

INSPECTION REPORT

THE WESTBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex

LEA area: Southend-on-Sea

Unique reference number: 115246

Headteacher: Mrs J A Davies

Lead inspector: David Tytler

Dates of inspection: 24 – 27 January 2005

Inspection number: 268100

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:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	712
School address:	Macdonald Avenue Westcliff-on-Sea Essex
Postcode:	SS09BS
Telephone number:	01702 349249
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Mary Lubel
Date of previous inspection:	19 April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Westborough Primary School and Nursery is a large school in the seaside town of Westcliff-on-Sea, near Southend, Essex, catering for 712 pupils aged three to 11, with 76 children attending the nursery on a part-time basis in the morning or afternoon. Most of these children transfer to the reception classes, which currently contain 78 children. About two-thirds come from a white British background (519 pupils). The two other largest groups come from an Asian (90) or Black Afro-Caribbean background (26). A large number of pupils come from families where English is not the first language, 156 of them at an early stage of learning English. The principal languages are Urdu, Punjabi and Bengali. The school also has several refugee and traveller children (41). The number of pupils having special educational needs is above the national average (161), as is the number having statements (18). These children have a range of learning, social, emotional, and behavioural needs, speech or communication or medical needs. A significant minority of pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times. The percentage joining in 2004 was 12 per cent. There are significantly more boys than girls (56 per cent compared to 46 per cent). The school has received a number of awards and is involved in a range of national and local initiatives. In common with many Southend schools, Westborough finds it difficult to recruit teachers: the nursery and reception classes in particular have recently experienced a significant number of staff changes. The attainment of children on entry into the school's nursery is well below that expected of their age nationally.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The Westborough Primary School and Nursery is a vibrant and exciting place, which provides a very good quality education for all its pupils. National test results in 2004 in Year 6 are well above the national average in science, average in mathematics and below in English. Standards in the current Year 6 have been maintained in science and mathematics and have improved in English. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well in this outstandingly inclusive school as a result of the good and often better teaching and the very good leadership and management of the headteacher. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The visionary headteacher is very well supported by staff and governors in the drive to raise standards.
- The outstanding personal development of pupils is underpinned by the excellent care, guidance and support provided for them.
- Teaching and learning are good and many good features were seen in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, French and German.
- There has been significant improvement in the nursery and reception classes. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but staffing difficulties have resulted in some weaknesses in provision.
- Very good assessment arrangements provide valuable information on how well pupils are progressing, which is used well to plan for the needs of individuals and groups of pupils.
- The provision for pupils having special educational needs is very good. Skilled support staff are deployed effectively to guide the learning of these pupils.
- The development of language skills for those pupils speaking English as an additional language is good in lessons with specialist teachers, but is often restricted by a lack of regular skilled teaching.
- Pupils benefit from a rich and varied curriculum, which includes the teaching of French and German.
- Very good links with parents, other schools and colleges and excellent links with the community make an important contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The school works hard to improve attendance but it is well below the national average.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. All the key issues have been tackled successfully. Teaching has improved significantly and the much improved personal development and care of pupils ensure that the needs of children lie at the heart of all that the school does. Improving the quality of provision in the nursery and reception classes and the teaching and learning of pupils speaking English as an additional language are now the priorities of the school.

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	E	D	B
Mathematics	B	C	C	B
Science	A	C	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.*

Pupils' achievement is good overall. It is satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes, and in Years 1 and 2. It is good in Years 3 and 4 and very good in Years 5 and 6. Pupils enter the school

with standards of attainment well below that expected for children of their age in literacy and numeracy. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above the national expectation in science and reaching expectations in English and mathematics. Those pupils who have been educated in Westborough for all their primary years, including those speaking English as an additional language or having special educational needs, achieve very well. Those who join the school other than at the normal times achieve well. Standards in ICT and PE are above expectations. Standards in religious education are well above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Whilst there have been differences in the performance of boys and girls in the past, no significant difference was observed.

Results in the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2004 were well below the national average in reading and writing and in mathematics in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. More than one in five children speak English as an additional language and the school reports a similar proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs. In addition 12 per cent of pupils join the school not at the usual time and this disrupts their learning. Although all of these pupils achieve well, their standards are often below expectations. Standards are, however, rising in the current Year 2, where they are now below expectations in English and mathematics as a result of closely targeted support using the school's very good assessment arrangements. Standards are in line in science.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils from the nursery to Year 6 have very positive attitudes to their work and behave well as a result of their teachers' very good behaviour management skills. There are countless opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative and as a result they have a considerable impact on the life of the school. Whilst attendance is improving, it is below the national average for primary schools, largely because of extended family holidays abroad. The punctuality of those pupils who attend regularly is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good education for all its pupils. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 to 6 with many very good examples seen. As a result of the strong specialist teaching, pupils achieve well, and often exceptionally well by the end of Year 6. Teaching and learning in the nursery and reception classes are satisfactory, with many good examples seen. The exemplary level of care, guidance and support ensures that all pupils can take full benefit of the high quality curriculum, which is tailored to the pupils' needs. Extra-curricular activities are excellent and a key support to the school's inclusive approach. Pupils' experience is further widened by the very good partnership with parents, other schools and colleges, and the outstanding links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school's leadership and management are very good. The headteacher's high quality and unique style of leadership and very good management ensure that the school remains focused on attaining high standards and continuing improvement. Her inspirational deputy, her very effective assistant heads and her highly committed staff support her very well. The governance of the school is very good. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and play a major role in planning the school's future.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents value all aspects of the school's work and appreciate everything that it provides for their children. Inspectors agree with these positive views. Pupils could not have a higher regard for their school and appreciate the fact that their views are respected, taken seriously and acted upon.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and curriculum planning in the nursery and reception classes.

