

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JAMES' CHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Allerton, Bradford

LEA area: Bradford

Unique reference number: 107304

Headteacher: Mrs J M Coyle

Lead inspector: Ms M D'Arcy

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th September 2004

Inspection number: 267796

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	178
School address:	Chelwood Drive Allerton Bradford West Yorkshire
Postcode:	BD15 7YD
Telephone number:	01274 777095
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd W Green
Date of previous inspection:	November 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average-sized primary school. At the time of the inspection, all children were attending full-time. However the school was preparing for the admission of a small number of nursery-aged children the following week, after having been granted permission to widen their provision to include this age group. There are fairly equal numbers of boys and girls. Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. There are small numbers from a variety of minority ethnic groups, but only one is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion with special educational needs (18 per cent) is broadly average. The range of pupils' needs include, specific and severe learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the usual admission and transfer times is high. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the area in which it is situated suffers from some social and economic deprivation. Children's overall attainment when they begin school is well below what is expected for their age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23158	Ms M D'Arcy	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Art and design English as an additional language
11358	Mrs V Lamb	Lay inspector	
23276	Mrs M Mann	Team inspector	English Design and technology History Music Religious education
11528	Mr M Wainwright	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography Physical education Special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. While standards by the end of years 6 and 2 are generally below average in English, mathematics and science, they are improving and most pupils are achieving well. Teaching and the curriculum are good and the school is being led and managed well. The school provides **good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Good management strategies implemented by the strong leadership team of headteacher, deputy, co-ordinators and governors are improving pupils' standards and the quality of provision
- The quality of teaching is good, with support staff making an especially good contribution
- Systems to assess pupils and to use the information to promote their progress are good
- Good quality learning experiences are enriched by a wide range of additional opportunities
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- Pupils achieve very well in music and attain above average standards
- Pupils have good attitudes to school, behave well and develop good personal qualities, but their attendance is unsatisfactory
- The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils are valued and fully included
- In the juniors, the quality of marking and the way pupils present their work are unsatisfactory

Good improvements have occurred since the school's last inspection. The school no longer has serious weaknesses. Standards have risen. The weaknesses identified in pupils' achievement, assessment, and the quality of leadership and management have been successfully addressed and are now good features. The quality of teaching is better and areas of strength have been maintained.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 , compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E*	C	A
mathematics	E	E	C	A
science	E	E	C	A

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Achievement is good. Although past underachievement is still being seen in the standards of attainment in some year groups, pupils in years 1 to 6 are now achieving well. While standards in English, mathematics and science are generally below average by the end of years 2 and 6 pupils' test results compare favourably with schools in similar contexts. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in information and communication technology (ICT) and reach the expected standards. They make good progress in religious education (RE) and by the end of years 2 and 6 achieve the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The standards that pupils reach in music exceed national expectations for their ages, reflecting very good progress in this subject. Work in other subjects was sampled so no judgements are made about standards and

achievement. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as do those who are learning to speak English as an additional language. Children in the reception class make good progress in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, physical development and the music aspect of creative development. In these aspects they reach the goals expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Although the children do not meet the expected goals in other areas¹, they make satisfactory progress.

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are **good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also **good**. The school has good procedures to check on and promote attendance but, despite improvements, levels are below national figures. Frequent, short, illnesses account for a significant proportion, as do holidays in term time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides pupils with a **good** education. The quality of teaching is good, with strengths in many areas, although marking in the juniors is unsatisfactory and expectations of how junior pupils present work are not high enough. Support staff make a very good contribution to teaching and learning. The school provides a good curriculum with lots of opportunities for pupils to benefit from visits, visitors and extra curricular clubs. Pupils with learning difficulties are well catered for and those learning to speak English receive very good support. Pupils are given good support and pastoral advice. Satisfactory provision is made to seek their views and involve them in the school's work. Links with parents and the community are satisfactory. Accommodation and resources are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **good**. The headteacher has developed a strong leadership team that have worked effectively together, and with governors, to promote the school's good improvement. There is a renewed vision for the future, based on good management systems to maintain pupils' improved standards and the good quality of provision. Governance is good. Governors are committed and work hard to support the school. They meet most of their legal obligations but omit some of the required information in their annual report to parents and do not ensure that there is an annual, formal, risk assessment for health and safety.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a generally good opinion of the school. They are welcoming the stronger links that are being established through various initiatives. Pupils also say that they like school and get on well with teachers and staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- improve the quality of marking in years 3 to 6
- improve the way junior pupils present their work
- improve attendance

¹ Communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development.

and, to meet statutory requirements

- include the required contact details in the prospectus
- ensure health and safety issues are formalised.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Although standards at the end of years 6 and 2 are generally below average pupils are achieving well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reception children achieve well in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, physical development and the music aspect of creative development
- The good progress of pupils in years 1 and 2 is reflected in much improved test results
- Junior pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science are showing good improvement
- The school's effective provision for inclusion ensures that all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can
- Pupils achieve very well in music and reach above average standards

Commentary

1. Children generally begin school with standards that are well below those expected for their age. Standards are particularly low in the areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Although children make satisfactory and sometimes good progress, by the end of their first year in school many have still not reached the goals expected for their age in most areas of learning. The exceptions are in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, physical development and the music aspect of creative development where progress is good and standards are in line with expectations. Overall, children's achievement is similar to that found by the last inspection. While standards are not as high in some areas, this is due to children's attainment on entry being lower than it was when the school was last inspected.
2. When compared to schools nationally, year 2 pupils' national test results in 2003 were below average in reading and very low (in the bottom five per cent nationally) in writing and mathematics. When compared to schools in similar contexts, these results were above average in reading, but well below average in writing and mathematics. The reading results were similar to those achieved in 2002, but the writing and mathematics results reflected a significant fall from the previous year. Over time (1999 – 2003) year 2 pupils' results have not risen at the same rate as those nationally. However, the most recent (2004) results show very good improvement in all three subjects. Although these results are currently unconfirmed, the indications are that reading results this year will be in line with the national average and writing results will be above. The mathematics results suggest that performance will be just below the national average but above, and possibly well above average when compared to similar schools. The 2004 reading and writing results also look as though they are going to be above average when compared to similar schools.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
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reading	15.5 (14.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.5 (13.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	13.5 (14.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Inspection evidence shows that the improvement that occurred in the 2004 test results has been in direct response to the school's good action to drive up standards. There has been a significant focus on promoting basic skills, particularly writing. This, together with good quality teaching, including an intensive focus on promoting speaking skills, has and is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Whilst speaking and listening skills are generally below and sometimes well below average, pupils are also making good gains in this area. The 2004 teacher assessments of pupils' standards in science reflect good improvement on the 2003 assessments. These, and inspection evidence, confirm that although standards are below average, pupils are achieving well, especially in learning scientific skills.
- Over time, the year 2 test results show that boys tend to outperform girls in reading; in writing and mathematics there are no significant differences. Inspectors did not find any evidence of differences in performance between boys and girls.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.3 (23.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.3 (24.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.5 (26.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- In 2003, year 6 pupils' test results were in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science and reflected significant improvement on the 2002 results. When compared to similar schools, these results were particularly positive being well above average in all three subjects. The most recent (2004) results, as yet unconfirmed, show that while there has been some fall in all three subjects (to levels indicating standards that are below national averages) these are still favourable when compared to similar schools, being above average in English and mathematics and well above in science.
- A complete set of test data is not available to determine how well year 6 test results, over time, compare to those nationally². However, school data and inspection evidence shows that, overall, junior pupils are currently learning well. However, there are some marked, age-related, differences in the standards of attainment in different junior year groups, which reflect past underachievement. The standards of pupils in year 5, in particular, are significantly lower than they should be and, whilst better, year 4 pupils' standards are also too far below what is expected for their age. The school is working hard to boost these pupils' progress, but there is much ground to make up, especially if the favourable test results achieved in the last two years are to be maintained.

