

INSPECTION REPORT

HELMSLEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Helmsley

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121364

Headteacher: Mr T Hiley

Lead inspector: Mrs J Stephenson

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th November 2004

Inspection number: 266989

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 155

School address: Carlton Lane
Helmsley
York
North Yorkshire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mr C Parkin

Date of previous inspection: 18th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Helmsley Community Primary School is smaller than most other primary schools. It caters for boys and girls between the ages of three and eleven. Since the last inspection in 1999 the school roll has declined due to the fall in the birth rate in the area. There are currently 155 pupils on roll. Nursery children attend school for the morning session only. Their levels of attainment on entry are in line with what is expected. There are eleven pupils (7 per cent) with special educational needs, which is well below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. There are 2 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. Whilst there are many pupils from Helmsley attending the school, there are a number of children who are bussed in from outlying villages and some pupils attend from rural deprivation areas. There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups.

The school has received a number of awards, including the Activemark that recognises its work in sport and the Artsmark that recognises its work in art. Other awards include the Basic Skills Quality mark, Investors in People, Schools' Achievement award and the local education authority's Inclusion Quality Mark.

At the time of the inspection, the head teacher had been in post for eleven weeks.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27384	Mrs J Stephenson	Lead inspector	Music Special educational needs
11468	Mrs J Menes	Lay inspector	
1550	Mr M Pinch	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Personal, social, health and citizenship education. Physical education Religious education
30499	Mrs T Woods	Team inspector	English Geography History
32094	Mrs J Bennett	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology The Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school with a number of key strengths. It rightly prides itself on providing well for all its pupils. Results in national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 are well above average, although standards are lower across other subjects. Pupils achieve well because teaching is good. In the reception class and Year 6, pupils make very good progress because teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. The school is well led by the head teacher and governing body. The management of the school is satisfactory. Pupils really enjoy their learning and parents hold the school in high regard. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because teaching is good. It is very good in Year 6 and the reception class.
- By the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are very good. Standards in art and design and physical education are good.
- Staff work hard to include all pupils, resulting in very positive attitudes to work.
- The monitoring and evaluation role of some subject leaders is underdeveloped.
- The leadership of the head teacher is good. He has a clear vision for the school and is building a strong team to improve it further.
- Marking and tracking systems are not used consistently to support pupils' progress.
- There are very good links with the community and this helps to enrich the curriculum.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are now average. The quality of resources has improved considerably and pupils are enthusiastic and very keen to learn. The interactive whiteboards in some classrooms effectively support pupils' learning.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Pupils' achievement is good overall; it is very good in the reception class and Year 6. The nursery provides a good start to education and children make good progress. The skilful teaching in the reception class ensures that children make very good progress and exceed the expected goals for their age. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make good progress and by the end of Year 2 standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good. Pupils' make very good progress in Year 6 and achieve very good standards in English and mathematics, as well as excellent science

standards, which are in the top 5% in the country. Boys' achievement in Years 4 and 5 is less good in writing, because their lack of concentration is not always dealt with effectively.

Throughout the school, pupils speak clearly and confidently with enjoyment, articulating their thinking in a lively manner. Rich learning opportunities provided by visiting specialists and clubs support the good standards in art and physical education (PE). Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and achieve very well.

Standards in ICT, religious education (RE), history, geography, design and technology (DT) and music are average. Insufficient time is allocated to these subjects and planning does not always provide sufficient detail on the teaching of specific skills. Behaviour is good; pupils have very good attitudes and personal skills. They work very well together and with enthusiasm. This reflects the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Fundamental to this is **good quality teaching**: well-planned and prepared activities and very good support from teaching assistants. This results in well above average standards in English, mathematics and science, promotes enjoyment of learning and meets the individual needs of pupils. In the reception class and in Year 6 very good teaching helps pupils to make rapid progress. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

The **curriculum is good** overall. It is significantly enriched through clubs, visits and visitors. It is well planned in English, mathematics and science. However, the balance of the curriculum is not as good as it should be and planning for other subjects lacks detail. Specific skills in ICT, RE, history, geography, DT and music are under-emphasised and standards are only average. **Assessment is satisfactory.** The pupil tracking system enables teachers to set realistic targets but does not always highlight pupils who need to make more progress. The head teacher has effectively implemented a good approach to marking and there are examples of very good practice, for instance in Year 6, but the quality of advice to pupils is inconsistent between classes.

Pupils are very well cared for in a safe and secure environment. The school is very welcoming and links with parents are good. Links with the community are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The head teacher provides effective leadership. He quickly evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses to underpin improvement. He has very good relationships with staff and has built an effective team so that all can contribute to the school's development agenda. The governing body is good and fully committed to the future direction of the school.

Management is satisfactory. The head teacher has implemented good systems for monitoring and evaluation. However, subject managers, particularly in ICT, RE, history, geography, DT and music, are insufficiently involved in this work. Financial management is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school. They feel confident in approaching staff and are very pleased with the information they receive. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the school, and their teachers; they like coming to school and share fully in its sense of community.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In order to raise standards further, the school should:

- Develop the role of subject leaders.
- Improve pupil tracking and marking systems to ensure that they are used consistently to support progress for pupils of all ages.
- Improve the balance of the curriculum and ensure that pupils' skills in ICT, religious education, history, geography, design and technology and music are properly emphasised.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is good. Standards by Year 2 are above average and by Year 6 are well above average. Girls outperformed boys in the national tests by Year 2 and Year 6. Since the last inspection results have fluctuated at Year 6, but over the last two years they have improved considerably because of the very high quality teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6 achievement in English, mathematics and science is very good.
- Pupils' speaking skills across the school are very good.
- Children in the reception class and pupils in Year 6 and those with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Pupils' ICT skills have improved but they are not used as well as they could be to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Children enter the nursery with levels of attainment that are in line with expectations. They attend the nursery for morning sessions only and they make good progress. Most of these children transfer to the reception class and they settle into full-time schooling very quickly. Children make very good progress in the reception class because of the expertly structured provision that very effectively supports all areas of learning. By the end of reception the majority of children are expected to exceed the nationally defined early learning goals in all areas of learning. Standards in speaking and listening, personal and social education (PSE) and knowledge and understanding of the world are well above average. The good teaching in the nursery and the skilful teaching in the reception class, the superb relationships and the very good routines ensure that important foundations for learning are established quickly.

Key Stage 1

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.0 (18.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.4 (16.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.5 (18.4)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Results in the Key Stage 1 tests have been very high for a number of years and the trend has been better than the national trend. In 2004 standards were lower than in previous years because there were only 16 pupils in the cohort and one or two pupils of lower ability can make a significance difference to the standards that the school achieves. In addition, there were serious staff absences during 2003-2004 that had a disruptive effect on pupils' learning.