- Ensure that all teachers have a secure understanding of how to provide for the needs of pupils at an early stage of learning English.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Results in the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2004 are well above average in science, average in mathematics and below average in English. Results in the tests for 7-year-olds are well below average in reading and writing and in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally in mathematics. Pupils achieve well, and often very well, in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. Children make satisfactory, and sometimes better, progress in the nursery and reception classes. Children do not reach all the nationally expected early learning goals and they enter Year 1 with standards in literacy and numeracy well below expectations. Over the last five years, there has been an underlying trend of rising standards for 11-year-olds.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make rapid progress in Years 3 to 6 with a higher than average number gaining the higher levels in English and mathematics.
- Standards in religious education are well above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
- Staffing difficulties in the nursery and reception classes have had an adverse affect on children's standards.
- Whilst pupils speaking English as an additional language achieve well by the end of Year 6, their needs are not always fully met lower down the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well by the time they leave school.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.6 (24.8)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.9 (26.7)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.0 (29.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 98 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. In the current Year 6, standards in science are being maintained and remain well above national expectations. Standards are rising in English and now match expectations, which represents an improvement since the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2004. Standards in mathematics continue to be at the national average in Year 6. The curriculum teams in English and mathematics have identified areas for improvement and standards are steadily rising. Intervention strategies have been employed very effectively across Years 3 to 6. When compared with similar schools, based on pupils' prior attainment in their Year 2 tests, pupils' attainment in the national tests in 2004 was well above average in science and above average in English and mathematics.
2. As a result of the good and often very good teaching in Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress and achieve well. In 2004, the school came close to meeting its challenging targets for pupils to gain the expected Level 4 or above in English but exceeded its target for pupils to gain the higher Level 5. It exceeded both targets in mathematics and did particularly well at the higher Level 5.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.6 (14.4)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.1 (12.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	13.3 (14.7)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 85 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Results in the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2004 were well below average in reading and writing and in the bottom five per cent nationally in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, based on the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils' achievement was well below average in reading and mathematics and below in writing. These comparisons should be treated with caution as not all those parents or carers who are eligible claim free meals.
- Pupils' attainment in Years 1 and 2 is negatively affected by the significant number of pupils who enter or leave the school other than at the normal times and the increasing number of pupils having special educational needs or speaking English as an additional language. Three years ago, three languages were spoken in the school, now there are 29. An analysis of school data shows that pupils who have spent all their primary education at Westborough achieve very well by the time they leave.
- Raising standards in English and mathematics are a priority of the school and strategies based on the school's very good assessment arrangements have ensured a sustained improvement. Individual targets are set and pupils' progress towards achieving them carefully monitored. Standards in English and mathematics in the current Year 2 are now just below national expectations while standards in science reach expectations by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils' standards in ICT reach national expectations by the end of Year 2 and are above by the end of Year 6. Standards in history and geography are in line with that expected nationally by the end of Years 2 and 6. In religious education, standards match those expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and are well above expectations by the end of Year 6, which represents a very significant improvement since the last inspection. In physical education, standards are above expectations by the end of Year 6. Timetabling arrangements during the inspection meant that it was not possible to see enough lessons in art and design, design and technology and in music in Years 1 to 6 or in physical education in Years 1 and 2 to make a judgement on standards.
- Children enter the nursery classes with attainment well below that expected nationally for children of their age. They make sound progress in the nursery and reception classes and by the time they enter Year 1, most children will reach the nationally expected early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. The vast majority, however, will not reach them in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and remain well below average when they enter Year 1, which affects their performance in all subjects. An analysis of test and assessment data showed some differences in the performance of boys and girls in the past. A range of strategies was introduced, including in one year a boys' only class, although this has now been discontinued: no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls was observed during the inspection.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented are very well provided for and achieve as well as their peers. The number of pupils with special educational need who reach the expected levels at the end of Year 6, reflect the success of the support they receive. A significant number of pupils are at the early stages of learning English. These pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6 and achieve well by the end of Year 6 as a result of

targeted support. However, the quality of provision for these three groups of pupils is not as high in Years 1 and 2 and their achievement in this stage of their education is satisfactory. These pupils represent a significant proportion of the school population and weaknesses in the provision they are offered reflect adversely on the school's otherwise excellent inclusion policy.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and are well behaved in classes and around the school. The outstanding personal development of pupils is supported by their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Whilst attendance is below the national average, punctuality of those who do attend regularly is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good, and often excellent, relationships throughout the school underpin its harmonious and inclusive atmosphere.
- A wide range of stimulating assemblies gives very good support to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral and social development, which is strongly promoted in all the school's activities.
- The low level of exclusions reflects the good behaviour seen throughout the school.

Commentary

9. Pupils and all adults in this outstandingly inclusive school work happily and productively together in an exciting and purposeful environment, which is humming with activity before the official start of school in the morning, at breaks and lunchtimes and well after the end of the school day. This excellent ethos builds pupils' self-esteem and lies at the heart of the pupils' outstanding personal development, enabling them to grow in confidence.
10. The very good relationships throughout the school are based on trust and respect. Many of the clubs and activities are set up and organised by the pupils with the wholehearted approval of the head and her deputy, who lend their support when invited to do so.
11. Pupils show high levels of self-discipline in lessons, assemblies and all the before- and after-school activities. The school chess club, originally introduced as a haven for vulnerable pupils has become highly successful in competitions and now gives very good support for gifted and talented pupils. All the participants have grown in confidence and self-esteem. In the nursery and reception classes pupils achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development and most will reach the levels expected when they enter Year 1.
12. The school day starts formally with a Tannoy assembly led by the deputy headteacher, which is always relevant and sets out the school's commitment to strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, challenging pupils to consider the impact of world events such as the Asian tsunami. A special assembly for Year 6 pupils to mark the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, taken by the deputy head, was exemplary and inspirational. Pupils and adults alike were visibly moved as they considered the inhumanity of man to man and the lessons this period of history holds for the 21st century. Multicultural development is a notable strength of the school.
13. Weekly house assemblies attended by pupils from reception to Year 6 give particularly good support to social and cultural development as they celebrate each other's achievements. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically and try hard to win the house cup, which is presented weekly to the house that has obtained the most rewards for good behaviour, attitudes and work.

14. Lessons in all subjects encourage pupils to think for themselves whilst respecting the views of others. They are helped to refine their ideas and understand the need to work collaboratively. Overall, the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved significantly since the last inspection.
15. Pupils work in an atmosphere free from oppressive behaviour. Teachers are adept at ensuring that whilst pupils are listened to, the class remains focused on the task in hand. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and in most cases want to do well. During the inspection, pupils were keen to show inspectors examples of their good work, some of it carried out at home. It was self-evident that they value the easy friendly access they have to the headteacher and her deputy, key figures in setting the ethos of the school.
16. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented, show very good attitudes to learning when supported in small groups. A special feature of the school, recognised by parents, is how well the whole ethos supports the inclusion of pupils with specific needs. Other pupils are supportive and understand that some of their friends at times need extra help.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.7	School data	0.2
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.

17. Whilst attendance has improved considerably in the last 12 months, it remains well below the national average for primary schools. The improvement is a direct result of very good arrangements for promoting good attendance, which are applied consistently and well supported by most parents. The high level of authorised absence is largely due to extended family holidays abroad, during which pupils complete work provided by the school. The punctuality of those pupils who do attend regularly is very good, not least because they are keen to take part in the activities provided before the start of the school day.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
519	19	0
1	0	0
31	0	0
4	0	0
3	0	0
6	0	0
5	0	0

Asian or Asian British – Indian	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	57	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	14	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	10	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	0	0
Black or Black British – African	20	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	10	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	8	0	0

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

18. The school accepts pupils who have been excluded from other schools and is successful in integrating them into the life of Westborough. The low, and decreasing, level of fixed period exclusions is reflected in the good behaviour in lessons, assemblies and around the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education for all its pupils. Overall, teaching and learning are good. Arrangements for gathering and using information on what pupils know and can do are excellent and the information is very well used to plan for the needs of groups and individuals. The very good curriculum is significantly enhanced by an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. The support, advice and guidance provided for pupils are also excellent. The very good links with parents and other schools and colleges and the excellent links with the community make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 to 6 and very good use is made of the information gathered on what pupils know and can do.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good teaching and learning enable pupils to achieve well by the time they leave school.
- Whilst there are good features of teaching in the nursery and reception classes, teaching overall is satisfactory.
- The achievement of pupils speaking English as an additional language is sometimes restricted by a lack of regular skilled teaching.
- All adults in the classroom are skilful in ensuring that pupils can take a full part in their lessons.
- Teachers make very good use of ICT to engage and hold pupils' interest.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 78 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (1%)	23 (30%)	29 (37%)	24 (31%)	1 (1%)	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.

19. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection, with a much higher proportion of very good and better teaching. Teaching across the nursery and reception classes is inconsistent although some good and better examples were seen. Teaching and learning in these classes are satisfactory overall. The teaching ensures that they make sound progress in the nursery but, because they come with such low levels of attainment, they enter the reception classes with levels of attainment still well below those expected. They continue to make satisfactory gains in their learning in the reception classes and enter Year 1 with standards well below the national expectations in literacy and numeracy.
20. Children throughout the school respond well to their teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour, showing good levels of concentration. Children are quickly introduced to the interactive whiteboards and many can use them without help by the time they leave Year 1. Teachers are expert in using these boards as a routine part of their lessons throughout the school and they are used well to engage and hold the interest of pupils. In a very good Year 6 history lesson, for example, the teacher made good use of the interactive whiteboard to introduce pupils to the skills of historical research as they investigated how Charles Dickens contributed to social reform. In an equally good parallel lesson taken in the ICT suite pupils learnt how to use hyperlink in research and plan it into their own work for website publication.
21. The overall good, and often better, teaching in Years 1 to 6 enables pupils to achieve well. A characteristic of the good teaching was the way in which teachers used their own experiences and those of their pupils to make the learning relevant to them. In an outstanding Year 6 religious education lesson on the parable of the prodigal son, the teacher made excellent use of the parable and his own experiences to teach pupils about forgiveness. Pupils were highly motivated to listen because of the very high quality presentation. Follow up tasks were inspirational and resulted in pupils thinking deeply when writing about their own experiences, imagining themselves as the forgiving father, the prodigal son or his brother. The lesson made a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils were not only being taught very effectively about religion, but also through religion.
22. Pupils responded well to the good level of challenge in many lessons, trying hard to do well and enjoying their successes. In a very good Year 6 lesson to investigate conditionals and to use them in sentences expressing possibilities, all pupils were fully engaged in the *If* game: "If I win millions on the lottery, I would..."; "If I was famous I would..."; or to use 'if' as an excuse. They enjoyed the activity and achieved well.
23. Alongside the effective and skilful use of ICT in all lessons, most teachers include a good range of cross-curricular links, with particularly good use of numeracy and literacy skills in a number of subjects. The use of specialist teachers in some subjects in some year groups is of considerable benefit to pupils as all their lessons are underpinned by good subject knowledge.
24. In French and German, for example, two specialist teachers use a wide range of methods to ensure that teaching and learning are very good, enabling pupils to achieve well. Pupils enjoy learning the different languages and work hard to take part in simple conversations. Similar high quality lessons were seen in English, mathematics, science, ICT, physical education and religious education.
25. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. In this lesson for physical development the work was over directed and there were no opportunities for children to make their own decisions or act independently. As a result they did not achieve as well as they should. In lessons judged to be satisfactory, questions were not always based on pupils' prior attainment and the teaching was not exciting enough to engage pupils' interest and their concentration lapsed.

26. The very good teamwork between teachers and support staff enhances the learning of pupils with special educational needs. All members of staff are sensitive to the particular needs of these pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively taught in line with the particular needs identified in their individual educational plans. Good use is made of teaching assistants and graduate trainees to ensure that all pupils are fully engaged in the lesson in whole-class, group and independent work.
27. The teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language is sound. Some teachers, however, do not have a secure understanding of how to provide for the needs of pupils at the early stages of learning English and the activities are not always well matched to their specific learning needs. There is some good practice within the school and this could usefully be developed to support all pupils.
28. The generally good teaching is underpinned by outstanding arrangements for gathering information on what pupils know and can do. The information is well used to plan for the needs of all pupils and is the principal reason for rising standards, particularly in Year 2. The assessment co-ordinator is hard working and efficient in carrying out detailed assessments of all pupils on a regular basis. Individual targets are set and recorded in the pupils' books. The targets for younger pupils are also put on individual notes stuck on the pages, which they are using. Progress is carefully monitored and targets reviewed as they are met. A notable feature of the assessment arrangements is that those pupils who meet their targets are rewarded and a letter sent home to their parents. Those who have not met targets are interviewed by the assessment co-ordinator and an action plan devised. Letters also go home to the parents of these pupils.

The curriculum

The very good curriculum from Years 1 to 6 is particularly relevant to all the school's pupils and is extremely well enriched by an outstanding range of extra-curricular and after-school activities, together with many visits and visitors. Accommodation and resources support the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The rich and varied curriculum provides pupils with a very good range of interesting learning opportunities throughout the day. Pupils particularly enjoy their French and German lessons.
- The school goes out of its way to ensure that pupils of all needs and backgrounds can take full advantage of all the school's activities.
- Personal, social and health education makes a very important contribution to pupils' personal development, their very positive attitudes and good behaviour.
- Pupils' benefit considerably from the excellent high quality after-school activities.
- Cross-curricular links are strengths of the curriculum.
- Skilled support staff make a very important contribution to pupils' good achievement.
- Outdoor provision does not fully meet the needs of children in the nursery and reception classes.

Commentary

29. The good curriculum in the nursery and reception classes ensures that all six of the required areas of learning are covered. Difficulty in recruiting early years' specialists has meant that a few staff do not have a secure knowledge of how to provide for all of their learning needs and further training is to be provided. Indoor accommodation and resources are good but not always used to best advantage. Outdoor areas are too small to meet the children's needs and particularly those in reception who do not have direct access to them from their classrooms.
30. The high quality curriculum in Years 1 to 6 ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs or speaking English as an additional language, have a wide range of interesting and relevant activities. Pupils particularly enjoy their French and German lessons, which the school is hoping to extend across the school.

31. Strong cross-curricular links ensure that pupils are able to reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills as they use them well to support learning in all other subjects. The excellent resources for ICT are very well used to support learning and research across the curriculum.

32. The recently formed curricular teams, which oversee all subjects, ensure careful and consistent planning. As a result there is a common approach to teaching and learning, although teachers retain their distinctive styles. The widespread use of specialist teaching is carefully planned to give pupils a broad range of experiences.
33. Personal, social and health education makes an important contribution to the pupils' personal development. A particular strength of the school is the outstanding range of high quality clubs and activities made available before and after school and at lunchtimes. Many of these are organised and run by pupils and as a result pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem. A number of clubs run by staff and parents on Saturday morning are highly valued by pupils, their families and carers. Pupils' experience is also broadened through a good range of visits to places of interest and of visitors into school.
34. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements. It is regularly reviewed and adjusted by the curriculum teams and the senior management team to ensure that it remains relevant to pupils.
35. The curriculum the school provides for pupils with special educational needs is very good, ensuring their inclusion in lessons and in all aspects of school life. Strategies such as Precision Teaching and Word and Number Shark using ICT are very effective in allowing pupils access to the full curriculum.
36. Whilst the accommodation is satisfactory and is well used to support the curriculum, the hall is too small for some aspects of physical education. Resources for teaching and learning are very good overall and they are well used to enhance the teaching in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety, the provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring and the way that the school involves its pupils through seeking, valuing and acting upon their views, are all excellent. These aspects have improved upon the existing, very good standards of the previous inspection and ensure that learning succeeds in a very caring and stimulating environment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent procedures ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe learning environment.
- Each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults and as a result pupils are confident in seeking help and guidance.
- The pupils' access to well-informed support and advice is a major strength of the school.
- The school involves pupils through seeking and acting upon their advice so that they are actively engaged in its day-to-day life and in planning for its future.
- Induction arrangements for pupils ensure that new pupils quickly settle into school.

Commentary

37. The school has a recognised, fully trained child protection officer, who ensures that all staff are also regularly trained. The effective policy is regularly reviewed. The school works closely with the social services and all relevant documentation is securely locked away. The school has several looked after, refugee and traveller children who have been identified and are very well cared for. Families and children who need extra support to benefit fully from all that the school offers are very well supported by the Octopus Room which provides a place refuge. The dedicated welfare officer employed by the school also carries out home visits.

38. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support. Their learning, social and emotional needs are clearly identified, and their day-to-day care is well managed. Pupils with special needs have full access to all outside support agencies. Parents and carers are consulted at all stages to ensure that all aspects of the care are used to help these pupils gain maximum benefit from all they do at school. Great care is taken to ensure that the needs of pupils speaking English as an additional language or joining the school at different times are assessed so that they can quickly settle into the life and routines of the school.
39. The trained health and safety officer works closely with the relevant governors and the site manager. Together they ensure risk assessments for all eventualities. All fire, portable electrical and physical education equipment is regularly tested. The school holds regular emergency exercises and all escape routes are accessible and well marked. The accident and medicine procedures are caring and efficient and all staff are trained in first aid.
40. The school makes very good use of professional services. The local police come in as part of the personal, social and health education programme and the school nurse makes regular visits. A teacher from the local authority's traveller education department supports traveller children who need help in settling in. Meals are cooked on the premises, served and consumed in very hygienic conditions. Parents approve the school's very concise Internet safety policy.
41. Information gained from returned questionnaires and by talking to pupils makes it clear that they all know to whom they can turn for comfort or help. The adults know the children very well and the school's pastoral manager, teachers and ancillary staff are always there to give kindly support. The academic and personal development of every child is tracked in detail, recorded in teachers' files and reported to parents annually and during consultation evenings. The pupils also have their own personal post box to the head or deputy headteachers.
42. Teachers and pupils agree that the opinions of the latter are constantly being taken into account, such as the suggestion that pupils should run six bring-and-buy sales each year. As a result the school manages to help support a fellow school in Kenya. In addition, the pupils run their own multicultural dance clubs and teach each other routines in a very mature fashion.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and other schools and colleges. The school also provides very good extended services such as educational and support programmes for adults. Links with the community are excellent. These aspects have improved since the previous inspection and now contribute very significantly towards the success of the children's learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outstanding links with the community are used very well to enhance the curriculum and widen pupils' experience.
- Parents work very well with the school to support their children's learning at home and in school.
- Very good links with other schools and colleges make an important contribution to pupils' learning.
- The extended services provided by the school, such as educational support programmes, are very good.

Commentary

43. The parents' survey, comments from the parents' meeting and from conversations with parents during the inspection show that the vast majority consider Westborough to be a very good school. Inspectors agree with their very positive views.

44. Parents are provided with very good information about the school and pupils' standards and progress. They now receive an annual, combined, governors' report and prospectus, which complies with all statutory requirements. Parents also receive a six monthly review of their child's progress and a full report in the summer.
45. Reports cover all subjects including personal development, say what a child can do and contain readily understandable targets. Regular newsletters are informative and interesting. Two parents' meetings are held each year and recent curriculum evenings have included reading and mathematics. The school has an open door policy. Help for parents who do not speak English is readily available. Documents are available in their own language and staff speak a number of languages.
46. Parents are very involved in the school and are sent questionnaires periodically. They have given their views on school security, collected cardboard for the construction of the cardboard classroom and collect wool for the knitting club. The school deals with most suggestions and complaints as they arise.
47. Parents are very keen to help in school and on school visits. Regular helpers are included in timetables, helping with reading, working in the library or the gardens. At home, many help with projects and topics and the home/school books are very well appreciated. The school is indebted to the Westborough Association, which raises considerable funds towards stage lighting, library shelves and books. The opportunities provided by the school for parents to learn English, become part of the parenting course or study National Vocational Qualifications enable them to support their children effectively.
48. The very good educational links with other schools benefit the children enormously. The school is part of the local excellence cluster of schools, which shares expertise. Having no playing field, the school is indebted to a local independent school for the use of its facilities. Local sixth form students come in to help with reading, and gifted and talented pupils attend the high school at weekends for special classes. Work experience students are always welcomed from secondary education, as are trainee teachers from local universities.
49. The school has very caring and efficient routines for pupils transferring to local secondary schools. Many secondary English and science teachers are invited into Westborough well before transfer. The pupils who are due to transfer make familiarisation visits to their chosen school.
50. Links with the community are outstanding. There are strong connections with local Baptist, Methodist and Roman Catholic churches and church leaders often take assemblies. The cardboard classroom was a joint effort by several local firms. Visitors from all over the world come to see it. Local retail firms have sponsored trees and greenery around the school. The school supports several charities in addition to its partner school in Kenya. These include Red Nose Day and Little Haven Child's Hospice. The many local clubs and societies use the school's premises. They are also used for Arabic classes, local children's parties and occasional Muslim weddings.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher provides very good leadership, which underpins the very good management of the school. The governance of the school is very good. All statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's commanding leadership focuses on the drive to raise standards and secure further improvement.

- The deputy head, assistant heads and all other staff and governors share her vision for the school and support her in striving to achieve it.
- Governors work closely with the school to identify priorities to enable the school to plan securely for its future.
- Senior staff have undertaken rigorous and regular monitoring of teaching, which has led to a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met and use their wide range of expertise to support and challenge the school.
- Instability in staffing has adversely affected leadership and management in the nursery and reception classes.

Commentary

51. The headteacher's very good leadership underpins the very good management of this large and demanding school. Her clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations are shared by all in the school. She works very closely with her talented deputy and together they ensure that all adults in the school are focused on seeking continual improvement.
52. They delegate responsibilities effectively to senior staff and the newly formed strategic management and curriculum teams, which have replaced subject co-ordinators. These teams are already having an impact on standards as they focus carefully on the needs of their subjects and plan targeted improvements, making good use of the information provided on what pupils know and can do.
53. The overall leadership and management of the school are significantly better than they were at the last inspection and improvement since then has been good. Many radical changes have been made to the way the school is managed. Other significant improvements include the widespread and effective use of specialist teachers in many subjects and the use of the school and its facilities by the community, including Saturday morning opening.
54. Where there are areas for development, such as the low standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and in the nursery and reception classes, the school analyses all the available data to find solutions. The changes put in place are already seeing standards rising, particularly in Year 2. The reasons for the low results in the national tests in 2004 for seven-year-olds were carefully analysed and the school's recently improved assessment arrangements used to identify remedies, such as the reading recovery scheme. The school's arrangements for self-evaluation are very good and all those with responsibilities in the school ensure that any concerns that do emerge are addressed as a matter of urgency.
55. The leadership and management of the nursery and reception class is satisfactory overall, with some strengths. It has, however, been adversely affected by instability in the teaching staff and as a result there is some inconsistency in provision.
56. The deputy headteacher carries out most of the monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom and is supported by senior staff and local authority advisers. Some perceptive peer observations also take place. This rigorous but sensitive approach, which involves all staff in seeking further improvement, has led to a significant rise in the proportion of very good and better teaching since the last inspection. Subject teams monitor curriculum planning and pupils' work effectively.
57. All adults in the school, with the active support of an energetic governing body, ensure that the school is outstandingly inclusive. One of the school's underlying priorities is to ensure that all pupils, whatever their needs or backgrounds, are included in all aspects of the school's work and can take full advantage of the many high quality learning opportunities available to them. The school sees continuing improvements in the provision for pupils speaking English as an additional language as a priority and is seeking further training for staff as a matter of urgency.

