

INSPECTION REPORT

MOSSLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bloxwich, near Walsall

LEA area: Walsall

Unique reference number: 130304

Headteacher: Mr Earl Richards

Lead inspector: Anne Elizabeth Kounnou

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st October 2004

Inspection number: 267352

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	258
School address:	Mossley Lane Bloxwich Walsall West Midlands
Postcode:	WS3 2SF
Telephone number:	01922 710357
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sonia Marshall

Date of previous inspection: 9th December 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Mossley Primary School is a popular school currently housed in two buildings on the same site. The school roll is falling due to a fall in the number of primary aged pupils living on the local estate, which is socially disadvantaged. A planned reduction in the number of places available at the school will eventually reduce the school to one form of entry. A significant building project is planned that will see the whole school housed in one building by the end of 2005, and will provide a Children's Centre on the site of the current infant building by the end of 2006. The school has developed links with the local community and other local schools in this time of change. It is involved in several community initiatives.

The school was last inspected by HMI in December 2002, when it was judged that the school had made good progress and no longer needed the special measures that were required after the inspection of September 2000. The report from the 2002 inspection by HMI does not cover all aspects of the school's work. The deputy headteacher is an Advanced Skills teacher, who not only supports the development of teaching and learning in the school, but also works with other schools in the local community to improve their practice and skills.

The school roll of 258 pupils aged from three to eleven years is taught in nine classes, four of which contain mixed age groups. Although there is a wide spread of ability, most children start school at age three with levels of achievement that are well below those expected. The number of pupils moving to and from the school during term time is about the same as that found in most schools. The great majority of pupils are from white British families living on the local estate. A few pupils from minority ethnic groups attend the school, with just one learning to

speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average at 22 per cent. Currently about 21 per cent of pupils, an above average proportion, have special educational needs. Two of these pupils have statements to address their learning needs. The range of needs includes speech, behaviour and learning difficulties, and a very small proportion has physical needs. Sometimes the school admits pupils who have been excluded from other schools due to their behavioural difficulties.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
30810	Liz Kounnou	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Personal, social and health education Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
9974	Daljit Singh	Lay inspector	
32180	Derek Sleightholme	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Music Physical education
32827	Jacqueline Marshall	Team inspector	English Religious education History Geography Provision for special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Mossley Primary is a very effective and much improved school. Many children start school with well below average attainment. Despite this, pupils achieve very well from Years 1 to 6. This is because teaching and learning are very good and there is a relentless focus by the leadership team on raising standards and helping pupils to succeed. Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve well, but many do not reach the goals expected for children at the end of the reception year. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and governance is very good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The way that teachers use the information gained from excellent procedures for assessment, to plan lessons that are very well matched to pupils' abilities, is a strength of the school and a significant factor in pupils' very good achievement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- The excellent systems for checking the quality of education have led to very good improvement.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good, so that pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well.
- The curriculum is very good for pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 and helps them achieve very high standards; however, the curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes could be more challenging.
- Although provision for pupils' cultural development has many good features, learning about the diverse cultures of British society is not sufficiently developed so that their understanding of this is limited.
- Despite the school's good actions to improve it, the rate of attendance and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

There has been very good improvement since the last inspection in 2002, when HMI judged that the school no longer required special measures. The leadership team have addressed all the key issues raised at that time assiduously. As a result, standards are much higher, and the school is among the top five per cent of schools in the country when measuring how much progress pupils make from Year 3 to Year 6. The excellent culture of checking the quality of education within the school means that it is likely to continue to improve, reaching even higher standards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement for all pupils throughout the school is very good overall. This is partly due to the very good teaching and learning from Years 1 to 6, and to the inspirational leadership of

the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In the nursery and reception classes, good teaching ensures that children achieve well. Many children start school in the nursery with levels of spoken language that are much lower than expected. Most make good progress, but the majority do not reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year. In the Year 2 national tests, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average when compared to those achieved by pupils in similar schools. In the national tests for Year 6 in 2004, pupils' results in mathematics and science were outstanding and comparable to the results of the top five per cent of pupils reaching similar levels when they were all aged seven. In English, test results were well above the average achieved by the same group. Standards have improved steadily and at a much faster rate than in most schools. During the inspection standards seen were average in these core subjects in Year 2, and above average in Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average throughout the school. In religious education pupils reach the expected standards. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well by teachers' careful preparation for lessons and by very good support from well-qualified teaching assistants. Boys and girls of all abilities achieve very well in the school.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good overall and contributes very well to the culture of success that permeates the school. Currently, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about the contribution of all cultures to British society. Although it is improving due to the good actions taken by the school, the rate of attendance is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good overall, and characterised by excellent use of assessment information that helps teachers plan lessons that are very well tailored to meet pupils' needs. The way that teachers keep track of pupils' achievements, and share challenging targets for them to reach, is excellent and a significant factor in pupils' academic success. The curriculum is good overall. In Years 1 to 6 it is very good and often provides exciting and challenging activities that help pupils to learn. In the nursery and reception classes it is satisfactory. Activities led by teachers are frequently very good, but those that children choose for themselves are not always planned well enough, so that they are not always playing purposefully.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership along with the exceptionally talented deputy headteacher. Together they are a formidable team and inspire staff and pupils to achieve their best. Governance is very good and ensures that all statutory requirements are fully met. It is characterised by rigorous systems for checking the quality of education that have helped the school to improve at a very good rate.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Almost all parents and pupils are highly satisfied with the school. A significant number of parents support the school by helping in lessons. Pupils love coming to school each day. One told the inspection team: "You will never visit a better school in your whole career."

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of opportunities for children in the nursery and reception classes to learn through play.
- Improve the pupils' understanding of the contribution of all cultures to British society.
- Continue to improve the good actions taken to increase pupils' attendance and punctuality.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement overall is very good due to the relentless focus on improving pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and very good teaching and learning. Standards achieved in the national tests are improving at a much faster rate than those in other schools, and are higher than at the last inspection. In the Foundation Stage, children build well on their overall low attainment when they start school in the nursery; however, by the time they leave the reception year most have not reached the goals expected at that age. Results in the Year 2 national tests in 2004 were average for reading, above average for writing, and well above average in mathematics. In Year 6, results were average in English, and well above average in mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve outstanding results in mathematics and science in the national tests at the end of Year 6.
- From Year 1 to Year 6, a very clear focus on developing skills across the curriculum leads to very good achievement for pupils of all abilities.
- Although achievement is good overall in the Foundation Stage due to a clear focus on developing children's skills in language and mathematical development, a broader and more stimulating curriculum would promote higher achievement in other areas of learning.

