

INSPECTION REPORT

HEY WITH ZION VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lees, Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105694

Headteacher: Mrs D Luke

Lead inspector: Dr J N Thorp

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st October 2004

Inspection number: 267007

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 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 302

School address: Rowland Way
Lees
Oldham
Lancashire
Postcode: OL4 3LQ

Telephone number: 0161 620 3860
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
Name of chair of Mr P Havenhand
governors:

Date of previous January 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hey with Zion Primary School is located in the Lees area of Oldham, about two miles from the town centre. The school has a joint Anglican and Methodist Foundation. The school is larger in size compared with others of this type, with its 302 pupils organised into nine classes and a nursery. Most children come from the surrounding area. There is significant mobility of pupils, with 24 joining the school other than at the time of first admission in the last school year and 26 pupils leaving during this period. The area around the school is fairly mixed; around 15 per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is similar to that found in other schools. Attainment on entry is broadly average, although there is a wide spread of ability. There are 42 pupils (14 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, which is in line with most schools nationally. Most of these pupils have learning difficulties, but some have communication difficulties. Five pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is slightly above average. A very small number of pupils have English as an additional language.

The school won a Department for Education and Skills (DfES) *Achievement Award* in 2000 and 2002; it received a *Healthy Schools* award and an *Eco-school* award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6327	J N Thorp	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage; Geography; History; English as an additional language
1112	P Oldfield	Lay inspector	
18703	C Canniff	Team inspector	English; Information and communication technology; Art and design; Design and technology; Music; Special educational needs
16971	R W Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematics; Science; Physical education; Religious education; Citizenship

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Overall **the school provides a good quality of education**. The school is well led; the strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils is very good and the effective support provided for pupils helps create the conditions in which all individuals can learn. Teaching is good overall ensuring most pupils' learning is good. Standards in some important subjects are higher than those normally expected of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The curriculum for some pupils lacks coherence. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- High levels of care and a firm commitment to inclusion ensure that all pupils needs are met
- Standards are above average in mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and also in English at the end of Year 2
- Teaching is good overall, but particularly effective in Years 5 and 6
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs who, as a result, are enabled to participate fully in lessons
- The school is well led; the headteacher and other key staff provide good leadership
- Curriculum planning does not ensure that pupils of the same age have the same experiences
- Activities planned for the reception children in the mixed-age reception and Year 1 class are not always appropriate for children their age
- The school's marking policy is not implemented consistently, so pupils do not always understand what they could do to improve their work
- Assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is underdeveloped

There has been satisfactory improvement overall since the previous inspection in January 1999. The curriculum for religious education has been improved and teachers now ensure it is clearly based on the new locally agreed syllabus. As a result standards have improved. The effectiveness of the governing body has improved and all the required policies are now in place. Governors are also now more fully aware of the performance of the school. Assessment in English, mathematics and science has improved, but there has been insufficient improvement in planning to ensure that pupils in the same year group are taught the same things. There is now a marking policy, but this is not yet consistently implemented in all subjects.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Overall **achievement is good**. Children generally start school with attainment which is slightly below average overall when compared with other schools locally, although there is a wide spread. Children’s learning is good in the Foundation Stage and so by the time they enter Year 1 most have achieved the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year in all areas of learning, although they make less progress in their creative development. This represents good achievement. Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2, because most pupils make good progress in relation to their capabilities, and standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. The table above shows that there was a dip in standards in 2003 at the end of Key Stage 2, but results in national tests in 2004 show they have recovered. Achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6, with standards above average in mathematics and science. Standards in English are average. Throughout the school pupils achieve standards expected for their age in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education.

Pupils’ personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Strong relationships and the good support of all adults ensure that pupils feel happy and secure at the school and contribute to their positive attitudes. Behaviour is good. Attendance is above average, but a small number of pupils are regularly late for school, which disrupts their learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall the quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good overall, and particularly effective in Years 5 and 6. This ensures that pupils’ learning is good. They are very well supported by a skilful team of teaching assistants, who help ensure that all pupils are able to participate in all the activities of the class. Assessment procedures are good for English, mathematics and science, but underdeveloped in other subjects. Pupils are well cared for and supported, so their personal needs are identified and met. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, although the school’s planning does not ensure that pupils of the same age have the same experiences. The school’s links with parents are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall **leadership and management are good**. The headteacher provides good leadership, with a firm focus on school improvement. Her commitment to inclusion contributes to its positive ethos. Management systems are effective in ensuring the school runs smoothly. Other key staff contribute effectively to leadership and management. The governing body now fulfils its legal responsibilities and governors are increasingly effective in contributing to the management of the school.

PARENTS’ AND PUPILS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents have positive views of the school. Most think standards are high and that their children are doing well. They believe the school’s good reputation locally is justly deserved. Parents appreciate the Christian ethos and value the school’s joint

foundation; they are pleased with the values the school promotes. Parents consider it is a happy and friendly school. Pupils also have positive views about school. The vast majority enjoy coming to school, are happy and secure and feel that their teachers help them to learn.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Plan the curriculum so that pupils of the same age have the same experiences
- Provide appropriate activities, in line with the Foundation Stage curriculum, for the reception children in the mixed reception and Year 1 class
- Implement the school's marking policy fully and consistently, so pupils understand what they could do to improve their work
- Develop assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall pupils' achievement is **good**. Standards on entry to the school vary considerably, but they are slightly below average overall. Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage, with the majority of children on course to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2, with standards in reading, writing and mathematics above average. Overall achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, although it is better in mathematics and science than it is in English. Boys and girls achieve as well as each other.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in most areas of learning in the Foundation Stage; achievement in creative development is not as good as in others;
- standards dipped in national tests in 2003 at the end of Year 6, but the changes introduced have been effective in raising them so by 2004 they were much improved;
- standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2; they are above average in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6;
- pupils still do not have sufficient opportunities to develop the full range of ICT skills, although overall standards are in line with those expected;
- pupils with special educational needs are making good progress against the targets set for them.