58. The school finds it difficult, as do many schools in the local authority, to recruit high quality permanent staff. It has tackled the problem at its roots by running its own graduate trainee programme in conjunction with higher education institutions. The programme has been very successful and a number of former trainees are now among the school's most skilful teachers.
59. The outstanding arrangements for the professional development of staff, including learning support assistants, continue after initial training. They are securely linked to the school's high quality procedures for performance management and meet the personal professional needs of staff as well as whole-school priorities. Good arrangements support newly qualified teachers and graduate trainees.
60. The governing body is very supportive of the school but does not shirk from asking probing questions or challenging it to justify and explain what it is doing. A range of committees reviews all aspects of the school's work and takes an active role in planning. All statutory requirements are met.
61. The school improvement plan is a useful working document and is regularly reviewed to ensure that priorities are achieved. Some of the success criteria, however, are not sufficiently precise or focused on raising standards. Current priorities include further improvements in provision in the nursery and reception classes and for pupils speaking English as an additional language.
62. Provision for special educational needs is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator inspires, motivates and influences staff and pupils and creates an effective, highly trained team. All aspects of the administration of special educational needs are well organised. Documentation is up to date, and individual education plans are working documents that are regularly reviewed and updated.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	2,089,161	Balance from previous year	-8,963
Total expenditure	2,133,739	Balance carried forward to the next	-53,541
Expenditure per pupil	1,971		

63. An unexpected drop in funding in previous years has led to a deficit budget. This has, however, been approved with the local education authority and a programme of repayment agreed over four years. A key priority of the headteacher and the governors is to ensure that all resources available to the school are used to meet educational priorities. The school is also skilful in obtaining a range of grants to extend the learning opportunities available to pupils, such as the teaching of French and German. It also makes good use of its membership of an excellence cluster in supporting the work of the school. The school applies the principles of best value in all aspects of its work and provides very good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The Foundation Stage comprises children in the nursery classes who attend part-time and those in the reception classes. Most of the children attend the nursery class before they enter the reception classes. They enter the nursery with levels of attainment that are well below those expected of children of similar age in all areas of learning except for physical development where the levels are below those expected. They make good progress in the nursery in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development and enter the reception classes with standards that are below those expected. Though children make progress in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, because they come with such low levels of attainment, they enter the reception classes with levels of attainment still well below those expected. Throughout the reception classes, the children continue to make good progress in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development so that the vast majority of children reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children also make good sound progress in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development but the vast majority of children do not reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Overall this is better than at the time of the previous inspection.

Teaching across the nursery and reception classes varies in quality. Overall it is satisfactory. However, in three of the five classes there were examples of good teaching with one example of very good teaching. More good teaching is needed to improve the rate of progress that children make towards the learning goals expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

The leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with some good elements, but has been hampered by constant instability of teaching staff. The leaders have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and planning makes provision for all six areas. Some staff, however, lack understanding of the needs of these young children, how they learn and what to provide to help them learn. There are plans for these staff to have more training. Due to the many changes in staff, the Foundation Stage member of the Strategic Management Team, also a member of the Foundation Stage Leadership Team, has not had enough time to support these staff and to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The classes are generously staffed and all staff work well together. Indoor accommodation and resources are good but are not always well used. There are, for example, too many tables and chairs that restrict children's movement and access to activities that need space. The outdoor areas are not large enough to meet the needs of all the children and reception classes do not have access to them from their classrooms.

Parents receive good information from the school about organisation and the Early Years curriculum. There is a well-developed programme of home visits for children entering the nursery. Many parents listen to their children read at home and help them with the appropriate homework tasks they are given.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision, and the quality of teaching and learning, in personal, social and emotional development are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff rightly place great importance on this area of the curriculum.
- Children are confident in class and quickly become independent.
- Children begin to play well together in both large and small groups.
- They quickly learn the routines of the class.

- Their attitudes to school are very good and they love to learn.

Commentary

64. Children soon adapt to the systems and routines of school. They feel safe and able to work with a variety of adults. They learn to work in small and large groups with other children, to share and take turns. When they enter the nursery many children prefer to play alone and are quite independent in their choice of resources and tasks. There are many opportunities for them to develop further their independence through choosing their own activities and through opportunities such as self-registering when they come into the nursery. Children undress and dress themselves and go to the toilet with a little help.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision, and the quality of teaching and learning, in communication, language and literacy are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of phonic skills is good in two classes and very good in another.
- Speaking and listening are given high priority.
- Standards in communication, language and literacy are not as high as in other areas of learning.
- Most children will not meet the expected learning goals in all areas of communication, language and literacy.

Commentary

65. Teachers plan the work well using the Early Learning Goals. Texts chosen, such as *The Bear Hunt* and *Bear and the Scary Night*, engage the children's interest and make them want to hear more. Many children make a good start to reading, recognising the title, cover and beginning and end of a book. They listen well to stories and enjoy new ones and old favourites. Children in reception know most of the alphabet phonics and recognise individual letters that are in their names and in other familiar words. They are able to write letters that are mainly correctly formed. Higher ability children are able to spell regular words correctly. Lower attaining children try hard to recognise the initial sounds.
66. Some children enter the nursery with little spoken English and others have limited development in speaking. Adults work very hard to extend children's vocabulary and to get them to speak in correct sentences and provide opportunities throughout the school day for speaking and listening.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision and the quality of teaching and learning in mathematical development are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are missed opportunities to practise number skills in activities throughout the day.
- Some of the children in the reception classes meet the Early Learning Goals in shape, space and measure.

Commentary

67. The introductory activities are well matched to the children's abilities and capture their interest. The initial learning is reinforced by the practical tasks later in the lesson. Children enjoy these and work hard to complete them. Teachers do not always take advantage of the day-to-day

opportunities to develop mathematical skills. For example, in one class no attempt was made for children to use the numbers counted from the attendance and lunch registers to do simple calculations and make mathematics relevant.

68. By the end of the reception classes, the children count accurately to 20 and recognise written numerals. They know the most common two and three dimensional shapes. They are beginning to add and subtract numbers less than 10.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision and the quality of teaching and learning, in knowledge and understanding of the world are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a poor general knowledge.
- Computers are well used in the nursery.
- Children in the reception classes reach standards in ICT that are above those expected of children of this age.

Commentary

69. Children enter school with a very limited knowledge of the world immediately around them. Activities are planned to help children understand the diversity of the cultures and beliefs of their classmates. There are many opportunities for children to use a computer in the nursery throughout the day. They develop good mouse control and can change programs when they want. Reception children log on to the computer using their own class username. They use programs such as *Paint* to create pictures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision and the quality of teaching and learning in physical development are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a lack of outdoor accommodation accessible from the classrooms.
- There is a limited range of outdoor equipment for the nursery and reception classes.

Commentary

70. Opportunities to develop their physical skills are satisfactory for children in the nursery who have access to outdoor areas. They climb and slide and try hard to hit a small ball with a bat. Opportunities are limited for reception children because they do not have the free access to outdoor play that they need though they have playtimes each day. Children have two formal physical education lessons each week. These are too formal, especially for the nursery children, and restrict children's appropriate development because the activities limit opportunities for choice. Most children use pencils, crayons, glue and scissors accurately and safely. A few children are unable to hold a pencil correctly for writing and some find cutting difficult.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision and the quality of teaching and learning in creative development are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given opportunities to experiment and become confident with a wide range of media.
- Children have too little time to experiment with musical instruments.

Commentary

71. Children have many opportunities to develop their creative skills through planned tasks such as colour mixing, working with clay and dough and through tasks of their own choosing, such as painting. They enjoy cutting, sticking and finger painting. They play un-tuned instruments to accompany rhymes but have too little time to explore the different sounds made by the instruments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are improving.
- Teaching in English is good, although in a few lessons the work was not always matched to the pupils' needs.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are very effective.