Cohort sizes remain small in Years 1 and 2 but there is now good and often very good teaching and as a result standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average and pupils' achievement is good.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (28.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.7 (28.7)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.5 (30.4)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Since the last inspection results at the end of Year 6 have fluctuated and the school's trend is currently below the national trend. However, results improved considerably in 2003 and these very good standards have been maintained this year. In 2004 English standards were good; mathematics standards were very good and science standards were excellent. Current Year 6 pupils are working to a high standard in all these core subjects. This is because of the high quality teaching by the head teacher and the deputy head teacher. They have expert subject knowledge and high expectations for all pupils, and as a result pupils make rapid progress. This is particularly the case in science where standards and achievement are very good because teaching really inspires pupils to learn.
4. Achievement across Years 3 to 6 is good overall. In mathematics and science there is very little difference between the performance of boys and girls. In Years 3 and 6 boys are achieving as well as girls in English. However, in Years 4 and 5 boys' achievement is relatively lower in writing. On occasions boys' restlessness in class is not always dealt with effectively and this results in a decline in their concentration.
5. Throughout the school pupils' speaking skills are very good. Their natural enthusiasm towards learning generally results in them talking to one another and articulating their thinking in a lively manner. They speak clearly and confidently both in lessons and to visiting adults. This supports their progress in all core subjects, especially in mathematics. They have good instant recall of facts and they articulate their mathematical reasoning very well.
6. At the time of the last inspection ICT standards were unsatisfactory. Since then, and particularly in recent months, the school has worked hard to improve resources and pupils have developed better skills in using computers. Standards are now average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory but could be better. ICT planning does not always ensure that teachers have the appropriate detail to guide their teaching of specific skills. There are some satisfactory links made with other subjects but these are limited.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the support they receive. Work is well matched to their different levels of ability and this ensures that they gain confidence and achieve high levels of self-esteem through the successful completion of their work.
8. Standards for all pupils in art and design and physical education are above average. There are rich opportunities, from visiting specialists and from attendance at clubs outside of the school day, for pupils to develop their skills in these areas.
9. Standards in religious education, history, geography, design and technology and music are broadly average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory but could be better. On too many occasions teachers are unclear about subject-specific skills to be taught.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are all **very good** and a strength of the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Relationships are very good and older pupils care for younger ones.
- Pupils are very willing to work with others and to share their ideas.
- Pupils like coming to school and share fully in its sense of community.

Commentary

10. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good and this makes a significant contribution to the good progress they make and the well above average standards they achieve in English, mathematics and science. Behaviour is good overall and this also has a positive impact on pupils' learning. However, in a very small number of lessons in Years 4 and 5, some pupils become restless and the teachers do not always deal with this effectively; it results in some pupils, particularly boys, losing concentration. Pupils are very interested in the range of activities that is provided and they enjoy coming to school. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and this motivates them to try their best and to learn and achieve as much as they possibly can.
11. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development continues to be a strength of the school as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' spiritual development is very well cared for through opportunities for them to reflect and examine their emotions, feelings and sense of well-being. This is often achieved through aspects of their cultural development in drama, dance, art and music. Pupils know and understand how they should behave, what they should do, what is right and wrong and what is fair. From an early age pupils develop these qualities through working and playing together and through the example set by adults in the school. Pupils gain awareness and understanding of their own and other cultural traditions through local visits and visitors to the school. The school continues to extend opportunities for pupils' cultural development through events such as inviting teachers from Spain, Poland and Italy to visit. These directly enhance the cultural aspects of subjects such as art, history, geography and religious education.
12. Relationships between pupils and adults throughout the school are very good and pupils relate very well to each other. Girls and boys of all ages work and play together and older pupils take good care of those who are younger through a well-established buddy system. This is reflected in lessons where it helps pupils to learn more effectively and to make good progress. They do this with self-assurance, independence and consideration for others. Pupils and adults listen carefully to each other and everyone makes sure that the different views and opinions are well respected.
13. The school is safe and secure and pupils are confident that they will receive high levels of care. Very good attitudes and values are actively promoted and this has a positive influence on their quality of learning and the standards they achieve.

Attendance

14. Attendance is good. There are effective procedures in school to ensure that pupils attend regularly. In 2004 pupils' attendance was reported to be below the national average. This was

because the school was closed for two days because of inclement weather and all pupils were recorded as being absent.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.2%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good overall, with many examples of very good teaching and some that is outstanding. The curriculum for English, mathematics and science is good but there are some planning weaknesses in most of the remaining subjects. It is significantly enriched by a variety of exciting opportunities both within and outside the school day. The school places a strong emphasis on supporting and guiding pupils, and the care they receive is good; parents and pupils have positive views of the school.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **good**; it is particularly strong in the reception class and Year 6 where it is sometimes outstanding. The quality of learning reflects that of teaching. Overall **assessment systems are satisfactory**. Some teachers are effectively implementing the new approach to **marking** but this is **inconsistent** across the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception class and pupils in Year 6 learn very effectively because of the very high quality teaching.
- Pupils are lively and keen to learn because teachers encourage them to talk and think carefully about their work.
- Teaching assistants are very effective and give very good support to pupils.
- Pupil tracking and marking systems are not consistently used to support progress for pupils of all ages.
- Some teachers are not always clear about the skills they want pupils to learn, in lessons other than English, mathematics or science.
- Provision for boys in Years 4 and 5 does not always deal effectively with restlessness and lack of concentration

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	11	9	6	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.

15. There are examples of outstanding teaching in the reception class and in Year 6. Both teachers are skilled at providing a very effective environment so that pupils are constantly and actively involved in their learning. Pupils have confidence and trust in their teacher and are not

