

INSPECTION REPORT

URMSTON JUNIOR SCHOOL

Urmston, Greater Manchester

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106314

Headteacher: Mr A P Dye

Lead inspector: Ralph Higgs

Dates of inspection: 21 – 23 February 2005

Inspection number: 268167

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Junior |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 7 to 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 288 |
| School address: | Hereford Grove Urmston Manchester |
| Postcode: | M41 5AJ |
| Telephone number: | 0161 748 2855 |
| Fax number: | 0161 747 0994 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Dr D Seex |

Date of previous inspection: 1 March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Urmston is an average size junior school. It is a popular school, retaining an almost full roll despite falling numbers locally. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic circumstances as the school serves an area that has similar socio-economic characteristics to those found nationally. The take up of free schools meals is below average, owing in part to the availability of service sector jobs in the nearby Trafford Centre. Currently, almost all pupils come from White-British backgrounds and no pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. The numbers of pupils with special educational needs, including Statements, is below average. The most common needs are dyslexia and moderate learning difficulties. When pupils join the school, their attainment is broadly average, overall, representing the full ability range. The current Year 6 entered with above average attainment in national tests. The school prides itself on providing a good all-round education, with a particular emphasis on extra-curricular sports.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 1608 | Ralph Higgs | Lead inspector | Science History Geography Personal, social, health and citizenship education |
| 8922 | Brenda McIntosh | Lay inspector | |
| 32151 | Jean Kendall | Team inspector | English Information and communication technology Art and design Religious education |
| 22421 | Val McGrath | Team inspector | English as an additional language Special educational needs Mathematics Design and technology Music Physical education |

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 6 |
| PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS | |
| STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS | 8 |
| Standards achieved in subjects | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos) | |
| QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL | 10 |
| Teaching and learning | |
| The curriculum | |
| Care, guidance and support | |
| Partnership with parents, other schools and the community | |
| LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 16 |
| PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS | 18 |
| SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2 | |
| PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS | 26 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Urmston Juniors is a satisfactory school with a number of strengths. Pupils show considerable interest in their work as a result of generally good teaching and a caring and friendly ethos. In recent years, standards have been slipping but are rising again, and achievement - the measure of how well pupils are doing taking their progress and capability into account - is satisfactory. Value for money is good, taking account of the school's low income and costs per pupil.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is a good climate for learning, enabling pupils to have very positive attitudes, to develop very good relationships and to behave very well.
- Current good teaching is promoting good progress, so that in Year 6 pupils are achieving standards in line with estimates based on their attainment on entry to Year 3.
- Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well.
- Attendance and punctuality are very good, reflecting the positive partnership with parents and the school's friendly and supportive environment.
- Until recently, there has been insufficient focus on raising standards due to weak systems of self-evaluation, target-setting and the checking of pupils' progress.
- Though curriculum enrichment, including out-of-hours learning, is good there are weaknesses in curriculum organisation and planning that hold back pupils' progress.
- A newly appointed team of teachers to key positions is promoting important improvements.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, overall. The steady upward trend in results had slowed, but a new team of teachers in Year 6, and fresh impetus to change brought about by a complete overhaul of key responsibilities, are raising expectations and increasing pupils' progress. Evidence from this inspection indicates that standards are rising again and that achievement is securely satisfactory. The accommodation is much better than it was, with good facilities for information and communications technology (ICT). Teaching quality is good, overall, but the proportion that is very good or better is low and there is insufficient emphasis on the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to promote improvement. The development of the curriculum has been satisfactory but has not fully taken account of new opportunities from national initiatives.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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.

Overall, achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make sound progress from Year 3 to Year 6 to achieve standards that are in line with expectations calculated from their attainment on entry to the school, which was above average in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to well-targeted support. There is little difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Standards are above average in Year 6 in English and mathematics and average in science. Analysis of results in recent years shows a slight fall in standards, overall, and weakening

achievement. However, standards are recovering and the satisfactory achievement seen during the inspection is better than the comparison with similar schools in the above table. Standards in other subjects are in line with national averages, and, in these, achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development is very good; provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their attitudes, relationships and present levels of attendance are very good as is their overall behaviour.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Overall, teaching and learning are good, though little is better than this and there is too high a proportion that is only satisfactory. Teachers' high expectations for pupils, their lesson planning and good knowledge of how to teach literacy and numeracy are strong features that promote good learning. The best lessons challenge pupils to think for themselves and provide many opportunities to become involved. However, in some lessons, learning is more passive and pupils have fewer opportunities to extend their personal understanding. There are inconsistencies in assessment practice between teachers and pupils do not know clearly enough what to do to improve their work. The curriculum is satisfactory and enriched through extra-curricular opportunities and educational visits, but, although all subjects are taught, there are inconsistencies in curricular coverage in different year groups. The provision for special educational needs is good. The accommodation is good, with some that is very good. Resources are satisfactory. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory, overall, as are support, advice and guidance. The school has good links with parents and the local community, who contribute well to pupils' learning and their personal development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides committed and caring leadership and is bringing about changes and improvements to the school, which has been lacking in strategic direction. Recent appointments to key roles have brought about a stronger focus on standards and the recognition of the need for greater consistency of provision. Some weaknesses in self-evaluation, curriculum planning and assessment mean that management is satisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory, overall.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are strongly supportive of the school and its work. The parent and teachers' association is a flourishing group and extremely successful in organising fund-raising and social events. Pupils like school and particularly enjoy the opportunities to take part in sports and clubs.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop and implement systems of self-evaluation that will ensure a secure basis for school improvement planning and bring about higher standards of achievement.
- Bring more consistency and coherence to curriculum planning in order to improve progression and promote greater independence in pupils' learning.
- Develop consistency in assessments of pupils' work, and involve them more in setting their own targets and checking their progress to help them improve upon their achievements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Standards of work seen during the inspection were average, overall, but above average in English and mathematics owing to the higher attainment of pupils in these subjects when they entered the school in Year 3. Achievement – the measure of how well pupils are doing taking their progress and capability into account – is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising and achievement is satisfactory.
- Pupils achieve well in their calculating and measuring skills.
- Pupils' reading skills are well developed and they can express themselves well when talking.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the careful identification of their needs and good support.

