

INSPECTION REPORT

KILNHURST ST THOMAS' CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kilnhurst, Mexborough

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique reference number: 106928

Headteacher: Mr G Fellows

Lead inspector: Dr J N Thorp

Dates of inspection: 28th February – 2nd March 2005

Inspection number: 267137

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: 5 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 129

School address: Meadow View Road
Kilnhurst
Mexborough
South Yorkshire
Postcode: S64 5UA

Telephone number: 01709 570297
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of Mr J Rew
governors:

Date of previous April 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Kilnhurst St Thomas' CE Primary School is located in Kilnhurst, about a mile from the centre of Swinton. The school is smaller than average. At the time of the inspection there were 117 pupils in Years 1 to 6 and 12 children in the reception class, attending full-time. Most children come from the surrounding area. The birth rate is falling however, and the number of pupils on roll is reducing. There is also some mobility of pupils. The area around the school displays the characteristics of socio-economic disadvantage, with around 27 per cent of children eligible for a free school meal, which is above average compared with other schools. Attainment on entry is generally below average. There are 27 pupils (21 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, which is slightly more than in most schools nationally. Most of these pupils have learning difficulties; two pupils have a statement of special educational need. There are currently no pupils whose home language is not English.

The school is involved in the Excellence in Cities initiative and with the family learning programme. An independent playgroup shares part of the school building. The school won a *Schools Achievement Award* in 2001 and 2002, received the *Activemark Gold* in 2004 and retained its *Ecoschool* status in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6327	Dr J N Thorp	Lead inspector	Mathematics; science; art and design; music; physical education
9884	Mrs M Roscoe	Lay inspector	
3065 1	Mrs M Entwistle	Team inspector	English; information and communication technology; geography; history; special educational needs
2754 1	Mr J Collins	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; design and technology; citizenship; religious education; English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Teaching is good overall, but is not consistent in quality across the whole school. Although standards are below average by the time pupils leave the school, good teaching and the pupils' positive attitudes enable them to make good progress from Year 3 to Year 6 and achieve well. The curriculum is sound overall, but very good opportunities are provided to enrich it. The headteacher and other key staff provide effective leadership; there is now a firm focus on raising standards and further improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics, science are below average; the presentation of pupils' written work is poor
- There is a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching; it is good in Years 3 to 6 ensuring these pupils' learning and achievement are good
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and form very good relationships with others
- The firm commitment to inclusion, high levels of care and good provision for pupils with special educational needs, ensures that the needs of all pupils are identified and met
- The learning mentor makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development and to the whole ethos of the school
- The school is well led; the headteacher and other key staff provide good leadership, but subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating teaching
- A very good range of additional activities enriches the curriculum very effectively
- Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs, enabling them to participate fully in lessons
- Attendance levels are below average, limiting the progress some pupils can make

There has been satisfactory improvement overall since the previous inspection in April 1999. There has been significant improvement in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) which has contributed to pupils achieving better standards. Individual co-ordinators now lead and manage their subjects effectively, although they have too few opportunities to evaluate the quality of teaching and support its further development. This contributes to the continuing lack of consistency in teaching. There has been too little improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science, which are very similar to those reported in the previous inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 satisfactory. It is good in reception and Years 3 to 6 however, but unsatisfactory in Year 2. Attainment on entry to the school is below average, although it is improving. Children achieve well, with the majority reaching the goals they are expected to achieve by the end of reception. Pupils' learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but they could do better in Year 2, where achievement is unsatisfactory and standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Learning is good in Years 3 to 6 because teaching is better. These pupils have made good progress from a low starting point and their achievement is good, even though standards overall are below average in English, mathematics and science. There has been good improvement in provision for ICT since the previous inspection and standards are now in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. By the end of Year 6 pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good teaching and support they receive; by the end of Year 2 their achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Very good relationships and the effective support provided by all the adults ensure that pupils feel happy, valued and secure at the school, which contribute to their very positive attitudes. The behaviour of most pupils is good. Attendance, however, is below the national average, limiting the progress of some pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good overall, and particularly effective in Years 3 to 6, where it contributes positively to pupils' good achievement. Assessment procedures are good, providing detailed information to track pupils' progress and to set targets for further learning. Pupils are well cared for and good provision is made for their personal development, to which the learning mentor makes a very positive contribution. The curriculum is enriched with a very good range of activities and visits. There are satisfactory links with parents, but a closer partnership is needed to help them support their children's education more effectively.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides good leadership. There is now a strong focus on raising standards. Overall management is satisfactory, with good systems in place, but the school's work is not evaluated rigorously enough. Other key staff lead and manage individual subjects well, but as yet are not monitoring and supporting the development of more effective teaching and learning. Governance has improved since the previous inspection and is now good; the governing body fulfils its legal responsibilities.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have very positive views about the school. They find the school friendly and welcoming, with dedicated staff, who expect their children to work hard and do their best. They value the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities provided. Most pupils have positive views they enjoy coming to school, are happy and feel secure.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science and improve the presentation of pupils' written work in their books
- Ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching across the school
- Provide opportunities for individual subject co-ordinators to monitor, evaluate and support the development of teaching
- Improve attendance

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall pupils' achievement is good in Years 3 to 6 but unsatisfactory in Year 2, where they could be doing better. Although there has been improvement recently, standards in English, mathematics and science are not yet high enough. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in some classes has an adverse affect on the overall standards achieved.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage, with the majority on course to achieve the standards expected by the end of reception
- Pupils do not do well enough in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2, and standards are lower than those expected of pupils of their age
- Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were well below the national average; standards amongst pupils currently in Year 6 are better and are now closer to those expected
- Pupils do well to achieve standards in line with those expected in ICT
- Good teaching and support enable pupils with special educational needs to achieve well in relation to their capabilities

Commentary

1. Children enter the school with wide-ranging levels of attainment, but overall standards are below those expected nationally. Children's language skills in particular are frequently unsatisfactorily developed on entry so their ability to communicate and use language is often weak. The good provision in the reception class, however, ensures that children make a good start to their time in school. There is a strong emphasis on children's personal development and on improving their language skills. Learning is good and children make good progress because teaching is good. As a result, the majority of children are on course to achieve the goals expected of them in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	12.9 (13.3)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.6 (12.5)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	14.1 (13.6)	16.2 (16.3)

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

2. In national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 standards were well below the national average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing compared with pupils in other schools nationally. In both writing and mathematics, pupils did slightly better than in the previous year, but slightly less well in reading. In comparison with those in similar schools, pupils attained standards which were well below average in reading and mathematics. In writing, the picture is more positive with pupils attaining standards in line with those of pupils in similar schools.

3. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics among pupils currently working towards the end of Year 2 are generally below those expected. Although teaching and learning are satisfactory, pupils are not making sufficient progress and their achievement is unsatisfactory. By Year 2, standards are not as high as they were reported in the previous inspection.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (25.7)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.2 (23.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.0 (26.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 in English and mathematics were well below average when compared with the results of all pupils nationally and in science they were below average. In both mathematics and science, however, standards were higher than in the previous year. This upturn is the result of the good teaching and support pupils receive in Year 6. The picture is much more positive when results are compared with those achieved by pupils in similar schools. In both English and mathematics pupils did as well as those in similar schools and in science they did better. Further analysis of the results indicates that these pupils made good progress overall between Years 3 and 6. Whilst still slightly below the national average, pupils currently in Year 6 are achieving well, with a higher proportion of them on course to achieve the expected standards by the time they leave the school.
5. Standards in reading and writing are below the level expected nationally by Year 2. Standards in reading are not as good as reported in the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2, standards of reading are generally below average, even though this year there has been better progress than last. Most pupils read appropriate texts with accuracy, but few are able to use expression to help them communicate meaning. By the end of Year 6 standards in English remain below average, but there has been improvement in both reading and writing at this stage. Some higher attaining pupils read well, with good expression and comprehension. This has a positive impact on their learning in other subjects.
6. Pupils in Year 2 are not making sufficient progress in mathematics and many of them are not on course to reach expected standards by the time they enter Year 3. Their achievement is unsatisfactory. Most pupils make better progress through Years 3 to 6. Although standards amongst pupils currently in Year 6 remain just below average, achievement is nevertheless good given the low starting point and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group.
7. Overall standards in science are well below those expected of pupils their age. Pupils have too few opportunities to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills and could be doing better; their achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils are making good progress from Year 3 to Year 6 in most areas of science; some pupils are on course to reach the level expected by the end of Year 6. Overall standards remain just below average, however. A major contributory factor to pupils' good progress and achievement is the good teaching they receive in Years 3 to 6.
8. Pupils' learning and achievement in ICT are good and they do well to achieve standards broadly in line with those expected of pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. While the teaching of skills is good, with effective use made of the computer suite, teachers generally provide too few opportunities for pupils to use their skills in other subjects.

9. There was insufficient evidence to support judgements about standards in any other subjects during this inspection.
10. The school provides well for its overall slightly above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Although the standard of these pupils' work is often well below average, they achieve well as a result of the good teaching and effectively targeted support they receive.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and they behave well. Pupils' all-round personal development is good; their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen on their learning in and out of lessons and enjoy the opportunities for independence that come their way
- Pupils' personal development is good overall with some very good features, but spiritual and cultural awareness are satisfactory and less well developed
- Not enough is done to promote good attendance and reduce above average unauthorised absences

Commentary

11. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, have very good attitudes to school. This begins effectively in the reception class, where children form good relationships and they continue to develop throughout the school. As a result, pupils enjoy positive relationships with all adults and take an active part in lessons. Pupils listen attentively and follow instructions accurately, share ideas with a partner, or undertake a range of duties described by them as 'twenty past three' jobs. Good classroom management ensures that pupils are 'switched on' to their learning and staff insist on good standards of behaviour which is achieved consistently in the junior classes. There are a number of younger pupils, however, whose behaviour causes low-level disruption when it is not managed well. Pupils with special educational needs are successfully integrated into all aspects of school life, behave well, and stay alert to their work.
12. Within a school environment that continuously promotes high self-esteem it is not surprising that it should also provide well for pupils' personal development. An emphasis on a strong moral code results in good behaviour in lessons and play areas. This is due to the consistent way boys and girls are treated and rewarded. Pupils and almost all parents are happy that the school deals with discipline problems promptly and do not consider bullying an issue. Rules and sanctions are regarded as fair and beneficial to all. Exclusions are low and rarely used.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	129	1	0

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

13. Staff provide positive role models and this in turn encourages pupils to develop good relationships with their peers and to work co-operatively with them. For example, shy or reticent pupils have the confidence to answer difficult questions in lessons or assemblies

because they do not fear being wrong and this has a positive effect on the quality of life within the school.

14. Pupils' social development is promoted very strongly, often through paired discussions in lessons. This enables them to respect another person's viewpoint. Time is taken to encourage pupils to 'be the best they can be'. This results in lively, happy children who are proud of themselves and the health-promoting status of their school. Very positive links have been formed with other schools and pupils relish the successful sporting activities they can try as a result. This not only enables pupils to develop their skills, but also helps build their awareness of a community beyond their own school.
15. Unlike the previous inspection when it was good, spiritual development is satisfactory. Residential visits contribute successfully to pupils' growing awareness of the environment, and through the *Ecoschool* project, learn what threatens or harms it. Charity collections are well supported because pupils want to help those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils explore complex human relationships in drama and look at fundamental religious beliefs in history. Many other subjects make a less active contribution, however, and there is insufficient focus on reflection on important matters in assemblies and in some lessons.
16. Cultural development remains at a satisfactory level. The strongest feature is that large numbers of pupils attend a good variety of clubs. Cultural awareness is further promoted through involvement in many local events. The encouragement of pupils' respect for other faiths and lifestyles in readiness for their life beyond school is a weaker element.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.5	School data	0.5
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.

17. Procedures for reducing lateness work well. Parents, however, are not sufficiently active as partners in supporting the school's endeavours to raise attendance levels. This is because not enough is done to tell them about high absence rates. Up-to-date attendance figures have reached 92 per cent so far this academic year, which is too low.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall the school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, enabling these pupils to learn effectively. The curriculum is sound, but there are very good opportunities provided for pupils to learn outside of lessons. Pupils are well cared for. The majority of parents have positive views about the school.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall, but particularly effective in Years 3 to 6, where there is a clear focus on pupils' learning that contributes positively to these pupils' good achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6
- Teaching is good in reception, where teachers provide a good mix of directed activities and opportunities for children to choose and work independently

- In Years 3 to 6, lessons are purposeful and well paced, with a firm focus on learning; pupils' behaviour is effectively managed so they are able to learn
- Teaching and learning are not always effectively organised in Year 2
- Good assessment information enables the school to track pupils' progress well and informs target setting for further improvement
- Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good

Commentary

18. Teaching in the school is good overall. It is particularly strong in Years 3 to 6, where teachers focus firmly on extending pupils' learning and manage their behaviour very well. This has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to school and ensures that learning is good. There is a lack of consistency, however, in the quality of teaching across the school. Although teaching was satisfactory overall in Year 2, it was not as strong as in other classes. This is unchanged from the situation reported in the previous inspection. In around three-quarters of all lessons seen in this inspection teaching was good and sometimes very good; there were no unsatisfactory lessons. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective, especially in Years 3 to 6, where it enables pupils to achieve well even though standards remain below average by the time pupils leave the school. Classroom assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs, which ensures that all pupils participate fully in lessons.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	5	15	6	0	0	0

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

19. Teaching is good in the reception class, where teachers provide a carefully planned balance of activities from which children can choose and activities directed by the teacher for a specific purpose. This ensures that children develop independence while enabling the teachers to manage progression in their learning. Both teachers are consistent in their reinforcement of classroom routines, which ensure that children learn in a very secure and ordered environment. There is good teamwork, with teachers and assistants working together very well. The detailed and accurate assessments teachers now make have improved since the previous inspection and enable them to plan activities to meet children's particular needs.
20. Teaching is particularly effective in Years 3 to 6 because there is a clear focus on pupils' learning and also on improving standards. Teachers manage lessons with these classes purposefully, usually with good pace; they provide interesting learning activities to which pupils respond positively. In a very good lesson in history with Year 6, the teacher made very good use of role-play to extend pupils' understanding of the roles of people in different positions in the building of a pyramid in ancient Egypt. The teacher managed the lesson very purposefully, from the initial presentation of background information needed, using the interactive whiteboard well, to the organisation and management of the debate in role herself. Throughout, she used questions very effectively to challenge and extend pupils' thinking, involving individuals well and ensuring they had time for their response. The high quality of the debate that followed enabled pupils to demonstrate orally their good level of understanding.
21. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 use a good variety of teaching techniques and approaches effectively to engage pupils' interest and enhance their levels of understanding. They are skilful at managing behaviour and ensuring their classrooms are orderly, enabling pupils to learn. In a very good literacy lesson in Year 4 and 5, for example, the teacher managed the class with a calm and deliberate manner. The lesson was very well planned and prepared; the use of a retired printer was imaginative and very successful in presenting pupils with the opportunity to

learn and use some technical language of the trade. The planned activity was highly motivating, captured pupils' interest and, as a result, they demonstrated a high level of enthusiasm for the task of writing persuasively and were very productive. Such imaginative and engaging teaching is very effective in sparking interest and enjoyment in pupils and contributes to their good learning.