- frightened to openly ask personal questions or to express their ideas. These teachers know exactly what they want their pupils to learn. They continually evaluate the learning throughout the lesson and make changes to it if necessary. All pupils want to achieve as much as they possibly can because teachers motivate and inspire them to work hard.
16. Teachers have very good subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science. Lessons in these subjects are well planned and always thoroughly prepared. Teachers know their pupils very well and are almost always sensitive to their different needs. They use well-planned tasks and questions to ensure that pupils remain involved in their learning. Pupils are keen, lively and enthusiastic about their work because they are encouraged to think and talk about what they are doing. On rare occasions in some Year 4 and 5 English lessons the restlessness of some pupils, particularly boys, is not always dealt with effectively. This disrupts the quality of learning and leads to a decline in concentration.
 17. Teaching assistants are very well informed about their tasks. They maintain the high expectations of teachers. Their work is well planned and they are able to give very effective support to individuals within a group as well as teaching small groups. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, the teaching assistant was very effective in helping a group of pupils to understand that addition is the opposite of subtraction. They also work with teachers to ensure that the quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. These pupils are fully included in lessons and work is carefully matched to their particular needs to ensure that they make very good progress.
 18. Assessment systems are satisfactory. There is a tracking system in place that enables teachers to set realistic targets but it does not always highlight those pupils who need to make more progress, for example boys in Years 4 and 5 who are not achieving as much as they should in writing. In addition, the system does not extend beyond English, mathematics and science. This means that progress is not tracked in other subjects and pupils' achievement in ICT, religious education, history, geography, design and technology and music, is not as high as it should be.
 19. The head teacher has recently introduced a well-designed marking system. This is being used well by some teachers but there are inconsistencies across the school. The very best marking uses praise effectively with comments that help pupils to improve their work. However, this is not yet implemented across all subjects and year groups. Even where supportive comments are included pupils do not always benefit from a greater understanding of how they can improve. For example, Year 6 pupils are very clear about what they have to do to improve their work; pupils in Years 4 and 5 are less clear.
 20. The vast majority of lessons observed were in English and mathematics. Some teaching of other subjects was seen and in these lessons teachers are rightly beginning to make links in learning. For instance, in a Year 5 history lesson, pupils were writing a 'Lord Frosty' comic strip outlining the adventures of an evacuee during World War 2. This was good in terms of practising and consolidating literacy skills but specific historical enquiry skills were not being taught. There is not enough rigour in some subject planning such as religious education, geography, history, design and technology and music and as a result pupils only make satisfactory progress.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good curriculum**. It is significantly enhanced by good opportunities for enrichment. In the foundation stage the curriculum is well planned and managed to provide effectively for the children's needs. Considerable importance is given to English, mathematics and science. These subjects are well planned. However, too little time is given to other subjects and planning of the curriculum overall is only satisfactory. Plans for

teaching in ICT, religious education, history, geography, design and technology and music do not always contain enough detail to provide the teaching of specific skills. Accommodation is good, as is the range of resources to support teaching and learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provides very well for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular and other activities that enrich learning.
- The curriculum provides equality of access for all pupils.
- The balance of the curriculum is not as good as it could be.

Commentary

21. The school provides a broad and rich curriculum for the pupils. This is significantly enhanced by the opportunities for enrichment, both within and outside of the school day. The school caters very well for pupils' personal social and health development and some projects raise the pupils' interest in and knowledge of their local environment and heritage. However, the balance of the curriculum is not as good as it should be because too much time is currently given to English and mathematics. Each day, most of the whole morning session is devoted to English and mathematics. This means that there is not enough time available for ICT, religious education, geography, history, design technology and music and standards in these areas are average. The school has recently begun to review its curriculum to better meet the needs and interests of pupils. Recommended units of work are being selected and adapted so that links can be made between subjects. In the best lessons, teachers manage this well. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, boys were motivated to write when the theme was linked to the historical event, the Charge of the Light Brigade. Pupils were given background information about this event, and the tight focus of the lesson remained on improving reading and writing skills. However, in a music lesson, links made with other subjects hindered the teaching of the necessary musical skills that pupils needed to progress their learning further. ICT, religious education, history, geography, design and technology and music planning does not always ensure that specific subject skills are taught progressively.
22. The curriculum gives equality of access to all pupils and provides very well for pupils with special educational needs. Their learning is very well structured and aided very effectively by teaching assistants. Pupils have good individual education plans and the targets in these are well focused and precise. They are fully involved in lessons because work is very well matched to their needs. The very supportive atmosphere in school ensures that these pupils have high levels of confidence and self-esteem. As a result they are well motivated to do their very best and make very good progress. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. The school council provides opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and listen to the views of others. French is taught and pupils can attend a club to learn Latin. There is a very good range of other extra-curricular activities that enrich pupils' experiences. For example, pupils can take part in drama activities, and can work towards their cycling proficiency badge. They can learn to juggle or sew and enjoy a range of sporting activities including football and table tennis. Opportunities to enrich curriculum experiences through visits, visitors, residential trips and the use of the local environment are well developed. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 visit the local allotments and the church. Year 6 pupils go on a residential trip to Humphrey Head and visit Eden Camp as part of their World War 2 studies. All additional, enriching activities safeguard the breadth of the curriculum whilst it is undergoing change.
23. Overall accommodation is good. Teachers make good use of the space available including the school's extensive and well-maintained grounds. The school's computer suite has only recently come into operation and so is not yet fully supporting the development of skills across the curriculum. Library provision is enhanced by weekly visits to the local public library. The quality of other resources is generally good.

Care, guidance and support

Care of pupils is strength of the school; the school provides **very well** for their health and safety. Support and guidance of pupils by the school are **satisfactory**. There are **good** opportunities for pupils to express their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-established routines and careful monitoring enable the school to effectively promote pupils' health and safety.
- Very good relationships support pupils' welfare and guidance.
- There are no formal procedures to monitor pupils' personal development.
- There are some inconsistencies in the quality of setting and reviewing personal targets.

Commentary

24. There is a strong family atmosphere in the school. Teachers are friendly and welcoming to pupils and their parents, and set an example of care and concern for others. Older pupils look after younger ones and develop friendships beyond their own age group. Routines for entering and leaving the school, for moving around the school and for lunch times operate smoothly. Similarly, rotas for the use of playground equipment are well understood and respected by pupils. Staff and governors monitor health and safety in the school to ensure procedures are workable and effective.
25. Pupils like their teachers and have confidence in them. Teachers and classroom assistants know and understand their pupils very well and give them effective guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and guidance with their learning and personal development. However, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of marking in pupils' books from one class to another, and not all pupils are involved in their own learning through setting and reviewing their personal targets. Although the school is active in promoting pupils' personal development it has not yet developed a formal approach to monitoring the progress of individual pupils in ICT, religious education, history, geography, design and technology and music. As a result standards achieved in these subjects are only satisfactory.
26. The school takes good care to introduce each child into the school sensitively. Parents are very happy that their children settle quickly into school life.
27. The school works hard to involve pupils in the development of the school. The school council provides a useful forum for pupils' ideas and suggestions. The council was instrumental in the introduction of the buddy system that encourages pupils to provide effective support for each other. Pupils also have opportunities to express their views and feelings in class through circle time, and they help to write their class rules and review the aims of the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents and is working hard to develop these further. There are **effective** links with other schools and **very good** links with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong and well-established links within the community have a positive impact on pupils' learning and personal development.

- Parents are very pleased with the education the school provides.
- Communication with parents is very effective and supports pupils' learning and welfare.

