

INSPECTION REPORT

MILTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Milton

LEA area: Stoke on Trent

Unique reference number: 123984

Headteacher: Mr P Giliker

Lead inspector: Mr R Burgess

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th June 2005

Inspection number: 267330

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 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	286
School address:	Leek Road Milton Stoke on Trent Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST2 7AF
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	G Regan
Date of previous inspection:	11 th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Milton Primary School is situated in Milton to the north east of Stoke on Trent. It is bigger than most schools, with 286 pupils on roll, aged between three and eleven years. The school serves the immediate community but also admits pupils from a wider area. The pupils come from a range of social backgrounds. The school admits children at the beginning of the school term after their third birthday. Pupils' attainment on entry is average, although a wide range of attainment is evident and there have been very wide fluctuations between different year groups over recent years. The majority of pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. There is one pupil with English as an additional language. Sixteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average. Three children have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is below average. There is one pupil who has joined the school recently and speaks English well. The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is below average. The school received a School Achievement Award in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. Pupils achieve well and most attain standards in English and mathematics which are above the national averages by the end of Year 6. Teaching and learning are good, with some very good features resulting in good learning in lessons. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management by the headteacher are very good and he is very well supported by his deputy.
- Most of the teaching is good, with a high proportion of very good teaching; as a consequence pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school.
- The quality of presentation is often unsatisfactory and detracts from the overall quality of pupils' work.
- Pupils' views are sought and responded to very well; as a result they are confident and readily take on responsibility.
- There is a very good range of activities outside of lessons.
- Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is very good and as a result they achieve very well.

The school was last inspected in January 1999 and has made a good improvement since then, effectively addressing all the issues raised. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are now average and provision is much improved. Assessment is used well to inform pupils how they can improve and to inform the teachers planning of future work. Provision for children in the Reception Year is now good.

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	C	A	C
Mathematics	B	A	B	D
Science	A	A	C	D

*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 good throughout the school as seen during the inspection. The results in national tests in 2004 reflect the impact on pupils' achievement of the use of temporary teachers to cover several long-term absences. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve very well. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well. Standards in the Reception classes are satisfactory in all areas of learning seen, except in their personal and social development which is good. The children currently in the Foundation Stage are achieving well including children who joined the school at the start of the Reception Year whose standards were mainly below those expected. Year 2 pupils achieve well; standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics are above average. They are average in science and ICT. Year 6 pupils achieve well; standards are above average in English and mathematics, average in science because of insufficient development of investigational skills and average in ICT. In religious education, standards by Year 2 and Year 6 meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The progress of pupils has been adversely affected by a significant number of long-term absences of staff over the last four years. When the impact of staffing changes and the differing numbers of pupils with learning difficulties are taken into account, standards are rising throughout the school.

Pupils' personal development is good. The provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils behave well in class and most have positive attitudes to school. The staff have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and teach well the differences between right and wrong. The pupils like coming to school. Most are punctual. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. There is a considerable amount of very good teaching throughout the school. This is resulting in good learning and rising standards throughout the school. There is good use of support staff. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve very well and those who have English as an additional language achieve well.

The quality and range of the curriculum are very good in the Nursery and Reception classes, and good elsewhere. Activities outside of lessons are very good. Throughout the school, pupils with potential difficulties are identified early and given very good levels of support. Pupils make very good progress towards their individual targets. The care, support and guidance provided for pupils are very good. Links with parents are very good. Links with the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher shows very good leadership and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. The contribution of other senior staff is good. There is a shared vision and determination throughout the school to improve standards and the quality of educational provision. Governance of the school is good. Governors are a committed team who know and understand the school and give strong support to the work of the staff as they strive to improve the school. There is a continuing review of the way the school is heading and the work of the school is regularly looked at and evaluated. The school has satisfactory resources, which are used effectively for the benefit of all its pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The questionnaires and comments received from parents were positive and supportive of the school. Responses from pupils indicate a high level of pride in their school. They feel they are given good opportunities for taking responsibilities and are listened to when sharing their views with staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- improve the presentation of pupils' work by setting expectations and improving the standards of handwriting.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The good quality of education provided by the school enables pupils to make good progress in most subjects. Standards are above average in English and mathematics and achievement is **good**. The pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school acts very effectively to identify and act upon any lowering of standards.
- Standards of attainment are above average by Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Whilst marking is often of a high quality it is not used to improve standards of presentation.

Commentary

1. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is broadly average. When children start in the Nursery there is a wide range of ability. This varies from year to year. Children achieve well and most, including those who join at the start of the Reception Year with below average levels of attainment, are likely to meet the goals expected in most areas of learning except in their personal, social and emotional development which is likely to be above average. Overall the Nursery and Reception classes give children a good basis for their future progress.
2. There has been good improvement in standards since the last inspection due to the school's efforts in addressing areas for development, for example in ICT. Following national tests in 2003 the school acted effectively to tackle a drop in standards of English and similarly in mathematics in 2004 in Year 6. The school sets itself high but realistic targets both for continuous improvement in provision and for pupils' performance, which have been met in recent years.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.9 (16.4)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.1 (15.3)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.5 (16.3)	16.2 (16.3)

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

3. The table above demonstrates that the results of national tests in 2004 for seven year olds compared with all schools placed the school well above average in mathematics, above average in reading and average in writing. Compared with schools with a similar intake, pupils were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (26.7)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.0 (29.4)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.4 (30.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. The table above demonstrates that the results of national tests in 2004 for eleven year olds compared with all schools placed the school well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. Compared with schools whose pupils attained similarly in Year 2, pupils were average in English but below average in mathematics and science. Data shows their progress slowed down during their first two years in junior classes. This can be traced to a period when the school experienced staffing difficulties including periods of long-term absence of permanent members of staff and disruption to learning. Lesson evidence and their work in Year 6 shows these pupils have recently made much quicker progress and are now achieving well.
5. There were no significant differences between girls and boys in mathematics and science, or between the performances of different ethnic groups. The school has recognised that girls were making quicker progress than boys in their writing and often attaining higher standards. The school has introduced actions through the curriculum to address this and while the overall discrepancy remains, recent pupil data shows the gap is closing. All groups of pupils are treated equally and do equally as well as each other. Inspection evidence shows that higher attaining pupils achieve well in relation to their previous levels of attainment.
6. Over the last four years there has been a variable trend in results for Year 6 pupils, reflecting different cohorts. Evidence made available to the inspection team confirmed this. Since 2002 the overall trend for pupils in Year 2 tests has been rising.
7. The inspection of pupils in Year 2 confirmed above average attainment in reading and writing and mathematics. Scrutiny of work and assessment data confirmed good achievement by these pupils. In Year 6 standards are above average and achievement in English, mathematics and ICT is good. The good teaching seen during the inspection is helping to overcome a fall in standards of achievement in the previous years due to the high number of long-term absences of permanent members of the teaching staff. In science standards are average because there is not sufficient development of pupils' investigational skills. Where there was sufficient evidence for the other subjects, including religious education, pupils' performance was average, and achievement was satisfactory.
8. The scrutiny of pupils' work provided evidence of thorough marking of pupils' work with good advice on how pupils can improve but there was little comment on the standard of presentation which often detracted from the overall quality of pupils' work.
9. Pupils with special educational needs and those who were still at the early stages of learning English achieve very well because they have well-written individual education plans with clear targets for the next steps in their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good** overall. Pupils develop **good** attitudes and values. Behaviour is good overall and most pupils behave well. Attendance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is good overall and most pupils behave well in and around school; a few pupils displayed challenging behaviour.
- Pupils are happy at school, get on well with each other and have good attitudes to learning.
- There is good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- Rates of attendance are above the national average.