Commentary

1. For the past two years, overall standards have remained close to the average in national tests taken in Year 6, whereas they were above average in the previous two years. In 2004, achievement was well below average compared with similar schools. Pupils who had been in school for the full four years achieved better than the small number who entered part-way through the key stage. Pupils' attainment in tests taken at the end of Year 2, before they enter the school, varies from year to year. In the current Year 6, attainment was above average on entry in reading, writing and mathematics, whereas in the current Year 3 and other year groups they were broadly average.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 26.7 (27.3) | 26.9 (26.8) |
| mathematics | 27.9 (26.9) | 27.0 (26.8) |
| science | 28.7 (28.2) | 28.6 (28.6) |

There were 78 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Achievement by Year 6 is now securely satisfactory and standards are rising. Boys' and girls' attainment is in line with their respective performance nationally. Pupils with special needs are achieving well. They receive good support. There is a new team of teachers in Year 6 and standards seen were above average in English and mathematics. This partly reflects the higher attainment of this year group when they entered the school, but it is also due to generally good teaching, which is leading to good progress in lessons and helping pupils to reach standards in line with their ability. Standards in science are average, representing satisfactory achievement given their somewhat lower starting point. Although progress in science lessons is good in Year 6, teachers are finding they have to fill gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills brought about by weak planning and organisation of the curriculum in previous years. A similar picture of improving standards emerges in other year groups, and particularly in Year 5, where much good teaching is leading to good progress in lessons.
3. Pupils have well-developed speaking and listening skills and can express themselves with confidence. They listen attentively in lessons and sustain concentration. Reading skills are equally good. Pupils read aloud with confidence, fluency and expression. Pupils produce a good range of written work in literacy lessons and the standard of work is beginning to

improve because of a greater focus on skills. However, there is varying provision across other subjects for pupils to develop their writing, and opportunities for learning through talking together are limited. In mathematics, standards are overall a little higher but better in the use of number, shape and measurement than for other aspects because of inconsistencies in provision, particularly in Years 3 and 4. In science, Year 6 teachers are following a revised scheme of work so they can cover the ground that has been missed in previous years. A new emphasis on giving pupils in every year group end-of-module tests is giving teachers across the school a clearer picture of progress, though target-setting is not consistently established. In other subjects reported in detail – information and communications technology (ICT), religious education and physical education (PE) - standards seen were in line with those expected by the end of Year 6.

- Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well, overall. Their needs are recognised, their progress is analysed against their individual education plans, and they received well-focused support either in the classroom or in small groups. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is not identified separately as the school does not keep a register or track their progress. However, owing to the careful planning that teachers undertake to provide for all groups of pupils in lessons, higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance and punctuality are very good. Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour are very good. Aspects of personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance rates are high and pupils are happy, keen and proud of their school.
- Very good relationships between staff and pupils promote good learning and the forming of constructive relationships among pupils.
- Teachers promote pupils’ personal development very well in lessons, resulting in very good attitudes to learning.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to contribute to the running of the school, and their understanding of other cultures is insufficiently developed.

Commentary

- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good. Attendance during the current school year to date shows significant improvement, with a 96.8 per cent attendance rate and no unauthorised absences. This figure reflects pupils’ very good attitudes and the very effective measures the school adopts to promote attendance and follow up absences. Punctuality on arrival at the school is very good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 3.7 | School data | 0.5 |
| National data | 5.1 | National data | 0.4 |

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

- The school has an orderly atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and relaxed. Pupils are proud of their school and they talk with enthusiasm about the range of activities offered. They are keen to participate in activities after school as well as those offered during the school day. Relationships between adults and pupils are supportive and this promotes very good, constructive relationships among pupils. In a religious education lesson in Year 4, pupils

worked in groups to write a code of behaviour for a school visit. They showed a very good understanding of the need to agree principles that would keep everyone safe and ensure the smooth running of the visit.

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and assemblies is very good. Teachers set high expectations based on mutual respect and consideration for others. Parents endorse the view that the school promotes high standards of behaviour, tolerance and kindness through teachers and other staff providing good role models. Behaviour at break-times and when moving around the school is good. The small playground space is used sensibly and safely. Pupils wishing to engage in energetic games stay within allocated areas, with due regard to the safety of others. Year 6 pupils were keen to show off their new garden area and explain the rules of the playground. No incidences of bullying or harassment were observed. The exclusion rate is very low indeed.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British | 265 | 1 | 0 |
| White – any other White background | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black African | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Pakistani | 2 | 0 | 0 |

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

- Personal development is promoted well in lessons and by out-of-hours opportunities; pupils are motivated and eager to learn, developing a good degree of self-confidence. The qualities required to become more mature and responsible are promoted well. Discussion with pupils established that they like coming to school and enjoy their lessons. They get on very well with one another. Older pupils are helpful and supportive to younger pupils in the playground. They talk with confidence about what they have learned and pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to reflect on what they can do to improve their work. They have a very clear understanding of right from wrong in their everyday relationships and within the school community, indicating that their moral and social development are very good. However, whilst pupils take responsibility for tasks within the classroom, there are limited opportunities for them to show enterprise and to take responsibility in the running of the school. A positive ethos within the school promotes pupils' spiritual development well but there are missed opportunities in assemblies to reflect on their own beliefs and circumstances and those of others. Pupils appreciate their own cultural traditions well, although their understanding of the richness and diversity of other cultures is only satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good, though with some variations. The curriculum is satisfactory, with good enrichment. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory, as are links with other schools. The partnership with parents is good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good, but there is little that is better than this and too much which is only satisfactory. Assessment has weaknesses but is satisfactory, overall, due to some recent improvements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good knowledge of how to teach literacy and numeracy.
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils, managing behaviour very well to enable them to concentrate on learning.
- Relationships are very good and contribute positively to learning.
- Methods of assessing pupils' progress are inconsistent and some pupils do not know what they need to do to improve.
- There is not enough emphasis on providing opportunities for pupils to learn through talking about their work, to stretch their understanding.
- There is not enough use of ICT for learning in other subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 0 (0%) | 4 (12%) | 18 (55%) | 10 (30%) | 1 (3%) | 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.