Commentary

28. The school is very welcoming to parents and the good relationships between home and school have had a positive impact on pupils' welfare and learning. Parents feel confident in approaching teachers with any anxieties or queries and know that they will be listened to and their concerns will be addressed. There are opportunities at school events for teachers and parents to get to know each other, and parents respond well to requests for contributions and help. There are opportunities for them to become involved in school activities and the school values their contribution and is grateful for their support. The head teacher is also working to involve parents through consultation meetings in order to discover their views about the school and proposed developments.
29. The school provides very good information for parents through regular newsletters and a newly developed website. Class teachers actively encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning. They send letters home each term explaining the work their children will be doing. Parents are pleased that the school offers advice on how they can help their children, and value opportunities to see their children's work. Parents receive useful information on pupils' progress and what they need to do to improve, through written reports, meetings with teachers and leaflets explaining pupils' targets in mathematics and English. These good communication systems keep parents well informed about the school and their children's progress.
30. The school sees itself as an integral part of the town and welcomes members of the community to social events. It encourages pupils to participate in their community through use of the local library, performing in the market square and the local theatre at Christmas, and holding the school carol service in the church. There are good links with local churches, and ministers who visit the school to take assemblies are popular with the children. Local businesses welcome pupils when visits are arranged to support the curriculum. The school makes its building available for community use, such as a well-established table tennis club which caters for all ages and abilities. There are productive links with organisations working in the area, like the National Trust, which involves pupils annually in an orchid survey as well as helping the school to develop its grounds.
31. There are good links with local schools, and effective liaison with the secondary school helps pupils to make a smooth transfer to their next stage of education. Pupils with special needs are particularly well supported in this way. Links with the secondary school are developing further as a result of its achievement of performing arts status. There are extensive contacts with other schools for competitive sport, and the school is working as one of a group developing a shared approach to healthy lifestyles. As a result of these links, pupils' standards in art and design, physical education and personal, social, health and citizenship education are good. The school hopes to widen pupils' horizons through participation in the Comenius Project, which will develop links with schools in Poland, Spain and Italy.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good. The leadership of the head teacher and the governance of the school are good. The role of some subject leaders is under-developed. Management overall is only satisfactory because currently there is insufficient monitoring of progress and evaluation of success particularly in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

- The head teacher has a clear vision and commitment to creating an effective whole-school team.

- The role of some subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and the curriculum is under-developed.
- Systems to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of school improvement planning are under-developed.

Commentary

32. The head teacher has been in post for eleven weeks. During this short period of time he has quickly identified the school's strengths and the areas that need to be addressed in order to bring about further improvement. This has been achieved through his effective monitoring of standards, teaching and learning, and through formal and informal discussions with staff.
33. He has a clear vision for school improvement and has already demonstrated a determination to bring about change that will further improve learning opportunities for all pupils. He has quickly built very good and trusting relationships with staff, and he is using the strengths that exist within the school to build an effective, whole-team approach to evaluation and improvement planning.
34. The deputy head teacher is energetic and enthusiastic in her commitment to the school. She is a good role model for staff and pupils. The head teacher is developing their complementary leadership roles to ensure a co-ordinated and coherent approach to school improvement.
35. The head teacher has accurately analysed data in order to establish a clear view of changing trends over time and to identify the most important priorities for school improvement. Appropriate amendments have been made to the school improvement plan as result of this analysis, which have been informed by a sensible evaluation of the factors impacting upon achievement.
36. Subject leadership is satisfactory overall. Staff are well informed about their subjects and are committed to improving provision. Some subject leaders have recently been appointed to their role, for example in mathematics and art, and they have worked hard to analyse and identify the strengths and weaknesses in their subject. However, the current strategies that subject leaders use to monitor and evaluate their subjects, other than in English, mathematics, science, art and physical education, are insufficiently rigorous to enable them to accurately identify the most important priorities for improving achievement. As a result achievement in ICT, religious education, geography, history, design technology and music is not as good as it should be.
37. The school improvement plan is clear and well structured, supporting school development. It identifies clear priorities for improvement and allocates resources appropriately. However, opportunities for formal review are not built into the plan. As a result staff are not involved in regularly evaluating the impact of action taken, and there are no in-year systems to re-focus the plan to reflect priorities identified through monitoring.
38. The governing body meets its statutory requirements and is fully supportive of the head teacher and deputy head teacher. Governors are well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses and its priorities and direction. There is an effective committee structure and identified governors work with some members of staff to gain an understanding of some key areas of school life.
39. Financial management systems are good. A sub-committee of the governing body, which works closely with the school's finance and administration officer, regularly monitors the budget. Benchmark information is used to evaluate overall spending in relation to similar schools and governors evaluate the impact of budgetary decisions in relation to outcomes for

pupils. Expenditure per pupil is above average for primary schools because the governors rightly decided to maintain high staffing levels, so that pupils could be taught in single year groups in Years 5 and 6. Given this high expenditure per pupil value for money is satisfactory.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	437,452
Total expenditure	447,195
Expenditure per pupil	2885

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	25,478
Balance carried forward to the next	15,734

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress in their personal, social, and emotional development, their speaking and listening skills, and their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Teaching is very good and sometimes excellent in the reception class.
- Teaching assistants contribute very well to children's learning.
- Systems for evaluating teaching and learning are under-developed.
- Assessment systems do not effectively promote continuity.

Commentary

40. Children enter the nursery with a broad range of attainment but overall it is similar to that seen nationally. Children make good progress and achieve well and by the end of the reception year they attain standards above those expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, physical development, and creative development. Children make very good progress and achieve well above average standards in their speech and language, their personal and social skills, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because teaching in these aspects of learning is consistently very good.
41. Nursery education is provided for morning sessions only within a mobile classroom on the school site. The accommodation is shared with a childcare group that operates each afternoon. A significant number of children, but not all, transfer to the reception class during the year in which they are five. Almost all of the children in the current reception class accessed the school's nursery provision. Staff work hard to ensure that the current shared use of the nursery classroom works effectively. However, because some activities have to be cleared away at the end of each morning, children cannot revisit some activities in order to build upon and extend their learning. As a result, some planned activities do not contribute as effectively to children's learning as they should.
42. Assessment information is used well to identify next steps in learning. However, current strategies for recording information about children's progress are not always consistent and do not always provide a clear picture of skill development. On rare occasions some activities do not successfully build upon prior learning, which limits progress.
43. The head teacher and nursery teacher are jointly providing satisfactory leadership for the Foundation Stage during a staff absence. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Monitoring systems are effective, providing an accurate view of standards at the end of the reception year. However, strategies for evaluating progress in order to accurately identify priorities to build upon children's good progress are under-developed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very effective teaching resulting in good progress.
- Children have very positive attitudes to learning.