Commentary

10. As at the time of the last inspection, the school places a strong emphasis on teaching good attitudes to learning and to understanding the need to behave well. These aims are largely achieved for the greater majority of pupils, who respond very well to the expectations of members of staff. Pupils say they are happy at school, their opinions are highly valued. A few pupils displayed challenging behaviour evidenced by the larger than average temporary exclusions, as high expectancies are beyond a few pupils who may not fully understand the requirements of the clear behaviour code. The exclusions relate to a very small number of pupils who all had identified behavioural difficulties. Correct procedures were followed at all times during the exclusion process and appropriate support and guidance offered to these pupils with the help of outside agencies. Pupils share well in the playground and co-operate well in lessons.
11. Pupils generally have good attitudes to learning but the care in the presentation of their work is unsatisfactory. They willingly accept a number of monitor duties as well as taking part in well-established class and general councils. Pupils enjoy good relationships with each other and with all staff; this gives them a very high degree of confidence and self-esteem.
12. Pupils who have special educational needs show very good attitudes to learning. In an ICT lesson a pupil who is receiving support for social emotional and behavioural aspects of learning was fully engrossed when responding to prompts on an interactive game.
13. Pupils are always very well supervised; there is thus a calm and happy atmosphere. They are polite to visitors. In the Reception, children's achievements in personal, social and emotional development are good; children learn school routines quickly because members of staff lead by example and ensure a happy and calm atmosphere during their time in the school. A very interesting range of activities enables children to become independent in making choices and encourages them to explore their environment.
14. Pupils are given very good opportunities to take responsibility. The very active school council is very well supported by the school and as a result pupils on the council feel confident to undertake surveys and questionnaires, so that decisions may be taken to improve aspects of school life, an example being a curriculum survey. They propose charitable collections. These activities help them to develop an understanding of the responsibilities of living in a community. The school listens very carefully to the pupils' views.
15. The school promotes well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the good provision contained in the last report has been maintained. Because of the themes of assembly and in lessons, pupils develop an awareness of spiritual knowledge. The school successfully develops a keen interest amongst pupils in their local environment and through good use of the environmental area in the school grounds pupils develop a sense of awe and wonder of the natural world. There are fewer opportunities for them to celebrate the cultural diversity of society in visits or visitors who provide insights into different cultures.

Attendance

Attendance is above the national average; pupils are keen to come to school. Most arrive punctually. Parents support the school well in that they ensure their children are not absent without good reason.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	282	9	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **good**. Teaching and learning are good overall with very good features. Provision for pupils with specific learning needs and with English as an additional language is very good. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are good and its enrichment is very good. There is very good provision overall for pupils' support, care and guidance. Links with parents are very good, and with the community and with other schools good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**, with some very good features. This is a great strength of the school in helping to raise standards and represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-prepared lessons keep pupils focused on the task so that they learn basic skills and facts at a good rate.
- Very good use of support staff has a positive impact on pupils' learning, especially for those with learning difficulties.
- Assessment and recording procedures in the school are good and used well to help pupils understand how they can improve but marking does not set clear standards and expectations for the presentation of work.
- In a small number of lessons the management of pupils' behaviour is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	9 (26%)	17 (49%)	7 (20%)	1 (3%)	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.

16. In Nursery and Reception, all staff effectively support individual and group activities and make a significant contribution to helping the children to behave well and concentrate on the carefully planned learning tasks. All the adults help the children to feel secure, gain confidence and communicate well with others. Good arrangements are in place to check what the children know, understand and can do and the information is used to plan the next steps children need to take in their learning.

17. Teaching and learning across the school for pupils in Years 1 to 6 are good in most lessons. The basic skills are taught well. This reflects the high priority that is given to providing in-service training for staff. Teachers have a very good understanding of how best to support pupils with special educational needs. They consistently employ good strategies to ensure that all pupils can access the curriculum. A focus on the development of subject-appropriate vocabulary is also in evidence in lessons in most other subjects; key vocabulary is shared with pupils, explained to them and reinforced throughout the lesson. Lessons focus on what pupils will learn and the skills they will use to learn effectively. In many numeracy lessons this involves pupils explaining the strategies they have used to reach their answers.
18. Teachers include a good range of activities to consolidate and extend understanding. Staff work hard together to ensure that lessons are of a consistently high standard, that there is a focus on what pupils will learn, and that the process is thoroughly reviewed in the search for improvement. Lessons begin with teachers sharing their intentions with pupils. Often, as in literacy or numeracy, these aims are clearly displayed on the board as a permanent reminder to pupils. This means that pupils are very clear about what they are going to be doing, and teachers usually explain why and how as well. The presentation of work by a significant number of pupils is unsatisfactory and detracts from the overall quality of their work. Although the marking of work is thorough and gives these pupils good advice as to how they can improve, the standards of presentation are rarely commented upon.
19. Pupils with learning difficulties, including pupils with behavioural problems, are all very well supported and make very good progress. Support assistants prepare their strategies very well in conjunction with the teacher and have clearly defined roles. They often sit near pupils who are experiencing problems, and help them during the first or final parts of the lesson. This is especially effective in many English and mathematics lessons. At other times, assistants and teachers will focus on helping groups who may be struggling to learn, or who need extra challenges in order to move them forward. In addition these pupils receive individual teaching by skilled staff including a learning mentor and a special educational needs practitioner. Teachers ensure that the planning of lessons includes task matched to individual pupils' targets.
20. There are clear and useful formal whole-school procedures for monitoring attainment and progress of all pupils. Class teachers' continuous assessment in literacy and numeracy is mainly good and used well. Targets for raising pupils' achievement are carefully identified on the basis of their prior attainment and used effectively to inform the grouping of pupils, and for tracking their progress; this information is communicated to individual pupils to help them understand what they need to do to improve.
21. In the satisfactory and unsatisfactory lessons observed, the weaknesses were in the management of pupils' behaviour. This had a detrimental impact on learning sometimes resulting in many being off task, and in the unsatisfactory lesson the focus of the lesson was lost as a consequence.