Commentary

72. Results in national tests for seven-year-olds in 2004 were below the national average in reading and well below in writing. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in reading and writing was also below that found nationally. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well below in reading and below in writing. However, standards in writing showed improvement over the previous year. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory.
73. In the national tests for 11-year-olds, standards in English were below average. However, pupils of all backgrounds and abilities had made good progress since taking the tests when they were seven. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in English was similar to that found in schools nationally. Although there was a dip in results in 2003 there has been an underlying rise in standards since 2000.
74. Work seen in lessons and pupils' books shows that standards are steadily improving and are now at the national average in the current Year 6. Standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 are still below average, although standards are steadily rising and some pupils are attaining good standards. There is a growing proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, 22 per cent of the pupils in 2004. While the majority of these pupils make satisfactory progress after joining the school, the difficulties they have with language development have an adverse effect on the overall standards for the younger pupils. In a very good Year 1 lesson pupils attained average standards in writing. A small group of pupils in

this class attain above average standards. They enjoy writing conversations based on the dialogue between Little Red Riding Hood and the wolf. Pupils are aware of their writing targets and try hard to meet them.

75. Pupils in Year 2 show a wide range of attainment. In a very good lesson, pupils wrote accounts of their recent visit to a local church. The more able pupils were able to use connectives such as, *next*, *then*, *after that* and *finally* to show the sequence of events. Pupils' handwriting is developing well. Many pupils use neat joined script. They are developing spelling strategies. Pupils reading skills are at least average and show improvement each year.
76. The reading recovery programme is very well taught and is proving effective in raising reading standards. Pupils show good understanding of the text as a result of clear explanations and good teaching. In a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils showed good understanding of conditional language and wrote imaginative sentences to demonstrate this. A video recording of a Year 4 performance shows that pupils are developing their speaking skills well and enjoy taking part in performances.
77. Teaching in English is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and manage lessons well. Lessons are well planned and in most cases cater well for pupils with different learning needs. In the best lessons, teachers use imaginative strategies to engage pupils. They plan tasks to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and give very positive feedback to pupils about their work so that they know what they need to do to improve. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. However, in the small proportion of lessons that were satisfactory, tasks were not always well structured to meet the needs of groups of pupils with different learning needs. The pace of learning was slow and as a result pupils did not make the progress that they should.
78. The school has very effective procedures for assessing pupils' progress in English. Very effective use is made of information from assessment to set targets for pupils and help them to improve. Pupils know their targets and try very hard to meet them. The use of assessment information is proving very effective in raising standards.
79. Management of English is effective. The school has recently reviewed its management structure and the current management team is quite new. They show good understanding of what needs to be done to improve standards and have a clear action plan. Teaching and learning are monitored by the senior management team and by a growing and rigorous programme of peer monitoring. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Literacy across the curriculum

80. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have well developed writing skills, which means that there is little recorded work in different curriculum areas. However, teachers do attempt to give pupils opportunities to write about their experiences. For example, Year 2 pupils wrote recounts of their visit to a local church. Teachers encouraged them to sequence their accounts using different connectives. Older pupils use their literacy skills in different subjects. Pupils are set projects which they may interpret as they choose. In presenting projects such as 'Lines' and 'Elephants', pupils make good use of their reference and research skills. They show good understanding of how to present their work in clear sections and use index and contents lists to organise the content. Work in history, geography and religious education shows that pupils make good use of their writing skills to support their learning.

French and German

Provision in French and German is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good and pupils achieve very well in lessons.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and try hard to build up simple sentences.
- The school wants to increase this provision to ensure pupils' progress year on year.

Commentary

81. Currently, pupils in Years 1 and 6 are taught French, while pupils in Year 3 are taught both French and German. Two specialist teachers, who are also class teachers at the school, do all the teaching. The school is seeking funding to extend this provision and would like to train other teachers to teach these subjects.
82. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are good for early learners of a modern foreign language. Pupils listen attentively to discriminate sounds and to develop accurate pronunciation. They respond with developing ability to questions and instructions couched in familiar language. Due to the emphasis on spoken language, pupils are growing in confidence in speaking, reproducing precisely what they have heard.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and pupils achieve highly in lessons. Teachers' expertise allows them to employ a mainly oral approach and to present pupils with a clear model of spoken French and German. Lessons are highly interesting, very well planned and fun. Pupils enjoy learning the different languages and readily reply to questions and try hard to build up simple conversations. Teachers use a wide range of teaching methods to hold pupils' attention and to consolidate their learning. The quality of pupils' vocabulary indicates the very good progress over time. Pupils have good attitudes and behave very well in lessons. They enjoy interacting with the teachers and with each other, and are keen to do well.
84. Teaching of modern foreign languages is a valuable part of the curriculum. It is very worthwhile in itself and prepares pupils well for their next stage of education. It also helps to expand pupils' cultural horizons and further develops their awareness of the structure and potential of language.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well overall.
- Planning for pupils at different stages of learning is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who have a particular gift for the subject are well supported and achieve well.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

85. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in the current Year 2 are below national expectations and in line with national expectations for pupils in Year 6. Although boys outperform girls in national tests, there was no evidence seen during the inspection of a difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Boys and girls are currently making similar

progress. The school does very well by its pupils, with all groups making similar progress and achieving well. Children enter the nursery with well below average mathematical understanding. Although they make satisfactory progress in the nursery and reception classes, overall attainment on entry to Year 1 is well below that expected. A significant number experience difficulties in communication, language and literacy, which limit their ability to discuss their work in mathematical language and to give reasons for their answers.

86. The school's data shows that pupils who entered the school in the nursery achieve very well. A significant number of pupils join the school at other times and, although they achieve very well while in the school, their achievement over time is more limited because of the disruption to their learning. The above average number of pupils with special educational needs and the increasingly high number with statements of special needs and those who speak English as an additional language, depress standards. The overall provision for pupils with special educational and other needs is very good and they achieve as well as their peers. The number of these pupils who attain the expected level in mathematics at the end of Year 6 reflects the quality of this provision. All indications are that standards are rising because of the very good leadership and management of the school, which have resulted in improved assessment procedures and target setting for individual pupils, a thorough analysis of test results identifying areas for development and an increased emphasis on developing pupils' problem-solving skills. Teaching and learning are monitored by senior staff and local authority advisers and overall provision has improved since the last inspection.
87. The quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was good overall. Teaching in a high proportion of lessons was very good. Strengths include:
- teaching which captures pupils' interest;
 - very good relationships which encourage pupils to contribute with no fear of failure;
 - good planning and effective use of teaching assistants to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs;
 - teachers' good knowledge of the subject;
 - well-structured lessons so that pupils move quickly onto group or individual tasks after stimulating mental mathematics sessions and clear, brisk explanations;
 - a good balance between direct teaching and independent learning at all stages of lessons.
88. In a small number of lessons where teaching was satisfactory, pupils spent too much time as a class, sitting listening to the teacher, and there was not a good enough balance between teacher directed learning and independent work. Pupils with a particular gift for the subject are very well provided for and achieve very well in Years 3 to 6 because of the high quality teaching they receive. Higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, were observed being challenged to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve advanced algebraic equations. They achieved highly because of the teacher's excellent knowledge of the subject and their own very good attitudes to learning.
89. Pupils benefit from regular mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of lessons and they make good progress. Teachers use a good range of resources such as whiteboard, number card, stringed beads and number lines, to challenge all pupils to offer answers, checking each answer quickly. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson, where the quality of teaching and relationships resulted in a very high level of involvement by all pupils using number cards to explain their strategies for problems such as 34×7 . Achievement was very high and by the end of the lesson most pupils understood the use of brackets and explained that 46×3 is the same as $(40 \times 3) + (6 \times 3)$.
90. Work in pupils' books and in lessons shows that data handling and shape, space and measure are regularly taught. During the inspection, for example, Year 6 pupils were successfully taught to read scales with greater accuracy and to employ decimal notation to record measurements and to change one metric unit to another such as 6.5 kilograms to 6500 grams. By the end of Year 6, most pupils can identify mode as a measure of average and

range as a measure of spread, and employ both to describe data sets. Information and communication technology is well used to support pupils' data handling skills. The subject is particularly effective in developing the numeracy skills of pupils with special educational needs and those who require further support.