Commentary

44. Children make very good progress and achieve very well. By the end of the reception year they attain standards that are well above those expected for their age.
45. Teaching is very good. Procedures and routines are well established, and clearly understood by children. They contribute well to children's growing levels of independence and confidence. Relationships are excellent. Adults provide very high levels of care and they respond sensitively to children's personal and emotional needs. This creates a climate in which children feel safe and valued as individuals.
46. Adults respect children's ideas and opinions. They know children well and provide very good levels of support and encouragement. As a result children are motivated to share their experiences and to try out new ideas.
47. Children have very good attitudes to learning. This is because staff plan activities that interest and motivate them, and they intervene sensitively to extend the children's play. For example, when two boys were exploring the remote control cars in the nursery garden, the teacher suggested that they drew a track that the cars could follow. As a result the children worked productively, demonstrating high levels of concentration.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress in speaking and listening skills.
- There are good opportunities for children to write for a purpose in their play.
- A very small number of nursery lessons do not successfully build upon the prior learning of all children.

Commentary

48. Children make good progress and achieve well. By the end of the reception year they are attaining standards that are above those expected for their age. This is because teaching is good. Staff consistently use opportunities that occur across the day to consolidate and extend children's learning. For example, as children in the reception class complete the weather chart the teacher challenges them to make links between sounds and letters in order to help them to write the day of the week.
49. Children make very good progress in speaking and listening. This is because staff provide good role models. They use language as they work alongside children to describe what they are doing. Staff are genuinely interested in what children have to say. They seek children's views and opinions and they encourage children to join in discussions through sensitive questioning.
50. Children use writing with confidence to communicate meaning. Staff provide opportunities for children to use writing in their play, and they value children's early attempts to communicate through marks and symbols. For example, in the nursery class, children can record their ideas at the writing table or by using clipboards that are available throughout the classroom. In the reception class they are encouraged to record the outcomes of their investigations and to create their own simple books. In a very small number of nursery lessons, activities do not successfully build upon prior learning. This is because assessment systems do not always provide a clear view of skill development in order to support teachers in their planning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Indoor play is well planned to promote mathematical understanding.
- Good use is made of opportunities to consolidate and extend learning as they occur.
- There are some missed opportunities to extend learning for nursery children through outdoor play.

Commentary

51. Children make good progress and achieve well. By the end of the reception year they attain standards that are above those expected for their age. This is because of the very high quality teaching in the reception class.

Example of Outstanding Practise

In an excellent reception class mathematics lesson the children were all highly involved in practical activities in which they were using differing measures to make comparisons. Time was used flexibly across the morning so that children had time to practise their skills, and to learn from each other by sharing their discoveries.

The teacher checked the learning of the children who had been working independently outdoors by asking them to explain to others how they had used a metre measure to find objects that were longer than and shorter than one metre, and to show how they had recorded their findings. This helped children to clearly understand what they had to do, and it motivated other children to do the same.

The teaching assistant used a baking activity to provide children with direct experience of comparisons using scales, while the teacher worked with targeted children in the water tray to compare the capacity of differing containers. Both adults used questioning very effectively to extend children's understanding.

Children made excellent progress in this lesson because the activities motivated them to work hard, questions were used very well to challenge them, and children knew that the teacher would value the outcomes of their independent work.

52. Teaching is good overall. Staff plan activities that are well matched to the learning needs of young children. For example, in the nursery, staff encourage children to count the animals in the 'jungle', to work out how many plates will be needed if everyone at the table needs one, and to sort pasta and seeds according to shape and size.
53. Staff usually make good use of opportunities that occur across the day to consolidate and extend learning. For example, in the reception class, children are asked to count how many children are present and to work out how many are absent, and they are challenged to write the date in numerals on the weather chart. However, some opportunities to extend the learning of nursery children through outdoor play are missed. For example, children develop their very good knowledge and understanding of the world by taking on the role of a driver or passengers in a bus. However, opportunities to extend an understanding of money, by providing real coins that could be used in exchange for tickets, were not provided for.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are well-planned activities for children to investigate the world around them.
- The teaching of ICT skills is very effective.

Commentary

54. Children make very good progress and achieve very well. By the end of the reception year children are attaining standards that are well above those expected for their age. This is because teaching is very good. Staff plan activities that interest and motivate children, and they encourage children to 'find things out' by investigating. In the nursery class, children enjoy using the binoculars in the 'jungle' to explore the effect that different lenses have on objects around them, and they learn about special events in the lives of other people by making foods and exploring artefacts associated with the celebration of Diwali. They use simple computer programs with independence and they learn about control technology as they play with remote control cars in the nursery garden.
55. In the reception class the teacher encourages children to observe carefully and to explore. She is a good role model, asking questions such as, "I wonder what would happen if...?" When one child saw a spider's web through the classroom window she allowed time for all children to look at it, and talk about what they saw. When demonstrating a computer program using the electronic whiteboard, she encouraged children to experiment as she 'wondered' what particular icons would do. ICT skills are very effectively taught. This is because new programs are demonstrated well. Explanations are very clear and children have good opportunities to use programs that allow them to practise and extend their skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are well-planned activities to develop children's physical skills both indoors and out.
- The opportunities to challenge nursery children to extend their skills are sometimes missed.

Commentary

56. Children make good progress and achieve well. By the end of the reception year they achieve standards that are above those expected for children of their age. This is because children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills. In the nursery class, children learn to use tools effectively as they create models in the design and technology area and they are shown how to use cooking implements safely as they work with the nursery assistant to prepare vegetables for a snack.
57. Children learn to move in a range of ways because regular opportunities are planned both indoors and out. They regularly work outdoors where they have opportunities to climb; crawl, jump and balance as well as using wheeled toys. Staff also plan regular lessons in the school hall where children learn to move safely in a large space and to co-operate with others. Nursery children work very well together to play games using the parachute and activities such as this contribute well to their social skills as well as their physical skills. However, on rare occasions opportunities to extend the skills of nursery children are missed, for example when all children are asked to jump with two feet. Some find this difficult and the teacher does not model the skill or challenge them to improve.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are well-planned activities that motivate and interest children.

Commentary

58. As a result of effective teaching children make good progress and achieve well. They attain standards that are above those expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Staff provide good opportunities for children to explore and to learn skills. In the nursery, children learn how to use musical instruments. They are able to record their ideas using a range of media and they enjoy responding to music by moving in a range of ways. These skills are effectively built upon in the reception class where children's skills and interests are effectively nurtured and developed.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are well above average and pupils achieve very well because of the very high quality teaching.
- Standards in speaking and listening across the school are very good.
- Boys in Years 4 and 5 do not always make good progress in their writing.
- The use of ICT in lessons is underdeveloped.

Commentary

59. Standards overall are above those expected nationally and pupils' achievement across the school is good. This is similar to the last inspection.