The curriculum

The curriculum provision is **good**. The school provides a good curriculum that is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. There is a **very good** enrichment programme. Accommodation and resources are **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good curriculum is enriched through a very appealing range of extra-curricular activities.
- Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is provided very effectively.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good.
- The school provides very good opportunities to help pupils to prepare for moving from infant school to junior and from junior to secondary.

- Good use is made of surplus accommodation and there is a good range of learning resources for most subjects.

Commentary

22. The curriculum is well planned for infant and junior pupils. This ensures they access the full range of learning experiences and that statutory requirements for each subject are met. The school has adopted national planning guidance for subjects and some, such as geography and history, are taught in blocked study units and this works well.
23. The timetables include sessions designed to promote specific skills such as reading, phonics and spelling. Overall this approach has helped the school eradicate former weaknesses in reading at age seven, which is now judged to be good. The successful drive to raise the profile of ICT has resulted in satisfactory standards in Years 2 and 6. The timetables do not, however, provide for formal regular practice in handwriting. This is another reason why the scrutiny of pupils' work in most subjects found standards of presentation are often unsatisfactory.
24. Teachers link subjects well at the planning stage when they see the potential for good connections to be made. Good use is made of regular visiting specialists who extend pupils' learning and their acquisition of skills. A local cricket team member taught pupils in Years 3 and 4 cricket skills and a dance specialist led a religious education lesson that effectively promoted the concept of belief through movement, although pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop their awareness and understanding of different cultures.
25. The curriculum is successfully extended through a very good range of extra-curricular activities that have wide appeal. These include boys' and girls' football, cricket, cross-country running, gymnastics and a recorder and ocarina club. There is a newspaper club that extends pupils' ICT skills and includes a visit to the offices of a local newspaper. In an innovative approach to extending extra-curricular activities, a trained senior manager leads a popular sign language club for pupils and staff.
26. The provision for PSHCE is very good. It has improved since the previous inspection through curriculum activities and the formal timetabling of lessons such as circle time and in implementing a national programme for social and emotional aspects of learning.
27. Pupils are encouraged to sit and talk to each other; many pupils regularly enjoy holding conversations with each other as they use the attractive external seating areas provided for both infant and junior pupils.
28. The governors have decided to provide sex education through a good formal programme for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have discussed how this aspect of provision can begin with infant pupils through the vocabulary used, for example, in science lessons. Parents are invited to attend a briefing, delivered by a nurse, covering the content of the formal programme provided for Year 6 pupils.
29. There has been good improvement to the provision for pupils who have special educational needs since the previous inspection and this is now very good.
30. The school ensures through very good transition arrangements that pupils are ready to move to the next phase of education. The deputy headteacher leads transition from infant to junior classes with a programme that promotes more mature ideas and concepts. Infant pupils joined with those from Year 3 to take part in a wedding ceremony that promoted drama, speaking and listening. Year 6 pupils are encouraged to practise writing skills through note taking and communication skills including how to express clearly their own point of view to help them meet the challenges they will face in lessons in secondary school.

31. Good use is made of the staff, including those supporting pupils who have special educational needs. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a positive contribution to these pupils' learning and achievement. The accommodation is good. Resources for learning are very good for PSHCE, good for English, mathematics and ICT and satisfactory for all other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

The school very effectively promotes pupils' welfare in a secure and very caring environment. Their personal development is well supported. The school is very good at taking pupils' ideas and opinions into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school ensures that pupils work in a very caring and safe environment.
- Pupils are given very good opportunities to make their views known and the school acts on them.
- There are very good induction procedures in place for children in Reception class, and for others when they join the school.

Commentary

32. The good provision contained in the last report has become enhanced. Pupils are given very good care, and very well established routines and checking do show that a very safe environment for learning has been established. For example the site manager undertakes a weekly risk assessment in key areas of the school and all school visits are risk assessed and must have the approval of the headteacher. This provision is very evident by the careful monitoring of vehicle movements to the premises.
33. Teachers and other adults in the school know the pupils well and establish warm and helpful relationships with them. They have a very good understanding of every pupil's needs. The school has established careful and well-followed guidelines to ensure pupils can fully concentrate on their learning. A very small number of pupils with identified behavioural difficulties have had to be excluded for a short fixed period. These pupils had been receiving good support in accordance with guidance developed in co-operation with appropriate outside agencies. This support is kept under constant review and adapted appropriately as agreed during formal and informal reviews of their progress. Careful assessment procedures are followed to ensure most pupils get appropriate challenges. Pupils feel well cared for and able to express their views through the class and school councils. A good example being the drop-in arrangements provided by the school nurse.
34. Pupils who have special educational needs benefit from the good care provided to all pupils. The school has good systems in place to offer support and guidance for those pupils with special educational needs; appropriate liaison is maintained with support services. This means differing needs are well met. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into school life.
35. Induction arrangements when children start school are very good. Many have had the benefit of attendance at the Nursery on site; they are thus very confident when they join school and settle well to routines, ready to learn, because relationships are good throughout the school and the expectancies of the school are well understood. Older pupils joining the school are integrated very well.
36. The school values and encourages pupils' views very well and the school acts on them, for example in implementing improvements to the outside play areas. The elected class and school council representatives share pupils' ideas and present a very good platform for debate. Pupils are confident that the headteacher and members of staff listen to their views

and as a consequence feel able to offer comments about aspects of school life. This civic pride prepares them well for adult life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a very good partnership between home and school.
- The school is a valued member of the local community.
- There are effective links with other schools.

