

INSPECTION REPORT

LYNNCROFT PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Eastwood

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122571

Headteacher: Mr David McNaught

Lead inspector: Mrs Barbara E Doughty

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th May 2005

Inspection number: 267260

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	319
School address:	Lynncroft Eastwood Nottingham Nottinghamshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Sean George
Date of previous inspection:	July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average primary school with 319 pupils including 77 attending the Nursery class part-time. Ten of the pupils are from mixed race backgrounds, with less than one per cent learning English as an additional language. There is a broadly average number of pupils with special educational needs, at 20 per cent. However, a significantly large number of these pupils have high level need including autism and dyslexia and nearly two per cent of the school's roll is in receipt of statements of specific need. Although this figure is in line with most other schools nationally, it is exceptionally high for this education authority. The school is situated in the lowest 30 per cent of the most socially deprived areas in the country and many of the pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Attainment on entry is below average and many children start the Nursery class with severe communication difficulties and language deprivation. The school is involved in a number of local and national initiatives including the Primary Leadership Programme and Improving Schools Project, and has achieved an Activemark award and Investors in People. Prior to the current head teacher being appointed in September 2003, the deputy had been acting head for two terms. Two of the teachers are temporary; both are newly qualified.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22261	Mrs Barbara E Doughty	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology
19365	Mr Gordon Stockley	Lay inspector	
19120	Mr Derek Pattinson	Team inspector	English History Geography Religious education
30823	Mrs Brenda Clarke	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage curriculum Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education English as an additional language
20165	Mr Alan Lemon	Team inspector	Special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	18
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	20
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and is rapidly improving. Most pupils make reasonable progress from starting school to leaving because of satisfactory teaching. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they work hard. The school's managers are good at dealing with weaknesses and are well focused on improving provision and raising standards. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- All pupils do well in the Reception Year and Years 5 and 6, but in some other classes the most able pupils do not do as well as they could.
- Good leadership and management provide an effective steer for improvement.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Not enough is done to develop pupils' speaking skills, promote writing through different subjects, or teach pupils how to use information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for learning.
- The accommodation is cramped with insufficient space for essential provision such as a library.

The school has made varied, but overall satisfactory, improvement since the previous inspection. The key issues have been dealt with. ICT and religious education now meet statutory requirements and governors have a clear picture of what the school achieves. After results fell between 2002 and 2003, things are on the up again and, despite significant barriers to improvement, including a budget deficit, the school has moved forward and is continuing to improve as developments bite.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Achievement is satisfactory. The disappointing results in the Year 2 and 6 tests in 2003 are now a remnant from the past and almost all pupils are making at least reasonable, and in some years good, progress. However, there is still a lot of catching up to do. Standards are below national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs do well against their targets because of effective support and pupils of all abilities achieve well in the Reception Year and Years 5 and 6 because of good teaching. However, speaking skills are too low and the most able pupils do not do well enough in Years 1 and 2. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve satisfactorily, although they do better in the Reception class, because in this class, teaching makes better use of assessment information to tailor the work for differently attaining pupils. **Pupils' personal qualities are good.** Their social and moral development is good and their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Attitudes and behaviour are good and attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, as are the teaching and learning. The best learning takes place in the Reception Year and Years 5 and 6. In the oldest classes teaching is rigorous and brisk, and brings learning to life. A huge amount of work is undertaken by pupils, which excites and challenges them well. In the Reception Year, there are interesting things for children to do and a clear focus on learning through observation and exploration. Throughout the school, relationships are very good, pupils understand what they are doing, and lessons are well prepared. Spelling is taught well, but writing is not sufficiently promoted through different subjects. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to develop their speaking skills or use ICT as a tool for learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well; their work is matched to their needs and their learning is good. However, because teaching has insufficient regard to what pupils already know and need to learn next, the most able do not do as well as they could in Years 1 and 2, and children's skills are not built systematically enough in the Nursery. The way in which staff care for pupils and involve them in making changes is good. The school has effective links with parents, other schools, and the community. The accommodation is unsatisfactory; the lack of a library has an adverse effect on pupils' reading skills and, in some areas of the school, unwanted noise disrupts teaching so that pupils lose concentration at times.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Governance is satisfactory and governors fulfil all but one of their statutory duties; there are some omissions in their annual report to parents. The leadership of the recently appointed head teacher is very good. He ensures that staff share a common purpose and has identified a clear way forward. Senior managers share his commitment to, and vision for, the school and are clear about their role in bringing about improvements. He and the senior managers have faced up to a difficult situation and identified and tackled the main weaknesses, dealing with them in order of importance. Teaching staff are now held accountable for the progress pupils make and senior staff are careful to deploy teaching assistants and additional teachers to support learning where it is needed most, for example in Year 6 as a short-term strategy for raising standards. Leadership in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and special educational needs is good, reflecting where the most successful and effective improvements have been made.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils are very happy with what the school offers them; they are happy to come and excited about what they do. Most parents echo their children's satisfaction, but some do not feel that they are kept well enough informed about how well their children are doing in literacy and numeracy because these subjects are not always taught by the class teachers. The school accepts their concerns and intends to explore ways it can improve the situation.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the use of assessment information in the Nursery and Years 1 and 2.
- Plan more effectively to improve pupils' speaking skills.
- Make sure writing is promoted through other subjects and ICT is used as a tool for learning.
- Improve the accommodation.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure the governors' annual report to parents contains all the information it should.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Most pupils achieve satisfactorily from starting school to leaving. Those with special educational needs make good and sometimes very good progress towards their individual learning targets. Children in the Reception Year and pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieve well, but the most able pupils in Years 1 and 2 and some children in the Nursery class do not do as well as they could. Standards in English, mathematics and science are below national expectations, reflecting pupils' attainment on entry.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in the Reception class and Years 5 and 6 and there is evidence of increased achievement in other years as improvements start to bite.
- Pupils learn the sounds of letters and words well and their reading and spelling skills are improving because of this.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in literacy and good progress in mathematics.
- In the Nursery, children's skills are not built as well as they could be over time, and in Years 1 and 2 the most able pupils do not attain high enough levels.
- Many pupils struggle to find the appropriate words to explain what they are doing, which impinges on their achievement across all subjects.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.1 (13.6)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.2 (13.5)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.3 (15.3)	16.2 (16.3)

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

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.8 (25.7)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.0 (27.2)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.1 (28.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. After a period in which the school's test results rose over time, standards fell in 2003 from below average to well below average in Year 2 and from above average to below average in Year 6. This was a period of considerable instability for the school and in 2004 results started to stabilise, and now, after some successful intervention strategies by the school's senior managers, supported by local authority consultants, there are signs of improvement.
2. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6. The most rapid progress is made in Years 5 and 6 due to good teaching. Here, the needs of the pupils are met well and most make good gains in their literacy, numeracy and scientific skills. As an immediate response to the need to stem

the decline in test results and raise standards, the senior managers reduced class sizes in Years 5 and 6 by targeting additional teaching support to these years. This means that pupils are taught in smaller ability groups for literacy, numeracy, and science, and has resulted in more effective teaching and learning, and pupils doing well. In addition, in order to ensure a more long-term impact on standards and after some slowing of progress was identified in Year 3 / 4 mixed classes, Years 3 and 4 were split into separate year groups and additional support put into Year 3, with an immediate impact on improving progress in both year groups. This year the school's value added data shows further improvements to pupils' achievements in these years and others too.