60. Current standards in Year 6 are well above average and pupils make very good progress and achieve very well. This is because of the high quality teaching, which is consistently very good. Pupils in this class are well motivated to learn because the teacher uses questions very effectively to draw out knowledge and understanding, as well as to prompt and aid discussion. In a very good literacy lesson linked to the theme of 'War and Peace', pupils were able to talk confidently about 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' and empathise with the soldiers involved in this event. Lessons are always thoroughly planned and the teacher is always clear about what she wants pupils to achieve. Tasks are well matched to pupils' different abilities and writing activities are interesting and focus on practising and developing skills. This helps pupils, especially boys, to settle very quickly to their work and to make very good progress.

61. All teachers provide a very good variety of opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking skills. As a result the standard of speaking across the school is very good. Pupils speak clearly and confidently both in lessons and when talking to visiting adults. They use a very good range

of vocabulary and speak in well-structured sentences. These skills help them to improve their reading and writing.

62. In Years 1 and 2 pupils attain standards that are above average in reading and writing and achieve well because tasks are well matched to their different needs. The quality of marking for younger pupils is clear and effective, describing how they can improve their work. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 varies from one class to another. In Year 3 it is good and in Year 6 it is very good. In Years 4 and 5, achievement is only satisfactory. Teachers in these classes do not always expect the very best from their pupils in terms of quality of work, behaviour and positive attitudes. On occasions some pupils, usually boys, are restless and shout out their answers to questions or talk to one another across the class. This disrupts the learning for the majority of pupils who are quieter and who are trying to listen to the teacher. The quality of marking in these two year groups is not as good as it should be. Some marking is detailed but written comments are sometimes too difficult for pupils to read and understand.
63. The quality of teaching is good overall. The skills pupils need to become confident readers and creative writers are generally well taught. This is because the vast majority of teachers have very good subject knowledge and use it to plan and prepare their lessons very effectively. However, the use of ICT is underdeveloped because its potential to improve and motivate learning in English is not always recognised. In the very best lessons, teachers structure activities that engage the interest of all pupils. They have high expectations of what pupils at all ability levels can do and they use resources, such as writing frames, very effectively. These teachers successfully link English to other subjects, to encourage and motivate less confident writers, particularly boys, to achieve. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to helping and supporting pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. They encourage pupils to talk about their work and to think carefully about their answers to questions. As a result pupils make very good progress and achieve well.
64. The leadership and management of English are good. The subject leader is keen and enthusiastic. She has a clear view of what needs to be done to ensure that all pupils, including boys, make as much progress as they possibly can.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. There are satisfactory links made between literacy and other areas of the curriculum and these are improving. Reading activities and resources are used effectively across the full range of subjects. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. The school is currently working to further improve writing and has identified themes linked to subjects across the curriculum aimed at engaging and motivating pupils. In the best lessons this works very well. However, this approach is at an early stage of development and is not yet underpinned by rigorous curriculum planning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are well above average and pupils achieve very well because of very good teaching.
- Pupils have good instant recall of number facts and think logically.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because teaching assistants support them very well.

- Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always contribute to pupils' learning.
- The use of ICT in mathematics is sometimes ineffective in supporting learning.

Commentary

66. In 2004 test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were well above average. The number of pupils achieving the higher levels was very good. Current standards in mathematics are above average. The head teacher teaches Year 6 pupils and current standards in this class are well above average. He has high expectations for his pupils and they develop good strategies for learning through talking and explaining their ideas. Standards in mathematics have improved since the time of the last inspection. All pupils make good progress because tasks are well matched to their ability and a thorough understanding and recall of number facts are gained at an early stage. Many opportunities are given for pupils to discuss their work and explain their answers and this also makes a significant contribution to their good progress. The higher attaining pupils are often set tasks that involve independent investigation through which they are able to extend their skills and reach higher levels of achievement. Pupils with special educational needs and less able pupils are well supported by very able teaching assistants who actively encourage them to share in the learning during whole-class sessions. Such opportunities enable them to raise their self-esteem and confidence as well as improve their mathematical understanding.

67. Overall the teaching of mathematics is good. It is very good in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 6. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of each pupil's level of ability. Lessons are well planned and tasks are effectively tailored to meet the needs of all pupils. This combined with good teaching strategies enables pupils to make good progress across the school. They gain a good understanding of mathematical ideas quickly because teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. There are some good examples of marking but it is inconsistent. In some classes pupils are not always clear about what they have to do to improve their work.
68. In a minority of lessons, ICT is used effectively to support pupils' learning, for example in Year 6 where the properties of two-dimensional shapes were explored. However, in too many other lessons, ICT is often used to give general practice in the consolidation of number facts in which pupils are already confident. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their work and provide clear explanations of how they have reached their answers to problems. This helps pupils to think about their learning and it further develops their reasoning and logical skills. Younger and less able pupils are able to confidently use a range of mathematical vocabulary to support their learning. By Year 6 pupils are able to think creatively and logically when they approach tasks such as estimation, and classifying and naming quadrilaterals.
69. In most lessons pupils are given opportunities to discuss their work together and to choose from a wide range of resources. These have a positive effect on the progress that pupils make and their understanding of concepts such as area being a measure of surfaces. This also enables pupils to be set tasks with more than one solution and this allows them to think creatively and to learn from each other.
70. Emphasis on mathematics is strong throughout the school and a well-planned curriculum forms the basis of good quality teaching and learning. The curriculum is effectively led and managed. The subject leader is new to the post and is currently being shadowed by the head teacher, who is a mathematics specialist. Together they have a good, clear knowledge of the subject's strengths and weaknesses.

Mathematics across the curriculum

71. The strategy of using mathematics to support learning in other curriculum areas and to practise the use of mathematical skills in a wider context is satisfactory. Pupils have opportunities to develop their mathematical skills in subjects such as design and technology, science and geography. However, there are missed opportunities to practise and develop mathematical skills in some other subjects, particularly ICT.

SCIENCE

Only one lesson was observed during the week of the inspection. Judgements about teaching are also based upon scrutiny of work and informal discussions with pupils.

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are very good and pupils achieve very well.
- There are good opportunities to develop investigational skills across the school.
- In some lessons pupils do not make as much progress as they should because recording methods are insufficiently varied.

Commentary

72. Standards in science at the end of Year 2 are above national expectation. Older pupils successfully build upon their scientific skills and knowledge and by Year 6 standards are well above average. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well and attain very high standards because of the excellent teaching. Standards have improved since the last inspection.
73. Teaching is very effective in Year 6. The teacher plans lessons carefully to build upon prior learning and provides very clear explanations so pupils understand what is expected of them. Relationships are very good. Pupils are extremely keen to learn and to do their very best because of the respect they have for their teacher. They are confident to ask questions openly if they do not understand. The very purposeful learning environment that the teacher creates contributes very effectively to pupils' learning and high achievement.