Commentary

37. The school values the links with parents and provides them with good information about the life and work of the school. A school website has been developed. Parents hold the school in justifiable high regard because it consults them and values their opinions, a good example being a survey about school meals which resulted in improvements being made. Parents are pleased to supervise homework. There are appropriate opportunities for them to discuss their children's work and progress. End of year reports give parents a good picture of how well their children are doing and of the work they have undertaken. The school brochure and governing body report give a detailed record of the life and work of the school.
38. Whilst there is no parents association, events organised by the school are very well supported by parents. Parents are pleased to give extra support to supervise visits, an example being a class visit to a local park. There are good links with local churches and the school has encouraged artists and authors to visit the school; this provides good cultural experiences for pupils but pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn about different cultures. The published school newspaper is supported by local businesses and keeps the community aware of school events.
39. The school is a valued member of the local community; adult education classes, the provision of pre and after school support and a community centre together with a nursery are on or adjacent to the site and all work together well.
40. The school has established good links with other local schools. A link with a local secondary school has provided very good physical education opportunities such as the visit by specialist staff to give demonstration lessons. Good arrangements for the transfer of pupils to local secondary schools have provided good opportunities for pupils to have science and ICT lessons in one of the local secondary school before this transfer. Pupils understand the purpose of these lessons to help prepare them for their secondary education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. Leadership by the headteacher is **very good**; it is **good** by the key staff. The governance of the school is **good**. The effectiveness of management is **good**. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very effective headteacher is very well supported by his deputy and well supported by other staff.
- The governors have good involvement in shaping the direction of the school; they know its strengths, support improvements and check progress systematically.
- The school reviews its performance well and has a clear strategy for further improvement to raise standards.
- Financial management is good.

Commentary

41. The headteacher sets a very good example to staff and pupils. He provides very good leadership of the curriculum and teaching in the school and has a clear vision for the future development of provision. He receives very good support from his deputy and good support from other staff. As a result most pupils achieve well and standards in core subjects are regularly above average and pupils achieve well. The school successfully meets its published aims.
42. The impact of this leadership is that there is a good ethos that is built on good relationships and helps pupils to gain in confidence and self-esteem. Very good teamwork involving all stakeholders has led to good improvement since the previous inspection with all previous weaknesses successfully addressed.
43. The governors have a good knowledge of the school gained through regular visits, contact with key managers, service on committees and involvement in school events. They provide good support to school leaders and have a good understanding of school strengths, priorities and barriers to improvement. They base this on asking challenging questions with sufficient regularity to make sure the school makes good provision for its pupils and that they achieve well. Governors ensure the school meets its statutory obligations.
44. Senior managers have supported the headteacher and governors well in compiling a strategic overview of school priorities and identification of targets to be met. The headteacher has worked in partnership with his deputy to lead with managers the process of self-review based on a clear trail of evidence from a wide range of sources. This is successfully rooted in a thorough analysis of pupil performance data, audits of progress already made, a very good knowledge of the different cohorts and the impact of differing numbers of pupils with learning difficulties together with the impact of long-term staff absences, the views of pupils, staff, parents and governors.
45. Co-ordination of special educational needs is very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator promotes a strong sense of teamwork, working collaboratively with a learning mentor and special educational needs practitioner.
46. Current priorities are drafted into a clear school development plan that not only gives priority to standards in core subjects but also recognises the important contribution of a successful Foundation Stage, pupils' learning in other subjects, extra-curricular activities and community involvement. Although the school development plan provides a lucid view of priorities it does not include a clear timescale for targets to be met.
47. The headteacher, senior managers and subject leaders use a number of good monitoring techniques to check progress with priorities. The monitoring of teaching has been beneficial because it has led to the identification of teaching strategies that could be modified. For example, the findings from monitoring led teachers to agree with managers on changes in the way lesson introductions could be improved and how rewards were to be consistently allocated within the pupil behaviour management programme. Similarly managers have known for some time that girls were making quicker progress than boys and often attaining higher standards. The school has introduced actions through the curriculum to address this and while the overall discrepancy remains, recent pupil data shows the gap is closing.
48. The school fully meets the requirements for reviewing staff performance each year. There is a regular programme of staff training that is matched to school priorities and personal needs. The opportunity to teach different age ranges and good training provided at the school have successfully helped staff to develop professionally and take on greater responsibility. Staff new to the school are supported very well. Teaching assistants are also well supported and guided towards opportunities to help them develop their career; they also receive regular performance feedback to help them improve their skills.

49. Financial management is good and office practices efficiently administered. The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of the challenges facing the school and they adopt best value principles when taking decisions about the service they provide and how it can be funded. Governors have good evidence that different initiatives have impacted positively on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and achievement. Most pupils achieve well and school provides good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	782367
Total expenditure	761068
Expenditure per pupil	2661

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	25000
Balance carried forward to the next	46299

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is **good**.

There are currently 63 children in the Foundation Stage, 30 in the Nursery and 33 in the Reception class. Three Reception children attend a mixed Year 1 and Reception class. Children in the Nursery attend full time. Children are skilfully eased into the main school in September each year. The school has very good arrangements for children starting school and very positive links with parents. Children are well prepared for their start in the Reception classes, with frequent visits beforehand. Most children's attainment on entry to the Nursery class is average for their age in all areas of learning.

By the time they reach Year 1, overall children have made good progress and achieved well including those who joined at the beginning of the Reception Year, several of whom had below average standards of attainment. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Individual needs are identified early and the children with special educational needs receive very good care and support.

The curriculum is carefully based on the recommended areas of learning and children are provided with a wide range of challenging and interesting activities. The staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They are fully aware of the principles that underpin good early years practice and work well together as an effective team. There is a rigorous approach to monitoring children's progress on a regular basis. The co-ordinator provides good quality leadership. The accommodation is good, overall. Although both Nursery and Reception classes are situated in separate buildings, very good efforts are made for their effective integration. The staff plan together and both classes join, and share resources for a variety of activities. Children in the Nursery make good use of the secure outdoor play area, although this is not freely accessible for the children in the Reception classes.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children exceed the relevant goals by the end of the Reception Year.
- Children achieve very well because of very good teaching.
- Trusting and warm relationships between all adults and children result in a very pleasant learning environment.
- Children are given very good opportunities to use their initiative and develop their independence.

Commentary

50. Most children exceed the relevant goals by the end of the Reception Year. They show mature personal and social skills because of a supportive atmosphere where each child feels very special. They learn to respect each other, share resources and take turns when working and playing together.
51. The very good quality of teaching and learning means that children achieve very well. Children are attentive and eager to learn, and most find it easy to conform to the high standards set by the staff. They know routines well, settle to tasks easily and behave sensibly at all times. Children show developing confidence in trying new activities. All children are purposefully engaged and show consideration and respect for property and each other.

52. The very positive relationships are to the fore and children feel secure and happy. Clear boundaries and the very good role models are set by the adults. The teaching assistants are used particularly well alongside teachers, to establish high standards of behaviour and social skills. Children's play and responses are supported and extended sensitively through good questioning. They are given every opportunity to develop their initiative and manage tasks independently. This was noted in the sessions where children select own activities, work on them for a good length of time and tidy up when they finish. Staff make regular checks of the level of children's involvement in activities. Constant encouragement to do well at every step of learning ensures that all children are working to capacity.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and most are judged likely to reach the relevant early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year with some doing better.
- Children have good opportunities to learn new words during purposeful play because of the clear focus on developing their speaking and listening skills.
- The well-planned activities provide interest, stimulation and challenge for children to explore writing for different purposes.
- The school/home reading system is well established.