3. However, standards are greatly affected in all subjects by pupils' poor communication skills and not enough is done to alleviate the difficulties pupils have in explaining their thoughts. Throughout the school, many pupils struggle to find the right words to say what they mean and their understanding is often masked by their inability to explain things articulately enough. For example, Year 3 pupils struggled to explain how they had rounded up or down to the nearest 1000 in mathematics and Year 6 pupils could not find the right words to say why stones weighed less when immersed in water than when suspended in air. However, in both instances the pupils arrived at the correct answers, indicating that their understanding was better than their explanations showed. Poor speaking skills also impact detrimentally on standards in other subjects, such as when writing historical accounts and explaining processes in geography, which makes it difficult for teachers to assess the level of pupils' understanding. In contrast, the school has adopted a more structured approach to teaching spelling and because of this standards in reading in particular are rising rapidly as this improvement starts to bite.
4. Children achieve satisfactorily in the Nursery Year and well in the Reception Year and most attain the goals they are expected to reach in personal, social, emotional, and physical development; no judgement is made about standards in creative development. Although they achieve satisfactorily in communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world, and well in mathematics, standards in these areas of learning are below national expectations, reflecting children's attainment on entry to the Nursery class. However, children achieve more effectively in the Reception class than they do in the Nursery. This is because whilst they get off to a very good start socially in the Nursery class, there is insufficient focus on building their skills systematically over time. In contrast, in the Reception Year the work is tailored well to build on their previous learning, taking good account of what individual children already know, understand, and can do.
5. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is now satisfactory because the historical underachievement in these years has been successfully addressed. Improvements to the quality of teaching have resulted in the school's latest value added data, and the work seen in lessons and pupils' workbooks, showing that most pupils now make adequate progress in both years, although the most able are still not challenged sufficiently to reach above the expected level by the end of Year 2.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in literacy and well in mathematics. Teachers and teaching assistants working with these pupils are focused on the pupils' individual needs and give good support to their learning. This is helped by the school's effective inclusion policy that is founded on the fundamental principle that all pupils can improve, specialist training for staff, and the school's accurate assessments about what these pupils can and cannot do. This in turn means that the work builds pupils' learning in small steps over time. The work achieved by those pupils with significant autistic tendencies is good, and the school is working hard at helping these pupils to conform more to classroom routines, with the intention that they spend an increasing amount of time in the classrooms working alongside their classmates.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall; their social and moral development is good and their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils of all ages have good attitudes to school and behave well. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships throughout the school are good.
- Pupils are enterprising and willing to take responsibility.
- Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes develops children's personal and social skills very well.
- The school has high expectations for pupils' conduct and because of this and the pupils' interest in school, pupils behave well.

Commentary

7. Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are keen to come to school because they make friends, enjoy their lessons and have friendly and caring teachers and support staff. In classrooms most pupils listen carefully, concentrate, apply themselves well, and work hard. They want to please their teachers and so they participate enthusiastically in discussions and are keen to ask and answer questions. Those with severe learning difficulties are supported inside and outside the classrooms by well-trained support assistants, who have good regard to their complex learning difficulties, and do well even though some of these pupils, because of the nature of their disability, struggle to conform to daily routines. This affects their concentration at times.
8. The school expects pupils to behave well and show respect, and pupils respond well to these expectations. A focus on social skills in the Nursery and Reception classes ensures that the children develop very good relationships and show care and consideration for others. In the playground, pupils play well together without any aggressive behaviour. In lessons behaviour is good and sometimes very good.
9. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and to help others. They enjoy this and are proud of being monitors and school councillors. Pupils behave responsibly as they move around the school showing courtesy and respect to teachers and other adults. Parents and pupils say that any instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. There have been no recent exclusions but there were one permanent and four fixed period exclusions in the previous academic year. The decision to exclude these pupils was not taken lightly and was made in the context of ensuring the best interests of all pupils were met. All of the correct procedures were followed.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
200	4	1
2		
4		
2		
1		
1		
1		
31		

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

10. The school provides sound opportunities for pupils' spiritual development through assemblies, class discussions, lessons and the day-to-day life of the school. Pupils are expected to work hard and to persevere when things get difficult, and the school recognises and celebrates their achievements well. The head teacher's awards for good effort and positive attitude are given out regularly and act as an incentive for pupils to work hard and try their best.
11. The school's good provision for moral development ensures that pupils understand right from wrong, are sensitive to the feelings of others, and respond to these appropriately. Pupils of all ages are involved in making class rules and in raising money for charities and others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are currently collecting used bottle tops to help local people suffering from motor neurone disease. The idea for this came from a pupil, and the school council is also involved in charity fund-raising activities. The school's provision for developing pupils' social awareness is good. Pupils are treated in a warm and friendly manner by staff and this has a positive effect on their relationships with others. A range of after-school clubs and visits, including residential visits for Year 5 and 6 pupils, makes an effective contribution to pupils' social development. Pupils' social development is also enhanced by their involvement in sporting and cultural events such as the annual local arts festival.
12. The school's provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils experience their own culture through visits to the locality and through their studies in art and design, music, history and geography. The curriculum provides some opportunities for pupils to learn about the traditions and values of different cultures and pupils from different faiths talk about their beliefs to their classmates.
13. Attendance levels have improved recently and they are now near to the national average for primary schools. The school is working closely with the Education Welfare Service to try to improve attendance further, offering incentives for high attendance and punctuality.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.8	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The needs of most pupils are securely met and those of pupils with special educational needs are met well. However, the learning opportunities of the most able pupils in Years 1 and 2 are insufficiently challenging to enable enough of these pupils to reach above the nationally expected level. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good, and the school cares effectively for pupils' well-being. The school is good at seeking and acting on pupils' views, and its partnership with parents and its links with other schools and the community are good.

Teaching and learning

Although not as good as at the time of the last inspection, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in the Reception Year, Years 3 to 6, and for pupils with special educational needs, and satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is satisfactory overall, but with weaknesses in Nursery and Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching in the Reception Year and Years 5 and 6 results from good use of assessment information to tailor work to meet the needs of differently attaining pupils.

- Throughout the school, lessons are prepared well and good regard is given to national teaching guidelines.
- However, insufficient notice is taken of what children in the Nursery, and the most able pupils in Years 1 and 2, already know and what they need to learn next.
- Relationships are very good and pupils work hard to please teachers.
- There is some good teaching in English, and particularly of spelling, but insufficient opportunities in Years 1 and 2 for pupils to take part in investigative science work, slowing achievement.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well because the way in which the school organises their learning ensures that most of their needs are met effectively.
- Too many opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills are missed.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	4 (12%)	9 (27%)	17 (52%)	3 (9%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

14. Most pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory; they are good in the Reception Year and Years 5 and 6. Most of the good lessons seen during the inspection were in Years 5 and 6 and all of the very good ones were in the Reception Year and Year 6. In Years 5 and 6, teaching is rigorous, brisk, and successful because it brings learning to life. For example, in a Year 6 mathematic lesson pupils were challenged to beat their personal best score in a mental multiplication session; the pace was rapid, with no time wasted. A large amount of exciting and challenging work is done by the pupils and because of this their interest level is high and they achieve well. This is helped by the senior managers' decision to increase the number of teachers in Year 6 in order that pupils could be taught in attainment sets and in small groups. This has proved to be very effective, but has not diverted the school's attention away from finding an equally effective and possibly less costly strategy in the long term.
15. In the Reception class there is a variety of interesting activities and a clear focus on learning through observation and exploration. Teaching makes learning fun and exciting, focuses children on doing things, and challenges them to do their best by working hard. This results in children developing very good attitudes to learning, listening carefully, concentrating well and persevering with their tasks. The adults' focus on praise and developing children's self-esteem results in children becoming secure and confident learners and achieving well.
16. Throughout the school, pupils understand what they are to do and most tasks have suitable challenge. However, in Years 1 and 2 too often the most able pupils do more of the same thing rather than move on, or they start at a lower level than they need to, which wastes valuable time and slows their learning. This is because, whilst teachers make particularly good use of assessment information in the Reception Year and Years 5 and 6 and satisfactory use of it in Years 3 and 4, they make unsatisfactory use of it in the other years. In Years 1 and 2, teachers have good regard to what pupils of different ages should be taught and use the national subject guidance well to ascertain this. However, they have too little regard to the level at which it should be taught to different pupils and tend, as a result, to teach what the average attaining should be taught. Whilst they usually adapt it to a simpler level for the least able, they do not do this for the most able. These pupils 'tread water' and do not, therefore have the opportunity to reach the higher level of which they are capable.
17. In the Nursery class, there is very good provision for children's personal, social and emotional development and, because of this, children get off to a good start in this area of learning. However, whilst there are lots of exciting things for them to do in the Nursery class, too often learning takes place in incidental, unplanned ways. This is because the planning is not as thorough as it could be and it is not based on careful assessment of children's needs.