Commentary

1. Children enter the school with wide-ranging levels of attainment, but overall standards are slightly below those expected. In some areas their prior learning is not as good as in others. Standards on entry are not as good as reported in the previous inspection. Moreover, an analysis of trends in attainment on entry indicates that standards are falling, particularly in relation to children's personal, social and emotional development and their ability to communicate and use language. Nevertheless the provision made for children in the nursery and classes with reception children ensures that they make a good start to their time in school. They achieve well in most areas of learning, with the majority doing well to achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. There is a strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development and children make good progress in this area of their learning because teaching is good. They also make good progress in communication, language and literacy. While there are some opportunities provided to promote children's creative development, generally these are insufficient to extend their learning appropriately. As a result, children make less progress in their creative development, with fewer achieving the goals they are expected to reach in this area of learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.2 (16.2)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.8 (15.1)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.3 (17.2)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- This table shows that pupils achieved broadly average standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 in reading and writing, compared with pupils in all other schools, while in mathematics they achieved above average standards. These test results also show that in writing pupils in the school did slightly less well than in the previous year. In reading and writing, the picture is similar when results are compared with those achieved by pupils in similar schools. In mathematics, however, standards achieved were well above average compared with those in similar schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.6 (26.5)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.1 (25.5)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.1 (27.5)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- This table shows that standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 in English and mathematics were above average compared with those achieved by pupils in other schools, but in science they were broadly average. These results also indicate clearly that in all three subjects pupils did better than they had the previous year, when there was significant disruption to teaching and learning and high mobility of pupils.
- The school was rightly very concerned about this dip in standards. However, the actions taken by the headteacher and the improved quality of teaching of the new teaching team for pupils in Year 6 have had a positive impact on standards, and results in 2004 were significantly improved. These improved standards are being maintained as was observed during the inspection.
- Pupils of all ages achieve well in reading. By the end of Year 2, standards of reading are generally above average. Most pupils can read appropriate texts accurately, with many of them able to use expression to help them communicate meaning. By the end of Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory progress, with standards average overall. Some higher attaining pupils read well, with good expression and comprehension. This has a positive impact on their learning in other subjects. Throughout Years 3 to 6 pupils have underdeveloped library skills, because the school is unable to provide appropriate library facilities. This has a negative impact on their ability to learn for themselves.
- Work seen during the inspection indicates that pupils achieve well in writing. This is because there is a high priority given to improving pupils' writing. Progress is good and standards among pupils currently in Year 2 are above average. Inspection

evidence also indicates that standards among pupils currently in Year 6 are also now better than they were. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their writing skills in other subjects and, by the time they leave the school, many now communicate their ideas effectively in writing.

7. The standard of pupils' work in mathematics by the end of Year 2 is above average. This is similar to that reflected in statutory assessment last year. Pupils are making good progress and their achievement is good. Pupils continue to make good progress through Years 3 to 6 so by the time they leave the school they have achieved well and standards are above average. This is because teaching is good.
8. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in science, and standards among pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are above average. A recent focus on developing pupils' skills of investigation has been successful and so standards in this aspect of science are good. Pupils make particularly good progress in Year 6 because teaching is very effective.
9. Pupils' learning and achievement in ICT are satisfactory and standards are in line with those expected of pupils by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Improved resources for teaching and learning are having a positive impact on the rate at which pupils make progress, but pupils still do not have the equipment to enable them to learn to use ICT as a measuring tool, which was a weakness reported in the previous inspection.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets and their achievement is good. This is due to good teaching and planning which take into account the wide variety of pupils' individual needs. The very good support they receive from classroom assistants also contributes positively to the progress they make.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour are **good**. Pupils' personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance is **good**; punctuality is satisfactory, although a few parents do not ensure that their children arrive to school on time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave well in classes and around the school;
- relationships are good; pupils get on well with each other and with all adults in the school;
- pupils undertake appropriate responsibilities seriously, contributing to their understanding of living in a community;
- personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, but the local community could be used more to support learning about other cultures;
- some pupils are frequently late, which disrupts their learning, but attendance as a whole is above the national average.

Commentary

11. The school expects and promotes good standards of behaviour very effectively. School and class rules are clearly displayed, providing guidance about rewards and sanctions. This helps ensure that the school is an orderly community. Pupils act maturely and sensibly and, as a result, behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes is good. This has been maintained since the previous inspection.
12. Relationships are good. Pupils of all ages help each other. Pupils understand that they can express a point of view and that their views will be considered, which effectively helps promote positive attitudes to learning and contributes to the good relationships between pupils and adults. Teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors also provide strong support so that all pupils feel a part of the school community and enjoy good relationships with others. Individual pupils with specific needs are helped to develop close relationships with others and play a full part in the life of the school because they are given very good support.
13. Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously. There is a well-developed and well-supported school council, for example, which deals effectively with the views and concerns of pupils. The buddy system works well, ensuring older pupils are very alert to the help and support needed by younger pupils. The many duties which pupils happily undertake in the school give them a good insight into the responsibilities of living in a community.
14. Assemblies contribute positively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially in providing good opportunities for spiritual awareness and reflection. Pupils respond well to the strong moral code that teaches them to distinguish clearly between right from wrong. This underpins the school's high expectations and supports the calm way that pupils behave. The school teaches well the richness of other cultures, through a very successful African week for example, and through topics in religious education. However, pupils have insufficient understanding of other faiths in the community. One reason is because local circumstances have prevented pupils from the school visiting local places of worship and this has restricted the progress they have made in extending their understanding of other faiths and cultures in the locality.

Attendance

15. The school promotes attendance well and levels are above the national average. This is better than reported at the time of the previous inspection. A few parents bring their children to school late, which has a negative impact on their children's learning. The school is working hard to improve this disruption to learning, asking parents to explain the reason for lateness. This is to be commended.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.8
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.

Exclusions

16. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education, which is effective in enabling pupils to learn and make progress. Teaching is good. The curriculum is satisfactory, although there are inconsistencies in planning. Pupils are well cared for. The school has good links with parents and satisfactory links with the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **good** overall. This ensures that in most lessons pupils' learning and their achievement are **good**. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall, but underdeveloped in some important areas.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall, but particularly effective in Years 5 and 6;
- teaching is good in the nursery and the reception class; in the mixed age class there is insufficient focus on the needs of the reception children;
- teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well;
- there is a strong emphasis on inclusion; classroom assistants provide very good support in helping teachers ensure all pupils can participate fully in lessons;
- pupils' learning is good because teachers manage their lessons skilfully and purposefully;
- in a very small minority of lessons teachers take up too much time with their own talk or provide inappropriate activities for some children in a mixed age class;
- assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is underdeveloped;
- some teachers' marking does not always help pupils improve their work.

Commentary

17. Teaching in the school is good overall, although it ranges from very good to satisfactory. Teachers focus firmly both on pupils' personal development and improving standards. While this has a positive effect on pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school, it also ensures that their learning is good. The good quality of teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection. Teaching is now particularly strong in Years 5 and 6, in the nursery and in the reception class.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7 (17.5%)	27 (67.5%)	6 (15%)	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.

18. Teaching is good overall in the Foundation Stage. Some good and very good features were observed in individual sessions or lessons in both the nursery and the reception class. Teaching was satisfactory overall for children in the mixed reception and Year 1 class, although at times the reception children were not always provided with appropriate activities based on the Foundation Stage curriculum. This results in a lack of consistency in provision across the whole key stage. In the nursery, the teacher and nursery nurse plan and introduce a wide range of appropriate practical learning activities, which they exploit well to promote children's learning. As the children work on their chosen activities, all the staff are good at involving them in talk about what they are doing. At times they join in practical activities or play to good effect, extending children's learning well. Good classroom routines are established right from the start in the reception class and these ensure that children are able to learn. The skilful organisation of teaching and learning in this class enables the teacher and classroom assistant to work with different groups and individuals. The interaction between the teacher and the classroom assistant is very good and this also has a positive impact on children's learning. In the mixed age class, there is insufficient focus on the separate and different needs of the reception children, which too often results in them engaging in activities more appropriate for the Year 1 pupils.

19. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Most of them are able to draw on a good range of strategies to ensure that their classrooms are orderly. They respond positively to their pupils and are consistent in communicating what they expect. Teachers and classroom assistants are very good role models. Relationships between all the adults and pupils are good, ensuring that pupils' personal and academic needs are addressed.

20. A real strength of the school is the emphasis on inclusion. There are some pupils with very specific special educational needs, but both teachers and classroom assistants are very good at ensuring these pupils are fully enabled to participate and included in all the activities in the class.

21. There is a clear focus on learning which ensures most pupils make good progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge, so they feel confident in what they teach. Individual lessons are well planned and generally managed purposefully and with good pace. This ensures that pupils are usually fully engaged in the various activities

provided because they are kept focused on what they are intended to learn. Teachers are good at intervening in what pupils do with good questions, which both reinforce understanding and extend learning effectively. Teachers make very good use of their skilful classroom assistants, who provide very good support, contributing effectively to pupils' learning.

22. At times teaching does not meet this generally high standard. In a very small number of lessons, for example, teachers allow their introductions to go on for too long because they talk too much. This not only reduces the time available for pupils to work on the activities planned, but it also means they are denied opportunities to think for themselves or take responsibility for appropriate aspects of their own learning. At times too, the activities provided for some children in the mixed age classes are not always appropriate for the younger pupils, because of the emphasis given to meeting the needs of the older ones, and this impedes their progress.
23. Overall assessment is satisfactory. Good systems and procedures have recently been put in place, which ensure appropriate assessment in English, mathematics and science. This enables the school to track pupils' progress in these subjects effectively and to set targets for further improvement. This information also helps teachers plan to meet the needs of different groups in the class. Assessment in other subjects is underdeveloped however, so teachers and co-ordinators are less certain about how well pupils are doing in these subjects. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is sometimes ineffective, because the school's marking policy is not implemented consistently enough. As a result, some teachers provide insufficient guidance in their comments for pupils about what they could do to improve, develop or extend their work.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum. There is a **satisfactory** range of opportunities that enrich the curriculum. Accommodation and resources for learning are **satisfactory** overall and are used appropriately in helping pupils learn.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the nursery and the reception class is good, but in the mixed reception and Year 1 class, insufficient attention is paid to the Foundation Stage curriculum;
- curriculum planning is satisfactory overall, but it does not always contain sufficient detail to support teaching and learning effectively;
- the school has no whole curriculum map, so is unable to be certain that all pupils experience the curriculum to which they are entitled;
- the organisation of the timetable is not always effective in helping pupils develop their skills in some subjects;
- provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, ensuring the particular needs of individuals are met;
- the school has a skilful and well-deployed team of teaching assistants, who support pupils learning very well;
- pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Commentary

24. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The curriculum for most children in the Foundation Stage is good; the wide range of practical and play activities planned in the nursery and reception class contributes positively to these children's good learning. In the mixed reception and Year 1 class, however, insufficient attention is paid to the Foundation Stage curriculum. As a result, the activities planned for the younger children in the class are not always appropriate because of the emphasis given to the needs of the Year 1 pupils.
25. The curriculum for religious education has improved since the previous inspection and now meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Overall planning for individual subjects is satisfactory, although there are variations in the detail included. As a result, plans for some subjects are not as helpful in supporting teaching and learning as they could be.
26. There is no overall map of the whole curriculum, to enable teachers to track which pupils learn which things. This is a specific weakness because teachers are unable to ensure that pupils of the same age in the different mixed age classes all receive the curriculum to which they are entitled. Moreover, plans for the teaching of the mixed age classes do not take sufficient account of the learning objectives for each year group. As a result, pupils of the same age, but in different classes, do not necessarily get the same learning opportunities. The lack of such a whole-school curriculum map also limits the ability of teachers to identify how subjects can be linked in order to promote the efficient use of time, by using skills learnt in one subject to support work in another, and to make learning more coherent.
27. In striving to maintain and raise standards further in English, mathematics and science, which it has done successfully, the school has not given as much attention to other aspects of curriculum development as it might. Although there are appropriately planned opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in literacy, mathematics and ICT to other subjects, the school has yet to take a more integrated approach to planning in order to give pupils' learning added interest and meaning. The organisation of the timetable does not ensure that there is continuity to the development of pupils' skills in all subjects. For instance, Year 6 pupils do not have music lessons throughout the year. As music is a skills-based subject, pupils need regular opportunities to practise and improve their music-making skills if they are to become confident musicians.
28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is a very strong, shared commitment to doing the best for all pupils and ensuring they are all fully included in the activities provided for the class. This is effectively realised for all pupils with special educational needs. The special needs co-ordinator is enthusiastic and very well informed and works closely with colleagues to ensure timely, matched provision. Parents and pupils are fully involved at all stages, including the regular reviews. The good liaison with support agencies ensures that where pupils receive statements of need they receive the additional support to which they are entitled. Pupils' individual education plans are of good quality and contain appropriate, short-term targets. These provide effective guidance for teachers' planning to support pupils' academic and personal development. Pupils are given very effective help

inside and outside the classroom by a highly motivated and skilled team of support staff, who work closely with teachers to ensure that individual needs are met. The very good relationships between teaching assistants and pupils motivate pupils to work hard to improve their learning. However, in some whole-class lessons, the needs of pupils with special educational needs are not fully met because teachers do not always plan work that is accessible when pupils do not have the support of a teaching assistant.

29. The school has a strong team of well-trained teaching assistants. They have a very good understanding of their role and work very well with teachers throughout the school in supporting individual pupils as well as groups within the class. They build very good relationships with pupils and give very good support to pupils of differing abilities. They help to ensure that all pupils, in particular pupils with special educational needs, have appropriate access to the curriculum, are fully included in class activities and make similar progress to their peers.
30. The school places a high priority on preparing Year 6 pupils for their move to secondary school. The residential visit for these pupils focuses strongly on pupils' personal growth and rising to personal challenges. This is good preparation for coping with the challenges of secondary school. The school has established some good links with local secondary schools and pupils undertake a number of planned linked units of work in literacy and mathematics, which help to prepare them for the next stage of their learning. Pupils also visit to become familiar with the schools and meet tutors. In addition they sometimes take part in other activities, such as investigative work in science. As a result, pupils are well prepared for this big step in their lives.

Care, guidance and support

The school has **good** procedures for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety, which ensure pupils are secure and looked after well. It provides pupils with **good** support and involves them well in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good arrangements ensure that pupils are well cared for in a healthy and safe environment;
- pupils feel happy and secure at school because relationships are strong and support for them is good;
- there are good arrangements to help pupils new to the school to settle quickly and happily;
- there is a lack of monitoring of pupils' personal development, but there are good systems in place to respond to all their needs.