Commentary

1. Many children begin school in the nursery, in the September after their third birthday, with levels of attainment that are lower than expected at this age. There is a wide spread of ability but many children have very poor language skills. Despite this they achieve well. They develop very positive attitudes to learning. A good proportion of children are close to reaching the goals expected by the end of the reception year. This is due to a very clear focus on teaching early language and mathematics skills. Teachers use assessment very well to track children's progress in both the nursery and reception year. They plan some high quality activities to increase children's skills. These are mainly activities that teachers lead. The activities that are provided for children to select from as they play are not of the same high quality and this limits children's overall achievement in all areas of learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.2 (16.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.5 (14.9)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.5 (17.5)	16.3 (16.3)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve very well. A comparison with the long-term trend shows that standards are improving at a faster rate than in most schools. In mathematics, higher attaining pupils do particularly well, with the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level

3 comparable to that in the top five per cent of schools in the country. This is due to very good teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils achieve higher standards in writing than reading due to the very good teaching of basic writing skills. During the inspection standards seen in English were average overall with substantial proportions of pupils doing very well, and in mathematics and science standards were above average. Standards are high because the school has an excellent system for assessment, which is used to inform lesson planning. This means that pupils are taught according to their abilities in all lessons. As a result all pupils achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support to help them make progress at a good rate. Those who are capable of achieving high standards are challenged to reach the next level. Staff share with pupils the results of assessments and make clear to pupils exactly what they need to do to improve. This helps them to make very good progress. Pupils achieve very well in ICT for the same reasons. The curriculum is structured very well, helping them to improve their skills, and ICT is a feature of many lessons across the curriculum. In religious education standards are as expected due to teachers' diligent planning and high expectations.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.1 (25.7)	26.8 (26.8)
mathematics	28.5 (26.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.2 (29.6)	28.7 (28.6)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Pupils achieve very well in Years 3 to 6. This is also due to the excellent assessment arrangements, coupled with very good teaching, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Standards in these subjects are very high. In the national tests in 2004 pupils' progress in mathematics and science was equal to that in the highest five per cent of schools where pupils' prior attainment was similar. Standards in English tests are well above average compared to those of the same group. Taken overall, pupils are making more progress in Years 3 to 6 than in most schools; again this equals the progress made in the highest five per cent of all schools nationally. The trend of rising standards is well established. There is a relentless focus on doing well in the school. Pupils are very clear about how to succeed and receive very good support from all adults in reaching their potential. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well in small groups, sometimes led by very able teaching assistants, and at other times by senior staff. Pupils with the ability to reach higher levels than expected are challenged consistently and helped to make very good progress. This is very clear in pupils' books, which show that pupils are routinely set work that is matched to their abilities. During the inspection standards seen in each of the core subjects were above average, with some pupils achieving well above expected levels. The same very good use of assessment characterises work in ICT, so that pupils achieve very well improving their skills at a very good rate due to a broad curriculum. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to practise and develop ICT skills in other subjects. Standards in religious education are as expected due to the same rigorous planning for lessons as is seen in Years 1 and 2. Throughout the school boys and girls are achieving their potential in all these subjects because the curriculum is very well tailored to meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their interests and abilities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development have improved and are now **very good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are **very good** overall; cultural development is **good**. Pupils' attendance is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A 'success culture' permeates the school and is reflected in its aims and priorities.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good and at times excellent because there are many initiatives that promote pupils' personal development very well.
- Pupils express a high degree of satisfaction with the school; they are highly motivated in lessons and enrichment activities.
- Although there are good opportunities for pupils to experience art, music and world religions, the diverse culture of British society is under-emphasised.
- The rate of attendance is improving due to the good actions taken by the school, but remains unsatisfactory.

Commentary

4. School displays, signs and posters are used very well to send pupils a very strong message that they can do well. Typically posters pronounce:
 - "Strive for excellence in all your work!"
 - "Read and make your dreams come true!"
 - "Always do better than your previous best!"

A spirit of very positive attitudes to learning stems directly from the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Their enthusiasm is communicated very well to pupils who show very good attitudes to learning and enjoy the appealing range of activities provided. This total commitment to a 'can do' culture permeates the school and pupils respond very well.

5. The pupils' behaviour in assemblies and some lessons is regularly excellent. Around the school, at playtimes and in lessons it is very good overall. Their response in lessons is sometimes excellent due to their interest in the engaging activities provided. A behaviour management strategy, that is well understood by all, leads to very good relationships at playtimes. It includes prominently displayed guidance that challenges 'behaviour busters' to think about the implications when school and class rules are broken. Pupils behave very well because they know they are valued. They take responsibility for many tasks, such as operating the projection of lyrics for whole school singing and helping to set up equipment and resources for their teachers. A school council member was voted into the role of announcing to the school a conker competition to raise funds for new litterbins. There is a very clear strategy to welcome new pupils to the school. This includes other pupils taking responsibility as a 'buddy' to give help and advice with school procedures.
6. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good overall with strengths in spiritual, moral and social development. There are many occasions that help promote pupils' spiritual development. Lessons often generate a sense of wonder because teachers make them exciting and school assemblies encourage pupils to think deeply. Pupils' very good moral development reflects one of the school aims: that good behaviour is central to good achievement. The pupils' social development is very good because there are regular planned opportunities to develop social skills, such as to talk to and work with a partner during lessons. Pupils invariably work very well together in groups, whether carrying out investigations in mathematics or team activities in physical education.
7. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good overall. There are a wealth of opportunities for pupils to study European and other world cultures. Good progress has been made in developing pupils' understanding of world faiths through the multi-religious dimension of religious education. However, the multi-cultural dimension of modern Britain is not yet

sufficiently promoted so that pupils lack an understanding of the contribution of all cultures to our society.

Attendance

8. Pupils thoroughly enjoy attending school and taking part in the activities provided. Many describe school as 'fun', and they particularly value the trust that teachers show them. Pupils take great pleasure from the extra-curricular activities that the school provides, and several clubs are currently 'over-subscribed'. Nonetheless, attendance is below the national average, because some parents take family holidays during term time and condone unauthorised absences. Parents could do more to support the school in its aim of raising the attendance rate. The school works hard to improve attendance by thoroughly investigating absences. For example, it quickly and efficiently contacts the families of absent pupils and offers them support. This makes it difficult for pupils to take holidays in term time. As a result there have been some improvements in the rate of attendance this year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/2003 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.7	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

9. The number of fixed period exclusions is very high compared to most schools. This is due to the appropriate actions taken by the school with respect to two pupils with special educational needs. One was excluded intermittently, the other for significant periods. The school provided good support for both of these pupils. A clearly planned and successful strategy prevented them from being excluded permanently.