Commentary

53. Children achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because of the good teaching of basic skills. By the end of the Reception Year most children reach the early learning goals and some are on course to exceed these. Good emphasis is placed on developing children's speaking and listening skills. Adults are good role models in their use of language. They use 'talk' to good effect and are good active listeners. Instructions for activities are very practical. Demonstration and use of visual information enable all children, including those with special educational needs, to understand what they have to do. The staff show that they value children's efforts at communicating. Children talk about their experiences interestingly and develop new vocabulary in all aspects of their work.
54. The overall good teaching is having a positive impact on children's learning. There is a rich learning environment, with good learning resources. Most children in the Nursery show improving control in developing early writing skills. They draw and paint with increasing control, and benefit greatly from the regular practice of attending to letter formation. Adults make skilful use of the 'Jolly Jingles' in teaching the initial letter sounds, and as a result some children are beginning to associate sounds with words and letters. Some good strategies, such as sharing favourite stories, for example *Handa's Surprise*, and talking about pictures, support children well in their early literacy development. Very good progress is made when adults work in small groups or on one-to-one basis to give children individual attention. This was noted in a literacy session where, inspired by their mini-beasts hunt, children in the Reception class made good attempts to write their descriptions. The more able children successfully apply their knowledge of letters to record short meaningful sentences. The literacy lessons modified to suit the very young effectively promote the development of early reading, writing and spelling skills. Class discussions and well-focused play activities provide good opportunities for children to try out their ideas in words. This sensitive approach ensures time for thinking so that the children gain in maturity and achieve well.
55. Skills in reading are also taught effectively. The book area in both Nursery and Reception classes is well resourced and inviting. Children handle books carefully and take them home to share with adults. Teachers effectively familiarise children with written vocabulary through

stimulating activities to focus on key words. By the end of the Reception Year, most children begin to recognise simple everyday words and express themselves confidently and articulately.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children reach standards expected for their age and some are on course to exceed the early learning goals by their transfer to Year 1.
- Children are eager with very positive attitudes to learning.
- Teaching is good, with some very good features.
- Children are provided with a good range of practical opportunities.

Commentary

56. In both Nursery and Reception classes, number is well emphasised in a good range of situations. Children gain some knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. In the Nursery, children match, sort and count using everyday objects. Teachers provide stimulating and sufficiently challenging opportunities for children to use mathematics in a range of contexts. In the best lesson, small group activities in the Nursery focused on the mini-beasts topic and involved an outdoor number hunt with children dressed as bees and children developed keen observation skills. Children count and make sets of items of different colours and sizes. Most are secure in counting reliably to 10. The well set up 'Video Shop' supports children's knowledge and understanding of buying and selling through role-play. The use of number rhymes, games and songs further enhances children's learning.
57. Very good teaching and learning continue in the Reception class. From samples of work it was apparent that ideas acquired in the Nursery are developed well. The teachers provide very good practical opportunities to count people or objects. They plan well and use a good range of imaginative teaching methods. They make learning interesting, linking skills they wish the children to learn to fun topics and themes, for example learning the positional language in the class's own 'Jungle Corner'. Children are encouraged to apply what they know to practical problems, for example counting the number of children, or fruit items to be shared. Games and practical activities develop number skills well, when the more able receive greater challenge. As a result, a significant number of children acquire sufficient knowledge and understanding of how to solve simple problems involving the use of vocabulary such as 'add one more' or 'take one away', 'how many altogether' and 'how many left', by the time they enter Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children reach standards expected for their age.
- There is a good range of opportunities to explore the world around.
- Resources are good and well used for extending children's knowledge and understanding.
- Very good support is provided in small groups, by the classroom assistants.

Commentary

58. Teaching is particularly good for exploring and investigating. Children enjoy learning and remain totally absorbed in the range of activities inside and outside. They achieve well as a result and most reach standards expected for their age, some having entered the Nursery with

standards below those expected. The current topic of mini-beasts is very well developed in both Nursery and Reception classes. Additionally, planting activities enhance children's understanding of different plants and what they need in order to grow. Children learn about similarities and differences when carefully examining and describing mini-beasts using the magnifying glasses, observing the tadpoles or learning about wild animals. They are beginning to develop understanding of the change to materials, through opportunities such as mixing cornflour or making models out of a range of materials.

59. The support staff make effective interventions and support children's understanding in group activities. They extend children's responses through appropriate questions. Children have good opportunities to use everyday objects and learn about home-life and relations in the home corner and other role-play areas.
60. Good quality resources are used very well. Children use paint and mix different colours skilfully, and most name the basic colours correctly. They use different materials, such as paper, card and textile, to develop cutting, joining, folding and building skills well and are encouraged to talk about their experiences, for example when making 'bridges' or looking for a best material for making a boat. However, they have not sufficiently developed skills in asking questions to find out how things work. Most children are successfully developing computer skills and increasing control in the use of mouse, to move items on the screen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a stimulating range of indoor and outdoor activities in the Nursery.
- Most children are on course to meet the early learning goals.
- Resources are good and effectively used for both indoor and outdoor classroom activities.

Commentary

61. There is good teaching to promote children's physical development. The Nursery class has a well-developed outdoor play area. This has a very positive impact on children's learning. Children share equipment with others and learn how to use space efficiently. They pedal and push vehicles with increasing control and manoeuvre them with confidence. Staff monitor children's involvement very well and engage in role-play to extend their experiences.
62. Most children achieve the expected standards for their age. They move with confidence around classrooms and show appropriate control when outside. Staff always provide calm and sensitive support and show very good understanding of how young children learn. They have a sensitive awareness of children's safety. The range of large and small outdoor resources such as play-house, bikes and bricks, is used well to promote children's physical skills in the Nursery. This provision is effectively shared with the Reception class.
63. Children were not observed in their regular physical education lesson in the main school hall. However, teachers' planning and the photographic evidence indicate that they learn to be aware of space and develop co-ordination and control in movement. Most children demonstrate reasonable hand and eye co-ordination. They hold pencil correctly and paint carefully with brushes. They are developing confidence in the use of different tools such as scissors and joining materials such as glue.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall children achieve well and meet most of the early learning goals.
- Children are provided with good quality resources and make good gains in learning.
- Teaching is good in providing plenty of opportunities for children to develop their creative and imaginative skills.