9. The quality of teaching is good across the school but the proportion that is very good or better is low, and there is too much that is only satisfactory. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and a good command of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This is shown in their explanations, which provide pupils with the confidence and direction to learn well. Objectives are clearly identified and appropriate activities chosen so that all groups of pupils can make progress. Lessons are usually organised into distinct but well-connected parts. This is a feature of good lessons in English and mathematics. However, approaches to teaching literacy vary. For example, guided reading and writing is taught in some classes and not in others. Where teaching is less effective in mathematics, there is some over-reliance on worksheets and textbook exercises. Most lessons are well planned and prepared. In the few very good lessons seen, activities challenge pupils to think hard and to stretch their skills and understanding and they learn very well.
10. A good feature of most teaching is the emphasis placed on using activities that are interesting and motivating. Teachers use a variety of ways to praise and encourage pupils to learn and have effective strategies when a few are being inattentive. Consequently, relationships are very good and contribute positively to learning as pupils take care with their work and try hard to complete it. However, even in these lessons, pupils are often given limited opportunities to talk about their work, in pairs or larger groups, so that learning through exploring ideas or through discussion are under-utilised. Increasing use is being made of ICT to help pupils learn in other subjects, and, where this happens, it is effective in promoting learning. However, as yet, this is not planned for systematically throughout the school.
11. Teaching is matched effectively to the requirements of pupils with special educational needs who are well supported by teaching assistants. They provide a good bridge between individual needs and lesson activities. Teachers help pupils with special needs to achieve well by good use of individual assessments. Though lessons are also suitably varied so that more able pupils can progress, the same degree of targeting the most able and talented is not evident, as the school does not yet identify these pupils separately.

12. In lessons that are otherwise satisfactory, there are some weaknesses that restrict learning. In these, activities are mundane and teachers do not expect enough of pupils so that learning is too slow. In some lessons, in Years 3 and 4, the class size is too large to enable sufficient support to be given to all groups and this slows the rate of learning for some pupils. This was the case for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics in Year 4, and for girls in PE when three classes from Year 5 were taught together. On a few occasions, pupils who are being inattentive are not dealt with firmly enough to prevent progress from being unduly interrupted.
13. Assessment is satisfactory, overall. It is good in some Year 5 and 6 classes where teachers analyse test results to set whole-class targets for English, mathematics and science and identify pupils who need additional support. All pupils in these classes have personal targets for improvement, which they refer to as they complete their tasks. Pupils in these classes mostly have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve the quality of their work. The lack of consistency in approaches across the whole school means that parents of pupils in Years 3 and 4 are less well informed about their children's progress and targets for improvement.
14. In all classes, teachers mark pupils' work regularly and give an indication of what has been achieved and areas for development. The best practice links marking with personal targets. End-of-unit assessments in English, mathematics, science and ICT, provide a useful overview of pupils' performance in units of work. Here again, there is some inconsistency in approach. Where practice is good, assessments give an indication of levels achieved and the specific strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. They provide a good basis for planning work matched to pupil needs.
15. Systems for tracking pupils' achievements through National Curriculum levels in English and mathematics are being further refined with the use of a newly purchased software package. Teachers make good use of the available data to group pupils according to ability and to ensure a match of teaching to need. Pupils with special needs are supported well.
16. Despite a recent high turnover in teaching staff and several absences, requiring the appointment of supply teachers, the school has maintained the overall quality of teaching since the last inspection, though a lower proportion of very good teaching was seen on this occasion. Teachers have been deployed to their strengths, resulting in a good overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6. The school has made satisfactory improvements to the use of assessment data, particularly to focus more strongly on setting targets, but inconsistencies remain.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory, overall. The school provides good enrichment through extra-curricular opportunities and educational visits. Accommodation is good. There has been little curriculum innovation, however, to meet the aspirations of the National Primary Strategy.

Main strength and weaknesses

- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Educational visits and good extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum, particularly for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- The accommodation is good.
- When pupils are taught in large groups or classes, some pupils do not learn as well as they might.
- There is inconsistency in curriculum coverage and the implementation of national strategies in different year groups.
- Gifted and talented pupils are not identified for specific provision.

Commentary

17. The breadth of the curriculum is satisfactory and recent reviews carried out by new subject leaders are strengthening planning. All subjects are taught, although there are some inconsistencies in curriculum coverage in different year groups. For example, personal, social and health education and citizenship is taught in discrete lessons in some classes, but through other subjects in others. The National Numeracy Strategy planning guidance is implemented in some classes, and ensures good coverage of all aspects of mathematics. In other classes, a narrower curriculum is a consequence of adopting planning guidance from a commercial publication. Pupils are given only one hour of PE per week, rather than the recommended two hours. The science curriculum successfully incorporates education on sex, and drugs and alcohol awareness. The school nurse provides additional sex education for Year 6 pupils. The school has established links between some subjects: for example, the use of mathematics skills for measurement and data-handling in science. However, opportunities are missed for using ICT to promote learning across the curriculum, and for developing an awareness of other cultures.
18. The school promotes good equality of opportunity, providing equal access to activities for boys and girls, and for pupils of all abilities in the vast majority of lessons. Pupils with talents in sport are given opportunities to compete in sporting competitions, and pupils have access to additional tuition for developing talents in music. This has not been extended, however, to provide additional activities for pupils with gifts in other academic areas, as the school does not keep a register of gifted and talented pupils or identify them for specific support. There is good provision for pupils with special physical, learning and emotional needs. Lower-attaining pupils are well supported because work is well matched to their individual needs and there is good quality additional support. The good management of support, the accurate identification of needs and targets, and the monitoring of progress assure good access to the whole curriculum for pupils with special needs. In some lessons, however, the class size is too large to enable sufficient support for all groups and this slows the rate of learning for some pupils. This was the case for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics in Year 4 and for girls in PE when 3 classes from Year 5 were taught together.
19. There are good opportunities for older pupils to participate in sport. This is promoted well through the extra-curricular programme, which has been further expanded since 2003 when the school joined the School Sports Co-ordinator Programme. There are many opportunities for pupils to play after school sport, join coaching sessions and engage in outdoor pursuits. Primarily these are targeted at pupils in Years 5 and 6, and there are fewer opportunities for pupils in Years 3 and 4. There is also good participation in other extra-curricular activities, including science, art and gardening clubs, and the school council.
20. The school has sufficient, well-qualified and suitably experienced teaching staff. The match of teachers to the curriculum is very good, with teachers deployed to make the most of their skills and expertise. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a result of the encouragement and help they receive from teaching assistants.
21. There has been very good improvement in the accommodation. Since the last inspection new classrooms, hall, playground surface and ICT suite have been provided. However, accommodation for the library remains unsatisfactory. Most classrooms in the old building are separated by partitions that allow noise to carry to neighbouring rooms. This presents a barrier to learning on occasions, particularly through speaking and listening, because of the disruption caused. Resources are generally satisfactory, though some shortages in ICT restrict opportunities for learning about control.
22. The preparation of pupils for the secondary stage is good. Pupils and staff exchange visits and the above-average attainment of Year 6 pupils, particularly in literacy and numeracy, equips pupils well for accessing the secondary curriculum.