Commentary

31. The school has good procedures in place to ensure pupils' health and safety. All equipment is checked and tested and any concerns are dealt with very efficiently. Staff are well trained in first aid and minor injuries are dealt with in a professional and kindly way; all such incidents are well recorded and parents contacted as appropriate. The daily standard of maintenance is high; as a result pupils respect the property.
32. The strong relationships and good support of all adults ensure that pupils feel happy and secure at the school. They are very aware that any concerns they may have are dealt with effectively. Child protection procedures are good. Contacts are well maintained with a good range of appropriate support agencies, ensuring good systems are in place to support all pupils. Attendance is well monitored; parents may be given an early first day telephone call to ensure that all pupils are accounted for on a daily basis. Parents expressed their whole-hearted approval of the support provided to their children. The school is a happy place to which parents say their children enjoy coming. Their trust is well founded.
33. The procedures to help the youngest children settle into school are good and parents are very pleased with the arrangements. Parents visit the school before their children start and they are given good advice about how to help their children settle at school. Older pupils have a thoughtful introduction to their new school life. The allocation of a peer buddy helps them to feel welcomed and well supported. Pupils with special educational needs have equal opportunities to learn, because they are well supported.
34. While the school has no formal way of monitoring pupils' personal development, it has good systems in place to respond well to the needs of any pupil. These include a strong personal and social development programme and pupil questionnaires set on an annual basis, through which their concerns and views are sought.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents and a **satisfactory** partnership with the local community. There are **good** links with other local schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links with parents which contribute well to pupils' learning;
- valuable activities support pupils' developing understanding of their role as citizens in the community;
- good links with other local schools are supporting curriculum development;
- parents are well informed about events in school; information about weekly activities in the Foundation Stage is very good.

Commentary

35. The school values its good links with parents and seeks ways to enable them to be more fully involved and aware of the needs of the school and their children. An

effective way of cementing this partnership is through the surgeries held prior to the annual parents' meeting with governors. Questionnaires are also sent to parents annually, and their views are welcomed and acted on appropriately. A few parents regularly attend assemblies held on Wednesday and Friday, to support and encourage their children. Parents regularly supervise homework and home reading. Overall there are good links, which contribute effectively to pupils' learning.

36. The school has satisfactory links with the local community. Local church leaders provide a very valuable link and are frequent visitors to assemblies. The school choir has sung at the nearby retired persons home and at the Methodist Church lunch club; harvest gifts are distributed to local needy or retired persons. Such activities are effective in helping the school build a good relationship with the local community and in helping pupils understand their role as citizens in the community.
37. The school has good links with some other local schools. For example, a learning mentor visits from one school to work with Year 6 pupils before transfer to secondary school. There are strong links with a nearby Beacon school, providing good support for developing the curriculum in mathematics and science. A most valuable environmental awareness project has been well developed with this school in the Eco-schools project. Good arrangements have been effectively established for the transfer to secondary school, for which parents have a good choice.
38. The school values good relationships and contact with parents very highly; a good range of letters and newsletters is sent home so parents are well informed. The information about learning activities which is sent home weekly for parents of children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Pupils' annual reports of progress are comprehensive, and attendance at open evenings in the autumn and spring terms is very high. Parents are interested in giving full support to their children, and this effectively helps their learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher provides **good** leadership.

Governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good leadership, ensuring a strong sense of purpose so all staff strive for continuous improvement, creating an effective climate for learning in which all children can succeed;
- leadership and management of key subjects and areas of learning are good;
- governance of the school has improved well under the strong leadership of an enthusiastic and well-informed chair of governors;
- the school's commitment to inclusion, promotion of equal opportunities and concern for the needs of all individuals are very good;
- there are clear links between allocation of resources and defined educational priorities, and financial control and administrative procedures are effective;
- although the management of assessment is overall satisfactory there are areas needing development.

Commentary

39. The headteacher provides good leadership. She has a clear vision for the development of the school which she communicates well to others. Part of this vision entails ensuring that pupils develop a sound awareness of the world in which they live and a sense of responsibility towards all who live in it. In this endeavour she has the enthusiastic support of governors. Largely as a result of her initiative the school has well-developed links with schools and other institutions in Namibia and Romania and these are effectively used to broaden pupils' personal development and knowledge. She has the full confidence of parents, teachers, other staff and governors. She strives hard to ensure that all children fully enjoy the benefits the school offers. She has established a strong sense of purpose and a determination to succeed which are reflected in a good sense of teamwork and commitment from all adults in the school.
40. Governance of the school was a concern at the time of the last inspection. It has improved considerably since then and is now satisfactory. The chairperson, who is knowledgeable, experienced in school governance and committed to school improvement, leads them well. Governors have satisfactory monitoring procedures in place. As a result they have a sound picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and so play a satisfactory and informed role in the strategic management of the school and in shaping its future. They concern themselves with standards and they keep themselves updated with curriculum developments. They support the headteacher and her senior staff well.
41. Management is good. The recent prolonged absence of the headteacher has not disrupted the smooth running of the school. Other key staff lead and manage their respective subjects and areas well. Children entering school get a good start to school life as a result of the well-led and managed provision in the Foundation Stage. Under the good leadership of the co-ordinator the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils' needs are well catered for through well-constructed individual education plans. They receive effective support in classrooms from skilful classroom assistants and this enables them to participate purposefully in all classroom activities and they achieve well. English and mathematics are led and managed well with the result that standards in these two areas are currently rising after falling back somewhat in 2003. Science is led and managed very well and standards in this subject are good throughout the school.
42. The headteacher has ensured that the school is very caring school and sets a high priority on enabling all pupils to participate in all activities as fully as possible. All staff want all children to do well. This has a positive impact on pupils' achievement, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and ensures that Hey with Zion is a very inclusive school.
43. While there are good systems and procedures for assessment in English, mathematics and science, they are insufficiently robust in other subjects, particularly in religious education, ICT, geography, history and music. This means that teachers are not always as aware as they could be of the progress their pupils are making,

because it cannot be monitored effectively. When the pace of pupils' learning dips, in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, it is not always immediately apparent and so teachers are not always in a position to take appropriate action to get learning back on track.

44. Financial management is good. The chair of governors has a good grasp of finances and funding issues. The principles of best value are clearly understood and soundly applied and all spending is effectively monitored and controlled. The school gives pupils a good quality of education and provides good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	584 509
Total expenditure	591 916
Expenditure per pupil	1885

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	29 921
Balance carried forward to the next	22 514

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

45. At the time of the inspection, children had been in the nursery for only a short time. Some children had attended on few occasions because of the school's policy of accepting children on both a full-time and part-time basis. The situation was similar with regard to children in the reception classes. Consequently, judgements on provision in each area of learning are based partly on observations of children currently in the nursery and classes with reception children, and also on a careful scrutiny of samples of the previous year's work, of teachers' planning and records, and of work on display.
46. Children enter the nursery with prior attainment that is slightly below average overall, although there is a wide spread of ability. In some areas of learning, attainment is not as high as in others. There is also some indication that attainment on entry is not as high as it has been in the past. By the time they enter Year 1, however, the majority of children have made good progress and are working at expected levels in all areas of learning, indicating good achievement overall.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage because teaching and the opportunities provided are good;
- children settle very effectively into the nursery because the excellent relationships quickly established with the staff ensure that they feel safe and secure;
- self-confidence and independence are effectively promoted;
- very good support for children with special educational needs ensures they are fully included in all class activities;
- in the mixed age class the specific needs of the reception children are not always addressed;
- reception age children concentrate well and are able to sustain their interest for longer.