Although children learn to become independent by choosing which activity they would like to do next, because they are not guided frequently enough to those that will best meet their needs, they too often chose to do things they can already do and avoid those that would give them new or more refined skills.

18. Relationships in all classes are very good and teachers and teaching assistants work together well, particularly to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs. These pupils learn well in their own classrooms, when working alone with a support assistant, and when in the support room with a qualified teacher and teaching assistants. They make very good progress in literacy and good progress in mathematics. This is because the good knowledge that adults have of these pupils is used well to provide relevant work to move their learning on, which leads to pupils enjoying their work and making good progress. Those pupils who have specific reading difficulties enjoy hearing and reading stories, for example, and learn how to decode words and prompts to help them to spell. Pupils with significant autistic tendencies are supported well; the outcome is that these pupils complete a vast amount of work and make good progress over time. They spend a lot of time either working with support assistants outside the classrooms or in the support room, with the intention that, as time goes by and they learn to conform more to rules and routines, they spend longer periods of time in the classrooms.
19. Effective teaching of spelling patterns is having a good impact on standards in reading and writing. This is because of the innovative way in which the English curriculum is led and managed. However, the opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to take part in planning and carrying out scientific investigations are too limited. Although there are examples of pupils' speaking skills being developed, such as in a Year 6 English lesson when pupils had the opportunity to bounce ideas off their 'talking partner' before sharing with the rest of their classmates how they keep their feelings 'in check' even when angry, planned speaking opportunities are insufficient.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and balanced, and is enriched well through a good range of sports clubs in particular, visits and visitors. Learning resources are adequate, and the accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good; however, it is unsatisfactory for the rest of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for literacy has developed substantially, bringing about a rise in standards.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils have good opportunities to participate in sporting activities during and outside the school day.
- There is limited application of numeracy and ICT across subjects and insufficient opportunities for investigative science in Years 1 and 2.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

20. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school now meets the requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education, and provision for ICT is now satisfactory. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is firmly based on the nationally prescribed early learning goals. The outdoor facilities for these children are good, extending the scope of learning. However, the curriculum is not structured as well in the Nursery as it is in the Reception class, limiting the progress that children make.
21. The school's leadership has begun to track pupils' progress rigorously in literacy and numeracy, effectively analysing strengths and weaknesses in provision. This has led to rapid

development of the English curriculum in particular in order to address weaknesses in reading and writing. Reorganisation of the timetable and staffing has resulted in well-organised phonics sessions where, for a short time each day, pupils develop spelling strategies. This has contributed significantly to the good progress that most pupils are now making in writing and reading. However, in most curriculum areas there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to practise speaking skills. Pupils achieve less well in science in Years 1 and 2 than they do in Years 3 to 6 because too little time is allocated to the investigations strand of the subject.

22. The school is proactive in evaluating and improving curriculum provision and has recently achieved accreditation for 'Quality in study support'. This initiative has enabled staff to examine their individual teaching strengths and to gather the responses of parents and children through questionnaires. From September, there will be an even greater focus on enriching curricular provision, using the strengths and interests of all staff to develop the arts and extend the provision in sport further. This is indicative of the importance leaders are placing on enriching curricular provision. A breakfast club is also planned.
23. There is good provision for pupils' personal development. A time of reflection is built into the school day, enabling pupils to discuss issues and to listen to the views of others. This contributes significantly to the good attitudes and behaviour of most pupils. Sex and relationships education and drug awareness are taught appropriately. Provision for citizenship is good. Pupils in all classes contribute to issues raised at the school council meetings, and take on additional responsibilities in classrooms.
24. Pupils have good opportunities to take part in sport. The development of an extensive programme of extra-curricular sports activities and the use of visiting specialists have enabled the school to achieve the sport 'Activemark'. In addition, pupils in Years 1 to 6 take part in swimming lessons, further enriching provision. A residential field trip enables older pupils to participate in outdoor adventurous activities. There is satisfactory provision for the arts. The arts curriculum is fully in place but pupils rarely visit art galleries or work with visiting artists. There are two recorder groups, but other opportunities for learning to play a musical instrument are limited. A good range of visits and visitors enriches provision in other subjects, for example visiting a local bakery as part of a science topic. A play leader provides a range of activities at lunchtime to engage and interest pupils, contributing to pupils' social development and smoother running lunchtimes.
25. The school plans a good and effective range of learning opportunities for those pupils with special educational needs. The work these pupils do is well matched to their specific needs and intensive programmes ensure that they do well. The school has worked hard to use staff creatively, developing smaller, single-age classes in most year groups and in particular in Years 5 and 6. In these older classes, this allows pupils to be taught in ability sets for literacy, numeracy and science, enabling teachers to meet individual needs more effectively.
26. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. Because there is no school library, pupils' ability to develop research skills is reduced. There is no computer suite and not all classrooms have computers in them, limiting opportunities for whole-class teaching and for pupils to use ICT to support work in other subjects. A majority of the classrooms are small with limited storage space. This places pressure on teachers to be creative when grouping pupils and also results in a significant minority of classrooms being untidy. Although the school has gone some way to address this by erecting walls, there are still some areas where unwanted noise from elsewhere in the school affects pupils' concentration at times. Other areas of the school also have limited storage space, making resources less accessible.
27. Whilst wrestling with budget restraints, a satisfactory level of learning resources has been maintained. However, subject co-ordinators cannot replace resources as fast as they would like, for example in history and geography, and have to borrow or work creatively to ensure there are enough resources to support current teaching.

Care, guidance and support

Staff's attention to pupils' health and safety is sound and the school provides a good standard of care for its pupils. Support, advice and guidance for pupils are satisfactory overall and the involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel happy and safe knowing that they can trust their teachers and other adults working in the school.
- The school and class councils make an effective and valuable contribution to school life.
- Pupils have good access to guidance and support about personal matters.

Commentary

28. The school is a happy and caring community where pupils trust staff and enjoy working and playing together in an atmosphere free from bullying and harassment. The pupils enjoy school and feel that the teachers are kind and always willing to help and support them. In the questionnaires that they completed before the inspection pupils identified a wide range of things that they enjoy about the school and most had nothing that they would want to change, except for the condition of some of the toilet blocks.
29. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory. However, the governing body does not at present have a specific person with responsibilities for health and safety but this is due to be rectified. A health and safety inspection of the premises has been undertaken recently by an expert from the local education authority. All routine checks are carried out and pupils who are injured or taken ill at school are well cared for. Pupils who sustain an injury whilst at school are given a note detailing the nature and location of the injury. In response to parental concerns, these are now handed to parents where possible rather than being sent home in pupils' bags. There is a policy for ensuring safe use of the Internet.
30. The head teacher is the designated Child Protection Co-ordinator and another member of staff is to be trained to provide appropriate back-up. Teachers and support staff, including the mid-day supervisors, know what signs of possible child abuse to look for and what they should do if they have any concerns.
31. The school has a strong commitment to its pupils with special educational needs and has made best value use of the financial resources available. It has established effective arrangements for supporting and meeting the needs of these pupils, who achieve well. However, especially in the Nursery and Year 1 and 2 classes, teachers do not always use assessment data effectively enough to set appropriate targets for individual pupils and make them aware of what they need to do to achieve higher standards.
32. Pupils' views are valued and acted upon. The school council is an established vehicle through which all pupils have a genuine voice in the work and development of the school. Council members are elected by their classmates and ideas and suggestions are made and discussed at the regular meetings of the class councils. The school council has put forward ideas for the development of outdoor play facilities and its members feel that their views and ideas are respected, listened to and where possible accepted. The school council also raises money for school equipment by organising raffles and making and selling toys and games at the Christmas fair.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents, the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school keeps parents well informed about their children's work and progress.
- The school values parents as partners in their children's education and operates a genuine open door policy.
- The school's links with other schools and the community adds variety to pupils' learning opportunities.
- There are some statutory omissions in the governors' annual report to parents.