22. Such purposeful teaching in lessons is not always achieved in Year 2, because the organisation of teaching and learning is not always as effective as it could be. At times the teacher displays a lack of confidence, which results in an uncertain approach and the communication of low expectations of pupils. Questioning skills are under-developed, which results in too much talk by the teacher at times and insufficient opportunities for pupils to contribute their own ideas or suggestions. The organisation of lessons is not always as effective as it might be, resulting in time lost because the change from one activity to another is not controlled well enough.
23. The school has good systems for assessment, which have improved since the previous inspection and a good deal of assessment information provides the school with a clear picture of pupils' progress. The careful analysis of this assessment information informs target setting for classes and groups of pupils. Where it is used effectively, particularly in Years 3 to 6, this information also helps teachers to plan specific learning activities to meet the needs of some individuals or groups of pupils in the class.
24. Since some classes have a larger group of pupils with special educational needs than in most schools, teachers are aware of the need to plan carefully to meet these pupils' needs and keep them fully engaged in each lesson. Teaching for these pupils is good. In literacy lessons, for example, where many of these pupils experience their greatest barriers to learning, pupils benefit because teachers demonstrate *how* to write a paragraph or improve a sentence, which develops their confidence for starting the task. The new interactive whiteboards motivate pupils and help those with a shorter concentration span to stay attentive. Lessons are usefully often broken up by short spells of paired talk or role-play, which are effective in helping to keep pupils involved. Teaching assistants give very good support in literacy and numeracy lessons because they have been properly trained and are included in the planning. These approaches are successful in enabling those pupils with special educational needs to make progress in line with others in the class.

The curriculum

The school has a **satisfactory** curriculum, but it is enriched with a very good range of activities. The accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- While the school's curriculum gives prominence to English, mathematics, science and ICT, a very good range of activities is provided to enrich and broaden it
- There have been good improvements to the curriculum and assessment since the previous inspection
- The school has been innovative in devising a system of planning that is well suited to its present mixed-age teaching arrangements
- Good links with the local secondary school and with local sports clubs enable the school to provide specialist teaching from visiting teachers and coaches
- The achievement of Ecoschool status and the work towards the Healthy School award have had a positive impact on the curriculum
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs

Commentary

25. The school's curriculum meets statutory requirements. At present, it is timetabled to give preference to English, mathematics, science and ICT. However, the range of extra-curricular activities helps to guard against the curriculum becoming too narrow. Parents are pleased with the wide range of opportunities provided for their children and value the fact that they are offered to all pupils without exception.
26. The school has responded positively to the weaknesses in planning and assessment identified in the previous inspection report. These have improved and are now good. It has taken the bold step of planning a curriculum that meets the needs of mixed-age classes through a skills-based programme that is particular to this school. The revised curriculum has the potential to raise standards whilst providing an enjoyable, exciting education. This is because links between subjects are at the heart of its structure. Planning for lessons has already improved, because teachers are very clear about what the pupils should learn in each lesson, and in most lessons the higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged, which was not the case during the last inspection. There is a firm commitment to raising standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Teachers' planning is better than it was, now building appropriately on what pupils already know and need to do next.
27. Strong features identified in the previous inspection remain strengths. For a small school, for example, there is an extensive programme of educational visits and extension activities throughout the year. Parents praise what the school provides. Specialist coaching sessions from local cricket, rugby, and football clubs improve the quality of what a small school can offer. Residential visits in Years 5 and 6 enhance pupils' learning and social skills. The school has good links with the local comprehensive school, to the benefit of older pupils, as secondary teachers visit the school and teach Year 6 pupils. Weekly French and Spanish lessons for Years 5 and 6 through links with a local community school also open up valuable new opportunities for pupils. Links with the closer community of family and the immediate area around the school are harder to exploit so that few parents regularly help in classrooms.
28. The school is justly proud of its *Ecoschool* status, and has developed a pond, wild-life area and orchard that contribute to cross-curricular learning as well as to recreation. It is also working towards a *Healthy School* award. The impact of these initiatives on the curriculum is good. Planning for personal, social, health and citizenship education is done through the local education authority's well-thought out recommendations for schools involved in the *Healthy Schools* project, and the school integrates environmental issues effectively into this.
29. The curriculum provides well for pupils with special educational needs. At present, the special educational needs co-ordinator is closely involved in writing most pupils' individual education plans, which are well written with specific and measurable targets. Reviews for those pupils with a statement of special educational need are very regular but for pupils with less pressing needs, targets are not reviewed often enough in some cases. The recently-developed whole-school tracking system means that the special educational needs co-ordinator can monitor the progress of pupils very well against National Curriculum levels of attainment. A very good feature is the range of intervention programmes that the school has in place, and the good work of the teaching assistants in leading these groups. The special educational needs co-ordinator has good knowledge of a range of remedial packages, and judges effectively when to use them. In addition to the expected early and additional literacy support programmes, pupils leave the class to join various highly relevant small group sessions that are closely focused on their needs. These are ably led by teaching assistants, who assess and record progress thoroughly, and pass this information on to the class teachers.
30. The school has an appropriate number of teachers and other staff which support the curriculum well. The learning mentor makes a very positive contribution to the life and work of the school. The large hall and separate dining room are also used well to support after-school activities. A local playgroup makes good use of part of a detached building on the site, facilitating good links with the school which help children make a smooth transition into the reception class. The shared play area also enables children in the playgroup and the reception

class to mix. The school has made good use of the space released by falling rolls, for example to set up a well-resourced computer suite and to create a separate music room. Resources for learning are generally good, well cared for and accessible.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes good care of its pupils' physical and emotional needs and their health and safety. Levels of support and guidance are satisfactory and the involvement of pupils in the school's development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The learning mentor makes a good contribution to pupils' pastoral care
- Assessment procedures have improved significantly, enabling the school to monitor pupils' academic progress well
- Insufficient care is taken in monitoring attendance patterns and taking action to improve them
- Governors oversee arrangements to ensure the health and safety of pupils effectively, but not all staff are fully aware of the arrangements for child protection
- Pupils are effectively involved in the school, with the school council playing an important role in bringing about change