² This is because although reorganisation within the local education authority resulted in the school changing from a first school to a primary school in 1998, the school did not have any year 6 pupils until 1999. Consequently, the first set of test results for year 6 pupils were recorded in 2000.

7. Year 6 test results show that boys have generally not performed as well as girls in English, but in mathematics and science there are no significant differences. The school's thorough monitoring of test performance by gender shows that when other factors are taken into account, such as pupils' special educational needs, length of time at the school and absence rates, there are no significant gender differences. Inspectors did not find any evidence of differences in boys' and girls' performance that could not be explained by such factors.
8. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in ICT and by the end of years 2 and 6 reach standards that are broadly in line with what is expected for their age. Achievement in RE is good, with pupils meeting the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make very good progress in music and reach standards that exceed what is expected for their age. Work was sampled in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and PE so there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on standards and achievement.
9. Throughout the school, the very good support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make similar progress to other pupils and achieve well. This is because learning experiences are tailored very well to their needs and they receive good quality teaching and support. Pupils identified as having particular gifts or talents make good progress because they are given work that provides extra challenge and/or take part in additional activities that are linked to their identified talents. Analysis of the work of the few pupils who are at an early stage of learning English shows some exceptionally good progress over the course of a year (two of these pupils were asylum seekers and have now left the school). This results from the school's good provision to ensure that these pupils are fully included in the curriculum, through, for example, extra support from the school's own staff and visiting specialists.
10. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. It has successfully addressed the weaknesses identified at that time. Achievement in English, mathematics and science by the end of year 6 is now much better than in 2002.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Their personal qualities, including spiritual, moral and social development are good. Punctuality is satisfactory but attendance is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is good
- The quality of relationships and attitudes promotes a good, caring ethos
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well
- Although procedures to promote attendance are good, standards are well below the national average

Commentary

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	142	1	
White – any other White background	1		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4		
Mixed – White and Black African	1		
Mixed – White and Asian	5		
Mixed – any other mixed background	3		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	5		
Any other ethnic group	1		
No ethnic group recorded	1		

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

11. Behaviour in lessons, the dining room, at assemblies and in the playgrounds is good. Although one pupil was excluded last year, this is a rare occurrence. Overall, pupils are friendly, polite and show respect for adults and each other. They report that bullying is not a major concern and say that the school would deal quickly with this type of behaviour, should it occur. The 'buddy' system³ also supports good relationships and ensures that all pupils feel included.
12. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are usually attentive and keen to participate. They are enthusiastic and talk readily about their work and involvement in school clubs and activities. Pupils collaborate well when working together and are keen to take responsibility. Those with special educational needs try hard to complete tasks and reach their targets. They receive much encouragement from the very good quality of adult support. The same can be said of those pupils learning to speak English as an additional language. Good quality, one-to-one help and supportive relationships with the adults who teach them results in these pupils being eager to learn and is reflected in their good progress.
13. Spiritual development is promoted well. The close involvement with the local church, the good quality assemblies and opportunities for pupils to find delight and wonder in lessons, all support their good standards. For example, year 2 pupils showed 'wide-eyed' excitement as they waited for their turn to read and were inspired to make expressive sounds in an imaginative music lesson. Interesting displays, such as those reflecting poetry and different religions, plus the use of indoor and outdoor plants in the spacious, attractive, quadrangles, support and heighten pupils' aesthetic appreciation.
14. The difference between right and wrong and the understanding of how every individual's behaviour has an impact on others are consistently promoted in lessons and assemblies. School rules foster moral values such as honesty, fairness and tolerance. A wide range of clubs, opportunities to participate in dramatic and musical productions, educational visits and a residential holiday, support pupils' social development well.
15. Cultural development is well promoted. For instance, in RE, pupils enjoy celebrating a variety of festivals, including Christmas, Diwali and Hanukah, and are learning to

³ Where specific pupils have responsibility for befriending and helping others in the playground.

appreciate the similarities and differences between different cultures. A sufficient range of books and use of the computer help pupils in their research about cultures other than their own. Pupils celebrate their own heritage through many visits to places of interest. Visitors into school, including theatre companies and musicians, all positively support this aspect of pupils' development.

Attendance

16. Although attendance has improved slightly over the last academic year, standards are not high enough. Despite the school's good efforts, the rate of improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. As well as introducing a system of rewards to motivate pupils to attend, the school has appointed a member of staff to work with the families of pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern. Parents are made aware of the importance of regular attendance and the school responds immediately to any unexplained absence. In response, most parents now provide the school with reasons for their child's absence on the first day. However, absences include quite a high incidence of frequent, short, illnesses and, although the school discourages holidays in term, this also accounts for a significant proportion of absences.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.6	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good and has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching has shown good improvement since the last inspection
- English and mathematics are taught well
- Expectations of how junior pupils present their work are not high enough
- Support staff make a valuable contribution to teaching and learning
- Good improvement has occurred to the systems and use of assessment, but marking remains a weakness

Commentary

17. Teaching is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. Previously identified weaknesses in years 5 and 6 have been eliminated. Work from pupils in these year groups over the last twelve months indicates much better teaching and learning than was the case in 2002. While the teachers currently in years 5 and 6 are newly appointed, they taught well during the inspection and were judged to have significant potential to maintain this quality.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	8 (27%)	14 (47%)	8 (27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

18. The last inspection's identification of good teaching in ICT has been sustained. In addition, the teaching of English and mathematics in years 1 to 6 is now also good and has been crucial to the rise in standards in these subjects. Although only two science lessons were seen during the inspection (both in the juniors) these were of a good standard. Year 1 and 2 pupils' science work indicates that science teaching at this key stage is effective in promoting good learning. Throughout years 1 to 6, there are additional strengths in the teaching of RE and music.