Commentary

64. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children achieve the relevant goals. They are able to use a range of materials well to produce attractive and interesting creative work, for example the faces, using real fruit, inspired by the famous artist Arcimboldo. Children also made divas and made sweets for the Hindu festival of lights. The Nursery children were observed engaged in various art activities, for example making mini-beast hats and a bee puppet. Some work on display, for example the watercolour paintings of flowers by the Nursery children, is very impressive.
65. Teaching and learning are good. There is a range of interesting and stimulating learning settings. Children work in a well-ordered environment in which creativity and expressiveness are valued. Teachers are skilful at ensuring that the children's curiosity is stimulated through role-play and they are kept purposefully engaged. Children particularly enjoy their role-play in the well set up imaginative areas. They are given good opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form, through working with a wide range of materials to create collage or paint patterns. Teachers plan their lessons well and have a clear understanding of the needs of the children. Most children show obvious enjoyment, take pride in their work and when encouraged, talk interestingly about what they are doing.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in most aspects of English in Years 2 and 6.
- Although boys' attainment has improved, far more girls reach higher standards in English than boys.
- Although pupils achieve well in terms of the quantity, content and range of work, standards of presentation are often unsatisfactory.
- Overall teaching is good.
- Subject leadership is good.

Commentary

66. In recent years attainment in English has often exceeded the average expected for pupils at ages seven and eleven. This represents good improvement since the findings of the previous inspection. This inspection has found that standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are above expectations. The factors contributing to this include good teaching methods that ensure lessons are interesting, a good range of English curriculum experiences, regular writing assessments, good use of ICT to help make learning fun and the positive impact of the good subject leader.
67. Pupil progress data shows that for many years girls have outperformed boys in reading and writing at age seven and English overall at age eleven. This pattern remains as there are currently more higher attaining girls and more lower attaining boys. Until recently there was no obvious reason for this other than the fact that provision in English did not stretch boys to the

same extent as girls in the same lessons. The headteacher, senior managers and the English co-ordinator have promoted positive action to address this through the curriculum and teaching. The impact of their efforts has been positive because the most recent data shows the attainment gap between boys and girls now narrowing, particularly this year in writing at age seven.

68. Given average attainment on entry most Year 2 pupils have achieved well to reach above average standards in most aspects of English by age seven. Pupils in Year 6 attained well above average standards when in Year 2. Tracking data shows their progress slowed down during their first two years in junior classes. This can be traced to a period when the school experienced staffing difficulties and disruption to learning. Lesson evidence and their work in Year 6 show these pupils have recently made much quicker progress and are now achieving well. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well because they benefit from small group and individual support provided by teaching assistants.
69. By Year 2 most pupils can speak clearly and confidently because they have many opportunities to engage in lively discussions with teachers, other adults and each other. By Year 6 most pupils express points of view with clarity, expression and maturity. During a discussion covering thoughts about transfer to the secondary school, pupils relayed their feelings of excitement and apprehension very well at the prospect of leaving Year 6 with assurance.
70. Pupils' attainment in reading at age seven is now above average; this is much better than the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils make the expected rate of progress during the junior years and in Year 6 most have acquired reading strategies such as skimming and scanning to locate information quickly. Most pupils read accurately, stressing words when it is appropriate to do so. Pupils used these techniques to research historical facts about the Beatles in work linked to history.
71. Although pupils in both Years 2 and 6 produce a good quantity of written work representing a good range of writing experiences, standards of presentation are variable and often unsatisfactory. Progress in improving presentation skills is uneven and shows in the way letters are not consistently formed, generally untidy work and the lack of attention to legibility. This weakness also occurs in presentation of work in other subjects. The regular provision of writing assessments has provided teachers with the opportunity to give pupils clear guidance targets to be met and as a result the quality of content in pupils' writing has improved.
72. Pupils' past work and lesson evidence confirm that teaching is good. In Year 2 the teacher used ICT well to help pupils improve literacy skills through the application of a spelling rule. In a very good lesson for pupils in Year 6 the teacher confidently used the classroom interactive board to teach pupils about the lives of the Beatles.
73. The co-ordinator provides good subject leadership and her teaching is a very good role model for other staff to follow. The co-ordinator has a secure view of standards gained through some analysis of data, lesson observations, dialogue with colleagues, work scrutiny and discussion with pupils. The co-ordinator has used the monitoring of teaching to provide advice on teaching methodology. She has made plans to further improve boys' attainment.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

Pupils use literacy often in other subjects. Science books show they label diagrams, insert text into tables, produce lists and write up experiments. In religious education, pupils have devised question and answer sheets on the religious practices of world faiths. Pupils use keyboard skills to word process factual information that they have accessed through interrogation of websites.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils are achieving well.
- Good teaching enables pupils with special educational needs to achieve very well.
- The school makes effective use of assessment information to inform planning and set challenging targets.

Commentary

74. The good teaching across the school, with pockets of very good teaching, results in pupils making good progress and achieving well. Teachers plan their work together where possible, and have very good subject knowledge, particularly in Years 3 to 6. In 2004 a large proportion of pupils achieved the higher than expected National Curriculum level in mathematics. The progress of pupils has been adversely affected by long-term absences of staff. Pupils are now making better progress, following a period of disruption to their learning caused by staff changes. Achievement seen in lessons during the inspection and in the scrutiny of pupils work over period of the current school year is good. Standards are above average, which indicates standards have improved since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the school because they are very well supported in lessons seen. The school has identified the need to include mathematics targets on pupils' individual education plans. In classes where there are a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs, teaching assistants provide very good additional support. Pupils' attitudes towards their learning, in mathematics lessons seen, are positive.
75. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment have improved since the last inspection. Teachers monitor pupils' progress well and use the information gained effectively to help pupils understand what they should do to improve. There are effective systems to track pupils' progress and identify pupils for support and set targets for future improvement are set and actions are planned for this to take place. The school analyses performance information well to enable staff to put into place systems or procedures to address identified issues, for example in developing pupils' skills in problem solving. The school has established targets to extend pupils' learning. As a result pupils across the school have clear knowledge of what they must do to improve further. Pupils have the opportunity to assess their own work in most lessons; this helps them to understand how well they have achieved in the lesson and what they need to work on to improve in the future.
76. The quality of teaching is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan lively and well-structured lessons with good attention to pupils' different learning needs. Consequently, pupils have very positive attitudes. Introductions include all pupils, often by targeting questions skilfully to the learning needs of individual pupils. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson about percentages, both the teacher and the learning support assistant sensitively encouraged pupils with special educational needs so that they learnt to answer questions confidently in front of the whole class. Furthermore, the work in the lesson was carefully planned to build on pupils' learning so that all pupils achieved well. Teachers provide good resources and make good use of computers to extend learning. The presentation of pupils' work is sometimes muddled and lacks clarity.
77. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. There is thorough monitoring of teaching and learning, and systems of assessment which lead to very well focused planning to meet pupils' needs.