Example of Outstanding Practise

Pupils were mesmerised in an outstanding Year 6 science lesson about the respiratory system. They very keenly watched a short video extract showing the structure of the lungs and the effects of smoking. Pupils were visibly shaken when they saw black encrusted lungs, diseased by tobacco. The teacher very quickly followed this extract with a series of open questions to test their understanding of the respiratory system. Pupils were able to quickly name and talk about the main functions of the nose, mouth, throat, trachea, bronchia and alveoli. Questions relating to family habits about smoking, and the effects of nicotine and tar, were handled very carefully and sensitively. Taking into account pupils' family circumstances pupils were confident to state their views and opinions, articulating their thinking about the effects of tobacco on the human body very clearly.

74. Good opportunities are planned across the school for children to develop their scientific knowledge and their understanding of investigation processes. For example, pupils in Year 2 are able to evaluate their understanding of planets to identify sensible questions for further inquiry and they are beginning to consider the outcomes from their investigations. Following a class investigation about evaporation one child was "surprised that the water outside did not evaporate". These experiences are built upon effectively in Year 3 to 6 where pupils are challenged to draw conclusions from their experiments and to recognise when a test is 'fair'. By Year 6 pupils are able to interpret results, drawing accurate conclusions. For example, they are able to use information that shows the relationship between diet and tooth decay in different countries, in order to suggest ways in which levels of tooth decay can be reduced by altering eating habits.
75. Pupils are given a broad range of opportunities to build upon their scientific knowledge. In Year 6 pupils use their literacy skills very well to support their work. However, in other classes pupils are asked to record their methods and findings in detail and some find this difficult. As a result some pupils' written work does not always accurately reflect their scientific knowledge and understanding. This limits the progress that they make in some lessons.
76. The leadership and management of science are good. The head teacher has taken on this role and he has a clear understanding of standards and necessary strategies to further improve curriculum, teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

No ICT lessons were seen in which pupils were learning specific computer skills. Inspectors observed ICT being used in other lessons.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' ICT skills are developing well and they are confident and enthusiastic about using them.
- The use of ICT to support pupils' work in other subjects is under-developed.
- ICT resources are well managed.

Commentary

77. At the time of the last inspection, standards in ICT were unsatisfactory. Standards are now average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is satisfactory. Standards are rising because the quality of equipment and associated software is improving. Pupils with well-developed skills and high levels of confidence are used very effectively to coach other pupils. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in the quality of equipment and media that give access to computers everywhere in the school. Increasingly the school is providing more opportunities for pupils to enhance their skills and use computers to support their work. A high proportion of pupils have access to computers at home and this contributes to their learning in areas such as becoming familiar with conventions, running software, word processing and saving, retrieving and printing their work. The school has recently developed its own website and pupils are encouraged to contribute to this. ICT in the school is now in a good position to improve further.
78. Interactive whiteboards have recently been introduced into some classrooms. This supports effective learning because teachers are able to give good quality demonstrations and pupils are motivated to work hard and try their best. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the acquisition and application of ICT skills. Younger pupils learn to display text and create their work on screen, can run simple programs effectively, use a mouse to make choices and print and save their work. Older pupils know how to use drawing tools, create and re-size textboxes and navigate encyclopaedia software to research information on topics such as the planets.
79. Overall teaching of ICT is satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge of the subject and of how to use ICT to support learning is variable across the school. The use of ICT in lessons is satisfactory, although there is some very good practice to be shared across the school. For instance, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, taught by the head teacher, pupils employed software very successfully in their work on the properties of rectangles. Pupils were keen, interested and enthusiastic. This high quality teaching ensured that pupils worked hard and learnt actively through experiment and discussion. However, where teachers are less successful in choosing appropriate software, pupils' experiences in using computers do not successfully build upon prior learning. For instance in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils using the computer were not challenged to think because the chosen program was not fully integrated into their work.
80. The leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory. The subject leader has recently been appointed to the post and has worked hard to give the subject a high profile in the school. The head teacher supports him very well, and together they have a clear plan for further improvement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

81. Satisfactory use is made of ICT across the curriculum but it is variable between subjects and classes. The school has sufficient hardware and a good range of software for effective progress to be made. Although pupils are making satisfactory progress, on too many occasions they are practising and consolidating skills and knowledge that they have already learnt. Very good use is made of ICT in Year 6 to promote numeracy skills. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use ICT effectively in most other classes.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

82. One lesson was observed in history and no lessons were observed in geography. There was a very limited sample of pupils' work available. Discussions took place with pupils and with

subject leaders. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in these subjects.

83. In history, Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of what the life of a soldier would have been during World War 1. They know that Florence Nightingale was a nurse and that she cared for sick and wounded soldiers. They have an awareness of the differences between the past and the present.
84. **By Year 6 standards in history are in line with national expectations.** Pupils make satisfactory progress. They can recall some of the events that led up to World War 2. They can describe some of the features of life at that time. For example, they know how the role of women changed and how people's lives were affected by the Blitz. Pupils carry out some research tasks using books and the Internet. They visit Eden Camp to enrich their understanding of life in wartime Britain. They benefit from listening to the experiences of a visitor from the local community who lived through the war years.
85. In geography, Year 2 pupils know something about the town of Helmsley. They can describe the shops and houses in simple terms and know that there is a market. Higher attaining pupils know where they live and can write their address. Pupils have located their house on a street map and visited the town itself. They know that there are cold and hot places in the world and that there are oceans and seas.
86. **By the end of Year 6 standards in geography are in line with expectations.** From the very limited amount of work in books, pupils show an understanding of how mountains and volcanoes were formed. Photographic evidence shows that Year 6 pupils go to Humphrey Head on a residential visit. They experience a range of activities that include orienteering and the study of rocks and land formation.
87. Pupils' work in English shows that links are being made to both history and geography to stimulate writing. However, in the one history lesson observed the development of subject skills was lost because the focus of the lesson was too confused with the practising of literacy skills. The lack of recorded work in both subjects supports this judgement. Subject leadership is at a very early stage of development and it is not yet having sufficient impact on overall improvement. Curriculum planning does not clearly state the historical and geographical enquiry skills to be learnt and there is insufficient time to ensure full coverage of these subjects. This means that the potential pupils have for learning and for producing high quality work, as they do in English and mathematics, is not yet being fully realised. Pupils' achievement is therefore only satisfactory.

Religious education

No lessons were observed in religious education, but evidence was gained through discussions with pupils and the subject leader, from examining teachers' planning and pupils' work and through observations of the religious elements of acts of collective worship

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided both in and outside lessons to support pupils' understanding of a wide range of religious beliefs of others.
- The role of the subject leader is under-developed.