19. In years 1 to 6, strengths seen in teaching included teachers' subject knowledge, which was evident in their planning, explanations, demonstrations and questioning. While teachers were only in the second week of the first term, they showed good knowledge of their pupils and most managed very well to set work that met their needs. The good improvements made to the school's assessment systems have played a major part in this and show that teachers are now using the information from assessments effectively to take pupils' learning forward. In the best lessons, teachers targeted all pupils when questioning, modifying questions well to provide both challenge and the opportunity for success for pupils of different abilities. Pace was generally brisk and expectations for work and

behaviour were mostly clear. The setting arrangements in English and mathematics for pupils in years 3 to 6⁴ are working well, allowing teachers to plan more effectively for a narrower range of needs. In most lessons, teachers share the learning objectives with pupils and in the best they involve pupils in evaluating how well they have achieved in relation to these. Other effective features are the provision made for pupils to work collaboratively and the promotion of speaking skills across the curriculum. Teachers provide many opportunities for collaborative work in groups and pairs, with discussion being a central part to aid understanding as well as speaking skills. However, although most teachers provide good role models for speaking, on a number of occasions teachers' use of language was **careless** and Standard English was not used. In lessons that were satisfactory rather than good or better, weaknesses related to aspects of management and organisation and occasionally pace.

20. Although teachers have a successful rapport with pupils and work hard to promote their good attitudes to learning, expectations about how junior pupils present their work are not high enough. Whilst the school has done some work on this in response to criticisms made by the last inspection, presentation is still an aspect that needs improving. Similarly, the marking of junior pupils' work remains unsatisfactory. On the whole, marking does not give pupils enough information about how to improve. When such comments are made they are frequently not followed through so pupils continue to make the same mistakes. There are instances of work going unmarked for long periods and comments from teachers that contain spelling mistakes. This is another area that the school has identified as a priority to improve.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and has improved since the last inspection. Consequently, these pupils are now learning at a better rate than they were in 2002. The tasks that are set for pupils are well matched to their needs, with teachers and support assistants showing good awareness of pupils' targets and the strategies noted on their individual education plans (IEPs) to achieve these. Those with social and behavioural problems are treated sympathetically but firmly, so that they are fully included but do not adversely affect the learning of others.
22. Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to teaching and learning. Overall, they are very well deployed and are actively involved in all parts of lessons and with different groups of pupils. For instance, they encourage the involvement of reluctant pupils; help to maintain individual pupils' concentration; lead group work and make some assessments of pupils' personal and academic achievements.
23. The learning focus in the reception class during the inspection week was primarily based on promoting children's personal and social skills. Consequently, only a few, short sessions were seen in other areas. While these were taught well there was scope for the activities to be organised and taught in more challenging and exciting ways. Sometimes, obvious opportunities to fully exploit the potential of the activities and make links with other areas of learning were missed. Good features included the caring and supportive nature of all staff, which helped the children to feel secure. Assessment systems ensure that children's progress is regularly checked and recorded. This aids the teacher in organising teaching groups, planning work to meet children's needs, and providing information to parents and the year 1 teacher at the end of the year.

⁴ Where pupils are grouped into teaching sets on the basis of their attainment.

24. For pupils in years 1 to 6, there are very good procedures for assessing attainment in English, mathematics and science, with the data from tests and assessments analysed thoroughly. The information is used effectively to track progress; organise junior pupils into teaching sets for English and mathematics; set whole school targets in English, mathematics and science, individual pupil targets in English and group targets in mathematics. Assessment information is also used effectively to identify pupils with particular gifts and talents as well as those with other special educational needs so that appropriate provision can be made for them. Steps have been taken for pupils to evaluate their own progress but these are at an early stage. Although there are, respectively, individual and group targets in English and mathematics, these are generally not highlighted sufficiently to allow pupils to assess how well they are doing in relation to them. This limitation together with weaknesses in marking restricts pupils' insight into their own learning. Overall, however, the school has made good progress in relation to the weaknesses in assessment pointed out by the last inspection.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum, which is enriched by a very good range of additional opportunities. Overall, resources are satisfactory and the accommodation is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from a very good range of additional activities, visits and visitors to school
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and ensures all pupils are fully included in the learning experiences offered
- Pupils are well provided for by a good number of qualified teachers and teaching assistants
- The accommodation is spacious and well maintained

Commentary

25. The school provides a good curriculum, which succeeds in stimulating pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Learning is often made more meaningful by the good links that are made between subjects, for example, between science, design and technology and ICT when year 4 pupils were studying 'light'.

26. A main strength is the very good range of enrichment opportunities. Many visits and visitors add much to pupils' learning. For instance, year 6 pupils buzzed with enthusiasm about their music workshop with a 'real' composer. Similarly exciting opportunities include the 'maths magician' and the 'animal man'. Visits, such as to York and Ingleton give pupils first hand experiences in history and geography and a residential visit to Kettlewell provides year 6 with opportunities for outdoor pursuits and the development of social skills. A highlight of the year was an Arts Week when pupils participated in a wide variety of creative activities. During lunchtimes and after school, many adults volunteer their time so that pupils of all ages can enjoy additional activities. These include various games, skipping, choir, reading, cycling proficiency, 'kids' praise' and recorders. Many pupils also learn to play other musical instruments, resulting in a large group of percussionists.

27. The teaching team provides a wide range of skills, which are shared successfully. The team includes a very good group of teaching assistants who know their roles well. They provide

fine support to teachers and help to ensure that all pupils are fully included. Those with special educational needs are supported particularly well and with great understanding. Where feasible, specific, additional, provision is made for pupils with particular gifts and talents. Pupils who are learning to speak English receive very good support from teachers, assistants and specialists who visit the school to work with them.

28. The school is fortunate to be housed in very good accommodation. It is extremely spacious with a large library and a separate music room. Outside there are interesting play areas, with play-equipment and markings, as well as a good-sized playing field. The school is clean and well maintained. Good displays of pupils' work and activities enhance the environment. Accommodation for reception children has recently been significantly extended in anticipation of the admission of nursery-aged children. While it is accepted that the much-increased space is a challenge in terms of display, the accommodation was not particularly stimulating for the children. Resources for reception children and the nursery children to be admitted are satisfactory. Throughout years 1 to 6, resources are satisfactory overall, and good in music and RE.