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	248	45	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	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 is very good. Teaching and learning are very good, with some excellent examples seen in each stage of education during the inspection. The curriculum is good overall, and is enriched very well to provide interesting activities that motivate pupils well. Pupils are given very good support for their learning and personal development; there are very good links with parents and very good links with the local community and other schools that contribute well to pupils' very good achievement.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **very good** overall and has improved since the last inspection. Assessment is now **excellent** and used extremely well. This is a strength of the school and lies behind pupils' success in national tests and teacher assessments.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent teaching by school leaders inspires pupils and provides an outstanding model for other teachers.

- Very good teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science from Year 1 to Year 6 lead to excellent achievement in the national tests.
- Excellent use of assessment to inform teachers' planning and the activities provided for pupils in lessons ensures that pupils of all abilities make very good progress from Year 1 to Year 6.
- In the Foundation Stage, teaching of language and mathematical development is consistently good, but some lessons in other areas of learning lack challenge, and this limits the progress that children make in these areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (7%)	20 (45%)	16 (36%)	5 (11%)	0	0	0

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

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher place a high priority on supporting teaching and learning. They regularly take groups or classes of pupils both to support them in their learning and to provide a model of good practice for other teachers to aspire to. During the inspection they taught excellent lessons in all stages of the school across a broad range of subjects. The enthusiasm that characterises their lessons motivates children in the Foundation Stage and pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 extremely well. They provide a level of challenge that increases the rate of learning to a staggering pace. Pupils can barely wait for the next activity and work feverishly to achieve the targets they are clearly set at the beginning of lessons. The head's and the deputy's knowledge of the primary curriculum is impressive, and their personal teaching skills provide an inspiring model for all teachers working at the school.
- The core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and ICT are taught very well from Years 1 to 6. Lessons are characterised by very clear aims that are shared with pupils in statements that are easy to understand. The aims are routinely reviewed as the lessons progress so that teachers and the skilled teaching assistants are very well aware of how well all the groups are doing. The lessons are tailored very well to meet pupils' needs, with different levels of challenge for all abilities. All lessons are characterised by a clear focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. This provides rich opportunities for pupils to play a full part. They frequently have opportunities to discuss aspects of their learning with a partner or in a group. Reporting back to the class provides very good opportunities for applying the school's listening code, which all pupils are fully familiar with. Teachers routinely ask questions that encourage pupils to extend their contributions to the class, and are constantly making them think about their learning. Consequently, pupils are developing a rich vocabulary to describe their work.

Example of outstanding practice

The way that the school uses assessment information in English, mathematics, science and ICT from Year 1 to Year 6 is extremely effective. It guides the quality of teaching and learning and raises standards for pupils of all abilities.

Assess–Plan–Teach: teachers consistently follow this motto. The assessment co-ordinator developed a very effective computer system for tracking pupils' progress. It includes information gleaned from half-termly assessments. The program instantly identifies pupils who are not making the progress teachers would like, and those achieving exceptionally well. These pupils work in target groups to help them move on. Teachers are exceptionally good at breaking down learning objectives into bite-size portions so that pupils always understand what they are learning. These are usually phrased as 'I Can Do' statements. At the end of lessons, and often part way through, they are reviewed and pupils show how well they are doing. Teaching assistants are actively involved and make notes of their achievements. Target-sheets pasted into the front of their books tell pupils how

to reach the next level. Older pupils are trusted to complete these so that they are fully involved in their own assessment. Lesson plans are brief and based on the targets for each group. Consequently, teachers are very skilled at planning different activities that help pupils to achieve the next stage in their learning. The rate of progress pupils of all abilities make in many lessons is breathtaking.

12. The same very good principles of assessment are used in the nursery and reception classes when teachers plan activities for language and mathematical development. When teachers lead sessions, children make good progress due to the clear focus on developing skills. Both teachers are able to capture children's interest and attention very well. The class activities they plan are frequently exciting and fun for the children to take part in so that they are keen to learn. However, activities that are planned for children to select as they learn through play are not as challenging. As a result, the progress that they make in other areas of learning is not as good because the children are not always fully motivated and sometimes lose concentration.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is **good** overall. There is a satisfactory curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes. The curriculum for pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 is very good. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are **very good** because there is a high priority on providing pupils with good experiences. The quality of resources and accommodation is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for English, mathematics, science and ICT is very well tailored to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities from Year 1 to Year 6, because teachers use assessment information extremely well and ensure that pupils make very good progress.
- A wide range of activities that motivate pupils very well enriches the curriculum.
- Planning for children in the Foundation Stage to learn through play is not as challenging as it could be.

Commentary

13. The excellent systems for assessment underpin the very good curriculum offered to pupils in the core subjects. Teachers are expert at planning different activities for groups of pupils in their classes according to their ability. Examples of this are seen in pupils' books across most subjects, but are particularly evident in English, mathematics, science and ICT. In Year 4, for example, at least one boy is working at the kind of challenging mathematics activities more usually found in Year 6. He is already achieving the level expected at the end of Year 6 and is likely to far exceed this in two years time. Senior leaders use their time very well to support target groups, often helping pupils who are struggling to understand the work. Teachers are skilful at adapting National Curriculum guidance to suit their pupils' needs. They carefully break down suggested topics into units of work planned over a specific timescale. The most effective part of their curriculum planning is the way they explain how pupils will be able to judge if they have successfully learned each of the skills to be taught. They do this by writing 'I Can Do' statements for pupils of all abilities, and keep a careful check of pupils' progress as each unit is taught. They quickly change their planning in tune with pupils' response to the work. If pupils are struggling they make the work more straightforward. If pupils quickly understand, they inject more challenge into the activities. Consequently, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well in these subjects.
14. Most pupils thoroughly enjoy school because there is a very wide range of activities to interest them, both in and out of school hours. Visitors who enrich pupils' experiences frequently enliven

school days. During the inspection Year 2 pupils taking part in a special 'Drum Crazy' course taught by a music specialist, demonstrated their skills to the whole school and many parents in an assembly. This exciting activity was packed with enjoyment from start to finish, and is typical of the range of activities the school provides to promote learning in all areas of the curriculum. The range of after-school clubs is very good; if pupils are not choosing to take part in line dancing they can try the gardening club, or one of a number of sports and other activities on offer. A well-attended homework club provides very good support for learning outside the school day. Often parents attend this club, so that the support offered to help families learn together is very good. Parents are very appreciative of the high quality homework that staff tailor to their children's needs.

15. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Children in the nursery and reception classes are taught in very spacious accommodation that includes a good sized outdoor classroom. There are shortcomings in the way the ample space is used to promote learning across all areas of learning. The lack of cover in the outdoor area limits the number of opportunities for children to learn outside. During the inspection unfavourable weather conditions prevailed. Nonetheless, teachers' planning and the resources on hand showed that the outdoor area is not used consistently to enhance learning effectively. The indoor space was not used as well as it could be to stimulate children's curiosity and excitement in learning through play. This is partly because many of the resources and much of the furniture are tired and well worn but also because curriculum planning, for activities that children can choose, frequently lacks a clear purpose. This is a direct contrast with the very good planning for teacher-led activities. These are often great fun for children as well as providing a very clear structure for learning. Assessment is used very well to ensure that these activities are tailored to help children of all abilities make good progress in their learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for care, welfare, health and safety are **good** and ensure that pupils are able to work in a safe environment. The school provides **very good** support and guidance for all pupils. The school seeks to involve pupils in the work of the school and does so **very effectively**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good monitoring of pupils' personal and academic development helps pupils to achieve very well.
- Caring teachers offer very effective support and guidance, which ensures pupils learn in a happy, safe, secure and constructive environment.
- Pupils are frequently encouraged to voice their opinions through the school council, enabling them to become constructive and mature citizens and to serve the school and the wider community in a considerate and helpful manner.
- Although all staff are fully aware of the procedures for protecting children, there is a lack of formal staff training for this.

Commentary

16. The excellent systems for assessment underpin the very good support and guidance that pupils receive. Staff regularly share targets for learning with pupils so that they know exactly what they need to do to improve. Older pupils have considerable responsibilities for checking their progress against these targets. Very careful checks are made of pupils' progress, and action is taken very quickly to support pupils who do not appear to be reaching their potential. Pupils capable of achieving higher levels are provided with a challenging curriculum that helps them move on at a very good rate. Those with special educational needs are supported

particularly well by the special needs co-ordinator. She regularly samples their work and the individual targets they are set to ensure that these help pupils to make the best possible progress. Parents are fully involved in the process. A strength of the school is the ethos of success. Display boards are covered with encouraging statements. This instils in pupils positive attitudes so that they believe in themselves. Weekly assemblies celebrate their successes in and out of school. A very good reward system encourages pupils to improve their personal skills throughout the day. They respond to this extremely well, beaming with pleasure when they receive recognition for their efforts.

17. The quality of care for pupils is good overall, with many very good features. Staff are very good role models and teach pupils to support and care for others inside and outside lessons. They enable pupils to support each other, to become motivated, confident, mature citizens of the school community and to work in harmony. A good system of holding regular weekly meetings ensures that all staff throughout the school are fully aware of any issues or concerns about individual pupils. Nonetheless, staff have not received formal training in child protection recently to update their understanding of the issues. The arrangements to help children settle in to the nursery are a very significant strength of the school. A comprehensive programme provides children and their parents with frequent opportunities to visit the school. There are plenty of opportunities for parents to speak to staff about any concerns and anxieties. Staff from the nursery visit children and their families at home before they start school and make a thorough and professional assessment of the child's pastoral, academic and medical needs.
18. The school council is an invaluable tool for developing and increasing effective levels of communication between pupils, staff and governors. The chair of governors holds regular meetings with the councillors to listen to their views. Pupils have been instrumental in bringing about changes to the school, such as forming a playground 'buddies' scheme to address their concerns about bullying. The council leaders are given significant responsibilities, such as reading out pupils' names and successes in weekly achievement assemblies. This gives them a very high profile in the school. Pupil noticeboards effectively encourage all pupils to play a part by keeping the council informed. The school has recently introduced a successful 'bag system' so that pupils can raise more suggestions to discuss at regular class council meetings. The work of the council enables staff to keep abreast of pupils' opinions and underpins the very good arrangements for pupils' personal development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **very good** and parents are very supportive as a result. Links with the local community are **very good** and very well used to enhance the curriculum. The school's links with other schools and colleges are **very good** and provide support for both staff and pupils

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good information and support is provided for parents so that they share a very productive relationship with the school.
- Parents are actively encouraged to support learning in the school and these experiences help to cement the strong partnership between parents and staff.
- The school works very effectively with its partner schools and the wider community to enhance pupils' learning.

Commentary

19. The very good level of communication between school and parents is an example of the school's commitment to forming a very professional and constructive partnership with its

parents. There are plenty of opportunities for parents to increase their understanding of what is taught through classroom displays and curriculum information, annual reports and parents' evenings. This is complemented by the availability of the head, deputy and other teachers, who are ready and available to meet with parents, to discuss any issues. Annual reports of pupils' progress are informative and share targets so that parents know what their children need to do to improve. A recent writing workshop enabled parents to develop ideas for working with children at home. Parents also work effectively with the Friends of the school and value the opportunity to attend and support recreational events. For example, £1000 was raised for the school at a recent summer fete. This was a significant achievement for the Friends group.

20. Dedicated and committed parents support learning in the school. During the inspection a significant number of parents were observed supporting teaching and learning in lessons. Many give their support to school events, attending and supporting educational visits and school assemblies. Many parents attend end of year celebrations, special assemblies and achievement assemblies to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem. This has enabled the school to share its ethos with parents. The school's open approach has resulted in a trusting relationship so that parents' views of the school are very complimentary. They value the staff very highly and are proud of their children's achievements. They recognise and appreciate the role that senior staff play in their children's success.
21. Very effective links with other local schools are improving the quality of education for all pupils. Staff regularly visit partner schools, for joint training or to share the good practice that has been developed. For example, a recent session introduced other local schools to the excellent systems for assessment. The transfer of information about pupils to partner schools is efficient and timely. There are good arrangements to help pupils and parents to make appropriate choices about the next stage of education. The school is used constructively to provide training for new teachers, trainee teaching assistants and nursery nurses, parents and sixth formers who want to pursue teaching and work with pupils. Links with the local community are very effective. For example, governors and staff regularly attend the local community forum to discuss issues of concern for the local estate. Good links with the police and the wider community helped to reduce vandalism on the school site, although unfortunately this has not been eradicated. Community visitors often support school activities, such as the local football coaches who provide training for pupils after school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The headteacher provides **excellent** leadership. Leadership of other key staff is **very good**. Governance is **very good**. The overall management provided by key staff is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Inspirational leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher has created an ethos of success for the school that is shared by all.
- Excellent use of systems to check the quality of education leads to continuous improvement at the school.
- Governors support the work of the headteacher and school very effectively.
- Very good leadership and management by the core subject leaders, the special educational needs co-ordinator and other senior managers are very effective in raising standards.