Commentary

33. The school's strong commitment to working with parents is demonstrated by the good range of facilities and activities it provides in an aim to involve parents as fully as possible. There is a pleasant and comfortably furnished room where parents can meet at the start and end of the school day and where a good range of courses and workshops is provided. There are also members of staff with specific responsibilities for liaising and establishing an effective partnership with parents. A recent development is the setting up of the parent support team which is intended to drive partnership with parents to even greater heights.
34. Most parents hold the school in high regard and appreciate the efforts of all staff on behalf of their children. They value the fact that teachers are always prepared to listen to them and expect their children to work hard and do their best. They are very pleased with the induction arrangements that help their children settle in quickly. They also appreciate the fact that their children enjoy school and are encouraged and helped to become mature and independent.
35. Parents themselves support their children by listening to them reading at home and ensuring that homework is completed and returned. A small but significant number help out in school on a regular basis. Others, through their hard work with the fund-raising group, support the school well by organising a range of entertaining events such as fairs, discos and other activities. These raise a significant amount of additional money which is put to good use by the school to benefit the children.
36. Parents are helped to assist their children's learning through a range of workshops on various curricular and other matters. The school also provides parents with advance information about the work their children will be covering. However, some parents have concerns about how well they are kept informed about their children's progress. The annual written reports they receive are of good quality. They are detailed and informative, telling parents clearly what their children can and cannot do and what they need to do next. They also celebrate pupils' strengths, progress and effort. However, because pupils are not always taught literacy and numeracy by their class teachers, parents say that, at the parent-teacher meetings, the class teachers do not always give a clear view about how well these pupils are doing in these subjects. This is a reasonable concern and one the school intends to address.
37. The school values the views of parents and collects these on a regular basis to inform the annual review of the school improvement plan. However, a small minority of parents feel that they could be better informed and consulted about what is going on and the school is currently seeking ways that it can improve its communication with parents. The governors' annual report to parents does not contain the school's targets for the Year 6 national tests, details of the attendance for the previous academic year, and an outline of the professional development undertaken by teachers.
38. The school's good links with other schools assist the smooth transfer of pupils to the next stage of their education, as well as providing opportunities for pupils to take part in a variety of activities including sporting events and art projects. Pupils also benefit from the expertise of secondary school staff in the arts, and visiting sports coaches; for example, a local football club has provided football coaching for the pupils. Links with a local bakery have provided opportunities for pupils to discover how bread is made, and some pupils have taken part in the annual Eastwood Arts Festival parade. French has also been added to the curriculum

throughout the school further enhancing the breadth of provision. All these experiences enhance the children's education and help to develop their social and personal skills.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. Leadership is very good, management is good and governance is satisfactory. The governing body meets its statutory duties fully.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher provides very good leadership because he has high aspirations and a clear view of the way ahead.
- The senior management team provides good leadership because it is taking a leading role in school development.
- Planning for school improvement is comprehensive and rigorous and focuses on the right issues to help drive up standards.
- The management of the school is good because arrangements for monitoring standards and quality are secure in most aspects of the school's work.
- Finances are used well, so the school makes the most of the money it has, but a budget deficit has slowed the rate of progress over time.
- The governing body is involved in checking aspects of the school's work, but is not involved as much as it could be in helping shape the school's direction.

Commentary

39. The head teacher provides reflective, purposeful leadership, which is increasingly effective in many areas because of his high aspirations, commitment and effective delegation. Whilst the length of his influence has been short, he has communicated his clear view of the way ahead and established a rigorous agenda so that all who have a vested interest in the school's development know what must be done to secure improvement. Despite inheriting a significant budget deficit on his appointment, which has limited the pace of progress, he has successfully overseen the introduction of systems and arrangements to improve provision and raise standards in many areas of the school's work, such as in English. Through his hard work, drive and determination to move the school forward, he has gained the respect of pupils, most parents, all staff, and the local education authority, who are all keen to make the school successful. Under his high quality leadership, the evaluation of introduced initiatives is increasingly embedded in the school's work to make the school more accountable in all areas, to help give pupils, whatever their needs, the best possible opportunities to realise their potential.
40. He is effectively supported by an able senior management team which he has empowered through training and support to lead the implementation of essential improvements. For example, at present the quality of subject leadership is unacceptably varied. It is good in some subjects, such as English and mathematics, developing in others, such as science, religious education and ICT, but still needs developing in the other subjects. However, through the good leadership of the senior management team, a successful 'buddy' system has been introduced to develop the role of these other leaders and make them more successful. As a result, their effectiveness is improving to help them gain an informed overview of what works well and what needs doing in order to help drive up standards.
41. Planning for school improvement is comprehensive and rigorous, and provides a clear, measurable agenda for improving achievement, teaching and learning. The school improvement plan is used well to determine the best use of available funding to support the priorities for school improvement. It is linked closely to the planned provision of training of teachers and support staff, which is given high priority, and the performance management arrangements, which are embedded in the school's work.
42. Systems are steadily being established to secure a rigorous approach to all aspects of monitoring and evaluation. The school's arrangements for evaluating its own performance are good. Pupils' performances in the national tests are rigorously analysed, weaknesses

identified, and strategies and approaches introduced to overcome them. For example, weaknesses in spelling are being addressed through the introduction of a successful whole-school initiative which pupils understand and enjoy. Pupils' progress is tracked increasingly carefully as they move through the school to help raise standards. The setting of individual targets by teachers to give pupils greater understanding of their learning is at an early stage of development. However, where it has been successfully introduced, such as in English, pupils know what they need to do next to improve, which is helping standards rise over time.

43. The committed governing body, led by an enthusiastic chair of governors, provides satisfactory support for the head teacher and carries out its statutory duties appropriately. Governors are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and some areas where it needs to improve. However, the governing body is not yet rigorous enough in checking aspects of the school's work and in holding the school to account for what it achieves or does not achieve. For example, there are no formal links with some subjects to help governors acquire knowledge and information from first-hand evidence to help them gain an informed overview of the school's work. As a result, governors are not as involved as fully as they could be in shaping the school's future direction. However, the governing body is steadily becoming more assertive and involved in the work of the school.
44. Regular monitoring of spending helps to ensure that the money allocated to the school is used to benefit pupils. Principles of best value are soundly applied, and the governing body is committed to ensuring that what it gets is wisely spent. The relatively new office staff work hard to familiarise themselves with administrative procedures to help ensure that the school runs smoothly and that day-to-day financial management does not impinge on teaching and learning. Financial control is good overall and tough decisions have been made to help reduce the deficit budget, caused by the school taking its eye off what it was spending, from minus £60,000 in September 2003 to around minus £20,000 by the end of March 2004. This was achieved because the head teacher and governing body quickly got a clear grasp of the situation and, with strong support from the local education authority, by March 2005 had reduced the deficit further to around £9,000. They have a clear current plan in place to reduce expenditure further and move out of deficit by the end of March 2006.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	783493
Total expenditure	742942
Expenditure per pupil	2794