23. Since the last inspection, improvement to the curriculum has been satisfactory. The school has adopted national guidance on schemes of work, but there are inconsistencies in planning and provision in some year groups and classes. The pace of implementation has quickened recently as new co-ordinators have come to grips with these issues.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory, overall. The school provides pupils with satisfactory support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils in the work of the school and its development is also satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- On a day-to-day basis, staff work hard to ensure that pupils are happy, safe and settled in school but there are no formalised systems for regular safety audits.
- Pupils receive a good level of personal support and, as a result, trusting relationships are established very well throughout the school community.
- Bullying is dealt with effectively on the rare occasions that it occurs.
- Pupils' involvement in assessing their own learning is insufficient.
- Pupils have responded well to the new school council.

Commentary

24. Parents are pleased with the level of care that their children receive. They feel that a strength of the school is the way their children like coming to school and are happy in their learning. Staff are ever mindful to safeguard the pupils from harm and they are well informed in matters relating to child protection. Pupils and parents do not perceive bullying to be an issue. Any incidents that occur are treated very seriously and staff do all they can to eliminate them quickly. Some children comment that they like this school because they feel safe and it is a very comforting place to be because everyone is nice to one another. Pupils are very confident that if they have any problems or worries there is an adult in whom they can confide.
25. On a practical day-to-day level the staff and caretaker are vigilant in checking the building to ensure a safe secure working environment for the children and deal promptly with any hazards found. However, the school has no formal arrangements in place for carrying out risk assessments of the premises and grounds and recording the findings. Good attention is given to risk assessments when taking the pupils out of school on educational visits. The school does not have a policy for the safe use of the Internet to ensure that everyone is aware of and follows the school's guidelines. Daily routines are well planned and pupils are carefully supervised when at work or at play. At lunch-times clear systems are well established, and this ensures a continuity of pupils' welfare and safety.
26. Information about pupils' academic achievements is used satisfactorily to monitor and guide future learning, but involving pupils in assessing their own work and extending their knowledge of how well they are doing, varies throughout the school. Some pupils are aware of their individual learning targets and know how well they are doing but others are unsure. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, both in class or small groups, and, as a result, they achieve well. Pupils' personal development is monitored well, enabling any special circumstances to be identified at an early stage.
27. The school is keen to involve pupils in decision-making and has recently set up a school council, initially with pupils from Year 6, to provide a regular forum to canvass their views about its provision. Pupils have responded very well to the responsibility and are encouraging others to participate. A whole-school questionnaire was used to seek pupils' opinions to provide a useful starting point for the work of the council. A new 'eco-club' has also brought a good response from pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school enjoys good partnerships with parents and the community, which contribute effectively to pupils' learning and personal development. Links with other schools are satisfactory and improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are strongly supportive of the school and their children's learning.
- Day-to-day communication is good but there is not enough information for parents on how to guide their children's learning at home.
- Off-site visits in the locality provide many good first-hand experiences for pupils.
- Induction arrangements for Year 3 pupils are good, but curriculum links with the infant school are underdeveloped.

Commentary

28. Since the last inspection the school has strengthened its links with parents and the wider community. Parents are pleased with the school's provision for their children and readily become partners in their education. There is a new enthusiasm among staff to encourage and build on the good relationships they have with parents and to involve them further in their children's learning.
29. Parents make a good contribution to pupils' learning and to the life of the school. A good number of parents and volunteers help regularly in class listening to pupils read; they accompany school visits and support concerts and other events very well. Several parents make a regular commitment to help with specific tasks, such as making toast for the morning snack and escorting pupils to swimming lessons. The parent and teachers' association is a flourishing group and extremely successful in organising fund-raising and social events. Parents and staff pull together very well to raise substantial funds for the school. This is particularly beneficial to the school as its overall budget and income per pupil are low. The funds generated are used wisely and have contributed towards the development of the school and the purchase of resources to enhance pupils' learning.
30. Pupils' annual written reports are satisfactory and provide more detail about the level of attainment and progress in the core subjects than at the time of the last inspection, but there is insufficient detail on pupils' achievements in other curricular areas. The targets identified for pupils' future learning are often too general to be of sufficient use for parents to guide their children's learning at home. Parents of those pupils with special educational needs are updated about their progress through regular meetings with the staff. Day-to-day communication is good but the school could provide parents with more information about the curriculum and how to help their children at home. Parents find that the school and staff are approachable and accessible at any time for formal or informal discussions.
31. Staff arrange a number of educational visits that bring learning alive for the pupils. Visits to local places of interest bring a sense of relevance to work in subjects such as history and geography. The recent good links with the church are already having a positive effect on pupils' spiritual and cultural development. A useful link with the Chamber of Commerce enabled the school to tap into ICT suppliers. The school has recently extended its partnership with local secondary schools and is benefiting from the use of facilities for science, music and physical education with the Grammar school next door. Although there are good arrangements with the infant school to help pupils settle into Year 3, there are too few opportunities for staff to share curricular issues and expertise to ensure continuity in learning from Year 2 to Year 3.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership, ensuring that the ethos of the school is positive. He is supported well by teachers in key roles. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The creation of a new team to lead core subjects, ICT and special educational needs is leading to important improvements.
- The headteacher, in partnership with the governing body, provides committed and caring leadership that has sustained the school's orderly and friendly nature.
- Self-evaluation is underdeveloped and as a consequence school improvement planning is not sufficiently focused on the whole-school aspects needing improvement.
- The financial management of the school is good.