Commentary

47. Children make good progress in this area of learning throughout the Foundation Stage because teaching is consistently good and a well-planned range of activities ensures they learn to share, co-operate and play confidently with others. As a result achievement is good, with the majority of children achieving the goals they are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1.
48. In the nursery, all the staff are very skilled at building relationships with the children, enabling them to settle quickly. Very friendly and positive interaction with the adults is effective in ensuring children feel safe and secure. Relationships are excellent, so

children have fun and, as a result, enjoy learning. The teacher, nursery nurse and other classroom assistants all work hard to promote children's self confidence and independence, with their effective management of activities and resources, for example. As a result, children develop the skills and confidence to work independently. They are well behaved and able to share resources fairly and take turns. They co-operate well with each other in the different activities set up for them and they learn to show respect for others' thoughts and ideas and respond to their feelings. Adults are very good role models and this has a positive impact on children's social development.

49. In the reception class and the mixed-age reception and Year 1 class, learning to share, take turns and co-operate with others are successfully reinforced. Children have good opportunities to work both individually and with others and they interact confidently with each other and adults. Very good support for children with special educational needs ensures they are fully included in all class activities. In the mixed-age class, the needs of the reception children are not always fully met because of the focus on the needs of the Year 1 pupils and at times this impedes their development. Overall, however, reception age children show they can concentrate well on the various activities provided and sustain their interest for longer. As a result children's learning is good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's learning is good, with the majority reaching the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception;
- good opportunities are provided to develop children's speaking, so by the end of reception the majority of children communicate confidently;
- sometimes too much teacher talk limits children's contributions to discussions;
- a good variety of opportunities are provided to stimulate children's interest in writing;
- there is good provision for developing children's reading, including the display of language throughout both nursery and reception.

Commentary

50. Children enter the nursery with broadly average language and communication skills overall, although some children have significant difficulties in this area. Children's specific needs are met well, with a good range of opportunities provided to develop their skills. Throughout the Foundation Stage teaching is good. Teachers, the nursery nurse and classroom assistants all give high priority to extending children's language skills. This ensures children's learning is good and enables the majority to achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. This represents good achievement.
51. The teacher and nursery nurse in the nursery reinforce good routines for speaking and listening right from the start so that children learn how to listen to each other and take turns in speaking. They provide good opportunities for children to speak

and are skilful in engaging them in discussion about what they do. Children respond well, although sometimes too much teacher talk can limit their opportunities to contribute. Generally, however, the effectiveness of the interaction with adults gives children confidence. By the time they are in reception most children speak confidently. Teachers and classroom assistants provide good opportunities to engage children in discussions both in larger groups and as they interact with them individually. They use questions effectively to engage children in talking. By the time they enter Year 1 most children can speak confidently, take turns in speaking and listening and generally communicate effectively with adults and each other.

52. A good range of activities across the Foundation Stage effectively promotes the development of children's writing. In the nursery children have access to a range of writing equipment in the writing area. Adults join in effectively to stimulate interest and encourage them to make marks as an introduction to writing. In the reception class, children have good opportunities for mark making, in the role-play 'Baby Clinic' for example, where they can write lists, make notes or complete a hospital visit card. Such opportunities are effective in helping children develop their skills.
53. In the nursery, the teacher and nursery nurse use a variety of means to help children learn letter sounds, through listening and responding to stories, for example, or sharing a book or singing action songs. These are effective in helping children learn some basic sounds and introducing them to some simple words. Throughout the Foundation Stage good opportunities are created to display language, which helps children recognise appropriate words and also stimulates their interest. In reception, for example, words about the past are displayed with photographs, to encourage children to think about things that have happened to them in the past. Words displayed, such as those linked to the story *This is the bear on a scary night*, are effective in making children think about a story they have heard. Children enjoy stories and handle books appropriately. At times, books are effectively displayed to support children's learning, such as those about parts of the body in the Baby Clinic role-play, but generally more could be made of this strategy.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures children's learning is good;
- children make good progress in this area of their learning, and achievement is good;
- teachers provide a good range of practical activities which supports children's learning effectively;
- in reception teachers and classroom assistants promote children's understanding of appropriate mathematical vocabulary well.

Commentary

54. Teaching is good throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers, the nursery nurse and classroom assistants all make good use of a variety of practical activities to promote children's mathematical development. As a result children's learning is good so that

the majority achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception and some exceed them. This represents good achievement.

55. The teacher and nursery nurse in the nursery provide a good range of practical activities to promote and reinforce children's skills in counting and ordering numbers. This contributes to the good progress children make. By the time children reach reception, most of them recognise common flat shapes and know their names. Most can recognise groups of objects with more or fewer objects and can order numbers up to 10. As they play in the sand, children describe the position of toys as behind or in front and under or above.

56. In the classes with reception age children, a range of practical activities and good use of number lines reinforce understanding of number, counting and order effectively. In the reception and Year 1 class a good display, *I can count to 10*, and number strings in 1s and 10s also reinforce children's counting effectively. Good displays of questions, such as *How many conkers can you see?* effectively encourage children to count. Very good displays of labelled flat and solid shapes, which they can handle, help children to recognise them and learn their names.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in this area of learning because teaching is good;
- children manipulate tools well in the nursery;
- in the nursery the good opportunities children have to work with the computers enable them to develop their ICT skills;
- the use of a theme around which to organise a variety of activities is effective in extending children's learning.

Commentary

57. Throughout the Foundation Stage children enjoy a good range of practical activities to learn about their world. Good teaching ensures children's learning is good and enables them to make good progress. Achievement is good, with the majority of children achieving the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception.
58. Children in the nursery enjoy a range of activities which promotes their learning in this area effectively. They manipulate the tools well, as they distribute pasta for example, or cut it. They are able to manipulate small models well, such as when they set out scenes for their imaginary play with the tractors. A good display of photographs helps children develop understanding of the roles of different adults in the school. Visitors to school, such as the firemen with their fire engine, provide an excellent stimulus to learning, which children pursue in a variety of ways. Children in the nursery have good opportunities to work with the computers, effectively developing mouse control as they access and work with various programs. As a result, their ICT skills are developing well.
59. In reception, children continue to develop the knowledge and understanding of the world because very good opportunities are provided for them. The organisation of teaching and learning around the theme of the book *Funnybones* is effective in helping children learn about the human body and links well with activities which promote their understanding in other areas of learning. The visit of a mother and her new baby provided a very good opportunity for children to ask questions which extended the work on this theme and linked effectively to work planned for children in the role-play. Teachers make good use of books to stimulate children's interest and support their learning by providing opportunities for them to find things out for themselves.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities to work with a variety of tools in both the nursery and reception, enabling children to develop their skills effectively;

- the outdoor area is used effectively to promote children's learning, although more opportunities could be provided for reception children in the mixed age class;
- at times, reception children are moved inappropriately into more formal physical education lessons, which limit opportunities to explore movement for themselves.