Commentary

22. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is a major factor in the school's overall effectiveness and the high standing in which it is held by the local community, governors, pupils and parents. Their shared vision, drive and understanding of the school have enabled them to work very closely together, drawing on each other's strengths, creating extremely high aspirations. They have a firm commitment to further improvement. This is a school that is committed to providing its pupils with every opportunity to fulfil their potential. There is a 'can do' culture which pervades the school. This means that pupils have a belief in their own ability to succeed and standards are rising as a consequence. This is a direct result of the inspirational leadership and vision of the head and deputy. Every member of the school team shares this vision.
23. Systems to check the quality of education are used extremely effectively to establish clear priorities for the school to deal with. They touch on every aspect of school life and are used and valued by all staff. The school analyses a wealth of data very effectively to identify areas for development and further improvement. This process is repeated with staff, governors and parents, ensuring the whole school community has an understanding of how the school can improve and its role within that. Most importantly there is an understanding of the need to check the impact of any action taken and feed findings into any further improvements. There is meticulous tracking and checking of pupils' progress by the headteacher, the assessment leader, the special educational needs co-ordinator and core subject leaders. As a result the school is very successful in boosting pupils' achievements in these areas. The school has already identified the need to develop further this approach in other subjects in the curriculum where there has previously been less emphasis on this.
24. Governors are enthusiastic and committed, and support and challenge the school very effectively; they ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They have a very good understanding of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to carry on improving. This is a direct result of their close links with key staff through regular visits to the school to see for themselves how well it is doing, before reporting back to relevant committees of the governing body. The headteacher has worked in close partnership with the governors to develop their expertise and knowledge through, for example, regular monitoring of pupils' work and joint lesson observations. Financial management is very good. The headteacher and governors monitor the budget very effectively throughout the year and make knowledgeable decisions that lead to further improvement.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	757,638
Total expenditure	745,350
Expenditure per pupil	2,781

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	18,500
Balance carried forward to the next	30,788

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

25. A key strength of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is the very good partnership between all the adults. Teaching assistants provide very good support to children and adults and are frequently involved in the very good assessment procedures that are in place for most teacher-led activities. In addition the excellent skills of the deputy headteacher are regularly used as a model of outstanding practice. This leads to rigorous evaluation and continuous improvement. Since the last inspection good changes to planning for the nursery class and the appropriate reorganisation of the reception class have been implemented. The improvement has been satisfactory overall, but some shortcomings remain in curriculum planning for activities that children select themselves.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very positive relationships between all adults and children help the children to develop confidence.
- There is a very strong focus on developing children's personal skills.
- Activities that children select themselves sometimes lack a clear purpose.

Commentary

26. A significant proportion of children lack confidence in their own abilities when they start school in the nursery. Many have had few opportunities to share experiences with children of the same age. Staff are very skilled at encouraging children to try new things and at teaching them how to work and play successfully with one another. Teaching and learning in this area are good overall, with strengths in the very trusting relationships that teachers and teaching assistants build with children. As a result, children achieve well. Some will reach the goals expected of them when they reach the end of the reception year, but a significant proportion will not. In the reception class children develop increasing responsibility by sticking their name card onto a sign to show which activity they have chosen to complete. Many have difficulty maintaining concentration when they are working without direct supervision. The quality of planning for activities that children select themselves does not match the very good quality of planning that guides activities the staff are leading. Consequently, although children clearly enjoy many of the activities, some activities lack a clear purpose and do not help children to develop the vital skills of perseverance and co-operation. This is a sharp contrast to the concentration children show when teachers hold their attention through exciting activities. In the nursery, for example, children were transfixed when they pretended to fasten their seat belts and fly around the world with Barnaby Bear.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent teaching by senior staff provides outstanding opportunities for children to learn, and an excellent model for teachers and teaching assistants to improve their practice.
- The range of activities planned for children to choose themselves often lacks challenge.

Commentary

27. Although there is a wide spread of ability, most children begin school in the nursery with very limited language development. By the time they leave the reception year many children achieve well and are close to reaching the goals expected due to the high profile this has in the school. In the nursery, the staff are very good at encouraging children to listen to others and to say what they think. Some children find this very difficult. Teaching and learning are good overall, and there are strengths in the very effective way that teachers in both classes help children to develop early literacy skills. In the nursery, staff question children very well, provoking good responses from children learning the sounds of letters. In the reception class, a very good focus on encouraging children to try to write is very successful. An excellent lesson led by a senior teacher captured children's imagination from the moment a letter to the class fell out of the book she was reading to them. Children were so fascinated by the letter, and so mesmerised by the teacher's skills in encouraging them to write, that they were loath to stop writing a letter to the shoemaker when they had the chance to do so. This excellent lesson was characterised by a range of interesting activities for children to choose that were very well planned to help them develop language skills. Typically, literacy lessons are not always as well focused, with many of the activities lacking a clear purpose for learning. During the inspection, the quality of these activities improved throughout the week in response to very good school leadership. Staff in the Foundation Stage are committed to providing high quality experiences for the children and regularly seek advice on how to improve their practice.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan very good links with other areas of learning to promote children's mathematical development.
- Opportunities to develop mathematical skills as children play are often missed.

Commentary

28. By the time they leave the reception class most children achieve well, but many do not reach the goals expected at this age. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers are particularly effective at creating opportunities to develop mathematical skills when children are working at other areas of learning. For example, children in the nursery pretending to fly around the world count down backwards from five before they take off together. In the reception class children are highly motivated by the interactive whiteboard, which zooms in the answers to mathematical questions, such as 'one more than'. In focused activities similar to these, teaching and learning are very good. However, as in other areas of learning, the activities that are provided for children to develop their skills as they play are not planned well enough. As a result, many opportunities to develop mathematical skills are missed. For example, there is not always a clear mathematical activity to complete whilst children play in the shoemaker's shop, and too little use is made of the outdoor area to promote mathematical learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of exciting activities is planned to promote learning.

- Some activities for children to learn through play lack a clear focus for developing children's skills.