Mathematics across the curriculum

91. Mathematics is well represented in displays round the school and in pupils' work across the curriculum. Completed work shows good opportunities for pupils to apply their measuring and data handling skills, which support their learning in subjects such as science and design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and pupils achieve well. Pupils achieve very well in Years 5 and 6 as a result of specialist teaching.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to learn through investigation.

Commentary

92. Standards in the current Year 2 classes are average and the achievement of these pupils is good, as many arrived in school with well below average knowledge and understanding. In Years 3 and 4, pupils continue to achieve well. In Year 5 and Year 6, pupils achieve very well because of the specialist teaching that they receive and standards are well above average by the time that they leave Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection.
93. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school with some very good teaching in Year 5 and Year 6. The best features of teaching are that teachers generally plan in detail, manage behaviour effectively, use questioning very well to probe and enhance pupils' understanding and set activities that provide appropriate challenge.
94. In Years 1 and 2, teachers are aware that many pupils do not possess a sufficient range of scientific vocabulary and so find it difficult to give precise explanations within science lessons. Consequently, they provide pupils with a list of appropriate scientific vocabulary for each lesson and encourage them to develop their speaking and listening skills by observing closely and describing what they see.
95. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the teacher provided pupils with a wide range of materials for them to handle and describe before building up a vocabulary list from their descriptions. Such good opportunities contribute to the development of speaking and listening skills within the school. Teachers capture the imagination of pupils by making effective use of ICT within lessons. Interactive whiteboards, digital cameras and a digital microscope all proved valuable resources for learning during the week of the inspection.
96. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning by supporting pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils enjoy their science lessons and work well as individuals, in pairs and within groups. They share equipment; accept responsibility readily and are aware of the need to listen to the views of others.

97. The school places an emphasis on practical and investigative activities and this is a key factor in improving standards throughout the school. Pupils in Year 6, for example, reacted enthusiastically to an investigation to test the effect that different masses have on the stretch of an elastic band. They were able to plan their investigation, select equipment, predict outcomes, discuss variables and explain how they could ensure that their test was fair. They then organised themselves within their group, discussed various options and came to decisions in an amicable and mature manner. Pupils throughout the school record their work within a standard format that includes predictions, data analysis and concluding statements and this helps them to think carefully about what they are required to do and what they have achieved. Almost all pupils are able to explain the requirements of a fair test, and during discussions with pupils it was clear that they appreciated these regular opportunities to engage in practical activities.
98. The school makes good use of data analysis and this is now playing a key role in the improvement of standards in science throughout the school. Teachers carry out regular assessments to see where pupils need additional support and then plan work accordingly. For example, the decision to implement specialist science teaching in Year 5 and Year 6 has contributed significantly to the very good standards achieved by pupils in Year 6. The specialist teachers have very good subject knowledge and their confident approach to the teaching of science enables pupils in their classes to achieve very well. This strategy also ensures that there is an equality of provision for pupils in the different classes within each year group.
99. The teaching of science is often linked to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills by writing up experiments and recording data in various ways such as tables, graphs and charts. For example, pupils in Year 5 had developed computer-generated graphs to show how water temperature affected the dissolving process. Pupils in Year 6 had researched the Internet to find out about the lives of Joseph Lister and Louis Pasteur, and as part of their history topic pupils in Year 3 had discovered the ways in which yesterday's rubbish can tell us about the past.
100. The recently formed science group provides good leadership and has a clear view of standards within this curriculum area. They have centralised resources and encouraged an emphasis upon scientific enquiry. They have, however, yet to establish a formal system for spreading the expertise that exists within the school, thereby ensuring consistently good teaching in all classes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Resources for learning are excellent.
- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning in other subjects.
- Classroom resources could be used more effectively.

Commentary

101. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were average at the end of Year 6 and although resources were improving, teaching was variable and only satisfactory overall. There have been considerable improvements since that time. Teaching and learning are now good; resources for learning are excellent and in the current Year 6, standards in ICT are above average.

102. Since the last inspection, the computer suite has been extended and the school now has more than 90 computers, each with Internet access. As a result, the ratio of computers to pupils is currently much better than in most schools and pupils are able to progress at their own pace in lessons, as they rarely have to share a computer. There are interactive whiteboards in every classroom and pupils have regular access to digital cameras and digital microscopes.
103. Teaching has improved considerably since the time of the previous inspection. All teachers have received training in computer technology and this has increased their subject expertise and confidence and contributed significantly to improving standards of teaching and learning throughout the school. Teachers also receive valuable support from a specialist instructor and some very competent teaching assistants. As a result, teaching is often good and very good; lessons have pace; challenging activities are set and pupils respond accordingly. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils used Clipart to find appropriate pictures to illustrate their word processing, whilst pupils in Year 6 were confident in the use of hyperlinks to carry out independent research to develop PowerPoint presentations. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively throughout the school. Year 3 pupils, for example, observed how different paper absorbed water and pupils in Year 5 were able to follow the process of evaporation. However, this technology is not yet used sufficiently as a vehicle for developing pupils' knowledge and understanding in a creative and imaginative way.
104. In addition to the regular timetabled lessons, pupils benefit from other additional opportunities to develop their skills. The computer suite is open for use before school and pupils regularly arrive early to use it. Teachers and support staff organise computer clubs during breaks, lunchtimes and after school, which are very well supported. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language benefit from daily sessions within the computer suite. Almost all pupils are highly motivated by the developments in this subject and discuss their work confidently and enthusiastically. Although pupils generally work as individuals, they are encouraged to support others who are experiencing difficulties within a lesson and they do so with maturity. Pupil attitudes and behaviour are consistently very good both within lessons and during extra-curricular sessions.
105. The newly developed subject co-ordination group provides good leadership. They have increased resources; monitored the scheme of work; ensured that assessment procedures are in place and that there is a displayed policy for health and safety and security when using the Internet. They have an action plan for future development that highlights a commitment to ensuring that all staff make full and imaginative use of the interactive whiteboards within each classroom.

ICT across the curriculum

106. ICT consistently supports learning in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 5, for example, have developed their scientific awareness by accessing websites to collect images from the Hubble Spacecraft, whilst in mathematics, pupils in Year 3 have improved their data handling skills by developing graphs, detailing the amount of rainfall during a given week. Pupils in Year 4 have word processed attractively presented 'Winter' poems, whilst pupils in Year 6 have carried out Internet research to develop PowerPoint presentations. Teachers make good use of the digital camera to record learning activities and computer-generated photographs are used effectively as part of a number of attractive displays throughout the school.

HUMANITIES

Three lessons were seen in history and in geography. Judgements are made on standards and teaching and learning from these and from teachers' planning and the pupils' recorded work.

History and geography

Provision in both history and geography is **good**. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of interesting, relevant visits and visitors support the curriculum well in both subjects.
- Very good teaching was seen in Years 1 and 6.
- The subjects are well managed through an enthusiastic, knowledgeable team.
- Resources are good and ICT is well used.
- Assessment is well developed.
- There are strong cross-curricular links.