Commentary

32. Governance of the school is satisfactory. The governing body carries out its duties conscientiously and it has considerable experience and professional expertise. Governors sustain positive relationships with the school and strongly support the emphasis placed on pupils' personal development and maintaining a good ethos. They play an important part in establishing the school development plan and in resolving major issues, such as the building of new classrooms. Consequently, all statutory requirements are met, though there are some gaps in policy in relation to health and safety. A system of working parties, rather than standing committees, allows it to be responsive to issues, but not to provide the degree of challenge necessary for the school to have a clearer strategic direction. Although a number of governors have identified link roles, limited first-hand knowledge of the curriculum and the school's performance restricts their understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Their contribution to the financial management of the school, however, is good and ensures that a tight budget is used efficiently and effectively. Unlike the school development plan, which only looks forward one year, governors have considered how they can maintain staffing levels over a three-year period. Principles of best value are applied soundly.
33. The headteacher provides competent and committed leadership that is satisfactory, overall. He has successfully maintained the school's underlying strength as a caring, orderly and friendly school but has not ensured a sharp enough focus on standards and improvement. This has meant that standards in Year 6 have until recently been slipping, and pupils' achievement is only satisfactory. The school development plan only focuses on a one-year rolling programme of change, so it does not look forward far enough, or take sufficient account of changing needs and opportunities, for example, to reshape the curriculum. It is also not based on a rigorous enough approach to self-evaluation, so that performance indicators are ill defined and do not provide a sufficient basis for monitoring progress. Analysis of performance data is satisfactory, but it is not sophisticated enough to uncover important weaknesses.
34. The headteacher has, however, recognised the need to breathe new direction and enthusiasm into staff teams and bring more consistency to the quality of teaching and provision. The recent appointments to the teaching staff and re-allocation of key leadership roles is bringing about important changes to move the school forward, but are not yet realising substantial improvements and higher achievement. This is partly due to the absence of the newly appointed deputy headteacher, which has reduced the capacity of the school to act on priorities. For example, the well-considered decision to introduce a computer-based management information system has been delayed. The lack of this information on a readily available basis restricts the school's capacity to monitor pupils' progress and take appropriate action. None the less, subject leaders for English, mathematics, science, ICT and the special educational needs co-ordinator, show good vision and preparedness to introduce systems that are bringing about a more coherent approach to curriculum organisation and planning, and

improved assessment practices. The limited time available for these key staff to monitor the changes does, however, hamper their knowledge of the impact of these changes on the quality of teaching, learning, and standards across the school.

35. The headteacher and subject leaders for English, mathematics and science (the core subjects) have analysed test data to identify curricular areas for further development. These priorities are identified appropriately in subject action plans as improving writing by the more able in English and extending investigations and applications in mathematics and science. The headteacher has monitored classroom practice and held discussions with staff. However, these systems are not sufficiently evaluative and they lack a rigorous focus on raising standards and improving the impact of teaching. Consequently, whole-school aspects for improvement have not been prioritised with accuracy. There are inconsistencies in practice across the school in key areas such as curriculum planning, assessment and target-setting and subject action planning. The school does not identify pupils who may be gifted and talented separately and so is not in a position to address their needs.
36. The headteacher has managed the recruitment of three new members of staff well to bring in relevant expertise to meet the needs of the school. Induction procedures are effective and have brought a secure start. Teachers have been deployed to their strengths, resulting in an improved quality of teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6. Performance management meets requirements, and targets that stem from discussion are linked to whole-school and personal professional development needs.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004 (school roll 288)

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 640,397 | Balance from previous year | 4,315 |
| Total expenditure | 627,517 | Balance carried forward to the next | 17,195 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,092 | | |

37. Financial management is good. The headteacher works closely with the governor responsible for chairing the working group, whose expertise and use of local education authority benchmarking enable them to profile the budget well and to keep patterns of expenditure within agreed plans. Day-to-day financial control and monitoring are effective. The school acted appropriately on its previous auditor's report, though this is now nearly six years old. The school has prudently kept a reasonable budget balance to allow it to respond to short- and medium-term needs. Overall, the school gives good value for money considering that its income and costs are low.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and is having an impact on raising standards and improving progress for all ability groups.
- Pupils' reading skills are well developed and they read with purpose and enjoyment.
- Assessment and target-setting are inconsistent.