Commentary

31. A common theme throughout the conversations with parents and pupils is that the school provides high levels of care, ensuring that pupils' needs take priority. This does not happen by chance and has been maintained since the previous inspection. A strong thread is the effective work of the learning mentor who is well experienced and readily available to those pupils requiring help with problems that may be hindering their education. This he provides through working sensitively with individual children referred by teachers. His work has a very positive impact on the extent to which all pupils eat healthy snacks at break times, manage their behaviour or deal with loss or separation in their lives.
32. The provision of support and guidance is satisfactory. Effective monitoring of pupils' all-round progress and behaviour is underpinned by the award schemes and this influences pupils' efforts positively. Assessment procedures have improved significantly since the previous inspection, so the school is now able to monitor pupils' progress effectively. It also involves pupils more in the setting and review of their individual targets. Some teachers are more successful than others, however, in providing a clear indication of how pupils could improve their work.
33. The monitoring of attendance patterns and taking positive action in individual cases is a weaker element of pupil care. Particular care is taken to follow up the absences of those pupils with very difficult home circumstances but not enough is done to establish the whereabouts of all pupils each morning or to assess the effectiveness or the compliance of current registration practices.
34. Health and safety aspects are well attended to in practice and the majority of formal risk assessments required are reliably undertaken or included in curriculum policy documents. Governors oversee this work well. The result of their careful planning is obvious in the security arrangements and the fencing which separates children from vehicles. However, governors have not made sure that all staff who work with children undertake appropriate training in line with child protection requirements.

35. Pupils' views about school rules are regularly sought and valued. Their democratic voice is expressed through the school council and their decisions bring about real improvements to play facilities and to provision of fresh fruit and teeth-kind drinks at break-times.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with parents. Links with the community are good and those with other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has developed an impressive range and variety of links with both pre-school and the main secondary schools
- Productive links with the community continue to enhance personal development whilst visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning
- Parents have satisfactory links with the school and are pleased with what it provides
- The school provides insufficient information for parents about the curriculum

Commentary

36. Many older pupils gain much from the work they undertake with staff from local secondary schools by participating in shared events and sporting tournaments and increasing their knowledge of European languages. These experiences also provide an authentic flavour of the next stage of their education. Parents say that younger pupils benefit from the effective links with the pre-school group that shares the school premises, and they rate the entire induction process highly.
37. The school values the good links it has established with the wider community and works hard to sustain them so that expertise can be harnessed and shared. This is a strength that has been maintained since the previous inspection. For example, professional sports coaches, local clergy, the police and expeditions to places of interest or adventure all help to bring learning to life and to broaden pupils' horizons.
38. Parents enjoy positive relationships with the school. A group of parents provide valuable help with extra-curricular clubs. Some parents have a positive impact on pupils' learning because they take the opportunities provided to attend school-based events where they learn about aspects of the curriculum. Celebration assemblies and parents' evenings are well attended and most parents are very comfortable in approaching the school for any reason because they are sure their questions will be answered in an open and honest way. Parents value their children's annual record of achievement which details progress made in all subjects and provides targets for improvement.
39. Despite all these strengths many parents do not take sufficient advantage of the opportunities to support their children's education. One reason is the lack of good quality written information to complement the end of term topic presentations, the family learning courses and 'shared reading' sessions. Parents need better written information because many of them are unable to attend school during the day due to childcare work or domestic duties. Parents do not receive enough detail about provision and this acts as a barrier between a number of them and the school. Newsletters are celebratory in content but miss the chance to draw all parents into the work of each year group by informing them what is to be taught.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is good and management is satisfactory overall with good features. Governance is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher knows the pupils well and takes the lead in ensuring a consistent approach to their personal development; there is now a firm commitment to raising standards
- Governors know the school well and participate effectively in planning further developments
- Management continues to improve, with the role of subject co-ordinators developing well, although at present they have insufficient opportunities to monitor and evaluate teaching
- Current procedures for evaluating the work of the school lack rigour
- There is a positive ethos in the school which is good, with a strong commitment to inclusion

Commentary

40. The headteacher knows the pupils very well because he is a very visible presence around the school. He regularly praises pupils' efforts, attitudes and behaviour, especially in assemblies. His positive lead ensures that there is a consistency of approach in developing pupils' personal qualities. The headteacher provides good leadership, which has improved since the previous inspection. Along with senior staff, he has formed an effective team with a firm commitment to raising standards. In spite of financial restrictions brought about by falling numbers, support staff have been well deployed to give extra support to pupils' learning, especially in English and mathematics, and this contributes effectively both to pupils' personal development and to raising standards.
41. The governors are more proactive now in shaping the school's direction and monitoring the school's work. Governors are supportive of the headteacher and they fulfill their responsibilities; a sound system of sub-committees has been established. The headteacher keeps them well informed about the work of the school through his reports to the governing body and, when possible, link governors visit the school and liaise effectively with subject co-ordinators. For example, the governors joined the headteacher and staff when drafting the current school improvement plan. The school improvement plan is now a more effective tool to help the school's future direction. It is suitably clear and its priorities are highly appropriate for the school's current stage of development. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
42. The management of the school is sound and is being improved through selected training for all staff. These growing strengths in management now ensure that the school has a good capacity to continue to improve and raise standards. The role of the subject leaders has been developed well, with most of the co-ordinators having good leadership and management skills. For example, leadership and management of special educational needs are good. The co-ordinator fully promotes equality of opportunity for the pupils and she has a good overview of provision across the school. She systematically monitors the effectiveness of support staff through direct observation and effectively reviews the quality of each pupil's individual education plan as a useful working document. At present, most of the co-ordinators' monitoring is of teachers' planning and pupils' work and this is giving them some clear insights into each subject's strengths and areas for development. However, they have had little or no opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning or to support the development of other teachers' skills, by working alongside them in their classrooms for example.
43. The current procedures for evaluating the work of the school lack rigour and are not sufficiently challenging to help teachers improve their performance. This remains an area of improvement for the school. Procedures for drawing up the school improvement plan are sound however, with the views of governors, staff, parents and pupils all carefully considered along with information from the school's monitoring systems. This enables the school to set fitting targets

for its further development. These have a direct impact on the school's provision and ultimately pupils' achievement. Performance management is implemented well and effectively linked to priorities in the school's improvement plan. The government's initiative on workforce reform is being implemented appropriately and the school's teaching assistants are playing an increasingly effective role in the education of the pupils.