Mathematics across the curriculum

Currently teachers make satisfactory use of mathematics in other subjects. The school recognises that in order to promote mathematics across the school, opportunities to identify its relevance in the planning of other subjects should not be missed. Mathematics does not feature prominently in display across the school. Teachers use the available resources well. Mathematical skills were seen to be put to appropriate use in a selection of examples during the inspection. For example, pupils make links with history when relating events within periods to a timeline, such as the Victorian era or

Roman times. The development of mathematical vocabulary in all classes makes a positive contribution to the literacy development in the school. Pupils' reading skills are used to good effect in interpreting problems.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in scientific enquiry are adversely affected by inconsistency in the teaching of this aspect of the subject.
- Pupils have good attitudes towards science, which support their learning.
- Science is not yet monitored as rigorously as English or mathematics.
- Marking is not always used well to help develop pupils' understanding of how they can improve.

Commentary

78. In the 2004 national tests, science results were in line with those expected at the end of Year 6, but showed a slight decline in the number of pupils attaining the higher level, Level 5. Standards seen during the inspection, although similar, present an improving picture overall. More pupils are predicted to achieve higher levels this year, due to some advances made in raising pupils' achievements. The science curriculum is enriched as a result of good links with the local secondary schools. For example, Year 6 pupils recently benefited from a visit to the Holden Lane High School laboratories. They were also visited by a rocket scientist from Star-chaser to enhance their learning about 'forces in action'. The standards reported at the last inspection were above the national average, but those related to a different cohort of pupils. Most pupils in the present Year 6 achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment.
79. In Year 2, the standards are in line with those expected nationally. The inspection evidence is that standards of attainment are improving steadily due to the school's better emphasis on practical and investigative science. However, pupils' skills and competence in this aspect are still weak even though their scientific knowledge is developing well. The achievement of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall.
80. Teaching and learning are satisfactory across the school. Teachers give clear explanations and ensure that factual understanding is well developed. However, there are inconsistencies in teachers' approaches to practical science that adversely affect the development of pupils' skills. As a result, pupils' grasp of how to test hypotheses, gain information through enquiry, and of what to do when they have collected information, is not as secure as it should be. In the most effective lessons, pupils enjoy a good range of practical experiences and are ably supported by teachers who challenge perceptions and develop understanding well, through questioning. This was noted in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were investigating and making careful observations of 'push' and 'pull' forces. Pupils in this lesson were also able to recognise when a test or comparison was unfair.
81. Pupils' attitudes to science are good. They are keen and enthusiastic. In practical and investigative science learning is sometimes restricted because pupils are not expected to show enough independence. Pupils are not encouraged sufficiently to pose scientific questions themselves, or make choices about how investigations are carried out and recorded. Photocopied worksheets, often the same for a whole class, restrict challenge and reduce opportunities for pupils to practise their writing about predictions, the shape of experiments and results. This results in occasions when, for example, more capable pupils are held back by low-level recording tasks. The marking of pupils' work is regular and encouraging, but less diagnostic in pointing out what they need to do to improve further. Pupils are not fully involved in assessing their own work. The resources are satisfactory and well organised for ease of access.
82. The management of science is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new, but already she is aware of the improvements that are needed. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are not

as advanced as in English or mathematics. The need to work alongside other teachers in their classrooms, observe practice and share good ideas to improve performance, has been recognised.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved and are now average in Year 2 and in Year 6.
- Teaching is good.
- The new ICT facilities and resources are making it easier for teachers to use ICT as a tool for learning in other subjects.

Commentary

83. At the time of the previous inspection pupils were not taught the full range of ICT experiences required by law and standards were below average at ages seven and eleven. The inspection has confirmed that these weaknesses have been eradicated. The curriculum is now good, the provision of ICT resources has significantly improved and standards in Years 2 and 6 are now in line with what is expected for the pupils' ages.
84. By Year 2 most pupils can use the arrow keys on a computer keyboard to control the movement of a 'rabbit' through a maze to successfully reach a portion of broccoli. They respond to electronic prompts built into software to practise the skills of using control to make things happen.
85. By Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory progress in developing their ICT expertise and can word process text to form a report, enter data into a spreadsheet, insert images into an article and access the Internet to research information for a topic. When pupils use a search engine most know that it is important to phrase key words carefully in order that the choices produced are more restricted to the precise enquiry being made.
86. Lesson observations confirmed the quality of teaching is good. In a good Year 6 lesson the teacher focused the pupils' attention on the importance of precision in terminology when using the Internet to research information. They were challenged to find the answers to a series of questions based on key events in British history since 1930 such as 'When was rationing introduced?' and 'In what year were the Olympic Games held in Britain?' The pupils collaborated well in an activity that promoted their social and communication skills.
87. The co-ordinator has only held responsibility for this subject since the beginning of the current academic year and has therefore had limited time to make a noticeable impact on standards. Leadership is therefore currently satisfactory. The co-ordinator is, however, very confident in using ICT and provides a good role model to others in terms of demonstrating how the subject can be used to enhance the teaching across the curriculum.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

This inspection has found that teachers are now regularly using ICT as a tool for learning in other subjects, particularly where new interactive boards have been installed in classrooms. Some teachers make good use of the visual techniques of their class boards. In a Year 6 lesson about the life of the Beatles the pupils traced events as the teacher effectively linked learning about a historical period through the teaching of English. Pupils from Years 1 and 2 used a microphone to 'interview' characters from a fictitious island community during literacy sessions. They could confidently attach headphones and play back the recording.

HUMANITIES

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

Only one lesson was observed in **geography** and no lessons were seen in **history** so no judgements can be made about the overall provision.

There is not enough evidence to make clear judgements about the standards pupils achieve in **G geography** or the quality of education provided.

From the analysis of pupils' work, talking to teachers and pupils, it is evident that pupils generally enjoy geography. The work is varied and the curriculum meets statutory requirements. Pupils improve their understanding and develop research skills. They mention the many worthwhile visits with particular enthusiasm as they recognise they are learning outside of school.

There are good links with other subjects such as English where pupils are provided with regular opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and independent writing across the school. Pupils' work on display around the school highlights how their writing skills are developed through geography. In geography the current Year 6 work shows good research of rainforests, making good use of ICT, which enables pupils to have a better understanding of, and growing responsibility for, their own learning.