Care, guidance and support

Care, welfare, health and safety are satisfactory overall. Pupils are given good support, advice and guidance and are satisfactorily involved in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality relationships are established between adults and children
- Pupils who transfer from other schools are very well supported
- Health and safety procedures are not managed formally enough

Commentary

29. The good relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are a strong feature of the school's pastoral care. Adults know pupils very well and have established a caring, family, atmosphere that helps them to feel secure. They are confident that they have an adult in school that they can trust to help them with any problems. Staff encourage them to do their best through these warm relationships. Pupils with special educational needs are cared for very effectively. Adults know them well and are fully aware of their specific needs.

30. Support for all pupils, based on monitoring of their progress, is good. This is because staff have a high awareness of individual needs and are well focused and conscientious in providing for them. The commitment of the school towards supporting pupils' welfare, especially through forming constructive relationships, is clearly seen in the role of the mentor who works with pupils who are experiencing difficulties, for instance with their attendance or behaviour, to build confidence and social skills.

31. There are very good procedures to support pupils who join the school other than at the usual admission time. In discussion, pupils who had transferred from other schools said that they were very happy that everyone was friendly and welcoming, explaining that this helped them to settle quickly. Procedures include, new pupils being paired with a 'buddy' who shows them the routines and accompanies them to assemblies and lunch, and plays with them during breaks. New pupils are actively included in special events and are often

comfortable enough to take up opportunities to join clubs and hold responsible positions, such as being buddies, very soon after joining the school.

32. As at the time of the last inspection, the management of statutory health and safety procedures remains informal. Risk assessments are undertaken for trips out of school and for emergency evacuation. Trades union representatives assess the school on behalf of members, and appointed contractors check equipment regularly. However, the school does not carry out systematic, annual risk assessments of the whole site, including school procedures and for lessons such as PE. During the inspection, the school was seen to be a safe and secure place. No major hazards were noted, although quite a number of reception children were allowed to wear dangling earrings in a PE lesson. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. Staff, including support assistants, receive training to keep them up to date on any changes to procedures.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the local community and wider world are satisfactory. Those with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of useful information is provided for parents
- Links with other schools provide specialist facilities for pupils

Commentary

33. The school provides parents with a good range of information. All parents are invited to discuss their children's progress with teachers each term. The headteacher and class teachers are available to speak to parents daily if needed and parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with comments or concerns. Every effort is made to inform and involve parents of pupils with special educational needs in their child's education and they are encouraged to discuss their child's progress at any time.
34. Parents get good information about the curriculum. They receive an outline of what their children will be learning each term and the annual targets set for their child so that they can support them at home. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement to the quality of pupils' progress reports. These are now more detailed and specific to individuals, with information about how pupils can improve. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are comprehensive. They are clear about the attitudes and values that the school promotes and include a good range of information about school life. The information provided for parents on attendance and acceptable reasons for absence is particularly useful. The prospectus gives a clear outline of the school's day-to-day procedures but omits some contact details; the summary about absence rates is not particularly clear.
35. The school is making good efforts to improve links with parents. For instance, it holds workshops for them from time to time to help them support their child with schoolwork. A senior member of staff has taken on responsibility for this aspect and is developing links and more activities to match the needs of parents, children and the school's priorities. Parents receive newsletters throughout the year to keep them informed about activities in school and the wider community.

36. The school has developed a good range of links with other schools and colleges. Arrangements for pupils when transferring to secondary schools ensure that they are familiar with the staff and surroundings before their first day. In particular, partnerships with specialist secondary schools provide pupils with a good range of educational experiences that they would not otherwise receive. For instance, during a week set aside for art activities, students from a specialist arts college worked in school with a group of older pupils who produced work that was exhibited in the college art gallery. The school takes part in sports tournaments with a local sports college and staff from that college have provided training for teachers to enhance their teaching skills. Links with a local secondary school provide a full day of activities for gifted/talented pupils so they can extend their knowledge and skills in a specialist environment. These partnerships make a significant contribution to extending pupils' skills and supporting their personal development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership, management and governance is good, but some statutory requirements are not met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has led the school well through a difficult period
- A clear vision and good management strategies have underpinned rising standards
- Key leadership staff and co-ordinators make a good contribution to the way the school is led and managed
- Governors are well informed and involved in the school's development

Commentary

37. Good improvement has occurred since the last inspection. The headteacher has led the school well through a difficult period, engendering a very good team spirit, commitment and extremely hard work from all. A strong leadership team have been successful in instigating systems to promote better standards and increase pupils' achievement, thus addressing the weaknesses identified by the last inspection. Teaching is now monitored rigorously by the headteacher, deputy and co-ordinators. This, together with detailed analysis of pupils' performance in tests and assessments has allowed the school to clearly identify strengths and weaknesses. The former have been built upon and the latter addressed through careful planning to improve things and critical evaluation of how well the action taken has worked.

38. The school's improvement plan, and supporting subject action plans, are not particularly informative documents in terms of, for example, being specific about how improvement to standards will be measured and evaluated. However, planning for improvement is clearly working. Co-ordinators maintain very detailed files that show astute insight into strengths and weaknesses and contain much information about past and future action to improve things.

39. The leadership of key staff is good. Co-ordinators are now significantly involved in the leadership and management of their areas of responsibility. For example, those for English, mathematics and science have made a noteworthy contribution to the improvement in standards. While the school has recently lost the English and mathematics co-ordinators, good thought has been given to who will replace them to ensure

improvements continue. The co-ordination of special educational needs is good and has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator's involvement in teaching all classes means that she can closely monitor and intervene in pupils' learning as well as providing support for class teachers. The deputy, who is responsible for some key areas of the school's work, such as assessment, provides good support for the headteacher and colleagues.

40. The governing body is a committed and effective team. They are well informed and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Many are regular visitors to the school and play an active part in its work and strategic development. Their effectiveness in this stems from the good information that they receive from the headteacher and co-ordinators and, for example, their visits to class to observe lessons. While governors fully understand their role in supporting the school they are also very aware of their role as a critical friend. In this capacity they are vigilant in questioning the school about its work and in requiring it to account for its performance. The governance of the school has improved since the last inspection, but some statutory requirements, such as information to parents and formal, annual, risk assessments, are not met.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	660,808	Balance from previous year	55,178
Total expenditure	595,768	Balance carried forward to the next	65,041
Expenditure per pupil	3,071		