Commentary

29. The rich range of activities provided helps children to achieve well. Nonetheless, the majority do not reach the goals expected by the time they leave the reception class. Teaching and learning are good overall. Often they are very good, for instance when adults in the nursery encourage children to try different bread from around the world. This activity is one of a range that has included visiting an in-store bakery at a local supermarket. Very good community links led the store to send a visitor to the class and to supply the nursery with a wide range of bread to taste. Children make very good progress and are fascinated by well-focused lessons such as these. However, the range of activities planned for children to explore learning independently lacks the same very good level of challenge. The outdoor area is not used effectively to promote learning in this or other areas of learning. Children from the nursery and reception classes are not routinely extending their understanding in the outdoor classroom. This limits the progress they make in all areas of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

30. This area of learning was only sampled during the inspection and no direct observations were made. Consequently, there is not enough evidence to make a judgment about the quality of provision. Nonetheless, observations of many other activities show that there are plenty of opportunities for children to develop dexterity with their hands and fingers, such as when they are spreading butter and other fillings onto their sandwiches in the nursery, and when they are using art tools or pencils for writing in the reception class. The outdoor area is not used effectively to develop children's physical skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress in developing their skills when adults lead activities.
- Activities for children to complete by themselves are not always exciting enough to hold their attention.

Commentary

31. Teaching and learning are good overall but the lack of opportunities for children to develop their skills in the outdoor classroom limits their progress. Children achieve well due to very good teaching in whole class groups, but many are unlikely to reach the goals expected at the end of the reception year. In the nursery, children are delighted to explore a range of percussion instruments together. The teacher skilfully builds in opportunities for them to play whilst others listen, and plenty of opportunities to try out a new instrument. She does this by including a simple routine in the song, when children pass the instruments round the circle. Children do this very efficiently, and the huge grins of delight on their faces as they make **VERY LOUD** or very quiet sounds with their instruments show how much they enjoy the music. However, independent activities for children to select do not have the same high level of challenge in both classes. For example, in the reception class, using templates for cutting out limits children's creativity. Children find it difficult to settle to one activity and take their name card from one to another because they are not always fully involved in learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do very well to achieve above the expected standards by the time they leave the school as a result of very good teaching.
- Initiatives to raise standards in speaking and listening are promoted in all aspects of the curriculum and have a very positive impact on standards.
- Very strong subject leadership has been instrumental in the improvements made since the last inspection.

Commentary

32. Very good improvement has been made in the overall provision for English since the last inspection. Standards seen are above average in Year 6, and average in Year 2, and pupils make very good progress. A significant number of pupils achieve higher than expected levels. This is the result of very effective, and at times excellent, teaching throughout the school. Teachers are able to target pupils' learning and raise standards because of their excellent use of assessment. This informs teachers' planning and ensures that the pupils have very well-matched activities in lessons. Pupils are very clear about the next steps needed to improve their work and confidently explain what they need to include to reach the next level, particularly in writing. Older pupils from Years 3 to 6 take increasing responsibility for this process. Whilst most teachers' marking is used very successfully to show pupils how they can improve, opportunities to share very good practice could be developed even further. Overall, assessment is used highly effectively to target pupils for literacy support throughout the school. Very good support for learning is provided through the very efficient deployment of teaching assistants and additional adults in lessons.
33. The most successful deployment of an additional adult in lessons is the inspirational role model of the subject leader. Pupils benefit from her excellent teaching. For example, a group of Year 1 pupils made outstanding progress in their recognition of initial letter sounds. In addition, she regularly shares her expertise with teachers and teaching assistants, modelling best practice during lessons. This approach has had a significant impact on raising the quality of teaching throughout the school. The subject leader's very good subject knowledge and highly effective checking of all aspects of the subject have enabled her to develop a very good understanding of the strengths and current areas for improvement. These areas are addressed very effectively in the current literacy action plan.
34. The school has been very effective in promoting speaking and listening skills in all classes and curriculum areas throughout the school. A recent area for development, this was practised consistently during the inspection and has led to the very good progress pupils are making in this area. The school has adopted a code for speaking and listening, which all adults in school reinforce very well. Consequently, pupils are aware of the need to improve how they listen and speak. A very good example was seen in a Year 5 and 6 class where pupils assessed their classmates during a very good 'court-room' role-play exercise. Half the class used specific details of successful speaking and listening skills to feed back how well others had spoken whilst acting out the roles of lawyers, judges and victims, and how their friends could improve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

35. Pupils' literacy skills are developed highly effectively across the curriculum. Reading and writing skills are regularly taught through other subjects, whilst pupils are encouraged to transfer the skills they have learnt in English to their writing across the curriculum. For example, in a science lesson on electricity, both the teacher and teaching assistant used the science activity to assess pupils' speaking and listening skills and the standard of their writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve very well because teaching and learning are very good.
- Excellent assessment procedures are used extremely well to help plan the next stage of pupils' learning so that pupils are provided with a very good mathematics curriculum that matches their abilities.
- Subject leadership is very good and lies behind the very good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

36. Standards seen during the inspection are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Given the well below average attainment of most pupils on entry to the Foundation Stage most achieve very well. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' very good achievement can be traced to some key features:
- teachers set very high expectations of the standards that pupils should reach;
 - very good instruction in basic skills by teachers who are very confident;
 - excellent assessment practices lead to rigorous planning that is very well matched to pupils' prior attainment;
 - provision of a wide-ranging mathematics curriculum;
 - very good subject leadership that includes rigorous checking of standards and achievement; and
 - lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve very well because they benefit from the sensitive encouragement and support provided by well-briefed and talented teaching assistants.
37. Teaching and learning are very good and better than at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan work carefully to match their prior attainment. This starts with ongoing accurate assessment of the standards and achievement of pupils. Weekly plans are regularly modified to take account of the progress made and skilfully adapted to build on pupils' current understanding. Pupils' work is marked carefully with very good guidance on correcting mistakes and suggestions on how to improve. Often the pupil is asked to follow the example and practise the calculation; pupils respond well to this. In an excellent lesson in Years 5 and 6, led by senior staff, the teacher was inspirational. The pupils' response was excellent as they worked very hard to complete number sequences. The teacher probed around the class with a magnifying glass, encouraging the pupils to be 'mathematical detectives', challenged pupils to meet their target in this lesson and praised their excellent efforts.
38. This lesson was typical of the very good range of curriculum experiences provided throughout the school. One of the reasons standards and pupils' achievement are much better than they were, is that good attention is given to teaching pupils how to carry out mathematical investigations. Consequently, pupils are much more confident when faced with problems and know which strategies to adopt. In a very well planned investigation into imperial measurement

[yards, feet and inches], the pupils realised how some imperial measures have been retained, such as for markings on a sports pitch. Many teachers make good use of ICT to help to illustrate mathematical concepts; this approach helps to raise standards.