44. Finances are managed soundly and the governors are mindful to be careful during a period of falling rolls and a reduced budget. Best value principles are applied satisfactorily. The headteacher has sufficient administrative support staff, who contribute effectively to the smooth day-to-day running of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£) deficit in brackets	
Total income	395427	Balance from previous year	5657
Total expenditure	388231	Balance carried forward to the next	12853
Expenditure per pupil	2442		

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 there were 12 children in the reception class, all of whom had attended a local playgroup adjacent to the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Teaching and learning are now consistently good, so that most children make a good start to their education. Leadership and management are good. The teachers have created a strong team of support that makes a valuable contribution to children's learning. The provision is well managed and planned so that children benefit from good continuity of learning. Induction procedures are sound and help children to settle in well. Links with the play group are good and an increasing proportion of children have attended some form of pre-school provision. Parents are very positive about the start children receive to their education. From a lower than average starting point, all children enjoy learning and most achieve well. Overall, standards in all areas of learning are on course to be in line with those expected by the time they transfer to Year 1.
46. A good range of purposeful learning experiences excites the children and makes them want to learn. All adults are very clear about what children will learn and this gives direction to the teaching and purpose to the work. Good resources are used imaginatively to create exciting activities, so that the children want to join in. The adults make detailed and accurate assessments of what children achieve and this gives them a clear idea about what each child already knows, understands and can do. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The provision for outdoor play has also improved and resources are generally good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are interested and hard working and greatly enjoy their learning
- Relationships between children and adults and among children are good
- Teaching is consistently good with the teacher and teaching assistants planning a good range of opportunities for children to develop independently and work collaboratively

Commentary

47. Children are happy and enthusiastic learners and are achieving well in this area. Most will reach the expected standards by the end of reception. They have developed good relationships with one another and are benefiting greatly from working together. Because of good teaching and support, children have a thorough understanding of classroom routines and expectations of behaviour. Their achievement is good. The carefully planned mix of activities helps children to develop their independence by making choices in activities and in the way they use resources. As a result, the free-choice activity sessions are well ordered and give children real opportunities to make decisions about their learning activities. The consistent reinforcement of classroom conventions leads to a very secure and ordered environment. The classroom is stimulating and motivates the children to work together and learn from each other. The behaviour of the great majority of children in the classroom is good and reinforced by the good role models of all staff. This is a happy classroom where pleasure and learning go hand in hand.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths

- The teaching and learning are good
- Role-play extends and enhances the children's speaking and listening skills well

Commentary

48. Most children start with limited language and literacy skills, but they make good progress in learning to listen to what others say and in early reading skills, with the majority on course to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. As a result achievement is good. All adults value talk, encouraging children to describe what they are doing and explain what they have done. Teachers model talk well and give children many opportunities to communicate their thoughts and feelings. In question and answer sessions at the start of lessons, children are encouraged to develop their ideas and express themselves. The teaching of letter sounds and reading and writing skills is good. For example, when children were looking for rhyming words, the teaching assistant was very careful to get the children to emphasise the 'sounds' the letters make. This enabled them to make good connections between rhyming words such as 'dog' and 'frog'. In writing, teachers provide a good range of writing opportunities that enable children to acquire early writing skills and most children can write some simple words and names independently. They greatly enjoy making their own 'registers' at the start of the school day.
49. Children enjoy the challenges of their early reading activities and are developing a real love for stories and books. Regular story time sessions are popular with the children and are often re-enacted by children in their directed activities. The teaching of phonics is very effective and, as a result, children's reading and writing skills have developed well since the beginning of the year. Children regularly look at books on their own, and in groups, and all are making good progress in developing their understanding of how the text connects with the illustrations and in their recognition of common words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a good understanding of positional language
- Children enjoy learning because of the lively practical activities

Commentary

50. Children's mathematical skills are below average when they enter the reception class. Most children are on course to meet all of the goals expected for their age by the time they start Year 1; they achieve well because teaching and learning are good. Most children show interest in numbers and a few higher attaining children can count correctly up to 20 and beyond. The majority recognise numbers zero to nine and are beginning to be secure in matching numbers and objects beyond five. They write numerals 1 to 5 with a good degree of accuracy. Children's knowledge and use of positional language are particularly good. Most children understand the concept of 'more than' and 'less than', as was ably demonstrated in a lively session of 'How many frogs in the pond?' This was a particularly successful session that reinforced children's understanding on number bonds of 10.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of imaginative activities develops children's excitement in the world around them
- Children do not make enough use of computers to aid their learning

Commentary

51. Curriculum planning shows that the children have full access to all aspects of this area of learning. Most are well on course to meeting the early learning goals in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Learning is good. When using construction kits children are interested and curious about how things work and they have planted flowers in the new outdoor play area and observed how these grow. They have visited Cannan Hall and dressed as Victorian children to develop their sense of times now and times past. Overall teaching is good, but insufficient regular use is made of the classroom computer to consolidate and extend children's learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality teaching successfully develops children's confidence, co-ordination and collaborative skills
- The school makes good use of the new outside play area

Commentary

52. The quality of teaching for children's physical development is good. Achievement is good, with the majority of children reaching the expected standards by the end of the reception year. A lack of an outdoor play area has now been addressed most successfully and children use large play equipment and apparatus well, sometimes playing alongside the children in the adjacent playgroup. Careful timetabling ensures good use of the present designated play area as, for example, when a lesson on singing rhymes started off in the outdoor area and progressed smoothly to the classroom inside to finish the day. Children are enthusiastic about physical education lessons, which move at a fast pace and successfully develop the children's co-ordination, use of space and collaborative skills. The development of children's control of small objects, such as pencils, paintbrushes and scissors, is good. Children handle a wide range of tools, construction kits and malleable materials safely because their use is carefully taught, as seen when children were making 'spiders' for their *Little Miss Muppet* story rhymes.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to try out their ideas in a range of play situations and media

- Adults do not join in imaginative role-play activities often enough

Commentary

53. Teaching and learning are good; children are achieving well, and most will meet the goals set for their age by the end of the reception year. They benefit from good resources to support imaginative play in which they can act out different roles. Children act as adults and children in the 'home' play area and use the props imaginatively. However, the teacher and classroom assistant do not join in these role-play activities often enough and so opportunities are missed on these occasions to further develop and expand children's language skills to sustain their play. Children paint, print and make collages, as well as models from recycled materials and construction kits. They are given good opportunities to try out the different skills they have learned and have made card and paper trains in their topic work on toys. When presented with the opportunity to choose materials they do so sensibly. Children join in songs and choruses of familiar words with great enthusiasm and enjoyment.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are improving, but fall below those expected of most seven and eleven year olds
- Writing lags behind reading, and presentation of work is often poor
- The school is taking well-judged and effective action to improve teaching and learning in the subject
- Good teaching in Years 3 to 6 ensures that these pupils are now achieving well
- Pupils are lively, confident speakers because of the school's positive climate and regard for their contributions
- Marking of work does not regularly show the pupils how to make their work better
- Leadership and management of the subject are strong, well informed and forward-looking

Commentary

54. Standards are below those expected overall, and well below in writing by Year 6. There has been improvement in the pupils' reading and writing during this current year, although national test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are not any higher than at the time of the last inspection. In 2004, standards at the end of Year 6 were well below average in English because almost half of the class failed to reach the expected level for their age. This was partly because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this class who found it harder than most to read and write competently. These lower attaining pupils achieve well from Year 3 onwards but they continue to struggle to reach the expected level in literacy, and lack confidence in test situations. However, there has been an improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels. Boys generally do less well than girls, and writing is weaker than reading by Year 6.
55. Pupils do not achieve well enough by the end of Year 2 to gain a good enough start for their work in Years 3 to 6. Since the last inspection, the results of reading tests at the end of Year 2 have fallen back, to well below average in 2004. Writing was better than this and in line with the results found in similar schools. In both reading and writing, few pupils reached the higher levels, and a worryingly large proportion remained either below or just at the threshold of the expected Level 2.