41. Financial management is good, with governors playing a significant part in financial decision-making. Budgeting is linked to the priorities set in the school's improvement plan. The school is making good use of all the financial resources available to it. Effective use is being made of the surplus. The school takes effective steps to ensure that it gets the best value from the spending and other decisions made. Some good use is being made of new technology, for example, to record and analyse assessment data to support the raising of standards.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. At the time of the inspection, the reception children had only been attending school for four days. Most had experienced some form of pre-school education but had come from a variety of settings. Given this context, the school's primary focus was the area of personal, social and emotional development, helping the children become familiar with the environment, staff and each other. Consequently, teaching sessions were very short and were mostly for small groups. Taught sessions that were observed were in the areas of communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. In these and other areas of learning, evidence was also gained by observing children engaging in activities that they had either chosen for themselves or been directed to, and by looking at examples of work completed by last year's reception group.
43. The overall quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching is good in the areas of personal, social and emotional development and physical development, and satisfactory in all other areas. While there is some comprehensive curriculum planning to cover the six areas of learning, opportunities to make appropriate links between areas are sometimes missed reducing the impact of some activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good
- Staff are sensitive to children's needs, which helps them settle quickly
- Good behaviour and skills of independence are promoted effectively

Commentary

44. Children make good progress and reach the expected goals by the end of the year. Although, they had only been in school for a short time, most children showed confidence and security in class and during outdoor play. Much of this is attributable to the sensitive and caring way that all adults treat children. Staff show good understanding of the children's needs and of the emotional impact of starting school and leaving their parents for an extended period. The teacher and other staff constantly reassured children about routines, such as lunchtime, playtime, changing for PE and what would happen in the hall during assemblies and PE lessons. When changing for PE, children were supported but encouraged to be independent. They also had some opportunities to make choices about their work. The children behaved well and few conflicts were seen. Most readily took part in indoor and outdoor play activities, making friends with each other and sharing resources. They showed good interest and enjoyment in the activities on offer.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although speaking skills are weak, this aspect is not always promoted effectively enough
- Children's enjoyment of books is promoted well
- There is scope to promote writing skills more effectively in play situations
- Letter sounds and handwriting skills are taught regularly and there are some good opportunities for children to write for a purpose

Commentary

45. Although children make satisfactory progress, by the end of the year about half have not attained the expected goals in this area of learning. Speaking skills are particularly weak. Although children gain confidence in speaking, their sentences are very short and contain little detail. Even during play situations, children speak very little, either to each other, themselves or adults. While pretend play areas have been set up for the children, overall these lack the resources and imaginative organisation to stimulate them sufficiently and little adult intervention was noted in such activities. Although staff question children and explain things to them not all provide an appropriate model for spoken language.
46. Children's enjoyment of books is promoted well. From their first days in school, children are given books to take home and share with their parents. They show good interest, for instance, watching attentively and joining in with a well-known story as the teacher uses a puppet to enhance their enjoyment and understanding. The children make simple comments about the illustrations, show knowledge of rhyme, and some know that the print carries meaning.
47. Pretend play areas have some resources to promote reading and writing, but these are not particularly stimulating and were not used much by children. A short writing session for a small group was taught effectively. The activity aroused children's interest so all were keen to make a label for an unmarked can of food 'that their teacher has purchased the night before'. Most were able to write their name on the reverse of the label then drew what they thought would be inside. Gentle encouragement from the teacher resulted in one child making a good attempt at writing the word 'soup'. Work from last year's reception class shows that letter sounds and handwriting patterns are taught regularly and that children are given some good opportunities to write for a purpose. For instance, they keep a diary about a toy kangaroo.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Commentary

48. As only one, very short, teaching session was seen it was not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of provision. The work completed by reception children last year suggests that they made satisfactory progress, although standards were below the expected goals by the end of the year. In the short session seen, children showed good interest in number. Many correctly identified the numerals one to five when taking part in a story-based mathematical activity using the rhyme 'This Old Man'. Last year's work shows that children completed a range of appropriate activities linked to number, shape, space and measures. In a singing session shared with pupils in years 1 and 2, numeracy skills

were promoted effectively as children were urged to tap their shoulders, knees and other body parts a specific number of times.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- While children are given some stimulating first-hand experiences, opportunities are sometimes missed to promote really effective learning

Commentary

49. The children make satisfactory progress but only about half reach the expected goals by the end of the year. Evidence from the work completed by last year's reception children show that they engage in a relevant range of activities to develop their awareness of scientific, technological, historical and geographical ideas. During the inspection, a small group of children were involved in making current buns. The nursery nurse leading the session reinforced the importance of good hygiene, reminding the children of the need to wash their hands before beginning. The children thoroughly enjoyed the activity and all were fully involved in measuring out and mixing the ingredients. While this first-hand activity provided a worthwhile learning experience, there were missed opportunities to promote learning in this area and across the curriculum. Early scientific skills could have been promoted better by getting the children to observe and describe how the mixture changed as they mixed it or added different ingredients. The use of a simple recipe would also have helped to promote both literacy and numeracy skills.

50. Opportunities to use the computer were readily available to children, but few chose to do so during the inspection week. Children showed good interest in using construction resources to build and make recognisable models. In pretend play areas, a greater range of dressing up clothes, for example from different cultures, would support children's growing knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- PE sessions are taught very well
- Children have good opportunities to develop both large and small co-ordination skills

Commentary

51. The children are taught well. In response they make good progress and reach the expected goals by the end of the year. In the PE lesson seen, teaching was very good and the

children made very good gains in developing an awareness of space and others around them. The very good balance between praise, encouragement, and challenge from the teacher helped the children to gain worthwhile experiences in moving in different ways and directions. A good sense of fun was instilled as children pretended to be rabbits disappearing down a hole. Listening skills were extended as the teacher introduced the idea of stopping in response to a command and social skills were promoted effectively in the ring games towards the end the session. Almost all children joined in enthusiastically. An initially reluctant child, who was sensitively encouraged to be involved by the teacher and nursery nurse, visually grew in confidence. Outdoor play is effectively resourced to allow children to have regular opportunities to gain such skills as climbing and balancing. Indoors, children have good opportunities to handle tools; items of small play equipment; construction and malleable materials. As they progress through the year children's work shows that they use pencils and tools with increasing dexterity and control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching of music results in children making good progress and reaching the expected standards in this aspect
- The development of children's creative skills through pretend play could be promoted better

Commentary

52. Children receive a good range of opportunities to develop musical skills. Teaching of this aspect is good so the children achieve well and by the end of the year their standards are in line with what is expected for their age. It is not possible to make secure judgements about standards, achievement, and teaching in other aspects of this area of learning, but provision for the development of creativity through pretend play could be improved.

53. Sitting in a circle the children are eager to begin their music lesson. The encouragement and praise from the teacher and other staff give them confidence to sing a 'hello' response to the teacher. The teacher tells children the correct names of the wide range of instruments available and provides opportunities for all to play these to explore the different sounds that they make. When singing familiar songs, children join in enthusiastically, accompanying their singing with rhythmic rocking movements, clapping and tapping of their knees. They especially enjoy playing the instruments as they sing.

