reached on standards is that too few pupils reach levels that are above average. Because of the amount and quality of support available, pupils with SEN make good progress in individual lessons and over time.

70. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and the investigation element of the subject, criticised at the last inspection, is now sound. Those pupils who had recently left Year 2 were clear about the differences between plant and animal life and used their knowledge of the five senses to substantiate their comments. They talked about materials having properties: for example, paper can be torn and it absorbs water, while plastic is non-absorbent. They knew that heat could change materials and that some could 'change back' when cooled, and understood the need for a fair test during investigations. This signals a good coverage of topics in science. However, there was no scientific basis for the Year 1/Year 2 lesson seen, as the work would have better served their learning in mathematics. In a good lesson in Year 3/Year 4, the teacher gave pupils opportunities to consider the variables for a fair test of absorption, using different materials. Whilst she modelled the approach, the pupils carried out their own investigation and were responsible for recording it. In Year 5/Year 6, the science lesson was well planned and showed very good levels of scientific expertise and understanding on the part of the teacher. However, the poor behaviour and lack of strategies to modify it resulted in unsatisfactory learning and achievement. The previous work from this class shows good quality marking that occasionally employs questions which add further challenge.

71. At the end of topics, pupils complete a summary self-assessment in which they consider their knowledge, understanding and skills against targets associated with the work they have done. This is good practice, as it gives them a clearer understanding of the progress they have made and of which areas need more attention. Teachers' use of data is underdeveloped. This is because it does not use information from all forms of assessment, including statutory assessments and tests, to identify progress within and between year groups.

72. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The recently appointed headteacher is the co-ordinator. She is aware of the need to focus on helping more pupils to achieve the higher levels. There is, however, no priority to check that the school's long term planning is appropriate for its mixed age classes. In the planning that is available nationally, specific units of work are occasionally designed to be taught to discrete year groups. This does not happen at this school. Additionally, where class topics are planned over two years, teachers are not taking their planning from the same year's coverage.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

73. Only one lesson was seen, taught by a member of the support staff. A firm judgement, therefore, cannot be made on overall provision. However, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of planning support the view that, by the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils have had a satisfactory range of experiences and topics, and their attainment meets expectations. They achieve satisfactorily.

74. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use ICT to help them in their writing, through the use of programmes that incorporate word banks. This is particularly effective for less able pupils and those with SEN. All pupils use a floor robot to acquire skills of control technology, through programming. Using this

equipment, they issue single instructions and, later, multiple instructions as a sequence. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop their programming skills when they control a screen-based device. Their sequences control its movement on the monitor and effectively develop their understanding of measure and angles of rotation. Following their visit to the coast, they used a desktop publishing programme to produce informative brochures presenting text and pictures in a 'trifold' leaflet format. Pupils in Year 6 are not clear about the many roles that ICT plays in our lives outside school.

75. There are good ICT links with the receiving secondary school, which also sponsors an annual achievement award. Pupils are involved in transition work that gives them experience in online education, including e-mail and web-conferencing.

76. Teachers make satisfactory, and sometimes good, use of the interactive whiteboards to enhance their teaching. The ICT expertise of support staff is put to good advantage to help pupils acquire specific skills and to assist teachers in the operation of the interactive whiteboards.

77. The development of ICT is focused upon its potential to raise standards though its integration across the curriculum. In order to reach this objective, the school intends to provide further training for teachers and to use software to monitor pupils' work. Resources are good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. Information and communication technology in other subjects of the curriculum includes work in geography, literacy, and mathematics. In mathematics, for instance, pupils in Years 5 and 6 use formulae available in a spreadsheet to find total amounts and the mean of a set of data. Leaders of other subjects are becoming aware of opportunities for ICT to extend and enhance provision.

HUMANITIES

There is too little evidence to make an overall judgement on provision in **geography** and **religious education**.

79. In **geography**, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have studied rivers and talk about the water cycle and sewage systems. More recently they have studied coastal areas and have benefited from a visit to Blackhall Rocks, where they saw coastal erosion for themselves. From discussions with pupils in Year 6 it is clear that they enjoy the subject. They discussed the work they did last year about St Lucia and how the lifestyle there is very different from life in the United Kingdom. Pupils know how to find towns in an atlas, and in discussion they made references to using co-ordinates. Subject leadership is unsatisfactory, because teaching and learning in geography has not been monitored. The strengths and gaps in teaching and learning have not been identified.

80. Only one lesson of **religious education** was seen during inspection, and this was taught by a visiting teacher. Discussions with pupils and scrutiny of work and planning confirm that standards are in line with expectations overall and that work meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

81. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 study the Jewish faith in considerable depth. They know a lot of the signs, symbols and sacred artefacts that are associated with Judaism. The work they do develops their understanding of celebrations, special people and events that are similar in the Jewish and Christian faiths. This is a valuable aspect of the pupils' learning and helps them to understand that there are similarities in other religions of the world.

82. By the time pupils are in Year 6, their knowledge of the Christian faith has been extended. They have studied Christmas and the diversity of its celebration around the world. For example, when they spoke about the Russian Christmas story of Babushka they could compare it with the telling of the events in the Bible. However, they were not so clear about the religions that they have studied in addition to Christianity. For example, Islam is included in religious education planning but pupils recalled little of their work on it. They have a well-developed awareness of the need for understanding and acceptance of those who have different beliefs and practices. They spoke of the need for tolerance and for people to respect others.

83. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The priorities for development include further evaluation of the scheme of work and the use of planning to identify opportunities to assess pupils' work. These are appropriate priorities to secure continuity and progress when not all religious education is taught by class teachers. More visits and visitors are to be incorporated in the curriculum to extend pupils' experiences.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use resources well to encourage learning.
- Leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

84. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils throughout the school make steady progress. Infant pupils learn about famous people in the past, for example Florence Nightingale. The work they produce is well illustrated to show the work she did and the impact it has on people today. They learn to sequence events in her life. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about invaders and settlers to the British Isles. They benefit from a trip to the local museum, where they examine artefacts such as pieces of pottery. The subsequent research supports their historical skills well. The oldest pupils say they like history and find the work on Christopher Columbus, Cortez and the Aztecs very interesting.

85. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It was good in one lesson and unsatisfactory in the other. In both lessons the content was good because of the way teachers used resources. In Years 1 and 2 the teacher invited *Louis Braille* (played by the chair of governors) to talk to pupils and answer questions about his life. Each time he made reference to important aspects of his life the teacher showed pupils where they could find out more. For example, extracts from books were read, clips from television programmes viewed, and the Internet searched. The lesson was lively and of great interest for all pupils. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have access to artefacts from the Aztec civilisation and to good reference books. However, too little challenge was built into the activities that ensued, and pupils' behaviour deteriorated as a result.

86. Subject leadership is unsatisfactory. This is because history has not been monitored and no one is clear about standards in the school. It is therefore difficult for the school to know where the strengths in teaching and learning lie and where improvements need to be made. Assessments are not yet in place to guide and direct teaching and learning needs.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There is too little evidence to make an overall judgement on provision in any of the subjects in this section.

87. The **art and design** work on display in Years 1 and 2 was of a good standard. Having looked at self-portraits by Picasso and Kokoschka, pupils then produced their own. After practising this, they evaluated their first attempt and then produced a second self-

portrait. The improvement was very clear, and showed evidence of good achievement. Year 5 and 6 pupils were taught satisfactorily and were offered a good range of activities based on moving figures. The teacher took good account of the range of ability in the class, for example by giving pipe cleaners to the less dexterous. A range of work linked to a visit to the coast was of a good standard and included

observational drawings of crabs, shells and starfish, a tie and dye montage, and some attractive weaving in shades of blue and green. Despite the good work that generates from teachers' interest and expertise, the co-ordinator has no clear view of standards in the subject, and no plan for development. Leadership is therefore unsatisfactory.

88. **Design and technology** was not the focus of this term's work and there was very little on display. However, Year 3 and 4 pupils had made delightful wind chimes out of decorated plant pots, some clay pots and, in an interesting link with geography, some 'fossil' imprints made with shells and plaster of Paris. The headteacher is currently the nominated co-ordinator. No development in the subject has taken place or is planned for this year. Again, therefore, leadership is unsatisfactory.

89. The one **physical education** lesson observed (dance) was taught well. Pupils moved well to music, wearing imaginary footwear that ranged from stilettos to flippers, and responding very well to the differences that each would make. The subject is soundly led, as there is a clear plan for its development and some evidence that this is being put into practice. Opportunities for pupils to engage in activities outside the school day are good, as there are mixed gender festivals/tournaments in rounders, netball, football, tag rugby, swimming and athletics.

90. There is a wide range of options from which to choose in **music**, by way of instrumental tuition. The subject leader teaches recorder and guitar. Brass, woodwind and upper strings are taught by visiting teachers. Pupils are accepted into instrumental tuition on the basis of interest and motivation, rather than through any form of skills' assessment. As soon as possible, instrumentalists are given opportunities to perform, for instance by playing in assemblies. Recently, they made a significant contribution to the leaving celebrations for the school secretary.

91. In the only lesson observed, teaching was very good, giving pupils in Year 4 the opportunity to make significant choices as they developed their ideas. The teacher supported them effectively, without intervening too closely. Using the pentatonic scale, the pupils composed a song based on the theme of a dragon. They explored options and worked well together in groups. This approach to teaching and learning in class music has recently been put in place, and pupils are enthusiastic about the compositional opportunities it gives them.

92. The resources are good; there is a good variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. At the time of the last inspection, singing in assemblies was unsatisfactory. It is now satisfactory, though pupils' approach to singing, especially that of the older ones, lacks vitality. During assembly, many of the oldest pupils either did not join in or sang without attention to posture and breathing.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

93. Teachers plan 'circle time' so that pupils have regular opportunities to express their feelings and ideas. Sessions are often linked to other curriculum areas and especially to religious education. Pupils take turns to share their views and feelings on a variety of issues; pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, discussed bullying. Younger pupils in the infant class, when learning about Hanukah, were helped to respect the values and beliefs

of others. Pupils say they enjoy discussing in groups and know they have to respect what others say. Each week, one class is rewarded for having the most positive attitude in the school.

94. Pupils are given regular opportunities to develop social skills. They have a healthy attitude to their school and have daily responsibilities to ensure the school runs smoothly. For example, there are monitors in each class who look after resources, and older pupils carry out *door duty* to ensure the safety of pupils at playtimes. They also contribute to the wider community, for example by collecting money for worthy charities such as *Children in Need*. They learn to care for others and for the environment through activities such as refilling water bottles for the youngest children and recycling paper.

95. Pupils talk in a positive way about the importance of regular sport and keeping to a healthy diet. They know about the dangers of the sun and the importance of healthy food. Older pupils from the *Healthy School Group* label food served during lunchtime to help younger pupils make healthy choices. Pupils enjoy after-school activities that involve sport. They know about the negative effect that drugs, alcohol and tobacco have on society, and visitors are invited to the school to talk with older pupils about these issues. The impact that this provision has on relationships, behaviour, attitudes and work ethic is satisfactory.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	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	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	5
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).