Commentary

38. Standards on entry to the school in reading and writing are generally in line with the national average, though they were above average for the current Year 6. Performance in Year 6 tests has declined since 2001. However, analysis of pupils' work and lesson observations during this inspection show that good teaching is having an impact and raising standards across the school. Standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening are above average in the current Year 6, and in line with what would be expected from earlier levels of attainment in Year 3, indicating satisfactory achievement overall. Reading standards are generally above average in other year groups and writing is in line with the national average.
39. Achievement in English across the school is satisfactory and similar to the previous year. Entering the 2004 scores on the national value added graph shows that the school lies almost exactly at the national average. A brighter picture is emerging through lesson observations which show most pupils, including those with special educational needs, to be making good progress in all aspects of literacy.
40. Pupils are articulate and confident when talking with adults. They have a good range of vocabulary and express themselves well. In a Year 4 religious education lesson, pupils showed above average attainment in speaking and listening as they collaborated in small group work, listening to and considering the views of others. Pupils listen attentively in lessons and sustain concentration.
41. Pupils read aloud with confidence, fluency and expression. By Year 6, they have acquired a range of skills to read challenging texts for research purposes and for pleasure. In an information and communication technology lesson, Year 6 pupils demonstrated their ability to search for and locate specific information from a range of websites. Some pupils could explain how they could test the validity of information by checking out facts presented in other sources. Pupils enjoy reading self-selected books during timetabled silent reading. They sustain concentration and are able to respond to books on a personal and literary level, expressing preferences based on author style. One pupil explained that she enjoys Jacqueline Wilson books, "because she writes about real life events that can be upsetting but she writes with humour". Higher-ability pupils can read beyond a literal understanding to interpret characters' feelings from their actions and comment on the effect of events in stories.
42. Pupils show good effort in their writing and produce a good range of work in literacy lessons. Teaching of writing is well organised, enabling pupils to identify structure and language features of different text types during shared reading and then to apply these to their own writing. Improving standards in writing is identified as a priority by the school and action to

improve writing of higher-ability pupils is beginning to have an impact. More able pupils are able to write interesting and lively narratives, using language for effect.

43. Teaching in literacy lessons is generally good. In all lessons, learning objectives are clearly conveyed to pupils and the plenary reinforces what has been learned effectively. In addition, the most effective lessons are characterised by:
 - very good explanation by teachers based on good subject knowledge.
 - opportunities for pupils to discuss their work with each other.
 - sufficient time for pupils to practise and apply their skills.
44. Lessons follow a similar format, but approaches to teaching vary. For example, guided reading and writing is taught in some classes and not in others. Though standards are high, skills might be further extended with structured guided sessions focusing on reading comprehension skills and use of language for effect in writing.
45. Use of assessment and target-setting is variable from class to class. There is very good practice in one Year 5 and one Year 6 literacy set where pupils are aware of their personal targets for improvement and take care to meet them in their written work. Marking is supportive in all classes but does not always give clear indications of what pupils need to do to improve.
46. Leadership and management of English are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has used data to identify whole-school issues but has not been able to monitor the quality of teaching and standards in other classrooms. Consequently, the good practice in some classes has not been shared across the whole school. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory, as inspection evidence indicates that the trend in English standards is rising again.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their reading skills in lessons across the curriculum through shared reading and personal research. Speaking and listening skills are promoted well in some lessons but opportunities for pupils to develop these skills in group discussions and other situations are not adequately developed across the whole curriculum. In mathematics and science, for example, there opportunities for pupils to investigate and problem-solve together are underdeveloped. The further development of writing skills in other subjects is similarly variable from class to class. There is good practice in Year 5, where pupils' reflective writing is developed through religious education and procedural writing is developed through science. However, in some classes there is too much copy writing and overuse of worksheets in foundation subjects

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning lead to above-average standards by Year 6.
- Pupils are well motivated and their behaviour is very good.
- There is good leadership by the recently appointed co-ordinator.
- There is insufficient feedback to help pupils understand how well they are doing and how they can improve.
- Inconsistent planning leads to a narrower curriculum in some year groups.

Commentary

48. Over the last five years there has been a trend of rising standards by the age of 11, with good improvement in the standards attained in the 2004 national tests. Current standards are judged to be above average when compared with schools nationally and average when compared with similar schools. Pupils in Year 6 have achieved satisfactorily since Year 3, having reached above average standards, overall, in their Year 2 tests. Pupils with special needs achieve well because the tasks are well matched their individual needs, and they receive good teaching in smaller groups. Pupils in all year groups demonstrated good achievement in the lessons observed, and above-average standards in their calculating and measuring skills.
49. The pattern of standards and achievement is not consistent across all aspects of mathematics, however. The curriculum currently offers good opportunities in all years for learning about number, shape and measurement, but there are too few opportunities for problem-solving and data-handling in Years 3 and 4. There is good achievement throughout the school in calculating skills because pupils are taught a good range of mental and pencil and paper strategies. Pupils show good learning in their understanding of place value and the relative size of numbers. For example, in Year 3, pupils confidently added two-digit numbers mentally, to totals beyond 100, and in Year 5, pupils divided 360 degrees by a range of numbers to find the size of angles. In Year 6, higher-attaining pupils solved problems using ratio. There is little evidence, however, of younger pupils investigating mathematics and solving problems. This is partly a consequence of inconsistency in planning. In Years 5 and 6, teachers have adopted the National Numeracy Strategy planning guidance for each term, but this is not established in Years 3 and 4.
50. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from satisfactory to good, and is good overall. All teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and there are very good relationships. This leads to pupils' good motivation and effort. Good use of resources and demonstrations promotes good learning. For example, older pupils learned how to measure angles accurately following a clear demonstration on the computer. They made and named acute, obtuse and right angles using 'angle makers'. Where teaching is less effective, however, there is some reliance on worksheets and textbook exercises. These offer few opportunities for using mathematics for meaningful purposes. As a consequence, problem-solving, investigative and practical experiences are too few. There are also missed opportunities for teachers and pupils to use ICT in all year groups. Marking does not consistently help pupils understand how they can improve.
51. The recently appointed co-ordinator has begun to monitor provision in the subject and has drawn up a good action plan for improving the breadth of the curriculum. There is an acknowledgement of the need to bring consistency to planning and to expand the use of ICT. The school demonstrates a commitment to continuing professional development, drawing on expertise from beyond the school to improve aspects of provision. The good vision for improvement and the role model provided by the co-ordinator contribute to the good leadership of the subject.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Pupils' generally good competence in mathematics allows them to use these skills well across the curriculum when called upon to do so. Pupils have a good knowledge of basic number facts and calculation skills. This is particularly evident in science, where pupils can make accurate measurements during investigations, and represent and interpret findings in tables and graphical form. Pupils in all year groups have the opportunity to apply some mathematical skills in their work in different subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is generally good, leading to good progress in lessons seen.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, and they work hard.
- Achievement across the school is only satisfactory, owing to previous weaknesses in curriculum planning and inconsistencies in provision.
- The new co-ordinator is providing good leadership.
- Assessments of work to provide pupils with constructive feedback are inconsistent.
- There is not enough opportunity for pupils to learn by talking about their work.