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-61650
Balance carried forward to the next	-21099

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

45. The quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but some weaknesses in Nursery teaching, not seen at the time of the last inspection, result in too many children making less progress than they could in this class. Children now achieve better in the Reception class than in the Nursery because the provision is more effective. Nursery children are happy and busy but the activities provided do not have the same clarity of purpose and this limits the progress they make. Children with special educational needs receive effective support and make good progress.
46. Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses in provision and, with the support of the head teacher and other senior managers, is beginning to take effective action. Spending time in the Reception class each day, older Nursery age children now receive more structure to some aspects of their learning and have appropriate opportunities to reinforce this in the Nursery. This is working effectively so that liaison between the Nursery and Reception class is developing well and staff are beginning to work effectively together.
47. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and is closely aligned to the nationally prescribed early learning goals. Children experience a good range of worthwhile opportunities that increase the scope of learning. Provision for outdoor learning is good. Useful systems of recording and checking children's progress have recently been introduced enabling leadership to evaluate whether children are making sufficient progress and to take effective action.
48. Within both classes, all adults work as cohesive teams. Teaching assistants are energetic and actively engaged with children. This is strength of provision, supporting children very well. Induction arrangements are satisfactory overall. Each day parents accompany their children into the classroom, developing positive links between home and school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults work together as teams to meet the needs of children.
- Routines and rules are effectively established and children quickly understand what is acceptable.
- A good range of interesting activities develops children's independence.

Commentary

49. Children achieve very well in this area of learning because of very good teaching. Although they start school with limited confidence and concentration, most are on course to reach the early learning goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year.
50. By the end of the Reception Year, most children are enthusiastic learners, able to concentrate for good periods of time. Relationships are very good. Staff work as cohesive teams towards common goals so children have consistency of what is expected of them. Staff are very good role models, investing time and energy in this area. Hence most children form good relationships with their peers and any conflict is quickly resolved. Well-rehearsed routines at the start of sessions give structure to lessons, for example answering names or changing the

weather chart. Children develop a notion of stewardship by undertaking simple tasks such as taking the class register or tidying away.

51. All adults manage children very effectively, so children behave well and respect each other. In both classes children have good opportunities to make choices in their learning, developing good levels of independence. However, Nursery children sometimes have too many opportunities for free choice, rather than being challenged to undertake a specific activity. This means that they often choose to do things they can already do rather than those activities that could teach them a new skill. During the inspection, Reception children performed 'The enormous turnip' for parents and younger siblings, developing levels of confidence and esteem in a social setting. Opportunities to perform in various celebrations are given such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and Harvest, which help children to appreciate their own culture and those of others. Children develop social skills when receiving class visitors, for example the practice nurse.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the Reception class well-planned activities and effective small group provision support children very well.
- The teaching of letters and the sounds each letter makes is very effective.
- Opportunities to practise early literacy skills are missed in Nursery.
- In both classes, there are too few planned opportunities to develop children's speaking skills.

Commentary

52. Many children enter the Nursery class with poor communication skills. As a result of satisfactory teaching in the Nursery and good teaching in the Reception class most children achieve well enough, but due to the low starting base, less than half usually achieve the early learning goals in this area and standards are below those expected nationally by the end of Reception Year.
53. A real strength of provision is the rigorous approach to teaching and learning in the Reception class. Children are placed in small groups with knowledgeable staff who teach effectively the next stage of learning. Children then practise new skills in well-planned activities. A good range of additional activities, for example forming letters in dough, or sequencing a story, support learning well. All children are busy either consolidating or learning new skills, enabling them to achieve well. By the end of the Reception Year, most children form letters appropriately, and develop a notion of reading one word at a time, and a significant number are at an early stage of writing, beginning to use some letters in their work. The most able children confidently read simple texts and write sentences, developing confidence as readers and writers.
54. Nursery children frequently listen to stories and perform songs and nursery rhymes with enjoyment, but there are too few planned opportunities to develop children's speaking skills and limited opportunities to target small groups of children for early writing, handwriting and reading activities. Most children experience difficulties expressing their thoughts and have limited vocabulary. Whilst there is sound provision for speaking and listening as a class and in groups in both the Nursery and Reception class, there are few planned opportunities to focus on children's development in this area.
55. Summer birthday children have a good amount of catch-up to do in their one term in the Reception class, and this limits the amount of progress they make. Recent initiatives have begun to address these issues, so that children in their fifth term in Nursery now join the Reception class to learn letters and the sounds they make, and then practise these in the

Nursery. This is successful, so that by the end of the Reception Year, most children identify the initial sounds in words and a significant number spell simple words such as 'hat' or 'bus'. This initiative is also impacting positively on children's early writing and reading skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching in the Reception class enables children to achieve well.
- Children learn to count effectively in everyday situations.
- Teaching in the Nursery does not always cater well enough for children's differing abilities.

Commentary

56. Provision for mathematical development is satisfactory in the Nursery and very good in the Reception class. Children enter Nursery with broadly average counting skills. As a result of the overall good teaching, they make good progress over time and by the end of Reception most attain the early learning goal for counting. However, the well below average communication skills of most children affect their ability to solve simple number problems and less than half usually achieve the goal in this strand of mathematics. Nursery children have good opportunities to count in everyday situations, such as the number of candles on the birthday cake, or those present at registration. They sing number songs, for example 'Five little fire fighters', consolidating early counting skills. Adults in the Nursery spend time assessing children's early counting and number recognition, but do not regularly use this information to prepare tasks that build on children's current knowledge. This limits the progress they make.
57. Teaching in the Reception class is very good. A rigorous pace ensures that time is used well and children concentrate for good periods of time. Because the teacher uses correct vocabulary, children are beginning to use words such as 'add', 'equals' and 'zero' in their explanations. The teacher effectively demonstrates new skills and then children practise these in small groups supported by adults. This effectively reinforces learning, enabling children to achieve very well at these times. Children develop skills systematically because the teacher plans work that carefully builds on earlier learning. The teacher uses her good knowledge of children's attainment to match tasks closely to their needs. By the end of the Reception Year, most children count to 20 and recognise numbers to 10. A small number of high attaining children solve simple addition sums.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum focuses on practical tasks that suit children well.
- Good planning enables children to make links in their learning.
- Teachers do not plan well enough for the development of children's vocabulary.

Commentary

58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress, but poor speaking skills limit most children's ability to name and describe features of their world. Provision for children to design and make is good; for example, Reception age children constructed moving pictures of 'The enormous turnip', refining their joining and cutting skills. However, opportunities are missed for children to use computers, for example for counting and matching purposes.

59. Because the areas of learning are interlinked, children reinforce their knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, through the topic about 'people who help us', Nursery children used specialist equipment in the class hospital; they 'drove' a fire engine outdoors, and welcomed a visiting practice nurse. Those who choose to do these activities receive good support from adults who effectively lift the level of play. However, in both classes, teachers' planning does not always indicate the new vocabulary to be taught, missing opportunities to inform learning. For example, Reception class children identified wild flowers, but by the end of the lesson most could not name 'petal' or 'stem'. Good use is made of visitors to enrich provision; for example, children have handled baby rabbits and developed a sense of history through handling toys from the past. Outdoor facilities contribute significantly to this area. For example, there is good provision for planting and growing and spotting mini-beasts in the woodpile and wild areas. Reception age children take part in planning new activities, for example discussing what will be needed in the class baby clinic; this gives them understanding of and insight into their learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for outdoor play.
- Children's manipulative skills develop well through a good range of activities.