56. Standards in speaking and listening are broadly in line with those expected nationally. This is because teachers plan many opportunities for paired discussion and work in groups, and delve for fuller answers to their questions. As a result pupils make good progress and speak out clearly and confidently. Drama activities such as role-play of *Little Miss Muffet* in Year 1, or the acting out of scientific explanations, develop the pupils' oral skills as they learn the subject content.
57. Pupils currently in Year 2 have made better progress in reading than last year's group, and more pupils read competently. Nevertheless, a significant number of pupils are still struggling with the early stages of reading, partly because they do not get the intensive support at home they need. This is a concern for the school. However, other pupils are benefiting from the teachers' recently sharpened approach to the teaching of reading. Lessons include regular practice of the link between letters and sounds, and pupils explain confidently how they use this to read difficult words. 'We know that "ed" sounds like "t" sometimes, but it's really "ed"', says one. Group reading sessions are better managed and progress is assessed and noted down.
58. In Years 3 to 6 pupils achieve well to catch up on the slow start in Years 1 and 2. Nevertheless, in reading, approximately a third of the Year 6 class hover below the expected level; this brings overall standards to below average. However, many pupils in Year 6 read for interest and pleasure. They can analyse the structure of a story, work out the character of protagonists and 'read between the lines' for motives and hidden meanings. This is because of improvements made to the teaching in group reading time. Also, teachers encourage reading for pleasure in many different ways. Pupils' skills in searching and retrieving information are satisfactory for their age.
59. Standards in writing are well below what they should be at Year 6, despite very good teaching. The oldest pupils have not had full benefit from recent improvements across the school, and this class has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. A good feature is that by Year 6, most pupils are able to write in a range of different forms. This is because teachers plan for writing sessions to follow from reading relevant texts. They have up-dated their skills in demonstrating writing, so that pupils become confident to try the techniques for themselves. After a very good lesson on producing advertising copy, a delighted Year 3 pupil reflected: 'I never thought that I could write so that people would be persuaded to buy something – but now I can!' By the end of Year 6, most pupils plan out a coherent piece of writing, organise it into paragraphs, and vary their style appropriately. Many try hard to choose interesting vocabulary, and their ideas can be imaginative. As yet, there are significant weaknesses in sentence structure, and in the use of punctuation to control more complex sentences. The presentation of work is often disappointingly untidy and messy. Teachers do not consistently expect high standards of grammar and general presentation, which is affecting the standard of written work in other subjects.
60. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but it is good and often very good in Years 3 to 6. The subject leader has ensured that long-term planning meets the requirements of mixed-age classes whilst covering all elements of the literacy strategy programme. Teachers' weekly planning has improved as they identify exactly what is to be learned and assessed. The use of interactive whiteboards adds interest and motivation, for boys in particular, and teaching is often lively and challenging. Assessment is good overall. Pupils are set group targets, so that teachers can plan more precisely for them. The subject leader uses the target records effectively to identify groups for intensive additional support. This support is provided very well by teaching assistants, but the feedback to pupils themselves is not yet strong enough. Pupils are not actively involved in judging their own achievements however, because the new marking policy is not yet fully embedded. Teachers' marking too often does not show pupils exactly what they have achieved, or how they might improve their work next time.
61. Leadership and management of the subject are good, with some important strengths. In the Intensive Support Programme, the subject leader has found a set of strategies well suited to the school at this time, and is relentless in putting these in place. At present she does not have

enough opportunity to monitor and support the work of colleagues, in order to check that the planned-for improvements are coming through in every classroom.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Pupils use their literacy skills satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum, but overall skills of presentation are poor and too few opportunities are taken to improve them. The provision of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills is satisfactory, with the potential to become good. The school's rolling programme for the whole curriculum enables pupils to practise non-fiction writing in a range of subject settings. The use of ICT hardware in lessons, such as digital cameras and listening centres, has much improved since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are lower than expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6
- Standards appear better in lessons because pupils are so well supported and more confident orally than they are at recording their work
- Throughout the school pupils do better at number than they do in other areas of mathematics
- Lack of care in presentation impedes some pupils' understanding of place value
- Pupils have too few opportunities to develop problem-solving skills
- Teachers manage the oral-mental introductions to their lessons well
- There is a clear emphasis on the use of appropriate mathematical vocabulary
- Leadership and management of the subject are good, with the co-ordinator supporting colleagues successfully and ensuring a strong focus on raising standards

Commentary

63. Most pupils make insufficient progress in mathematics in Year 2 and standards are below average. Consequently their achievement is unsatisfactory. This is not as good as reported in the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress through Years 3 to 6 and they achieve well although standards are still just below average by the end of Year 6.
64. Test results in 2004 indicate that standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were well below average compared with those achieved by pupils in other schools nationally. Consequently standards were not as good as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Standards in lessons are better because pupils are so well supported and because pupils are better at giving answers orally than they are at recording them in their books.
65. Throughout the school pupils have a better knowledge and understanding of number than they have of other areas of mathematics. There has been a strong focus on reinforcing pupils' understanding of place value throughout the school and this has been successful overall. By Year 2 pupils have had good opportunities to work with number patterns and number lines which have supported their work on place value and basic calculations effectively. Most pupils have acquired a satisfactory understanding of the basic number operations, although many of them continue to make simple errors in their calculations. At this stage pupils know the names of common two-dimensional shapes and can identify some of their properties. Pupils at this stage have too few opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in problems. By Year 6 pupils have extended their understanding of number and calculation appropriately, with many showing they have a sound understanding of place value. However, a significant minority of pupils present their work carelessly or untidily. This hinders their understanding of place value, since they do not always set out their calculations accurately, for example using the squared paper they work on to guide them. Higher attaining pupils are able to discuss alternative strategies for completing calculations. In their work on shape, pupils demonstrate a satisfactory

understanding of some of the properties of three-dimensional shapes and are able to use terms such as face and edge to describe them. They can measure angles. They have completed some interesting work on using co-ordinates to draw a polygon and its reflection on a different axis. Pupils' ability to solve problems is a weakness, as they have too few opportunities to develop the skills and understanding needed.

66. Teachers have good skills in leading the introductory oral-mental mathematics activities. In each of the lessons seen, these were generally well organised, pacey and demanding. Teachers are good at managing these activities so that all pupils are involved, because they are able to pose different questions or provide different tasks for the different groups in the class. Where this is most effective, as in a lesson observed with Year 4 and Year 5 pupils for example, the initial mental work on subtraction was effectively linked to what was to follow in the main part of the lesson.
67. Teaching is good in Year 1 and in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Year 2. There is good emphasis placed on the language of mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and this contributes to pupils' good learning. Teachers encourage pupils to use relevant vocabulary, so when they were discussing strategies for subtraction, for example, some pupils in Year 4 and 5 were able to use terms like 'partition' as they described the method they had used. Throughout Years 3 to 6, teachers are good at getting pupils to work together, usually in pairs, to discuss strategies for working out calculations, to share methods of working or approaches to problems. This has a positive impact on the progress that pupils make, because there is constant reinforcement of, and support for, learning. Teachers use assessment effectively. They are skilled at intervening as pupils work and they use questions purposefully to check understanding or provide further challenge.
68. In lessons where teaching was less effective, the organisation of what pupils were going to do and how they were going to do it was not as clearly or carefully thought out. This was the case in a Year 2 lesson, when the management of the transition from one part of the activity to another was not always sufficiently well controlled, resulting in lost time that could not be made up. This meant that the end of the lesson was rushed. The lack of sufficient time to review and reinforce what they had done during the lesson had a negative impact on pupils' learning.
69. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and she uses this well to support her colleagues, ensuring they are secure with the mathematics they are going to teach. There is a firm focus on raising standards. Assessment is good and the co-ordinator is aware of overall standards because she monitors the outcomes of assessment effectively. This has enabled her to identify appropriate priorities for improvement. She is not yet sufficiently aware of the quality of teaching, however, because she has no opportunities to observe lessons and this limits the extent to which she can support further the development of her colleagues' skills.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. Pupils sometimes use their mathematics skills in their work in other subjects and where this happens it helps pupils develop an appreciation of their practical uses. On these occasions, pupils' skills contribute satisfactorily to the progress they make in other subjects. This happens when pupils use scale and make measurements in design and technology, for example, and when they measure the length of a string as they investigate the sound it makes in science or on the few occasions they use graphs and tables to record data. However, the school does not have a planned and systematic approach to extending pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below those expected and achievement is unsatisfactory by the end of Year 2 because pupils have too little time for learning in science
- Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6, although overall standards are below those expected
- Pupils are more able to talk about their work in science in Key Stage 2 than they are to record it appropriately
- There is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' skills of investigation
- The use of appropriate scientific vocabulary contributes positively to pupils' understanding
- Teaching is good overall in Years 3 to 6, but unsatisfactory in Year 2
- The co-ordinator has had some time to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching in science, but this has been insufficient to enable her to address the limitations in provision for pupils in Year 2