Commentary

53. Standards in science at the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with the national average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, taking account of their starting point when they entered Year 3. They are currently making good progress in lessons seen in Year 6 and this is helping them recover ground lost due to previous weaknesses in the curriculum.
54. By Year 6, pupils know more about the required topics, such as forces and materials. Pupils generally have a secure understanding of the basic concepts needed to understand forces. They know a number of methods used to separate mixtures. They use a range of equipment safely when carrying out investigations, taking accurate readings using different measuring devices. Written reports contain clear tables and pupils draw sensible conclusions based on their observations. These show a sound understanding of what makes a test fair. However, middle- and lower-ability pupils have some difficulty in setting out findings systematically, using correct terminology. Pupils' generally good mathematical skills are shown by their understanding of different types of graphs and accurate working out of measurements.
55. The quality of teaching is generally good and is based on good relationships. Teachers have high expectations for behaviour and pupils respond very well, showing good levels of concentration. Teachers' planning is thorough and clear learning objectives provide a focus for each lesson, though extension activities are rarely planned for the most able. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use this well to demonstrate and explain new topics, asking appropriate questions, but there is too little opportunity for pupils to talk about new ideas to extend their understanding. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that there is sometimes too much reliance on worksheets and copywriting answers. Marking is satisfactory but approaches to providing pupils with targets and feedback, so they know how to improve, are inconsistent. There is a good and increasing emphasis on investigative science as the result of a reorganised scheme of work that provides for greater progression in skills and knowledge. Teachers plan these sessions well. However, it is only recently that teachers have placed sufficient emphasis on the importance of pupils planning their own investigations and making decisions about how to record their findings. This still varies between classes and has hindered progress and overall achievement. Similarly, ICT has not yet been used to best effect to help pupils to achieve more.
56. The subject leader has introduced a number of important changes showing good vision. He has brought enthusiasm to learning about science, which he is spreading through the school. The curriculum has been restructured into a more logical sequence and a new system of assessment introduced across the school, which when fully established will allow a clearer picture to be gained of pupils' progress. There is limited monitoring, and so evaluation of learning in the school is based on weak foundations. Overall, his leadership is good and his management is satisfactory, as changes are at an early stage and have not yet had an impact on learning. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The installation of a computer suite has improved pupils' access to ICT and, consequently, improved their skills.
- The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very good but only satisfactory in Years 3 and 4.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to the use of ICT and achieve well when given good direction.
- The newly appointed co-ordinator provides a good role model and has a clear vision for the development of ICT.
- Curriculum planning is inconsistent between year groups.
- Assessment is insufficiently developed to enable pupils to build on their skills across the school.

Commentary

57. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6 and achievement is satisfactory. Standards are higher in some aspects of the curriculum than they are in others owing to varying knowledge and expertise among teachers and a lack of some resources to support further development. Pupils in Year 6 are working in line with expectations in use of multi-media presentations and are able to produce a set of linked pages that incorporate images, sounds and texts. They are working above expectations in using ICT to find things out, interpret information and exchange and share information. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were able to search the Internet to find out information about the ancient Olympics, accessing websites and using hyperlinks. Many were able to verify the legitimacy of the information by checking it against other sources and comparing the validity of websites. They make less effective use of ICT to develop ideas and make things happen - for example, by using controlling equipment using a series of instructions. Lack of resources to support teaching in this area inhibits progress beyond average expectations.
58. Achievement across the school is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 5 achieve well, but more able pupils in other year groups are not sufficiently extended to build on their skills or to achieve their full potential.
59. Lesson observations and analysis of pupils' work show that teaching is very good in Years 5 and 6, and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Pupils in Year 5 used a graphics package to create, combine and manipulate objects. They were able to modify and improve their plans (to redesign the school toilets) and experiment with alternatives. They manipulated the draw tool with confidence and worked with a high degree of independence. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 use text and graphics effectively and are introduced to databases but are unable to manipulate sound because of a lack of music software. Very good teaching is characterised by very good explanation, based on secure subject knowledge, and good use of the interactive whiteboard to demonstrate and model new skills.
60. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject; they want to achieve well and apply their skills productively. However, the current medium-term planning is too inconsistent to enable all pupils to achieve their full potential across all areas. Assessment gives an overview of the curriculum areas covered but is not sufficiently developed to assess levels of attainment and enable teachers to plan to build on skills and to extend learning.
61. The subject co-ordinator is providing good leadership. He has a clear vision for development of ICT. In the short time he has been in the role he has carried out a thorough audit of resources and identified gaps in provision. Action planning is well targeted to meet current priorities in promoting consistency in medium-term planning, introducing a whole-school assessment system and identifying professional development needs. Management is

satisfactory because these improvements have not yet realised consistently good quality across the school. The provision for ICT has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. Pupils have sufficient skills for them to use ICT in other lessons, but the potential for learning using these skills is underdeveloped. Good use of ICT to support learning was observed in a mathematics and literacy lesson, though, generally, computers in classrooms are underused. There are recently installed interactive whiteboards in two classrooms, which are used to support teaching through display of text and graphics. All classrooms have networked computers, but this facility is not used to its full potential. The headteacher and co-ordinator have rightly identified the use of ICT to support teaching and learning across the curriculum as an area for further development.

HUMANITIES

63. Religious education was inspected in detail and a report follows below. It was not possible to observe enough lessons in history and geography to report on provision in these subjects.
64. A good **history** lesson was observed in Year 5 where pupils were enthusiastically role-playing a debate about child labour in Victorian England. They had a good knowledge of factory conditions and the attitudes of reformers and factory owners. History is linked well to other parts of the curriculum as shown in an ICT lesson, where pupils were investigating the ancient Olympics, and in an art lesson where they were exploring designs on ancient Greek pottery. However, there is too much reliance on worksheets in some topics in younger classes.
65. In the one **geography** lesson seen with Year 3, pupils made good progress in acquiring knowledge of the Nile delta due to energetic and well-focused teaching, though the historical resources used unwittingly communicated images of Egyptians at odds with a balanced contemporary picture.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning was good in lessons observed.
- The recently appointed co-ordinator is providing good leadership focused on improving provision.
- Assessment is not sufficiently developed across the whole school to enable pupils to build on their knowledge and skills in a systematic way.