54. The children engage in an appropriate range of artwork, including drawing, painting, collage, and modelling with clay and play-dough. Children's paintings of themselves showed satisfactory development of form. During the inspection, children were being encouraged to mix their own colours from powder paint and were exploring the resulting effects in terms of colour and texture. While opportunities for children to show creativity through pretend play are available, the quality and organisation of resources, including the interaction of adults in such activities is limiting.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are good
- Initiatives to raise standards are having a positive impact
- Handwriting and the presentation of work in the juniors are often untidy
- The quality of marking in the juniors is inconsistent

Commentary

55. Standards are improving. Although the school's test results are below average nationally, they compare very favourably with similar schools. Considering the level at which pupils enter school, achievement by the end of year 6 is good. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

56. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are broadly average by the end of years 2 and 6. Teachers in years 1 and 2 speak clearly and emphatically to pupils, plan lively discussions and give good opportunities for poetry and drama. Most pupils listen attentively and the good level and input of support staff ensures that all understand and participate, including the minority who are at an early stage of learning English. In year 2, pupils enjoy working with a 'talking partner' and show confidence in forming sentences together. Given their starting point, pupils make good progress. By year 6 the majority of pupils speak confidently to adults and share ideas politely. The staff's good relationships with pupils and effective encouragement gives them confidence to participate orally. For example, year 6 pupils expressed their likes and dislikes about the poem 'Hiawatha' articulately and definitely; one pupil found it "rather strange and old-fashioned", whilst another confessed, "I like it but I don't fully understand it".

57. A recent focus on reading has helped to raise standards throughout the school. These are broadly average by the end of years 2 and 6. Infant pupils enjoy listening to stories and are keen to read. By the end of year 2 most are very familiar with letter sounds and use these to read unfamiliar words. Higher and average attainers read suitable texts fluently and with understanding; lower attainers use picture clues and manage simple words, but have not yet reached the stage of blending sounds in longer words. However, most are using a wide range of strategies and are, consequently, making good progress. By year 6 the majority of pupils reach average standards. Teachers encourage pupils to read widely and good class libraries support this. Pupils discuss books and authors and give good reasons for their preferences. An emphasis on guided reading⁵, with an additional time allotted to it each day, has helped to raise standards. Whilst there is a good range of reading schemes and fiction books there is no formal system for pupils to borrow books from the school library.

58. Writing is the weakest element, with standards being below average by the end of years 2 and 6. However, there has been a steady improvement since the last inspection. Writing is rightly identified as a priority for improvement. Setting arrangements in the juniors, plus good provision for pupils with special needs, is ensuring that all pupils are suitably challenged. Consequently, by the end of years 2 and 6 pupils have made good progress.

⁵ Where pupils are taught and helped to acquire reading skills in a small group led by an adult.

Year 2 pupils experience a wide range of writing, including tongue twisters, comprehension passages and story writing. Good attention is given to punctuation and handwriting at this stage, with pupils being set good improvement targets. Most pupils use capital letters and full stops accurately. Higher and middle attainers are reaching average standards and a few are exceeding them. Lower attainers need much encouragement and have not yet reached the stage where they can transfer their thoughts into writing without much support. However, the improvement shown by the end of year 2 is good and pupils are prepared well for the next stage.

59. By the end of year 6, pupils have good opportunities to write in different styles for different purposes; for example, one writes a biography of his great-grandfather and then contrasts it with one of Alan Shearer! Whilst above average and average attainers write at length, lower attainers produce only a paragraph or a short letter. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and in the main year 6 pupils' work is presented neatly. During the year, this group accomplish a creditable amount of work, which is wide reaching in its content. Overall, however, while there is good coverage of the curriculum in other junior year groups, too often work is not presented carefully. Not all work is marked regularly and the quality of marking is inconsistent, with little guidance provided to help pupils improve.
60. Teaching is, overall, good, with classroom assistants providing effective support, mostly interacting well in lessons. There is some good team teaching, but in one lesson, learning was disrupted somewhat because two sets of pupils were being taught simultaneously by different teachers. Planning is good. Teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils, revisiting them at the end of lessons, thereby helping pupils to gain an understanding of how well they are doing. Group tasks are usually matched suitably to pupils' needs and pupils have a good knowledge of the targets they aim to achieve.
61. Although the co-ordinator has only just been appointed, she has a clear vision for future improvement in the subject, building on the successful strategies and knowledge of the previous co-ordinator. Regular and thorough assessments, plus significantly improved analysis of pupils' progress, have been implemented since the last inspection and these features are helping to improve areas of weakness.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. There are many planned opportunities for pupils to use language and literacy skills in other subjects. Good links are established to promote reading, writing and discussion skills in most subjects. Examples include, infant pupils writing about Florence Nightingale in history and accurately recording instructions for making sandwiches in design and technology. Junior pupils write extensively in history about the Vikings and World War Two, whilst in science pupils use 'persuasive' writing to explain that air has weight. Some effective use is made of ICT to help pupils edit their writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment and the use made of it is very good

- Pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables and their mental calculations skills are weak
- Teaching overall is good
- There are weaknesses in the marking of work for junior pupils
- Recent action to raise standards is proving effective

Commentary

63. While standards at the end of years 2 and 6 are below the national average, test results over the past two years have improved and compare favourably with similar schools. Overall, pupils achieve well. However, pupils' work shows that there has been some inconsistency in progress in the past resulting in the standards of some junior year groups being significantly lower than they should be.

64. There are very good procedures to assess pupils' standards. Effective use is made of the information from regular assessments, with, for example, a clear record showing each pupil's level of performance and how they progress from one level to the next. Any that show insufficient progress is highlighted and suitable action is taken. This may be within the pupil's class or in special booster classes. Gifted pupils are identified and additional provision made for them. Test results are analysed carefully and aspects of the subject shown to be weaker are set as a focus for improvement. Weaknesses in calculation have currently been identified and form a focus for lessons throughout the school. This weakness was very evident when pupils undertook mental tasks. Their knowledge of multiplication tables is especially weak, with many in years 5 and 6 still unsure of the four times table. Teachers are working hard to address this current priority. For instance, in years 3 and 4 the teacher promoted sharper thinking skills and mathematical strategies by urging pupils to work as quickly as possible when adding and subtracting tens and hundreds to other two-digit numbers. Higher attainers were given more challenging calculation tasks, which they relished.

65. Teaching is good overall. This was seen in a lively year 2 class where pupils were managed well and guided effectively so that good learning took place. The teacher encouraged pupils to predict answers in an effort to extend their mental agility. Teaching assistants provided very good support, with the quality of the teamwork being a particularly successful feature of the lesson. This was seen throughout the school. Teaching assistants know their role and the pupils well and provide strong support in all lessons.