Commentary

88. **By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.** This is the same as it was at the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school pupils, including those who have special educational needs, have a sound knowledge of religious ideas based on major world religions, although there is an emphasis on Christianity. Younger pupils learn about festivals and celebrations associated with different religions, such as Christmas and Diwali, together with stories from the lives of prophets and famous people associated with them. They are encouraged to understand the meaning of the celebrations and beliefs that they study. Older pupils develop a more in-depth understanding of different religions and are able to distinguish similarities and differences between them. Year 6 pupils are currently studying Judaism and understand the significances of Passover. They know that the Torah is a holy book and that fingers must not touch it. Pupils also understand that the common pattern of religions is that they have divine beings, laws, festivals and celebrations, and moral principles. Pupils learn to show respect for other people's beliefs and values. Pupils usually complete the same written work and this limits the progress that some pupils make, particularly higher attaining pupils.
89. Lessons are supplemented by the religious content of assemblies in which moral issues are exemplified, and practices and beliefs of a range of religions are discussed. Pupils enjoy and follow stories such as that of the Spirit Bear of the Tsimshian people of Canada with great enthusiasm. This level of interest helps the understanding of the principles and values represented.
90. The locally agreed syllabus has been recently reviewed and the school curriculum is to be revised. Currently there is insufficient time to ensure full coverage of this subject. Representatives of different faiths are invited into school, to meet and discuss issues with pupils. Pupils also visit places of Christian worship and this extends their understanding. A suitable range of resources and artefacts is available to support pupils' work. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory and at an early stage of development. It is not yet having a positive impact on the progress that pupils make. Although the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress, the potential that pupils have, for producing good quality work, is not yet fully realised.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, Design and technology, Music and Physical education

Two dance lessons in physical education were observed and one lesson in music. No lessons were seen in design and technology. Inspectors talked to pupils about these subjects and looked at pupils' work, where this was available. It is not possible to judge the overall quality of provision from the limited evidence available.

Design and technology

91. Standards in design and technology are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is satisfactory. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils have an appropriate range of opportunities to develop their 'design and make' skills. For example, Year 2 pupils design and make coats from felt. They use magazines to research ideas and to identify purpose, and they draw plans of their designs. They amend their designs as their ideas develop further, and they use appropriate joining techniques effectively. By Year 6, pupils are able to evaluate and amend their designs to address construction difficulties, and they show good attention to detail. For example, as part of their study around healthy living, pupils design and create 'foods' using clay. They demonstrate good observation skills, using

tools and colour effectively to shape realistic healthy and unhealthy 'meals'. Curriculum planning is developing and most aspects of the subject are included but there is insufficient time to ensure full coverage of this subject.

Music

92. Standards in music are in line with expectation. This is different from the last inspection when standards were above expectation. This is because the school has been without a music specialist for a number of years. However, the school now has a music specialist who is teaching across all year groups and this is beginning to have a good effect on pupils' musical abilities. Singing across the school is good. Pupils sing in tune, with good pitch, and they are able to sustain notes. The choir sing confidently and enthusiastically. They articulate the words clearly and sing with accurate pitch and rhythm because the teacher models singing well. However, there is not sufficient clarity in the specific music skills to be taught so that pupils can build progressively on their learning and standards can be raised beyond broadly average. Year 5 pupils who wrote their own lyrics to *There'll always be an England* demonstrated a good example of using literacy in music.

Physical education

93. Standards in physical education are above expectation and in dance they are well above expectation. The extra sporting activities that pupils are involved in during and after school contribute well to the standards they are achieving. Pupils dance with vigour and enthusiasm. They relate their movements to the mood and tempo of the music with grace and feeling. On occasions a spiritual atmosphere is created and pupils have opportunities to reflect and enjoy their experiences. Pupils are enthusiastic and are keen to improve their performance in all aspects of their work. This has resulted in the school gaining the Activemark award. A teacher who has a high level of expertise and enthusiasm for the subject leads the physical education curriculum. She has created a good quality programme of activity that takes place both within and outside lesson time. It provides well for all ages and abilities, ensuring a diversity of opportunities for physical activity that includes games, dance, gymnastics, running and swimming.

Art and design

Provision in art is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because teaching is good.
- There are good opportunities for children to learn from the work of professional artists.

Commentary

94. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are achieving standards above those expected for their age. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Staff provide a good range of opportunities for children to develop their skills, to respond creatively to a range of stimuli, and to work alongside professional artists.
95. Teaching is good. Staff encourage pupils to observe carefully and they plan activities which motivate and interest them. For example, in a Year 1/2 lesson pupils were given opportunities to look closely at a fish, to identify its special features and to mix colours that accurately reflected those seen. As a result pupils concentrated well, tried hard, and produced work of high quality.

96. Staff provide good opportunities for children to learn from the work of professional artists both by working alongside them on collaborative projects, such as the mosaics that are displayed in the school grounds, and by exploring the techniques used by artists. In an effective Year 4 lesson ICT was used successfully to enable pupils to learn about the work of Paul Klee. They were able to identify the characteristics of Klee's work and to interpret them by relating them to the concept of 'a journey'. Pupils were highly motivated and began to make links with their own experiences. In their own work that followed, they demonstrated their ability to adapt Klee's ideas in order to tell their own story of a journey. They were very confident to make their own individual responses and were able to clearly articulate their thinking, demonstrating good levels of creative interpretation.
97. The leadership and management of art and design are satisfactory. The subject leader has recently been appointed to this role and has sensibly used a range of informal methods, including examination of displays, to begin to evaluate standards across the school

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils state their ideas and share their views confidently because they know they are listened to and respected by all staff.
- There are good opportunities for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship in all aspects of learning.

Commentary

98. The overall 'family' ethos ensures that the school gives high priority to personal development as an integral part of its work. There are very good supportive relationships that underpin all activities and learning. Sensitive teaching, respecting pupils and valuing their contributions ensure that pupils gain in confidence and self-esteem. The positive effects of this can be seen in the enjoyment pupils gain from attending school. They demonstrate mature and responsible attitudes and are able to work independently or in groups, supporting and caring for each other. As pupils develop these positive attributes, they become aware of their personal value and they consolidate them through participation in activities such as talking together in circle time, dance, drama and discussions about what is happening in the world. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by very effective teaching assistants, enabling them to participate fully in sessions and supporting good progress.
99. The school has very good relationships with people and organisations in the local community. Pupils meet and talk to people from outside the school. Pupils gain good insights into a range of jobs and professions and how they affect other people's lives. They meet artists and musicians and talk to a variety of people, including the police, school nurse and local clergy. There are well-established systems and both the pupils and adults understand routines in the school. These encourage the development of good personal, social and health education and citizenship. They form a strong base upon which the school's good quality of teaching and learning is built.
100. School assemblies make a good contribution to this curriculum area. Pupils are encouraged to think about 'friendship' and what is right and wrong and to consider the views and opinions of others. Older pupils are often given responsibility for younger pupils through the buddy system and these duties are carried out with sensitivity and care.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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