39. Subject leadership is very good and very focused on raising standards, improving teaching, learning and assessment. The co-ordinator has analysed data from test results and teacher assessments, and tracked pupils' progress accurately. She uses this information to give very clear support and guidance to colleagues. Her observations of lessons, planning and pupils' work have led her to draw up a very clear plan for further improvement. The drive for raising standards in the school means that the plan is likely to be very successful.

Mathematics across the curriculum

40. This is very good overall. For example, the science curriculum is used well to provide many opportunities for pupils to practise their numeracy skills. In a lesson on electric circuits and bulb intensity, pupils cut and measured accurately each length of wire during the experiment. They counted within a range of numbers to 100 the layers of tissue paper used to blot out the torchlight. Speaking and listening skills are often practised during mathematics lessons, with a very good focus on developing pupils' mathematical vocabulary.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6, pupils' achieve very well because teaching and learning are very good.
- The very good curriculum is often based on practical work that motivates pupils very well, and science is used well to promote literacy and numeracy skills.
- Subject leadership is very good and is leading to a good improvement in standards.

Commentary

41. Standards seen in all aspects of science are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve very well throughout the school. Higher attaining pupils do particularly well, reaching well above average standards for their age. Their success stems from:
- teachers' very high expectations of the pupils;
 - a clear commitment to providing pupils with regular opportunities to carry out experiments;
 - good marking with clear targets set to match pupils' prior attainment;
 - clear objectives of each lesson that are easily understood by the pupils; and
 - very clear guidance from the subject manager on how the science curriculum should be taught.
42. Teaching and learning are very good. Most teachers are very confident in organising and managing science experiments. Pupils achieve very well because work is based on first-hand experiences. In a Year 4 and 5 class, ICT was used very well to record digital photographs of pupils' experimenting in earlier lessons. This very good strategy provoked lively discussion and very good achievement in the use of scientific terms such as filtration, sieving and mixture. Higher attaining pupils confidently assessed what they would change if repeating the experiment. Lower attaining pupils achieved very well due to the support of a teaching assistant who could confidently provide focused individual support. In Year 6, pupils found out why light intensity changes when the lengths of wire used to make a circuit are changed. They

responded very well to the challenging teaching and worked hard together to organise a fair test. The teacher's excellent knowledge of electricity had a direct effect on pupils' understanding of the link between the lesson and electrical safety in the home. This was improved by an interesting and challenging homework task to consolidate pupils' understanding of fuses and circuits. Throughout the school, teachers mark work conscientiously and make good use of comments to raise further questions and extend pupils' understanding. Excellent procedures for assessment have helped to raise standards and ensure that pupils achieve very well, because pupils know what they need to improve to reach the next target.

43. The science curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to take part in experiments. Pupils achieved very well in a Year 2 and 3 class when they discussed the results of an experiment to test the role of toothpaste in protecting teeth. The pupils were fascinated to see how an egg shell had decomposed when placed in vinegar with no protection and how the use of toothpaste, spread on to another egg shell, had created a barrier to decay. In Year 6, most pupils know that water can be frozen to become ice and then thawed back to water, and that the presence of air is crucial to the burning of a candle, because they have seen these processes happening. Lessons are often used well to promote literacy and numeracy skills. As a Year 4 and 5 lesson developed, pupils learned how to write up the science method formally, how to label diagrams and how to record a conclusion. This lesson was typical of the good range of work seen in pupils' books.
44. The co-ordinator, provides very good subject leadership, and has drawn up a clear strategic plan for further improvement in science. Directions to staff have been supportive but purposeful. For example, across each unit of work, usually taking seven lessons, the co-ordinator has set a requirement that a minimum of four lessons must be based on investigations. This approach has been one key factor in the good improvement made in this subject since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT is used very well in many lessons across the curriculum.
- Pupils achieve very well due to excellent use of assessment and lessons that are very well matched to pupils' abilities.

Commentary

45. Standards seen in ICT have improved and are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve very well. Teachers are very clear about pupils' attainment in the subject due to excellent procedures for assessment. Detailed records are kept of pupils' responses to each of the units of work, with a clear indication of the level each pupil has reached. Teachers then use this information extremely well to plan their lessons. They adapt the national guidance skilfully, by breaking down the aims into small targets for each lesson that pupils can clearly understand. Lessons have simple targets for all ability groups to ensure that pupils build on their previous skills. This exceptionally successful strategy enables pupils of all abilities to achieve very well.
46. Teaching and learning are very good and characterised by challenging lessons that ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to learn about each new topic and to practise their skills independently. Lessons are usually reviewed midway through to see how well pupils are doing. Pupils take some responsibility for their own assessment by showing the teacher how well they are doing in achieving the targets set at the start. Higher attaining pupils make very good gains

in learning due to the level of challenge they are set. Consequently, in Year 6 more able pupils can find all the information they will need to create a multi-media presentation, searching the Internet and other sources. They confidently used many facets of the software, for example, to create a professional presentation of key facts about Aztec society. Teachers' confidence in teaching ICT has improved considerably, and continues to improve due to the good leadership and management of the subject. A particularly effective feature is the system of recording achievements in lessons on prepared sheets. Teaching assistants are fully involved in this process, making notes themselves and sharing their observations with teachers.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

47. This is very good. Links with ICT are common in many subjects. Pupils frequently bring notes from other subjects to the ICT suite to use in their work. Lessons in other subjects are increasingly enhanced by teachers' effective use of classroom interactive whiteboards. In addition to using these to display the lesson targets many teachers are beginning to use them confidently as a resource to highlight aspects of learning in most subjects.

HUMANITIES

Geography and History

48. During the inspection no lessons in **geography** were seen, and only one lesson in **history**. As a result it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision for these subjects. Nonetheless, good links to other subjects are made and both subjects were seen being taught in other lessons, so that in a Year 6 English lesson pupils very effectively learnt how to use primary and secondary sources through looking at Aztec artefacts and information texts. In the history lesson seen pupils in Year 6 were challenged very well to work in groups and used their literacy skills to gain and note information from secondary sources about Aztec daily life. From other evidence, including examples of pupils' recent work, it is clear that the school provides a wide and diverse range of opportunities for the pupils to learn the skills needed to study these subjects. Displays in classrooms and around the school promote the subjects well. In both geography and history, visits are planned to further enrich pupils' learning and understanding and they talk enthusiastically about their experiences.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Artefacts and a rich curriculum are used well to interest and engage the pupils.
- The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the strengths of the subject and how to improve it further.
- Whilst teaching overall is good, more opportunities could be planned to develop the pupils' understanding of living in multi-cultural Britain.