66. Whilst, there are many strengths in assessment, overall, the marking of junior pupils' work is unsatisfactory. Very little guidance is given to pupils. It is not made clear when they achieve an objective or how they can improve their work. In addition, in some classes, basic errors and misspelling of mathematical vocabulary are ignored. For example, a year 6 pupil writes, 'decimels' and 'multiplycation' and no comment was made by the teacher when an above average year 4 pupil wrote about 'verticels', 'horizontels' and 'trapezian'. Expectations of how pupils present their work are not high enough in all year groups. Some year 3 pupils set down calculations without any sign to show which operation they are carrying out. Moreover, not all teachers set the right example for pupils; in one class the teacher misspelled mathematical vocabulary and scribbled comments to pupils. Overall, last year's work showed that presentation in years 3 and 4 was unsatisfactory. Use of rulers was a rarity, even for drawing graphs, and although there were regular comments about untidy work they were ignored. In other years, most work was presented satisfactorily. Whilst in lessons pupils are asked to explain strategies or findings, they are not asked to write any when they work individually.

67.Despite weaknesses in presentation and marking, the action taken by the school to improve standards has been effective. A lot of time and effort has been spent analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the subject to achieve this improvement. The new co-ordinator is determined to continue this process and is aware of what steps need to be taken.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68.Little was seen of mathematics being used in other subjects. Some links are made with ICT, as when year 6 pupils were preparing presentations about 'shapes' to be used with year 2 pupils. The same year group also used measuring skills effectively in a science lesson on air resistance. They depicted their findings on charts and graphs, although poor presentation, with no use of rulers, resulted in inaccuracies.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection
- Pupils are achieving well overall but in some junior year groups standards are not high enough because of the impact of past underachievement
- Overall, the way junior pupils present their work is unsatisfactory, as is the quality of marking in the juniors
- The co-ordinator is leading and managing the subject effectively

Commentary

69.There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen and, although attainment is below national averages by the end of years 2 and 6, overall, pupils are achieving well. The good leadership and management of the co-ordinator, who has a sharp insight into the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and a clear view of how to improve things, have underpinned these improvements.

70.Although it was not possible to see any teaching of science in years 1 and 2, pupils' work shows that they make good progress. Pupils receive a comprehensive curriculum that addresses all areas of science, with a strong emphasis on practical work and the development of scientific skills. For instance, pupils record their predictions of what will happen when they leave ice cubes in different places or beat egg whites. They then record the changes that they observe at different stages. Work shows that pupils have good opportunities to record what they have learned in their own words, which provides good support for the development of writing skills. In addition, good support is provided through the provision of carefully structured worksheets that guide pupils in the process of recording in a structured, scientific, way.

71.During years 3 to 6, achievement has been varied. Pupils' work over the last twelve months showed that in years 5 and 6 most made good progress from a fairly low base resulting from past weaknesses in provision that led to underachievement. However, in the work completed last year by year 4, progress was insufficient and work was of a poor standard.

Although this group has quite a significant number of pupils with special educational needs and contains a high number who joined the school during the junior years, their progress was not good enough. Consequently, the standards and application of current year 5 pupils are weak. However, while past weaknesses in provision and pupils' underachievement have been recognised and are being addressed, there is much ground to make up. This was seen in the lessons in years 5 and 6. Teachers, new to the school, had set work for pupils that would, ordinarily, have been appropriate for their age, but despite good teaching, learning was only satisfactory. In year 6, pupils showed good knowledge and understanding of the functions of different parts of plants in growth and nutrition but their limited development of investigative skills hampered their progress. Although most had a reasonable idea of fair testing, many were very unsure of how to go about devising an investigation. This was also a factor in the year 5 lesson and was exacerbated by pupils' weak skills in working together effectively in practical situations. Although these pupils were enthused by the lesson content and the interesting activities that had been planned, most needed considerable adult support to carry out tasks and had limited prior understanding to draw upon to help them benefit from the lesson.

72. In the two lessons seen teaching was good. Key features were teachers' good subject knowledge; thorough preparation, including good promotion of scientific skills; searching questioning, involving many pupils; and a brisk pace. While their expectations were appropriately high, limited knowledge of pupils' prior attainment resulted in some work and tasks being too challenging for these pupils. Nevertheless, both teachers evaluated their lessons well and were aware of the adjustments to make for future lessons and the importance of focusing on promoting scientific skills.
73. Overall, pupils say that they like science. In lessons most apply themselves well, but skills of working independently are underdeveloped in the juniors. Moreover, while the work of pupils in years 1 and 2 is presented neatly, in most cases, junior pupils' presentation is untidy and occasionally poor. Teacher expectations in this element are still not high enough. The marking of infant pupils' work is generally helpful, but in the juniors it is mostly cursory and there are instances of work going unmarked for long periods. Improving marking and the presentation of work has been identified as a school priority.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good
- There are current inadequacies in resources, but these are being resolved
- Not enough use is made of classroom computers

Commentary

74. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and by the end of years 2 and 6, standards are broadly in line with those expected. There is a full and suitable curriculum and teaching is good. However progress is currently being slowed by the inefficiency of some equipment. At times, computers do not work or do so extremely slowly so that the pace of learning is adversely affected. Understandably, some pupils are frustrated that they cannot always achieve tasks

as well as they can at home. The school is acutely aware of the problems and is in the process of remedying them.

75. Teaching is good. Teachers are well prepared for lessons and know what they want pupils to learn. They cope very well with the vagaries of the equipment so that lessons proceed without too much loss of momentum. A good example of effective teaching was seen in year 1 where the teacher's clear explanations were supported by a confident demonstration on the interactive screen. This prepared pupils well for learning. Most behaved sensibly and shared the equipment well. A very good lesson was taught to year 5 pupils by the highly skilled co-ordinator who constantly imparted new information and skills so that pupils gained very well in confidence and new learning.

76. The subject co-ordinator is new to the school but has a very clear view of the improvements to be made. Four new interactive screens will shortly be installed in classrooms and the equipment in the suite is being enhanced. A computer club has recently been introduced to support the raising of standards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. All classes have good access to the computer suite to support literacy and numeracy skills as well as specific ICT skills. Some year 1 pupils used the classroom computer in a mathematics lesson, but otherwise little use was seen during the inspection of pupils using their skills to support learning in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

Religious Education (RE)

Provision in RE is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good curriculum and effective teaching ensure that pupils achieve well
- RE contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- There is a good range of artefacts and resources to support learning
- The use of ICT to support learning is underdeveloped
- There are good systems for assessment

Commentary

78. Effective teaching plus a good curriculum that comprehensively covers six main world religions, ensure that pupils achieve well. By the end of years 2 and 6 standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Good planning linked with ongoing assessments, support pupils' good progress.