Commentary

66. Work sampling and lesson observations show that standards are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, though they vary from year to year. In Year 3, written work includes too many worksheets, which do not give sufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect on and to learn from religion. Standards are higher in Year 5, where pupils are encouraged to reflect on the implications of religious ideas for their own attitudes and behaviour. Pupils achieved well in the lessons observed. Pupils in Year 4 discussed the Ten Commandments seriously, showing a satisfactory understanding of the need for rules in their own lives. In Year 5, they debated the issue of forgiveness and were able to apply the idea to their own life experiences.

67. Christian themes are taught regularly. Discussion with pupils established that they acquire good understanding of how religious teaching can be applied to their own experiences and modern-day contexts. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are taught about one other principal world religion and they are knowledgeable about the traditions of Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. In Year 6, pupils study and compare world religions, showing a sound understanding of similarities and differences between key aspects and recognising the way in which religion influences people's lives.
68. Teaching and learning were good in the lessons observed. Lessons are well planned and prepared, allowing pupils to make good progress. Teachers have secure subject knowledge of the topics being covered. The good relationships established enable teachers and pupils to share ideas openly. Pupils are encouraged to communicate their ideas and recognise the views of others through collaborative group work. Social and moral development is promoted well. Samples of pupils' work show that teachers provide feedback on the quality of work produced but do not use assessment consistently to plan for progression in pupils' understanding about religions and learning from religion.
69. Religious education is enriched through visits to places of worship, such as Christian churches and a Mosque. During the inspection, Year 3 pupils walked to a local church for a lesson led by the curate and church members. The visit supported their learning about differences and similarities in places of worship and helped them to develop their religious vocabulary. The local curate also visits the school to lead assemblies and to teach pupils about world religions.
70. The recently appointed co-ordinator is providing a good role model in planning and teaching religious education. The policy and scheme of work have been improved to provide more opportunities for reflection and make links with personal, social and health education. The action plan is appropriately targeted on improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

71. It was only possible to see enough lessons in physical education to report in detail on that subject. Other subjects were sampled where possible.
72. An art and design lesson was seen in Year 6 that involved pupils attempting to recreate movement from designs on replica ancient Greek pottery. Clear, precise instructions from the teacher helped pupils make good progress in working out their own responses. Design and technology was sampled, but not in sufficient depth to make a secure judgement about provision throughout the school or standards attained by Year 6. Teachers' planning, which follows national guidance, indicates that there is adequate coverage of the curriculum. During the inspection Year 5 pupils were observed achieving well in response to a well-taught and practical food technology lesson. No music lessons or singing in assembly or extra-curricular musical activity were observed.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good partnerships contribute to the enrichment of PE through extra-curricular sporting opportunities.
- There are good opportunities for Year 6 pupils to undertake outdoor and adventurous activities.
- Pupils behave well and show positive attitudes.
- There is insufficient coverage of the PE curriculum in some year groups.
- Learning and achievement are unsatisfactory when pupils are taught in a very large group.

- There is insufficient feedback to pupils to help them understand how they can improve.

Commentary

73. Lessons were observed in Years 4 and 5 and discussions held with staff and pupils. A scrutiny of planning and timetables was undertaken. Achievement, overall, in Years 4 and 5 is satisfactory. Standards in games in Year 5 are in line with expectations for the pupils' age, but in gymnastics in Year 4 they are below expectations. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in physical education, and show good attitudes to their work. They show satisfactory achievement, in line with the rest of the pupils. By Year 6, pupils show satisfactory achievement in swimming, with the vast majority of them swimming the required 25 metre distance.
74. All areas of activity in the physical education curriculum are taught between Years 3 and 6, including swimming, dance, gymnastics, games and adventurous activities. The latter is provided during an annual visit by Year 6 pupils to the Newlands Centre in the Lake District. Since the last inspection, good links have been established with the grammar school for the shared use of sporting facilities. In addition, good involvement in the School Sports Co-ordinator Programme has extended coaching and competitive extra-curricular opportunities, primarily for older pupils.
75. Teaching and learning in games and gymnastics are satisfactory, overall. Pupils respond and behave well, contributing their own ideas and working co-operatively. However, opportunities were missed in lessons to help pupils understand how they can improve their work. In games, the size of equipment was not adapted to meet the needs of younger pupils. When three classes were taught in the sports hall together, pupils spent too much time waiting for their opportunity to be fully active, and their rate of learning was therefore too slow and achievement was unsatisfactory.
76. The time allocation for PE is one hour per week, which is less than the recommended two hours. A discussion with pupils shows there is insufficient breadth in the PE curriculum in some year groups, indicated by their narrow experience of gymnastics or dance in Year 4 and the first half of Year 5. This contributes to pupils attaining standards below those expected for their age in gymnastics. There has been good improvement in the accommodation for PE since the last inspection, provided by the new hall, resurfaced playground and access to the sports hall and all-weather playing area at the neighbouring grammar school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

77. There is no overall scheme for **PSHE** or **citizenship** but sex education is provided through the science scheme, and, for older pupils, in liaison with the school nurse. Though an audit of provision has been undertaken in each year group, only in one class in Year 6 is a formal, timetabled programme of PSHE followed, though in several others explicit links are made in religious education. Pupils' personal development, none the less, features strongly in the school. A range of opportunities is provided through sharing ideas and opinions in lessons, and by taking part in school assemblies, visits and out-of-hours activities.
78. A newly established school council is helping develop pupil participation and their understanding of decision-making, but this is currently only operating with Year 6 pupils. A new eco-club performs a similar function. The school operates effectively as a community and encourages social and moral responsibility very well. Consequently, pupils are become more confident in sharing their ideas and exploring opinions with adults.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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