Commentary

49. As religious education was not reported in the last inspection it is not possible to judge any improvement in provision made since then. Standards seen are in line with those set out in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Whilst there is good evidence of high quality work in pupils' books, much of their learning has come from first-hand experiences, opportunities for discussion and drama. As a result pupils talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about what they have learnt. Year 2 pupils gained their knowledge of many of the

key aspects of Christianity from listening to Bible stories and acting them out, whilst older pupils in Year 6 talked animatedly about the similarities and differences that exist between different faiths following their visits to local churches and the Sikh Gurdwara. Pupils learn about other religions through a similar approach and by the end of Year 6 pupils are able to describe the main features, symbols and beliefs of the main world religions.

50. Overall, pupils achieve well throughout the school as a result of good teaching and learning. Where teaching is good and better, resources, artefacts and visitors to school are planned effectively to engage pupils and deepen their understanding of other religions. In a Year 3 and 4 class, the teacher's excellent subject knowledge and use of artefacts meant that pupils were highly motivated in their learning and made very good progress in their understanding of the Muslim faith. The local vicar was able to explain the symbolism of special clothes he wears through a very interactive lesson for a Year 4 and 5 class, where pupils dressed up in a cassock, surplice, stole and hood. However, opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding of living in a community along with members of other faiths and cultures are sometimes missed in teachers' planning. The subject leader has already identified this as an area for development and is currently planning other visits and visitors that can bring meaning to pupils' learning. Through her checking of pupils' books she has also identified the need to find out about pupils' understanding of religious education through discussions with pupils and is developing this approach throughout the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

51. Not enough lessons were seen in these subjects to make a secure judgement about the overall provision and the quality of teaching and learning. Two physical education lessons were seen. No lessons were seen in music, art and design, or design and technology. There were examples of pupils' work to see in art and design, and design and technology; in addition there were samples of pupils' work on display around the school and pupils spoke about the subjects but there was not enough evidence to make a secure judgment about the standards achieved. There was no pupils' work to see in music.

Art and design

52. The school has a well-resourced dedicated art room that provides very good accommodation for pupils to improve their skills. In addition to lessons it is used for two after-school art clubs, for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and those in Years 3 to 6, that add to pupils' enjoyment of art. The curriculum is planned well using the national guidance as a basis for the topics. These are usually taught in blocks so that pupils can concentrate on developing their skills. Teachers are good at making links with other subjects, so that examples of Greek art are displayed that complement history work on Ancient Greece. In Years 3 to 6, pupils use sketchbooks to practise their skills. The quality of the sketchbooks is variable. The best include many opportunities for pupils to experiment with different art techniques and materials. Art on display in the art room, from pupils throughout the school, is of high quality and shows how pupils are developing their skills through the topics planned. Some displays of work around the school show that there are missed opportunities for pupils to practise skills, such as mixing their own paint for personal portraits.

Design and technology

53. Clear curriculum planning, based on the national guidance, provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop skills in the subject as they progress through the school. Many classes have the prospect of working at three projects each year in well-designed blocks of time. However, the range of work seen often lacks challenge, as there is not enough focus on the designing process, or sufficient opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work. For example, puppets made by Year 2 pupils are made using a template rather than the pupils' own designs. Activities such as these limit the development of skills in the subject. Older pupils in Year 4 have clearly

designed and made their own torches, but the way that they record the process of designing on loose sheets of paper does not help them to learn from their mistakes and build on their ideas as they move through the school.

Music

54. Discussions with pupils confirm that they are provided with a good curriculum that includes opportunities for them to sing and play together, compose and listen to a broad range of music. Year 6 pupils recognise musical terms used when composing such as crotchet and quaver. They made some shakers in design and technology that were used as percussion instruments. Pupils have listened to visiting musicians performing in school and they can sing a good repertoire of songs appropriate for school assembly. They learned to sing the Beatles' composition Yellow Submarine during a history topic that included a visit to Liverpool. During a school assembly Year 2 pupils plus children from the reception class had an excellent opportunity to gain confidence by performing the 'Drum Crazy' sequence. Their exhilarating performance gave pupils the chance to sing and play together and they joined in enthusiastically. In an extra-curricular music and drama workshop pupils learned breathing exercises to improve the quality of their singing. As a result of good teaching their singing was tuneful and their diction clear.

Physical education

55. The lessons seen and discussions with pupils confirm that a good range of physical education opportunities is provided, including gymnastics, games skills, dance and swimming. Orienteering skills are acquired during a residential weekend. Consequently, by Year 2 most pupils have learned what makes a good balance and how to hold their body movements with increasing control. Pupils dodged and darted skilfully between each other when playing a tag game. In Year 6 most know how to rotate the gymnastic shapes they create and how to link these into an attractive sequence. Pupils know that 'warm up' and 'cooling down' sessions make an important contribution to their overall health. The quality of teaching is enhanced by the very good skills of senior staff, who regularly model lessons that enable pupils to make very good progress, and help other staff to improve their skills in teaching the subject. As a result, pupils enjoy improving their games skills and some have progressed well in competitions. For example, the netball team are through to the local area final. Pupils report that they have made good progress in swimming. Many have attained the national 25 metres standard. Two pupils were commended during the Achievement Assembly for swimming longer distances, one pupil reaching one kilometre. The very good range of after-school activities includes many opportunities for pupils to enhance and enjoy their sporting skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Social, Emotional and Behavioural Skills (SEBS) scheme, promoted by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), has been introduced very successfully this term.
- Pupils' personal development has a very high priority in the school.

Commentary

56. At the start of this term the school introduced the SEBS scheme to all year groups. This is part of a pilot programme run by the DfES, and has been very successful. It has provided pupils with a clearer programme to learn about developing their personal skills. School leaders have enthusiastically ensured that pupils throughout the school now have plenty of opportunities to take part in these activities. Curriculum planning is now in place for all year groups. These recent developments are leading to higher achievement. Although regular opportunities for personal development are not yet timetabled in every class, there is now a clear programme to support teachers in improving pupils' personal skills.
57. Pupils' personal development has a very high priority in the school. Display boards are covered in encouraging notices to help pupils see how they can succeed. Signs, such as that proclaiming George Halas' view that "Nobody who ever gave his best regretted it", are seen in all the school's common areas. The school ethos has created a culture of success very well. This inspires pupils with the confidence to know that they can aspire to greater things. This positive attitude is a significant factor in pupils' academic success. Pupils are taught to take responsibility for their actions in all that they do, and this is a key strength of the school. External visitors are used very well to support staff teaching about health and drugs issues, and for sensitive sex education lessons for pupils in Year 6. Health issues are carefully planned as part of the science and physical education curriculum, where pupils learn how their bodies work.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (Ethos)	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	1
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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