Commentary

71. By the end of Year 2 standards are well below those expected of pupils their age and by the end of Year 6 they are below those expected. This is not as good as reported in the previous inspection at the end of Year 2, and these pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory because currently they are provided with too few opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. Standards by the end of Year 6 are similar to those reported previously. Nevertheless, achievement is good at this stage, because pupils make good progress from a low starting point. However, since standards are so low at the end of Year 2, it is very difficult for pupils to catch up by the end of Year 6.
72. An appropriate range of topics is planned to ensure that the science curriculum is covered during Years 3 to 6, but this is not reflected in the amount or quality of the work in pupils' books. This is because many pupils have difficulties recording their work. However, in some topics pupils demonstrate they have acquired appropriate knowledge even though they have not been able to record it well. Pupils in Year 3 and 4, for example, showed how effectively they had learned about condensation as they discussed what happened when a glass was taken out of the refrigerator.
73. Throughout the school pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills of scientific investigation, although there are some valuable opportunities provided in some topics. In studying sound, for example, pupils in Year 4 investigated the relationship between the length of a string and the note it produced and pupils in Year 6 investigated the best materials to muffle a sound. By Year 6, pupils are able to identify the resources they will need for their investigation, they can plan what they intend to do and they have an idea of what constitutes a fair test. Generally, however, the opportunities pupils have are insufficient to extend their skills effectively.
74. Teachers introduce and use appropriate scientific vocabulary well and this contributes positively to pupils' thinking and learning. As they discuss the changing of liquids to solids and gases, for example, pupils use terms such as evaporation and condensation accurately and confidently. The quality of pupils' recorded work in their books, however, is unsatisfactory; in Year 2 there is very little evidence of any work in science.
75. Although it was not possible to see any lessons in science in Years 1 and 2, teaching is unsatisfactory because it fails to ensure that pupils have an appropriate range of opportunities to extend their learning in science. The amount and range of work completed by pupils in Year 2 are unsatisfactory. Although it was possible to observe only one lesson in Years 3 to 6, there was sufficient evidence of pupils' good learning and progress available to indicate that

teaching is good at this stage. In the lesson seen with pupils in Year 3 and 4, teaching was lively and the content of the lesson made interesting by the very good use of resources. These included a digital video camera to display what happens as a Mars bar melts, and ice-cold glasses to demonstrate condensation. The pupils were fully engaged in learning throughout, and showed their enthusiasm and involvement through their keenness to contribute to the discussions about their observations.

76. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides a very good model of teaching. She analyses the outcomes of assessment rigorously and there is a strong determination to raise standards. This analysis underpins planning in Years 3 to 6. The procedures for assessment in science are satisfactory overall. They have been evaluated and alternative approaches are being tried to improve them. Very valuable revision work is organised for Year 6 pupils, the majority of whom demonstrate their enthusiasm by coming into school early in the morning for this extra work. Parents are also sometimes involved. The co-ordinator has had some opportunity to observe lessons and evaluate the quality of teaching in science, but this has not been sufficient for her to identify and address the weaknesses in provision for pupils in Year 2.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement in provision since the last inspection and standards have risen; pupils' achievement is good
- Pupils are highly interested during lessons and make good progress but they have insufficient opportunities to reinforce some of their ICT skills
- There is no whole-school approach to assessing and recording pupils' skills in ICT
- Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6; teachers are confident in using a range of ICT equipment in their lessons
- Good links with the local secondary school support the school effectively in developing teaching and learning in ICT
- The computer suite is not used efficiently enough to support pupils' learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy

Commentary

77. Standards have improved since the previous inspection and are now in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Although there are still some partial gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills, the analysis of their saved and printed work and observations during lessons indicate that throughout the school pupils' achievement is good and that they reach expected levels. By Year 6, many achieve better than this in the 'presenting' and 'evaluating' strands. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
78. There are a number of reasons for this improvement. An up-dated computer suite, with good resources, enables regular class lessons to develop pupils' computer skills effectively. Teaching is also better, especially in Years 3 to 6 where it is good; this contributes positively to pupils' good learning, so they acquire skills at a good pace. The school's 'rolling programme' of curriculum planning gives high priority to ICT and its contribution to learning in other subjects.
79. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress. Their learning is good as they learn to enter information into graphs and pictograms, for instance of traffic surveys, and they show they can use the tables to interpret what they have recorded. In a valuable game to reinforce their skills, pupils' give appropriate instructions to a floor turtle in order for it to reach the crocodile

'Mamba'. They use graphics packages well to try out different colours in an image on the screen.

80. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 have sound keyboard and word-processing skills. They have experienced all aspects of the subject, although they have not re-visited some areas enough to consolidate their skills. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have been introduced to control and monitoring devices to switch lights on and off, but they have insufficient opportunities to apply this in other contexts to reinforce their learning. The carefully planned links with English and history in Years 3 to 6, on the other hand, enable pupils to achieve well in communicating information, as they combine text, tables and images in a multimedia presentation about the Egyptians for example. Pupils in Year 4 and Year 5 took good account of the needs of the younger pupils or the parents for whom they were producing the presentation. Pupils in Year 6 added more sophisticated elements such as buttons and animations. During one lesson, Year 6 pupils reviewed each other's presentations, with a view to helping their peers to improve their work, and fed back their evaluations with maturity.
81. Planning is good and significantly improved since the previous inspection. There is every sign that the rolling programme of units over four years is requiring teachers to consider the progression in ICT skills very carefully in their planning. The development of accurate, effective ongoing assessment and tracking of progress, however, is an urgent priority.
82. It was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2, and therefore there is insufficient evidence to support a judgement about the quality of teaching. Three lessons were seen with pupils in Years 3 to 6. In these lessons the teaching was good, and had some very good features. Teachers explain and demonstrate effectively, and achieve a good balance between instruction and time for personal investigation and practice. Pupils are eager, well behaved and full of enthusiasm and application. As a result, learning is good and they achieve more than expected in some aspects of their work. The requirement to work in pairs in most lessons develops the skills of collaboration and teamwork, and makes a good contribution to their social and personal development. Very good liaison work with the local secondary school also supports the development of Year 6 pupils' skills in ICT. One lesson with a teacher from the secondary school not only extended pupils' mathematical skills but also demonstrated how useful ICT could be in supporting investigations in other subjects.
83. Leadership and management are good, contributing positively to the good improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher's overview of the curriculum enables him to have a clear view of how ICT can contribute to the other subjects and this is developing well. Good links with the partner secondary school also provide valuable subject expertise and support. The headteacher, as subject leader, has reviewed and evaluated provision effectively and identified clear priorities for further development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. Planning for each term shows that there are clearly identified opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in their learning in other subjects. This extends to the full range of ICT hardware that is used well in many lessons. On these occasions, pupils' skills contribute satisfactorily to the progress they make in other subjects. At present, however, the computer suite is under-used in the mornings so there are missed opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills further, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