Commentary

60. Children's learning and their achievement are good in this area because teaching is good. In the nursery, children have good opportunities to develop their skills in manipulating equipment such as writing and drawing pencils, paint brushes and scissors. Children continue to develop these skills effectively in reception, so that by the time they enter Year 1, the majority have reached the goals they are expected to achieve.
61. In the nursery children use the available tools confidently as they work with different media. When working outside they have good opportunities to move, climb, ride and balance, and many of them show a good level of confidence as they steer the bikes, scooters and cars around obstacles. Indoors there is a good range of soft play equipment which is helping children develop an appropriate awareness of space and enabling them to learn to control their own bodies in various situations. This contributes effectively to children's learning.
62. Reception children have a good range of opportunities to extend their skills with the various tools and equipment available in the classroom. These are effective in helping them make progress in developing their hand and eye co-ordination. Children in reception also have access to the outdoor area, although more opportunities could be created for reception children in the mixed age class to access the outdoor area. At times, however, there is a tendency to push them on to more formal lessons in physical education in the hall, with too little opportunity for children to explore space, direction, speed and balance for themselves.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although children make satisfactory progress, their achievement is not as good as in other areas of their learning;
- in both the nursery and reception children enjoy the range of activities provided for them, but they would benefit from more of these.

Commentary

63. Although it was not possible to observe many activities planned in this area of learning, teaching is satisfactory overall. Children's learning is satisfactory, but they do not make as much progress in this area of learning. Achievement is satisfactory and so not as good as it is in other areas of learning.

64. Teachers plan an appropriate variety of activities, which stimulate children's imagination and which they enjoy. As a result they make appropriate progress towards the goals they are expected to achieve. Children in the nursery enjoy working with paint, as in their large-scale paintings of a fire engine after the visit of the fire service to the school. They enjoy the role-play opportunities they have, using the props provided to support their play effectively with the tent, for example. These stimulate good interaction as children work together in pairs or small groups. The teacher and nursery nurse provide good opportunities for children to sing simple songs and rhymes, which they enjoy, and these also contribute to their creative development.

65. In reception, there is also a satisfactory range of opportunities provided for children to make progress in this area of their learning, but by the time they enter Year 1, fewer children have achieved the goals they are expected to reach than in other areas of their learning. Children concentrate well as they work at their individual pictures and they show they can use the available equipment appropriately. In both the nursery and reception, children enjoy working with the sand or water, which they use imaginatively, especially when they use some of the equipment provided for them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in reading and writing by the end of Year 2, representing good achievement at this stage;
- pupils have good opportunities to improve their writing skills;
- good teaching is contributing positively to raising standards;
- pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and show a keen interest in reading;
- the accommodation for the library is unsatisfactory and limits opportunities for pupils to use and extend their library skills;
- good subject leadership and management have brought about some good improvements and standards are rising;
- ICT is used satisfactorily to support work in English, but pupils do not use the classroom computers well enough as a tool for learning.

Commentary

66. Standards have risen over the last year in both Year 2 and Year 6. Those indicated in the most recent national tests at the end of Year 2 for reading and writing are higher than achieved in the year of the previous inspection. They are now above average, representing good achievement. Standards in Year 6 are beginning to rise following significant slippage in 2003 and are now average overall and achievement is satisfactory. In addition to more pupils reaching the expected national standard, more are achieving the higher level. This is because staffing issues have been addressed following a period of instability, which affected the consistency of pupils' progress.
67. There is a strong emphasis on improving pupils' writing and teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to write in a wide variety of contexts in English lessons and in other subjects such as science. From talking about the different styles well-known authors adopt and how they use words and phrases to create interest and say what they mean, pupils learn to adapt their own writing well for different purposes. As a result pupils make good progress in the development of their writing skills and they use language well for description and to create mood. For example, a Year 6 pupil wrote, "Then I came to a strange rock formation, which the closer I got, the more mystical it became."
68. Overall teaching is good. Lessons have a clear focus, which is shared with pupils so that they know what they are to learn. Teaching is now particularly good in Years 5 and 6, where good questioning and well-led discussions develop pupils' understanding of the different texts and writing devices. These teachers constantly remind pupils of what they already know and how to use this knowledge in their work. Prompt sheets on these skills support pupils well when they work independently and when evaluating their own and each other's efforts. As a result, these pupils make very good progress in developing the skills of writing.

69. Good assessment procedures mean that teachers are clear about what pupils already know and they use this information to group pupils within the class and to provide additional support where necessary. However, the quality of teachers' planning and marking is variable. Where good, pupils' learning is carefully structured so that skills are built systemically. Some planning is rather sketchy, however, and does not take sufficient account of how pupils learn or identify what each group is expected to learn or do. Most pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. Work is adapted to suit their needs, as appropriate, and well-deployed support assistants ensure that they can do it. Where marking is good, teachers make reference to pupils' achievement in relation to the aims of the lesson and comment on how they can improve.
70. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading. They are motivated by teachers' good choice of texts that appeal to both boys and girls. Pupils of all attainment levels can talk well about their favourite books or authors. Guided reading and opportunities for individual reading are well organised. Guided reading groups make good progress in their understanding because teachers ask probing questions to extend pupils' comprehension skills. However, the time could be used more effectively in the reading sessions if more groups were set tasks which focused upon the development of specific reading skills.
71. The school does not have enough space to set up an effective working library. The lack of opportunity for pupils to browse through a wide range of books, in particular non-fiction, shows in pupils' choice of reading matter. Few choose to read non-fiction or poetry. However, pupils are taught library skills, which they use effectively for research, although many do not know how to use the public library's computerised system for finding and locating books.
72. The effective leadership and management have brought about, with the support of colleagues, rising standards and good achievement. This is because national test results are analysed, and standards of teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated in order to identify areas for improvement. New development targets are successfully addressed. For example, pupils' handwriting and presentation, identified as a weakness in the last inspection report, have improved. Although pupils' speaking and listening skills are average overall, the school is taking steps to improve pupils' oracy skills further. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to extend these skills, but are not yet identifying them consistently in their lesson plans.
73. Computers are used for word processing, but pupils do not readily go to the classroom computers to help them with their writing, for example to check spellings or grammar. They do not decide for themselves that a particular piece of writing, such as a report or formal letter, might be better presented on computer.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

74. Reading and writing are used well to support learning in other subjects and pupils' competence in them is good enough to impact positively on standards of written work in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils adapt their report writing skills well when writing up investigations in science, and label things accurately in design and technology. When working with computers they make effective use of

their writing skills for a variety of purposes, including word processing. Good reading skills enable pupils of all ages to research topics on the internet and to find information in books, locating it quickly and easily because they know how to use the 'contents' and 'index' pages.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well;
- teaching is consistently good throughout the school and especially strong in Years 5 and 6;
- pupils' recall of mathematical facts is good;
- the subject is well led and managed;
- assessment procedures are not sufficiently robust;
- pupils enjoy mathematics and have good attitudes to their learning;
- insufficient opportunities are given to pupils to use their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