79. Pupils in years 1 and 2 are developing a good understanding of the stories, festivals and places of worship of Christians and Muslims. They show good recall of some of the stories they have heard, such as Noah's Ark and the birth of Jesus, and are beginning to understand that everyone is different but special. Staff encourage pupils to express their feelings and views, with an especially good example, using puppets, seen in one infant class. During years 3 to 6, the curriculum widens to include studying the worship and

practices of Jews, Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs. Good displays, including artefacts, arouse pupils' interest and support learning. Year 3 pupils show good knowledge of places of worship such as the Christian cruciform church and the Jewish synagogue, noting similarities and differences, whilst year 4 trace the journeys of pilgrims, discovering why pilgrimages are made. By year 6, pupils have a growing understanding of the key events in the lives of the different religious leaders and their work and influences in the associated religions.

80. Teachers encourage good discussion of how people of different faiths worship, their rituals and linked moral themes, such as caring for and respecting each other's views. For example, in an assembly, the uniqueness of a person was likened to a specific treasure, whilst in a year 1 lesson, pupils discovered how special people, such as a doctor or a fire-fighter in their community helped them and were important to them. Good resources to support each religion studied enable pupils to have a further insight into how different people worship. There have been a few visits from people of different faiths, including the local vicar, who is a regular visitor, and the pupils have visited the parish church. However, there have been no visits to other places of worship, such as a mosque or a synagogue and there has been little use of ICT to support pupils' learning.
81. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and well involved in local training initiatives and projects. She has been instrumental in organising the school's RE assessment system and has monitored curriculum plans, pupils' work and lessons. The subject contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
82. Work in **geography** and **history** was sampled so secure judgements about provision, standards and achievement in these subjects are not made.
83. In **geography**, pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussions with pupils indicate adequate coverage of a range of topics. Recording of work is not extensive, however, and there are missed opportunities to promote literacy skills in the subject. Visits, such as that to Ingleton, give pupils good experience of fieldwork. Pupils' clear recall of such visits shows that they make learning more interesting and meaningful for them.
84. Pupils' work in **history** indicates good coverage of the curriculum. In years 1 and 2, pupils enjoy learning about past events and the differences between 'now and then'. For example, they discuss the differences between visiting the seaside in Victorian times and nowadays. They are fascinated with the bathing machines and costumes in those days and talk animatedly about the Punch and Judy show. Good accounts and drawings of Florence Nightingale show pupils' understanding of a well-known historical figure and their developing appreciation of how people lived in and endured different conditions to the ones they enjoy today. Many visits to historical sites, for instance York, support learning and pupils are keen to find out facts and discover evidence. There are good examples of extended writing, too. Pupils write full accounts of rationing, being an evacuee, and battles. In discussion pupils show a wide knowledge of the subject and obviously enjoy it.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and reach standards that are above expectations
- Teaching and learning are very good and the subject is led and managed very well
- Pupils are given good opportunities to learn an instrument and perform for others

Commentary

85. A knowledgeable and enthusiastic music specialist teaches every class each week. Her high expectations and effective methods make learning fun and exciting and result in pupils making very good progress and reaching standards that are above expectations. Class teachers and support assistants attend these lessons and join in with the pupils. This promotes the high profile given to the subject and increases the skill level of staff.

86. In addition to lessons, infant and junior pupils enjoy their own, separate singing sessions. These include good teaching of skills, such as breathing properly, and give due attention to key musical ideas of pulse, pitch and dynamics. Pupils understand these terms and know how to keep the beat and when to sing loudly or quietly. The quality of singing is also enhanced through the school choir. Although the choir had only met together on two occasions this term, they were able to tackle a three part song competently and sang tunefully.

87. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn guitars, woodwind and percussion instruments. Even at this early stage of the term, four competent drummers performed their own composition during an assembly. Learning to play the recorder is also part of the music curriculum; pupils in years 4 and 5 enjoy a whole class recorder lesson and an extra curricular recorder club is held for year 6 pupils. All are making good progress.

88. A good feature is that all lessons contain a composition element. Infant pupils create rhythmic compositions with their voices and percussion instruments, whilst pupils in year 6 are currently working with a visiting composer to create a class composition. Some use is made of ICT to support pupils' compositions.

89. All pupils take part in the end of year productions and pupils sing with several local schools and entertain in the community. During the arts week, the whole school produced a musical CD. In addition, regular visits from many musicians, including a hand-bell team, enhance the provision. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well.

90. Work in **art and design**, **design technology** and **PE** was sampled so it is not possible to make secure judgements about provision, standards or achievement in these subjects.

91. In **art and design**, pupils produce an appropriate range of work in two and three dimensions. The curriculum is planned to address all aspects of the subject and makes suitable links with other subjects. For example, year 4 pupils produce ICT generated pictures in the style of Mondrian and in year 5 pupils use what they had learned about graphical modelling in ICT to create visually attractive displays with interesting objects. Infant pupils' drawings of shells show good development of the artistic elements of line and tone and in a recent arts week pupils of different ages worked productively to create good quality paintings, collages and sculptures.

92. In **design and technology** pupils learn the expected skills of planning, making and evaluating. Infant pupils' work making sandwiches and bread shows that they were taught to think carefully about the process, listing the required ingredients and tools. Year 2 pupils' project on 'Joseph's coat of many colours' is very comprehensive. In this they learned about the properties of different materials, choosing with care before assembling and joining the components and producing a product of which they were proud. By year 6, pupils have satisfactorily designed and made slippers, making some effective use of mathematical skills when measuring to ensure that they produce the correct size. Pupils make informed evaluations and suggest improvements to the finished article. One pupil writes 'If I could I would make a heel and change the colour'. Evidence shows that design and technology is being taught regularly.

93. Only one **PE** lesson was seen. In this, year 2 pupils' standards in gymnastics were similar to those expected for their age. When discussing aspects of school with some year 6 pupils, all eyes lit up at the mention of PE. They enthused about their interests and also about what the school provides. Their description of games lessons indicated that they are taught correct techniques and skills. Although there are no regular school teams, pupils participate in tournaments under the auspices of the local sports college. The school shows a good awareness of the wider benefits of PE. For example, members of a local football team have visited, not only to improve skills but also to present an assembly on the importance of teamwork. Efforts to promote physical fitness have been successfully linked to pupils' social development; for instance a skipping event for charity resulted in a large sum being donated to the British Heart Foundation.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Commentary

94. Work in personal, social and health education (PSHE) was sampled. Although no lessons were seen, there is a regular programme with all classes having timetabled sessions each week. The programme, which includes circle time, is also effectively linked to work in RE.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
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	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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