Commentary

60. Children enter the Nursery with average manipulative and physical skills. They make satisfactory progress through this class and the Reception Year so that most are on course to meet the expected goals by the end of Reception Year. Reception age children show sound control as they twist and stretch, and travel backwards and sideways. With help, they confidently balance along a plank. In both classes, most children are adventurous, climbing high on vertical bars. The outdoor provision contributes significantly to this area. There is space for children to steer and propel wheeled vehicles, and good opportunities for balancing, swinging and climbing.
61. Teachers plan a sound range of worthwhile activities to develop children's hand-eye co-ordination. For example, Nursery children drew circles and lines in shaving foam. In the Reception class, they confidently rolled and formed dough, and showed dexterity when clicking and combining construction materials for the class model village. However, in the Nursery, activities sometimes do not have clear learning intentions; for example, when painting and printing children lacked direction, limiting opportunities at this time.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

62. Owing to inspection priorities, no overall judgements were made about the provision in this area of learning. Children sing with reasonable tunefulness, showing real enjoyment at these times. In both classes there are good opportunities to take part in role-play, with a good level of resources and dressing-up clothes to develop imaginative play.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and those with special educational needs achieve very well.
- A wide range of strategies is helping to improve pupils' reading, writing and spelling, but speaking and listening are not given enough emphasis, the quality of pupils' handwriting is inconsistent and some aspects of reading are not promoted well enough.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 and 6.
- The subject is well led; plans for its continued development are rigorous and the co-ordinator is increasingly effective in moving the subject forward.
- Performance data is regularly analysed to help identify and overcome weaknesses, but is still not used well enough to help match work to pupils' precise needs in Years 1 and 2.
- Literacy skills are not emphasised enough in other subjects.

Commentary

63. Standards are below national levels overall at the end of Years 2 and 6; speaking and listening skills are well below national expectations at the end of Year 2 and below at the end of Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory over time and good in Years 3 to 6.
64. Pupils write for an increasingly wide range of purposes as they move through the school including letters, instructions, poems, book reviews, stories, play scripts and newspaper reports. When writing stories, they consider plot, characters and the structure of their writing. However, teachers give too little attention to extending pupils' vocabulary, to help them become more confident speakers and writers, and pupils rarely write extended stories or use ICT to draft or redraft their work. The school's approach to teaching handwriting, by encouraging pupils to join letters in Years 1 and 2, leads to wide variations in the quality of pupils' presentation. Spelling is now well taught. However, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to help pupils with the quality of their spelling by ensuring that dictionaries and thesauruses are always readily available.
65. The development of pupils' reading skills is given sound emphasis. Pupils learn to read with increasing fluency, accuracy, understanding and expression through a wide range of successful approaches, which include whole class and teacher-led group reading sessions. These approaches are helping standards to rise over time. However, the school is not uniformly successful in promoting a home-school partnership in reading, and the development of some aspects of reading is restricted due to the absence of a school library. For example, although older more able readers talk confidently about their favourite book, they rarely skim and scan non-fiction text to locate specific information because the development of research skills is not given enough attention. This is preventing some pupils from reaching the higher levels in reading. Research work is limited due to the absence of a library, which also restricts pupils' personal development.
66. Teaching and learning are sound overall, but with good features in Years 3 to 6, and especially in Years 5 and 6, where targeted teaching of pupils in smaller groups is helping standards to rise. Features of good teaching include a confident approach based on secure subject knowledge, good questioning of pupils, a brisk pace, high expectations, and good relationships, which successfully underpin learning. Teachers present a language-rich environment in their classrooms to help pupils acquire a love of language. Most marking is good, referring to pupils' individual targets to help secure the next steps in learning as well as celebrating their best efforts. As a result of these positive features, many pupils achieve well and have good attitudes to learning, especially in Years 3 to 6.

67. Overall, pupils make at least satisfactory gains in learning in all areas of the subject as they move through the school and good achievement is evident in Years 3 to 6 for many pupils, and for those with special educational needs in all years because individual support strategies are working well. These pupils complete a vast amount of work, especially given some of their specific and severe learning difficulties, and many of them make very good progress in writing in particular, given their previous attainment.
68. However, the most able pupils do not do well enough in Years 1 and 2. This is because work is not challenging enough to enable them to make best possible progress. Regular analyses of performance data carried out by the school support these findings. There has been a decline in standards in Years 1 and 2 over recent years. This has now been stemmed, mostly through effective subject leadership, although standards are not yet rising again.
69. Whilst improvement since the last inspection has been variable from year to year, on balance it has been satisfactory overall. Following a period of decline the school is keen to drive up standards again and has established a rigorous approach to its development to make this happen. For example, checks on teaching and learning through lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' books are helping to identify what works well and what needs doing and to ensure that pupils make best possible progress. The subject leader has successfully overseen the introduction of whole-school initiatives in reading and spelling which are starting to make an impact to help raise standards. The outcomes of National Curriculum tests are rigorously and regularly analysed to assess pupils' levels of attainment and to track pupils' progress from year to year. However, teachers are making better use of the information they have to plan the next stage of pupils' learning in Years 3 to 6 than they are in Years 1 and 2, where work is sometimes not matched to pupils' precise needs. Teachers usually set work at different levels of ability, but sometimes only on the basis of a general appreciation of pupils' differing abilities and not on the basis of pupils' recent attainments. Consequently, there are times when work is too easy for the more able pupils, mostly in Years 1 and 2, which restricts their learning.
70. Many pupils enter school with a limited vocabulary and little confidence in the spoken word. As pupils move through the school, teachers place sound emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills, such as through the well-led questioning of pupils, drama sessions, such as in religious education, and discussion sessions, such as in 'philosophy' in Year 6. However, approaches to the development of speaking and listening do not have a high enough profile to help pupils become confident and articulate speakers by the time they leave school. For example, the use of 'talking partners' is inconsistent in English lessons and in other subjects, and role-play situations, drama activities and debate, while evident, are not used enough to help pupils to speak confidently and clearly.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

71. This is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write as part of their work in other subjects. In subjects such as religious education, geography and history, there are too few examples of pupils' extended writing, which restricts progress. The use of literacy skills across the curriculum has been identified for development to establish a planned programme and this is needed to help raise standards further.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recently introduced systems for assessing and tracking pupils' performance are enabling the school to focus more closely on the attainment and progress of groups and individuals and to take effective action to bring about further improvement.

- The quality of teaching is good in Years 5 and 6.
- Assessment information is not used well enough to raise achievement for the most able pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to apply ICT skills to their work in mathematics.

Commentary

72. Achievement is satisfactory over time, with pupils making good progress in Years 5 and 6. Whilst a similar number of pupils at this school to most other schools reach the nationally expected level by the time they leave the school, too few reach the higher level, depressing standards overall to below average. Following a period of declining results, rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning, tracking pupils' progress over time and addressing weaknesses, has effectively halted this decline and things are improving again. Most classes now have single age groups, and a significant number have smaller pupil numbers. These initiatives are beginning to impact on pupils' achievement and standards are rising. Additional staffing has enabled the grouping of Years 5 and 6 pupils by their level of attainment, enabling teachers to provide work more closely aligned to pupils' needs. This, together with consistently good teaching in these classes, is enabling pupils to achieve well. Whilst pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is still below what it could be, more pupils are now on course to attain the higher level in the national tests.
73. Because the current generation of Year 2 pupils entered school with well below average attainment, current standards indicate satisfactory achievement over time. Twenty per cent of pupils in this cohort have special educational needs. This, together with too few pupils attaining the higher level in national tests, results in standards overall being well below the national average. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school due to the carefully targeted support they receive. Careful consideration is given to how the learning of these pupils can be built systematically over time and because of this they make good progress.
74. Pupils' below average speaking and literacy skills by Years 2 and 6 affect the progress they make. For example, most pupils have difficulty verbalising the steps they have used to make calculations. This limits opportunities to consolidate learning through explanation and affects their mental agility when solving written problems.
75. Teachers now regularly assess pupils' knowledge and understanding at the end of each mathematical topic. However, particularly in Years 1 and 2, the information gained from these assessments is not used well enough to provide new work that more closely matches the differing needs of pupils. Because lower attaining pupils are given additional support they can usually complete their tasks successfully and with good understanding because things are explained to them, they have the opportunity to repeat work, and their learning is consolidated. However, the most able pupils lack challenge because they frequently complete the same work as their classmates – a key reason why too few pupils achieve the higher level in national tests.
76. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 5 and 6 where lessons move at a swift pace and no time is wasted. In these years, good assessment informs the learning well so that the work carefully matches pupils' needs. Pupils are taught the skills they need prior to undertaking new work, supporting their learning well. Teachers provide challenging problem-solving activities that enable pupils to apply number operations in interesting ways. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils used their knowledge of algebraic equations to calculate relationships between differently sized tiles. The work involved the use of fractions, decimals, multiplication and addition, consolidating pupils' knowledge and enabling them to apply skills in context. All teachers manage pupils effectively so that pupils behave well, and listen respectfully to others. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning; they are enthusiastic and concentrate and persevere for good amounts of time.