There is not enough evidence to make clear judgements about the standards pupils achieve in **history** or the quality of education provided.

From the analysis of pupils' work, talking to teachers and pupils, it is evident that pupils enjoy history. The work is varied and the curriculum meets statutory requirements. Pupils improve their understanding of historical facts well. Teachers use different methods, techniques and resources to motivate them; for example, when studying Tudor times pupils visited a Tudor house where they acted out the parts of different members of a Tudor household in costumes of the period. Pupils in Year 6 say they found their work interesting from Year 1 to Year 6 as they cover all periods of history. Visitors and specialist teachers enhance teaching and learning in history.

Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and independent writing across the school. Pupils' work on display around the school highlights writing skills in history. The presentation of pupils work often suffers from poor standards of presentation.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education is planned in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, but the topics are not studied in appropriate depth.
- Religious education does not make enough contributions to the development of pupils' writing skills.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning about different religions.
- The aspect of assessing and recording pupils' achievements is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

88. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the expectations set out in the local authority's agreed syllabus. The average standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils' achievements in the subject are satisfactory overall. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

89. Religious education is planned and taught in accordance with the recently revised locally agreed syllabus. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers make good use of story telling and discussion, and because of this pupils begin to develop own ideas about appropriate personal responses to right and wrong, and basic knowledge of their own and others' religions. In a lesson, Year 6 pupils studied the aspect of expressing faith through the arts. They were very effectively supported in a dance workshop led by a visitor, and learned how the believers express emotions through dance and movement.
90. Teachers effectively use resources and appropriate methods to support pupils' learning. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher created an element of awe and wonder by carefully handling and talking very interestingly about how special the holy book Qur'an is to the Muslims.
91. Across the school, there are too few opportunities to reinforce and consolidate pupils' thoughts and understanding through pictorial and written work. A limited amount of written work was seen in most classes. Pupils are not encouraged enough to apply the skills learnt in literacy sessions to write their own accounts of what they have learned or researched independently.
92. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is keen to raise the profile of the subject further. She has begun to monitor the provision and is clear about what needs to be done, for example the need for consistency in the assessment arrangements for tracking pupils' performance.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

It was possible to observe only one lesson in design and technology and none in art and design, so no overall judgement has been made of these subjects. However, samples of pupils' work were seen and discussions held with staff and pupils.

In **art and design**, much of pupils' work on display around the school is indicative of a satisfactory standard. Some of the artwork is careful and well finished, for example the staff portraits by Year 5 and pictures of 'Starry Night' using pastels and chalk, inspired by the work of the famous artist, Vincent Van Gogh. Pupils also had the opportunity this year to work with the artist in residence, who helped them in creating a very impressive collage of 'Milton Jungle'.

Pupils in all classes work on various **design and technology** projects through the year, for example making slippers, puppets or moving toys. Some examples of pupils' sketches indicate satisfactory understanding of the process of designing. In the lesson observed, Year 2 pupils confidently generated ideas by thinking and talking about equipment in a playground. The teacher made a very good use of photographs and other pictures, some of which were contributed by the pupils.

Both subjects are well planned to ensure that skills build progressively as pupils move through the school. The examples of work on display indicate that what is taught follows the particular subject's characteristics and its link with other subjects, for example history and geography. Pupils' work in art and design links very well with religious education, for example the stain glass windows designed by pupils in Year 6.

There are resources of a satisfactory range and quality in art and these are used to good effect to assist pupils' learning and to engage their interest in art lessons. Co-ordination of both subjects is good and is being developed to include more direct monitoring of teaching and learning, and review of standards attained in these subjects.

Only one **physical education** lesson was observed during this inspection. Judgements are not therefore made for standards in Year 6, teaching, learning and pupils' achievement. The lesson showed Year 2 pupils were attaining standards in gymnastics that meet the expectations for their age.

The very good programme of curriculum enrichment provides pupils with opportunities to work with visiting specialists. A religious education lesson provided Year 6 pupils with the opportunity to take part in a dance workshop led by a visitor. The quality of movement in this lesson was good as pupils used dance to reflect emotions. Similarly junior pupils enjoyed working with a cricket coach who developed their bowling and fielding skills well.

Pupils are taught to swim. Checks made on the progress in swimming of the pupils currently in Year 6 showed most had attained the national 25 metres standard. Some have been awarded certificates for life saving techniques.

One infant and one junior **music** lesson were observed during this inspection. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgments on teaching, learning and pupils' achievement. These lessons featured listening skills and opportunities to compare the sounds being produced. The comments made by pupils showed a level of musical understanding that was broadly in line with that expected for their age. Standards of singing in a school assembly were satisfactory.

Pupils use their musical skills to perform in school concerts and community events. A collection of photographs showed pupils enjoyed playing percussion instruments and recorders with a group of visiting musicians.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for pupils to develop personal attributes and social skills are very good.
- The inclusive nature of the school ensures that all pupils are valued and made to feel part of the school.
- Pupils show a mature attitude towards the school's personal, social and health education and citizenship programme.

Commentary

93. Pupils achieve very well. Evidence of the purposeful development of pupils' personal, social and health education can be found throughout the curriculum. Religious education lessons and assemblies make a significant contribution to the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship. Teachers and all staff are very good role models for pupils and the close and caring relationships which exist between staff and pupils aid discussion.
94. The quality of teaching is very good. Teaching and support staff are used well to ensure that children have the opportunity to discuss personal and social issues in small groups. Assembly themes encourage pupils' thinking about other people, helping them to be more aware of people's feelings and to be more tolerant. The quality of provision is enhanced by the very good attitudes of pupils and the close and trusting relationships they enjoy with staff.
95. The school takes very seriously its responsibilities in preparing the pupils to develop an understanding of society and the part they can play in it. As part of this work there is a regular programme of visits from representatives of the local community who support the school in covering a wide range of topics that include bullying, road safety, 'stranger danger' and wider community issues of litter, vandalism and drugs awareness.
96. The school has allocated specific time for personal, social and health education and the curriculum is well organised. Teaching often takes place through 'circle time', when pupils gather in a whole-class group to discuss a range of issues that affect their lives. Pupils' views

are regularly sought and pupils of all ages are elected to serve on the school council and this effectively promotes their sense of responsibility and citizenship.

97. Leadership and management are very good. The school has allocated specific time for developing personal, social and health education and the curriculum is well organised. The co-ordinator has identified links between personal, social and health education and other areas of the curriculum. The scheme is wide ranging, encompassing healthy living, including diet, relationships and an awareness of the dangers of alcohol, smoking and illegal drugs.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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