HUMANITIES

85. Owing to lesson timetables and to inspection priorities, too little evidence was collected to support overall judgements about provision in geography, history and religious education. It was possible to observe only one lesson in both geography and history and none in religious education. The small amount of pupils' previous work in books and on display was examined and discussions were held with pupils in Year 6.

86. In **geography**, the evidence available indicates that there has been good improvement in some key aspects of geography in Years 3 to 6 which were judged unsatisfactory in the previous inspection. There was too little evidence to make any such comparison for Years 1 and 2. The school now has a curriculum plan for geography in Years 3 to 6 that is well based upon the key skills that were noted as weak last time. Examination of the medium-term plans for the second year of the school's rolling programme shows that geography is timetabled and taught in each term, with suitable links made to other subjects. In the lesson seen, pupils' work in Years 4 and 5 was of a standard broadly in line with that expected of pupils their age and their achievement was good as they learned about the relationship between rivers and settlements. There was a good emphasis on technical terms such as 'erosion' and 'tributary' and most showed understanding of the physical features of a river.
87. In **history**, more evidence is again available in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. Planning in Years 1 and 2 is based on themes such as *Toys* and *Houses and homes*. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have good opportunities to undertake work in all the required study units. Links with literacy are purposeful and valuable. In the lesson seen, pupils in Year 6 developed their ability to offer a point of view or to challenge it, as they researched and prepared a justification for building the pyramids. Pupils achieved well in the lesson, and standards were broadly in line with those expected.
88. In **religious education**, standards are broadly similar to those reported in the previous inspection and continue to be below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Discussions with pupils and the evidence in the limited amount of earlier work show that by the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is below that expected. Attainment by the end of Year 2 is similar. There has been some improvement in planning, however, and the co-ordinator has conducted an audit of the subject and identified appropriate priorities for improvement. These have not yet begun to impact on attainment and religious education remains an area of development for the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

89. It was not possible to observe any lessons in art and design, design and technology or music during the inspection and only two in physical education. Consequently there was insufficient evidence to support a judgement about overall provision in these subjects.
90. In **art and design**, pupils' work on display indicates that they experience an appropriately broad art curriculum. The quality of pupils' work on display is often good; its mounting and presentation is motivating for pupils and effective in raising their self-esteem. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have had satisfactory opportunities to work with an appropriate range of materials. They have experimented with colour mixing, with paint, in collage and in their weaving with threads and fabrics. Good links are made with other subjects, such as history for example, in which pupils have drawn and painted houses from the past. In Years 3 to 6 pupils have had good opportunities to try out their ideas in their sketchbooks, investigating shade as they mixed colour and experimenting with texture as they worked with paper. The valuable art club has provided opportunities for pupils to work on a larger scale, with their three-dimensional models for example.
91. In **design and technology**, the evidence indicates that standards are broadly in line with those expected throughout the school and that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. This is similar to that reported in the previous inspection. Pupils work with an appropriate range of materials to develop their skills and there are often good links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 made a forest of fruit and vegetables in their literacy topic on *Where the wild things are* and pupils in Year 2 have identified the specific use of certain materials in houses and related this to their work in science. The work of pupils in Years 3 and 4 on making push-along toys has been successfully developed by the end of Year 6 where pupils have made a controllable buggy using their knowledge and understanding of electricity.

The profile of the subject has been raised by whole-school activity days and links with another local school on a special design and technology *Build It Day*.

92. **Music** plays a significant part in the life of the school. Teachers plan an appropriate range of activities, well supported by a published scheme, to ensure that pupils enjoy a varied musical curriculum. In the single lesson seen, teaching was satisfactory, as pupils worked on a performance of their own compositions based on the story of *Mamba and the Crocodile*. In this lesson, the standard of pupils' work was appropriate for their age. They were able to explore percussion sounds, repeat simple rhythm patterns and keep a steady pulse as they played them. Pupils enjoy singing; on the occasions when pupils sing together in assemblies their singing is enthusiastic and generally tuneful, maintaining the melody well to a guitar accompaniment. On occasions, pupils are able to listen to music, as they enter and leave the hall for collective worship, for example, and the opportunity is made to display information about the composer. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to perform music in regular concerts for parents and the community, and in large-scale concerts with other local schools.
93. A very good range of extra-curricular music making activities is provided, including the samba band which is well attended by pupils and staff. The school provides some instrumental tuition. The school's resources for music are good. The reduced numbers of pupils on roll has allowed the opportunity to create a most valuable separate music room.
94. It was possible to observe only two lessons in **physical education**; both were lessons in dance with pupils in Years 3 to 5, and consequently there is insufficient evidence to support a judgement about overall provision in this subject.
95. In both lessons seen, pupils worked with a real seriousness of purpose and enjoyed developing their skills. There was good co-operation as pupils worked well together on extending their ideas. Most pupils demonstrated appropriate control over their movements and many showed good imagination as they worked on different movements and body shapes. Teaching was good in these lessons, because teachers are good at helping pupils improve the quality of their movement. With the Year 3 and 4 pupils, the teacher used questions very effectively to extend pupils' thinking about their movement and she was able to comment on the quality of their work and suggest ways for them to improve. With the Year 4 and 5 pupils, the teacher involved pupils well in evaluating their work. Pupils showed that they were able to suggest ways to each other about how to improve or extend their ideas. This good teaching enabled pupils to achieve well in these lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

96. It was not possible to observe any lessons in personal, social and health education and citizenship during the inspection, so there was insufficient evidence to support a judgement about overall provision in this area. There is, however, evidence to show that it is an established feature of the school's curriculum. It is being approached in a very relevant and creative way through the work being done towards the *Healthy School Award* and in relation to the environmental issues that have arisen from the *Eco-school* status.
97. Observations of various activities across the school show that the school is successful in developing pupils' sense of responsibility to themselves and one another. Pupils are keen to be involved. The school council introduces pupils to the democratic process and teaches them how they can contribute to their community. The learning mentor makes a very valuable contribution in supporting the school council.
98. In almost all lessons, there is a strong focus on pupils' personal development, the success of which contributes positively to the effectiveness of teachers' management of pupils' behaviour. The very positive and supportive atmosphere which teachers establish in most lessons enables pupils to develop confidence and increases their self-esteem. The trusting relationships among all the adults and pupils in the school contribute well to this.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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