Commentary

107. Where the subjects are well taught good use is made of artefacts and appropriate resources such as large-scale maps. Pupils are taught to question authenticity and bias. Year 6 pupils were taught why it is dangerous to rely on one source of evidence when studying how Charles Dickens contributed to social reform. At times, cross-curricular links prevent pupils concentrating on the key skills of the subjects. In a lesson on the achievements of Alexander Graham Bell, the teaching and learning of history key skills were sidelined because the lesson concentrated on the science of sound. In a Year 1 lesson, however, pupils' literacy skills were well used and developed in a lesson on houses and homes.
108. Pupils use appropriate computer programs for these subjects and are able to access the Internet when doing research. Their familiarity with ICT allows them to make good progress in this area of the curriculum. The local area is well used by all year groups and visits to museums and historic places reinforce pupils' interests.
109. The management team has planned the curriculum carefully with an emphasis on first hand experience that allows the pupils to make good progress. They are currently further developing assessment to ensure that pupils have grasped the key skills.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good and pupils achieve highly.
- Teachers make very good use of pupils' knowledge of their own faiths so that they learn from each other.
- Pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes in lessons reflect the respect they have for others' beliefs and traditions.
- The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills as well as to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The whole ethos of the school supports pupils' learning.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

110. Standards of attainment are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and well above expectations by the end of Year 6, which represents a very significant improvement since the last inspection. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Lessons are very well prepared and researched by teachers to include meaningful discussions and interesting tasks. Pupils with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language are well supported to play a full part in lessons.
111. As a result of teachers' understanding of the importance of teaching pupils *through* religion as well as *about* religion, pupils link religious teaching with everyday life. They know that special books such as the Bible, the Qu'ran and the Guru Granth Sahib set rules for living. Pupils are taught that different religions share some common features, such as caring for each other, and the importance of festivals such as Christmas, Eid, the Chinese New Year and Ramadan.
112. Discussions with pupils show that they have a very good understanding of why religious education is important in breaking down prejudices and in helping them understand religious beliefs, attitudes and activities of other people while developing their own beliefs and values. As a result of the high quality teaching and the way teachers link different faiths studied, pupils retain knowledge of activities, rituals, literature and practices of a variety of religious communities. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher taught pupils that Muslims give money to help others in the same way that the kitchens attached to Sikh Gurdwaras are always open to those in need of food. Pupils gain a good understanding of the nature of religious belief and can describe the importance of prayer in their lives. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' writing. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher reminded pupils about the importance of punctuation and of using interesting vocabulary to grasp the reader's attention. Good use is made of visitors and visits to different places of worship to stimulate further pupils' interest in the subject.
113. The subject is very well led and managed by the newly appointed and enthusiastic curriculum team. It has introduced a scheme of work, linked to the agreed syllabus, which gives very good support to teaching and learning. Very good assemblies, such as that in memory of the Holocaust, and the school's aims and ethos strongly support pupils' learning as well as their spiritual, moral social and cultural development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

114. No **art and design** lessons were seen during the inspection. It is not possible to make a judgement on attainment from the work on display around the school.
115. Only one lesson in **design and technology** was seen during the week of the inspection so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards or teaching and learning. Teaching and learning in the Year 4 lesson seen were judged to be satisfactory. It was possible to talk to the newly formed design and technology group and to pupils from Year 2. Planning is based on the national guidance for this subject and teachers attempt, where possible, to link it to other areas of the curriculum. As part of their study of The Industrial Revolution, for example, Year 6 pupils made water wheels and railway vehicles designed to move along a wooden track. Pupils in Year 1 had planned, designed and made bookstands to support their special books as part of their religious education studies, whilst Year 5 had made musical instruments from reclaimed materials. All classes have regular opportunities to participate in design and technology lessons; all of the programmes of study are covered and resources are of a satisfactory range. Pupils in Year 2 said that they enjoyed their lessons and talked with enthusiasm about the finger puppets and glove puppets that they made during the previous term.
116. Only one **music** lesson was observed during the inspection so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision or of teaching and learning. Pupils sing well in

assemblies and enjoy opportunities to take part in musical productions. Pupils have opportunities to learn a range of instruments. The school invites different groups of performers into the school to perform for the children and enrich their musical experiences.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities enriches the curriculum.
- Specialist teaching enables pupils to achieve well.
- The school hall is not suitable for indoor physical education lessons.

Commentary

117. During the inspection, it was possible to observe four physical education lessons featuring gymnastics and games. In Years 3 to 6, teaching was good overall and the current pupils in Year 6 achieve standards that are above average. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 and it was not possible, therefore, to make a judgement on standards achieved by pupils in the current Year 2 classes.
118. Pupils clearly enjoy the many opportunities that are provided for them to participate in additional team sports and sporting clubs, such as those for football, basketball, gymnastics, karate, athletics, hockey and tag rugby. These varied opportunities are open to both girls and boys and involve pupils from Year 1 to Year 6. The specialist sports coach is highly committed and organises many of these clubs, although some are led by other enthusiastic members of staff.
119. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop their outdoor education skills during residential experiences at an activity centre in Norfolk. The school has established close links with a number of local sports clubs and visiting specialists, including those from the local secondary school, which provide curriculum support for teachers. Although the school does not have its own playing field, this in no way limits pupils' participation in sporting activities and school teams compete successfully against other schools in a range of team sports. Pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 enjoy swimming lessons on an annual basis and almost all achieve the national standard of swimming 25 metres by the time that they leave the school.
120. In all lessons, teaching and learning was at least satisfactory and good or very good when specialist teachers or instructors were involved. Teachers set the right tone for lessons by changing into appropriate clothing and through their willingness to participate in physical activities. They give appropriate attention to health and safety aspects, such as warming up at the start of a lesson and cooling down at the end. Most pupils enjoy this subject and demonstrate positive attitudes in physical education lessons and during after-school club activities. In a gymnastics lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils had a clear understanding of what was expected, responded appropriately and made good progress. They co-operated happily in paired activities and enjoyed the opportunity to develop their agility. In this lesson, the strategy of distributing a range of photographs to demonstrate learning objectives greatly assisted the progress of pupils with English as an additional language as they were able to see what they were expected to achieve. Although specialist teaching does contribute significantly to the good standards that pupils achieve, it is important that this expertise is spread throughout the school to ensure consistently good teaching in all classes.

121. The recently formed physical education group provides good leadership; it has ensured that all aspects of the curriculum for physical education are taught and has monitored the good assessment procedures that are in place. The group is aware that there is insufficient indoor accommodation for a school of this size, that internal pillars in the school hall make it unsuitable for indoor physical education lessons and that the lack of fixed apparatus limits the progress that pupils can make in some aspects of gymnastics.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

122. Timetabling arrangements meant that it was only possible to observe one PSHE lesson during the inspection. This very good Year 5 lesson celebrated the good things the pupils had done or achieved in their lives. In addition to this lesson, judgements are based on a review of the school's everyday practice, in the breakfast club, assemblies, during extra-curricular activities and through speaking to pupils. The new curriculum team ensures that PSHE is very well planned in line with a new local authority curriculum being piloted by the school. The programme does not include sessions on drug awareness but this is being addressed. In virtually all lessons teachers encourage pupils to discuss their ideas, to listen carefully to others and to take responsibility for their actions. One member of the team has successfully completed sex education training and is responsible for it in Years 5 and 6. Social concerns are a regular feature of assemblies and support pupils' growing understanding of local, national and international issues. The school enjoys a friendly and fruitful relationship with the local police liaison officer. Pupils know that their ideas and suggestions are listened to and taken seriously. In talking to them and taking their responses into account it is clear that pupils have a real influence in the way the school is managed. The school is working towards the Healthy School's Award and is to be assessed in April.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	1
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
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	2
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).