77. Leadership is good. Although improvement since the last inspection has been barely adequate overall, recent improvements have been effective because of the support the co-ordinator has had from the school's leaders in finding out what was going wrong and why test results were declining, and bringing about improvements. The tracking of pupils' progress and setting realistic targets are making teachers more accountable and are bringing about improvements in the rate of progress pupils make. It also enables the school's leaders to evaluate pupils' achievements more carefully and to pursue and eradicate emerging issues. Pupils' strengths and weaknesses in national tests have been evaluated and effective action taken. For example, in response to a weakness in pupils' use and application of mathematical skills, staff have undertaken training in problem-solving techniques and resources and guidance provided to support this aspect. Across the school, most pupils now have satisfactory opportunities to use calculating skills in problem-solving situations.

Mathematics across the curriculum

78. Provision is satisfactory. Pupils have some opportunities to apply mathematical skills to work in other subjects, such as devising timelines in history, but there is room for further improvement, for example adding measurements to design intentions in design and technology lessons. The use of ICT is unsatisfactory. Teachers provide few opportunities for pupils to record their results using computer-generated graphs and tables, or to practise and revise numeracy skills using classroom computers.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good in Year 6.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn well through investigative work, but this does not happen enough in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils' weak language skills mask their understanding in science and depress standards in the national tests.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT in science.
- The subject is now receiving focus and there is a clear way forward, but the school still relies on pupils catching up in Year 6.
- Visits are used well to interest and enthuse pupils and enhance their learning.

Commentary

79. Standards are below the nationally expected levels in Years 2 and 6. However, this reflects pupils' below average attainment at the start of Year 1 and most pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 6. The quality of teaching is sound overall, but is more effective in Years 3 to 6 than it is in Years 1 and 2.
80. Good teaching in Year 6 stimulates pupils' enthusiasm for science. Lively lessons based on investigation capture pupils' interest and make them want to find answers to questions, such as "What makes the helium-filled balloon suspend motionless in mid-air when paper clips are tied to its string?" and "Why does the stone weigh less in water than in air?" In this class and others in Years 3 to 6, there is very good language promotion and an expectation that pupils will use scientific words in their oral and written responses to questions and explanations. However, despite teachers' good examples, many pupils struggle to explain things, although often it is clear from what they do that they understand the scientific concept being explored. Their grammar is inaccurate, however, and their words are imprecise; not enough is done throughout the school to improve them.

81. There is a good emphasis in Years 3 to 6 on investigation and using visits to enhance learning. Pupils, for example, in Year 4 visited the local nature reserve and brought back snails and woodlice. They then created different habitats in the classroom to see which they preferred, such as wet leaves for them to crawl under and rotting wood for them to burrow into. They placed snails in containers with different foods to see which they preferred, always with good regard to the creatures' safety.
82. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 are good at drawing ideas from pupils such as what to test and how to test it. However, this does not happen enough in Years 1 and 2. Although pupils in these years, for example, observe plants growing and set seeds to see what they need in order to grow and survive, the work is very directed and few ideas come from the pupils, limiting the development of their scientific enquiry skills. For example in a Year 1 lesson, pupils stood celery sticks and cut flowers in dyed water to see where the liquid goes. They carried out the investigation in unison, following the teacher's instructions. They were told how to record what they saw, but the most able would have benefited from deciding for themselves how to record the results.
83. Although some, but not all, classrooms have computers, these are rarely used to support work in science. This means that pupils do not sufficiently choose to record their findings on computer databases, or write up an investigation using a word-processing package. This is because they do not understand the use of computers as a tool to aid learning.
84. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory, but management systems are under-developed. The declining trend in test results at the end of Year 6 since 2002, when they peaked to an all-time high, has been stemmed. However, the school is not in as secure a position as it was at the time of the last inspection and improvement in the subject has been unsatisfactory. This is because its focus has been on raising standards in English and mathematics and most of its energy has have been put into improving provision in these subjects. The senior managers are now getting to grips, however, with what is happening in science and they, and the subject leader, are starting to form a clear view about what needs doing. They have carried out a very good analysis of pupils' learning at the end of Year 5 so that they can address the gaps during Year 6. This year they have targeted support for these pupils in the run up to the tests as a short-term solution to increasing the number of pupils attaining the nationally expected level and above. However, whilst this is proving successful in the short term, they are not complacent and realise that it would be unrealistic to sustain this costly strategy in the long term. Because of this, they are currently putting in place longer-term strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning from Year 1 onwards, such as making teachers accountable for the amount of progress pupils make each year.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a good idea of the usefulness of ICT in the world outside school.
- The school has a useful bank of laptop computers, but not enough computers around the school to enable pupils to use them, as they feel fit, as a tool for learning.
- Computers are used well to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information to tailor work to meet the needs of differently attaining pupils.

Commentary

85. The school has suffered from immense problems with hardware since the last inspection. Dated and defunct machines in classrooms and in the computer suite could not be replaced because the school has been operating for the last two years within the context of an

abnormally large budget deficit. In addition, shortage of teaching space has meant that the computer suite has been dismantled to create a much needed additional classroom. To go some way to compensating for this, the school has bought a bank of laptops. However, these laptops have wireless connections that do not always work, often making it difficult and extremely time-consuming for pupils to connect to the Internet, or to retrieve and save their work. Fraught with difficulties the school has done well to maintain the, albeit, below average standards that pupils reached at the time of the last inspection.

86. Despite these barriers to improvement and learning, pupils with special educational needs made good use of personal laptops, for example to hold their interest or to help them with reading and writing. The achievements of other pupils are satisfactory because of sound teaching. Improvement since the last inspection has been adequate. At that time, the school was failing to meet statutory requirements in ICT, but this has been dealt with. The school now has sufficient equipment to deliver the curriculum, including digital cameras, data-loggers, and a computer-linked microscope. Although there are currently no interactive whiteboards to support teaching and learning, some have been ordered.
87. Subject leadership is sound. The school's focus has been on raising standards in literacy and numeracy and although the senior managers have made tracks to improve things in ICT, they are well aware that much more needs to be done. No one currently checks on the quality of the teaching and learning and because of this the action plan for further development focuses on replacing and enhancing hardware rather than on what can be done to improve teaching and learning. Assessment is developing, however, and the subject leader has devised an effective way for teachers to record pupils' achievements. However, as yet, insufficient use is made of the information to adapt the work for differently attaining pupils. This means that most pupils start a lesson at the same point and move along together and that instead of going onto the next step the more able pupils do more of the same.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

88. Although this is unsatisfactory overall, Years 5 and 6 pupils' awareness of ICT as a useful tool is good. Pupils in a Year 5 lesson, for example, explained how computers "can help to see what happens when building a car or an aeroplane" and "can simulate how a building might be affected by gales". Year 6 pupils have designed playground rides on computer and rotated them in order to check their designs from different angles. However, insufficient use is made of ICT in Years 1 to 4. This is partly because most classrooms do not have computers and pupils in those that do, do not use them. This is because the machines do not always work properly; time is then wasted trying to get them to function effectively. This means that pupils cannot go to a computer to, for example, check grammar or spellings or to record a piece of work.