75. Currently pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are attaining standards that are above the national average in all areas of mathematics. All pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching. Teachers have a good understanding of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy, resulting in teaching throughout the school being at least good. Strengths of teaching include:
- interesting teaching which motivates pupils;
 - careful lesson planning which meets all pupils' learning needs and leads to effective learning;
 - good questioning of pupils, making sure they understand;
 - effective support being given to pupils with special educational needs enabling them to make at least as much progress as the other pupils.
76. Teaching is lively and interesting so pupils enjoy mathematics sessions and they are well motivated. There is a good pace to lessons with all pupils, including the higher attainers, being set appropriately challenging tasks. They respond enthusiastically and display good attitudes to learning. Behaviour in classes is good. This good behaviour, children's good attitudes to work and their enthusiasm make a significant contribution to the good progress they make. Teachers in Year 5 and 6 have very high expectations of pupils. In these classes the level of challenge is high and pupils respond enthusiastically. These pupils are currently making very good gains in learning. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and effective and informed help in classrooms, enabling them to fully participate in all given activities and to make good gains in learning.
77. Throughout the school pupils have good recall of appropriate mathematical facts which they apply well in problem solving. This helps support learning well by hastening its pace. For example, when studying three-dimensional shapes, Year 1 pupils use their knowledge of the names and properties of two-dimensional shapes to describe three-dimensional shapes that are unfamiliar to them. In studying fraction equivalence, Year 5 pupils use their good knowledge of multiplication tables to respond quickly and correctly to the teacher's challenging questions.
78. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The good provision that was evident at the previous inspection has been strengthened. Monitoring of teaching is effective and having a positive impact on it, improving its quality. As a result all teaching seen during this inspection was at least good, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Standards of pupils' attainment fell in 2003 but have improved considerably since then. Although there are effective assessment procedures in place, they are currently under review. The analysis of assessment data is being used effectively to establish where there are gaps in the learning of different groups of pupils. This assessment information is used effectively to set individual targets for improvement in order to challenge pupils and to give them a good indication of how successful they are being as learners. It is not being used effectively, however, to track individual pupils' progress over periods of time shorter than a year in order to spot those important occasions when slower progress may give cause for concern.

Mathematics across the curriculum

79. Pupils sometimes use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and this helps them to develop an appreciation of the practical uses of mathematical skills. For example, pupils take measurements in science, and they use graphs and tables to record data in geography and science. Such opportunities tend to occur incidentally and not as a result of systematic planning. There is no planned strategy for pupils to use their mathematical skills and knowledge in other curriculum areas. Such a strategy would extend the opportunities for pupils to use their skills in this way.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in both key stages attain good standards;
- teaching overall is good and enables pupils to achieve well; it is especially strong in Year 6;
- pupils with special educational needs are supported well in classrooms and achieve well;
- the subject is very well led and managed;
- the use of ICT to support teaching and learning is not being fully exploited.

Commentary

80. Current standards of attainment are above average in all areas of science in both Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is good. As a result of a recent focus on investigative work throughout the school pupils demonstrate good investigative skills. For example, Year 2 pupils are encouraged to look closely and to observe carefully when experimenting and to record their findings systematically. When appropriate they use their mathematical skills in recording their findings; for example, when studying taste properties of a range of foods they fill in a simple chart. Pupils in Year 6 have good knowledge of the way blood circulates around the body. They also have a good understanding of the importance of the major body organs such as the heart and lungs and the part they play in keeping us healthy.
81. Throughout the school teaching is good and in Year 6 it is very strong. The Year 6 teacher is also the subject co-ordinator. Her teaching is exciting and well informed with the result that her pupils are very well motivated and are currently making very good learning gains. Under her management the subject has improved well since the previous inspection. There has been improvement in teachers' planning, so that all pupils are now being appropriately challenged. This has ensured that higher attaining pupils are achieving well. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support in classrooms and this enables them all to fully participate in all activities and subsequently make good learning gains and achieve well. The recent organisation of a science club for older pupils is effective in extending the learning of those who wish to further develop their interest in the subject. The strong focus on investigative work is fostering an appropriate inquisitiveness among pupils. As a result, levels of engagement in learning during lessons are good. Pupils are enthusiastic to learn and work well together.
82. The co-ordinator has a strong determination to improve the subject further. To this end she is working to a well-defined action plan. Currently satisfactory use is being made of ICT to support learning and teaching, although the range of this support is limited. For example, when studying change in materials over time as when ice melts in water, pupils measure temperature changes by hand and do not have the experience of using sensors attached to the computer. When studying sound the older pupils do not use sensors to measure sound intensity. As a result their understanding of the power of ICT in its use in scientific investigation is not as

developed as it could be. The school is aware of this omission and its possible remedy features in the science action plan.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy ICT and have good attitudes to learning;
- there has been good recent improvement in resources and staff expertise;
- there are no procedures for assessing how well pupils are learning;
- pupils do not have enough opportunities to use ICT to support their day-to-day learning in other subjects.

Commentary

83. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good, reflecting the effectiveness of teaching. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected for their age and similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Although pupils' progress in the lessons seen was generally good, their achievement overall is satisfactory. This is because, until recently, planning for pupils' learning has not reflected the needs of pupils in the mixed aged classes and so progress has not been consistent from year to year. In addition, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use ICT as a tool to monitor external events. This was identified in the previous inspection report as an aspect of pupils' learning that was less well developed. Pupils enjoy the activities and apply themselves well to the tasks. During lessons, pupils of all abilities work closely together. They discuss the tasks enthusiastically, sharing ideas and supporting one another very well. They listen carefully to teachers and support staff, readily accepting their support and advice. This contributes to their progress and by Year 2 pupils confidently use ICT to present their ideas. They choose and change font and size and use different drawing tools to create images to illustrate their work. Year 6 pupils build on their previous learning and show satisfactory skills in using word-processing and desktop publishing programs, and the Internet for research.
84. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is good overall. Teachers are successfully developing their competence and confidence through good support and training. They give clear explanations and demonstrations so that most pupils approach new learning confidently. This contributes well to the progress they make in lessons. Improvement also stems from better resources, in particular the installation of a computer suite with additional computers and an interactive whiteboard. Although the computer suite is small and rather cramped teachers use it effectively and the resources enable lessons to have a good balance of direct teaching and hands-on experience. Teachers ensure that adult support is targeted where needed so that pupils of all abilities increase their skills. The technician and support assistants make a positive contribution to the pupils' learning. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively, making an effective contribution to pupils' personal and social development.
85. Currently, there are no procedures for assessing pupils' learning and attainment. This means that teachers do not have the information they need to match tasks to pupils' differing needs as accurately as they should. This slows progress for some pupils because they are not always challenged at the right level. However, the school, is

aware that some pupils do not have access to a computer outside school so have set up a clubs for these pupils in Year 2 and 6 to give them more practice. This is helping to improve their confidence and skills.

86. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear vision for developing provision in the subject. In a short time she has set about improving planning so that there is better continuity in pupils' learning. She is evaluating the provision in order to draw up a more focused development plan. As yet there is no monitoring of teaching and learning. Therefore the school does not have a clear or secure picture of pupils' standards and achievement in all year groups.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

87. This is satisfactory and although the pupils have sound computer skills these could be put to greater use in other subjects. The range of activities in ICT lessons in the computer suite provides effective opportunities for pupils to contribute to their work across a range of subjects. For example, they used ICT to search for information in history and science, and used graphics programs to enhance their learning in art and design. Computers situated in classrooms, as opposed to those located in the suite, are not used often enough during ordinary lessons. This is preventing pupils from practising the skills learnt in the computer suite. As a result, pupils do not use the computer as another tool to aid learning, like a pen or a book.