HUMANITIES

89. Inspectors saw no lessons in either **history** or **geography**. Nor was there enough evidence from pupils' books and wall displays to form secure judgements about teaching, learning, standards or provision in either subject. Limited inspection findings indicate that geography and history are appropriately represented across the school. For example, in geography Year 2 pupils compared life in Eastwood with that on the imaginary island of Struay while Year 6 pupils studied mountain environments across the world. In history, Year 2 pupils, in a good link with literacy, wrote about the Great Fire of London while older pupils studied the lives of famous people in the Tudor period, such as Sebastian Cabot and John Hawkins.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assemblies are closely linked with the religious education syllabus and have a strong moral theme, which makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- There are too few visits, visitors and artefacts to help bring the subject to life for pupils, as at the time of the last inspection.
- There are good plans in place to move the subject forward.

Commentary

90. Overall standards are below those set out in locally agreed guidelines. However, pupils' progress over time is satisfactory and pupils learn both about and from religion as they move through the school. This is because teaching and learning are satisfactory, the subject is soundly led, and it is appropriately represented in the school's curriculum. For example, by the end of Year 2, pupils know about the Ten Commandments and consider the importance of rules in school. By the end of Year 6, they compare aspects of Christianity with Islam and consider sensibly how some of the sayings of Muhammad relate to their own lives. As pupils move through the school, they acquire knowledge of Christianity, and begin to apply what they are learning about to their daily lives.
91. The subject is secure within the school's planning and the school has improved its provision well over time. Unlike at the time of the last inspection enough work is now recorded by pupils to enable teachers to accurately assess what pupils know and understand. Also, Christianity is given greater emphasis than at the time of the last inspection and religious education is particularly well represented in Year 3. In this year pupils compare Christian and Hindu stories, learn about faith in a study of Martin Luther King, and discover what kind of person Jesus was.
92. Teaching and learning are satisfactory on balance, but with some unsatisfactory teaching that is depressing standards unnecessarily. It is at its best when the use of artefacts helps bring the subject to life, as seen in a Year 1 lesson when pupils looked at artefacts from the Jewish faith and learnt what it was each one symbolised. It is at its worst when work is not matched to pupils' needs, the pace of the lesson is too slow and pupils are engaged in activities which do not contribute to their religious understanding, and when pupils are asked to draw pictures and colour them in before writing a religious story. In addition, undemanding worksheets are sometimes used which slows the pace at which pupils learn.
93. Assemblies, such as the 'Golden Book' ones and daily reflection times, have a strong moral theme. Pupils consider a wide range of issues, which contribute to their understanding of religion. For example, they learn about fairness, friendship and the importance of courtesy, care and consideration for others. Older pupils discuss issues such as "What is wisdom?" As a result, the subject makes a good contribution to their personal development.
94. However, religious education does not make a good enough contribution to pupils' cultural understanding. This is because, despite the good visit to Southwell Minster involving pupils in Years 3 to 6, there are too few visits, visitors and artefacts to bring the subject to life, as at the time of the last inspection. As a result, the subject is not preparing pupils well enough for life in a multi-cultural society.
95. The subject is soundly led, and there are clear plans for its further development. The subject leader is being well supported by the school's senior managers to help raise the profile of religious education across the school. Resources have been extended to help support teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are to be reviewed and new teaching guidelines are to be introduced later in the year to ensure that pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding systematically.
96. Links with other subjects are evident, such as with art and design, as pupils depict Jesus on the Cross, and history, but these require further development. Teachers give too little attention to the development of literacy skills in religious education. However, good links exist, such as

when pupils use play scripts to write the story of Christmas for Christians while others learn about Rama and Sita through drama.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

97. No teaching and learning were seen in these subjects to form judgements about the provision overall. Small parts of lessons were observed, pupils' work was examined and discussions with staff took place.
98. Standards in **art and design** are typical of what is expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. Teachers ensure that pupils develop skills in a consistent way, often building up knowledge and understanding over a period of time. For example, Year 2 pupils examined the work of William Morris before simplifying and enlarging shapes of pinecones. During the inspection this was extended to paper collage with pupils choosing initial shapes and then layering to build the sections of a cone. They worked with enthusiasm and good understanding. All aspects of the art and design curriculum are covered over time and include print, use of textiles, and sculpture. Teachers use pupils' skills in art to enhance work in other subjects; for example, in history work, Year 4 pupils designed and constructed badges for Boudicca. Pupils use ICT appropriately for computer-generated art and to visually enhance their work in other subjects. However, there are few opportunities for visiting artists to work with pupils, thus reducing opportunities to enrich provision further. Pupils rarely visit art galleries to enhance and inspire their learning.
99. Standards in **design and technology** are broadly at nationally expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils develop appropriate 'design and make' skills as they move through the school. Teachers frequently plan work that links to an overall topic, enabling pupils to use their skills for a real purpose. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 designed Viking longboats as part of their work in history. Some teachers plan a design project that builds carefully over a period of time, but this is not a consistent feature. Good practice was seen in Year 5. Pupils examined a range of toys prior to labelling the mechanisms for movement, examining varying spindles and cams. They generated detailed design intentions of how the mechanisms would work, listed materials, and drew up an order of work. The finished results closely resembled design intentions. However, opportunities are missed to apply measurements to designs.
100. No **music** lessons were observed, but pupils' standards of singing are appropriate for their ages. Most pupils sing with reasonable tunefulness and good levels of enthusiasm. Music currently has a low profile in the school and is an area highlighted for development in the school improvement plan. There are two recorder groups, but no other opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments.
101. No judgement is made about standards in **physical education** at the end of Year 2 but they are at the expected level by the end of Year 6. Good coaching of basic skills enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily. Pupils have a sound understanding of fielding skills and games' strategies. All pupils enjoy a short programme of swimming lessons each year enabling them to develop confidence as swimmers as they move through the school. The school has worked hard to achieve the Activemark for sport. This has entailed extending provision beyond the school day. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities such as athletics, cricket and netball clubs, and also to participate in competitive sporting activities in the community. Visiting specialists enhance the provision further. There are good links with the local secondary school whose visiting teachers support the physical education curriculum. Older children take part in a visit to a residential centre, providing good opportunities for outdoor adventurous education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

102. This school provides well for pupils' personal, social and health education. This is because, as well as discrete timetabled lessons, it is embedded in the pupils' day-to-day lives and cuts across all subjects. The school council is well established, for example, and gives pupils a

good forum for influencing what goes on and instigating change. The general belief that everyone should be treated fairly is reflected in the class rules and the premise that it is most successful to “learn in peace and quiet” is reiterated by pupils in discussion.

103. Effective relationships between teachers and pupils in Years 5 and 6 in particular means that mature discussions take place, for example about how to deal with feelings such as those of anger and disappointment. Pupils talked comfortably about how they react to different events and things people say to them and, although they sometimes got their phrases wrong, they expressed with feeling their belief about life being full of “ups and downs” and how to deal with this in different ways.
104. Pupils are encouraged to act independently and to think for themselves. For example, when some pupils in Year 1 asked their teacher during a science lesson, “Does one of us put in the celery and then the other put in a follower and so on?” the teacher responded with, “You need to work as a group to decide who does what”. However, this is not as well developed as it might be if further thought were given to promoting it intentionally, such as through scientific investigative work, rather than incidentally.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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