HUMANITIES

88. It was possible to observe only a very small number of lessons in history and none in geography during the inspection. Consequently there was insufficient evidence to support a judgement about provision in these subjects.
89. In **history**, the evidence in pupils' completed work indicates that standards are broadly in line with those expected and sometimes better, throughout the school. This reflects the picture reported in the previous inspection. Pupils are developing their understanding of chronology through the use of timelines of various kinds, and of change as they compare things past and present. They are developing a sound knowledge of the various historical topics they study. Good use of historical sources supports pupils' learning effectively, like the artefacts and photographs in their work on the Victorians and maps in their study of the Romans. Very good opportunities are created for pupils to learn about local history from visits, such as that to Quarry Bank recently. These effectively stimulate pupils' interest in history, and, along with the good teaching they receive, create a genuine excitement in learning about the past.
90. In **geography**, the scrutiny of pupils' earlier completed work indicates that all aspects of the curriculum are covered. Teaching ensures that pupils have good opportunities to study both the local area and the wider world. At times good links are made between the study of geographical and historical topics, such as in the work on settlements. Pupils learn about their immediate environment, with some valuable work on maps, and they compare it with a village in India.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement in provision for religious education since the previous inspection;
- well-informed teaching gives pupils sound knowledge of some major world faiths;
- teachers use resources well and this enhances learning;
- learning in religious education contributes positively to pupils' personal development;
- pupils' learning is not assessed regularly;
- pupils make good use of their writing skills in lessons.

Commentary

91. At the time of the last inspection religious education was an area of concern. Standards were below expectations and resources for teaching were inadequate. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 now are attaining the expected standards as determined in the locally agreed syllabus; achievement is satisfactory. The curriculum is sound and meets the requirements of this syllabus. However, a new agreed syllabus has recently been introduced into local schools and the school is aware of the need to revise both its syllabus and its policy to bring it fully in line with new requirements.
92. Throughout the school pupils effectively learn about the main religious traditions and faiths and the impact these have on people's lives, in both the past and the present. Their study of Christianity, Judaism and Islam makes a good contribution to cultural development. Much of this study follows particular themes. For example, in Year 2 pupils learn about how children are sometimes initiated into a particular faith, such as in a Christian baptism. This is made particularly interesting for them and their learning is good when they role-play an infant baptism in the classroom. Year 6 pupils learn about the concept of prayer and the part prayer plays in worship in different faiths. They study the words and meaning of the Lord's Prayer and its place within the Christian tradition and they also study Islamic prayer traditions.
93. Teaching is good throughout the school. Well-informed teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' understanding and appreciation of the main faiths. Teachers effectively make good use of a range of resources and artefacts to make the subject interesting and to motivate and enthuse pupils. For example, in a mixed age class of Year 4 and 5 pupils the teacher showed pupils a range of articles used by Jewish families in their devotions. This immediately raised the interest level. She engendered even more interest when she read out a Hebrew prayer in a language totally unfamiliar to all the pupils present and written in a script which was also unfamiliar. Pupils have been taught to respect other customs and traditions. When they are introduced to unfamiliar things in lessons, they respond with considerable interest, sensitivity and reverence. Such moments make a good contribution to the development of their spiritual awareness. Year 1 pupils have a growing awareness of differences and similarities in the Christian and Islamic faiths which they demonstrated well in a lesson in their responses to some challenging questions from the well-informed class teacher. A strong feature of this lesson was the very effective

support given by two teaching assistants to pupils with special needs, enabling these pupils to participate fully and purposefully in all activities

94. Pupils are given good opportunity to use their writing skills in religious education. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils write interesting personal prayers of thanksgiving and Year 6 pupils write meaningful prayers for younger children based on their understanding of the Lord's Prayer and prayers that are part of the Islamic prayer tradition.
95. The co-ordinator has been appointed only recently, but already has plans to improve the subject further. To this end an appropriate action plan is in place. In this the school acknowledges the need to introduce assessment procedures which will allow it to monitor standards much more effectively by systematically measuring individual pupils' learning and progress.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

96. It was possible to observe only one lesson in art and design and no lessons in design and technology, music or physical education during the inspection. Consequently there was insufficient evidence to support a judgement about provision in these subjects.
97. The **art and design** curriculum gives pupils experience of working with a broad range of materials. Their drawing and painting are informed by the study of the different styles and techniques used by well-known artists, such as Paul Klee and Troy Hudson. Examples of work displayed around the school indicate that, in general, pupils achieve standards in line with expectations for their age. Pupils make some use of sketchbooks when practising skills and techniques, but the range could be extended so that pupils investigate a wider range of ideas and materials to inform their work. This would also provide information for assessment, which is not yet in place, and a helpful picture of how pupils' thinking and image-making develop during their time at the school.
98. In **design and technology**, teachers' planning is based on the national guidance and indicates that pupils have opportunities to practise the appropriate range of skills, and design and make their own products. Pupils' designs are clearly labelled and are informed by research and evaluation of made products.
99. In **music**, planning for the development of pupils' skills is satisfactory. However, pupils in Year 6 do not have regular music lessons throughout the year and this limits the progress they could make in the development of their skills. Throughout the school pupils have suitable opportunities to sing and play instruments through performance and composing, and to listen to music, including, on occasion, live performances from musicians, for example an African drumming group. Pupils can extend their skills by joining the choirs or learning a musical instrument. Take-up of these opportunities is very good and pupils regularly take part in performances in school and in the local community.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

100. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is well promoted across the curriculum and in separate lessons. Too few lessons were seen, however, to judge provision or teaching overall. In the two lessons seen, teaching was good and enabled pupils to make good progress in developing their understanding of what makes a good friend. The work in PSHCE is often closely linked to provision for religious education.
101. Pupils develop an understanding of themselves in relation to the larger world in which they live through a new programme of study introduced largely by the headteacher with the full support of the governing body. Responding to a recent upsurge in community strife the school endeavours to build on pupils' tolerance and understanding of all peoples from wherever they originate. On occasion the whole school community works and learn together about peoples and their cultures and ways of life. The school has well-developed links with schools and other institutions in Namibia and Romania; pupils are able to exchange their art work with pupils from a school in Romania, for example. In this way they learn that there are similarities and differences in the way they and their counterparts perceive the world around them. Sometimes the whole school works together on a topic theme. For example, in a week of intensive study the pupils enjoyed learning about African art, dance and music. They began to realise that not all art and music is identical to that found in western culture but that it can still be appreciated and enjoyed by all. Year 6 pupils have learned that water is a very precious commodity in Africa and that people there do not take it as much for granted as perhaps they themselves do. This initiative is beginning to broaden their perspectives and give them a greater appreciation of the way others live in other parts of the world. It is also effectively expanding their definition of citizenship to one that encompasses the entire world.

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	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	3
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	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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