

# INSPECTION REPORT

**BEETHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Beetham, Milnthorpe

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112313

Headteacher: Ms W E Nicholas

Lead inspector: Mr G R Alston

Dates of inspection: 8 – 9 February 2005

Inspection number: 269601

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary aided  
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 47

School address: Stanley Street  
Beetham  
Milnthorpe  
Cumbria  
Postcode: LA7 7AS

Telephone number: 01539 562515  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Reverend I Davies  
Date of previous: 16 March 2000

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Beetham Church of England School caters for pupils between the ages of four and eleven. It has one site and lies in the heart of Beetham, a small rural village community, five miles North of Carnforth. The school is much smaller than average, with 47 pupils on the roll of the main school, 23 boys and 24 girls, of whom six are in the Reception year. Children arrive at school with the full range of ability levels. Overall, based on the school's own testing of children, the standards that the children have reached in all areas of learning on entry to the Reception year are at the expected level for children of this age. Pupils are organised into two classes; an infant and a junior stage. Pupils in junior classes are often taught in smaller groups made up of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils or Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. Housing is mainly owner-occupied terraced and detached dwellings. It is an area of

average mobility although in some years there are relatively large numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school during the school year. All of the pupils are white and there are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. This figure is less than that found in most schools. There are no pupils who claim free school meals, (although a number of families who are entitled to free meals do not take up the offer), which as a percentage is below average. Fifteen per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs; the majority have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. Two of these pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. These figures are about average. In 2002 the school gained a Healthy School's Achievement award and an Investors in People award in 2003. It has recently received an Artsmark award and Eco school status. At present the school has no hall or designated outdoor play area for the youngest children. The school has a new headteacher who took up her post in September 2004 but who was absent during the inspection due to illness. Religious education is the subject of a separate inspection.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20794	G Alston	Lead inspector	English Science Design and technology Geography Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language
19740	A Smith	Lay inspector	
29504	S Herring	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design History Music Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

When asked his thoughts about school a Year 6 pupil smiled as he said, '*Beetham is a small, caring school, it's like one big happy family and everyone gets on together*'. He was right! The school's effectiveness is **satisfactory** reflected in the great warmth, security and encouragement it provides for its pupils, resulting in a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils enjoy school, have good attitudes to work and behave well. Pupil achievement and teaching are satisfactory. A new enthusiastic headteacher, supported by knowledgeable governors, provides effective leadership. The management is satisfactory and is developing. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are above expectations and pupils' achievement is good.
- In Year 6, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below the expected level.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged in mathematics and science and in mathematics, all pupils' mental and problem solving skills are not as good as they should be.
- The procedures for checking on how well pupils are achieving are unsatisfactory.
- The new headteacher is providing clear leadership and beginning to manage the school well.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social is very good and good for cultural development and makes a major contribution to the good behaviour and very good relationships exhibited by pupils.
- There is no hall or outdoor play area for the Reception children; this restricts some areas of the curriculum for example, physical education and outdoor activities.
- Opportunities to extend pupils' literacy, mathematical and ICT skills across all subjects are not sufficiently well planned or taught in lessons.
- Links with parents and the community are very good.

Overall, improvement since the last inspection is **barely satisfactory**. In March 2000, the school had a 'light-touch' short inspection and teaching and achievement were judged to be very good. Since then the school has had a significant period without a headteacher and there have been staff changes. National initiatives have not become fully embedded into the practices of the school. Over the last four years National test results have fluctuated dependent on the abilities of the small cohorts of pupils taking the tests. At present, pupil achievement and teaching are satisfactory. The new headteacher is beginning to bring about changes that will have a positive impact on the school. In addition, a key strength in pupils' attitudes identified last time has been maintained. In relation to the key issues identified:

- provision for pupils with special educational has improved,
- the presentation of pupils' work is better, but their handwriting still needs to improve.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	A	A	A
Mathematics	C	E	D	D
Science	E	E	C	C

*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 6.*

Due to small numbers of pupils taking the tests it is not reliable to compare results year on year, or judge the school's performance based solely on the results. **Overall, pupil achievement is satisfactory.** Children enter the Reception class with levels of ability at the expected level for their age. Sound achievement in the Foundation Stage ensures that most children will reach the expected level in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1 except in their personal development, which will be above. They continue to achieve appropriately and, at the end of Year 2, standards are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. At the end of Year 6 standards are average in English, mathematics and science. Satisfactory achievement ensures standards at the end of Year 2 are at the expected level in ICT, however, they are below at the end of Year 6 where achievement is unsatisfactory. Across the school, pupils' achieve well in speaking and listening. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriately compared to their prior learning. However, higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, and social, are very good and cultural development is good.** As a result, relationships are very warm and caring, and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Most times pupils enjoy school, and attendance and punctuality are better than in most schools.

#### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a satisfactory education. Teaching is sound overall.** Teaching observed was always at least satisfactory, but there were not enough lessons where the quality of teaching was good or better. Pupils learn appropriately and make sound progress because they have very good relationships with their teachers and good attitudes to work. English and mathematics are taught satisfactorily and pupils develop sound basic skills except in their mental and problem solving skills in mathematics. Also, in many lessons there are missed opportunities to make further use of pupils' literacy, mathematical and ICT skills. The range of learning experiences is not always exciting or interesting for pupils. Although a range of short-term projects, lots of visits and visitors and good links with the community significantly enhance the work planned in lessons. Parents support the school very well. Links with other schools are very good. The accommodation and resources at present do not have a positive effect on learning. There is no hall or outdoor play area for the youngest children and this restricts the curriculum. There are not enough computer programs to support learning in most subjects.

#### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the school is good and management is sound.** The leadership provided by the new headteacher is good. She leads by example, encouraging staff well and has started to move the school forward. The management of the school is sound. It is beginning to establish clear management systems in order to check effectively not only how well the school is performing but also the impact of any action plans that have been implemented to bring about identified improvements. Management of some subjects is good for example, mathematics. The governing body is effective, especially in its role as a critical friend and in supporting the school. Governors use their expertise very well in shaping the school, but less so on in-depth checking on its everyday working and performance.

#### **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents have very positive views of the school. They are pleased with the progress most children are making, the quality of teaching and the caring atmosphere. There was some concern expressed about the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils at times. This was

found to be the case on occasions. The pupils mostly enjoy school, like their teachers and feel they are well looked after, although there are not always exciting things to do in some lessons.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise the standards achieved in ICT by the end of Year 6.
- \*Improve the quality of teaching across the school to that seen in the best lessons.
- \*Help pupils to develop better mental and problem solving skills in mathematics.
- \*Improve assessment procedures.
- Ensure higher attaining pupils are challenged at all times.
- Make greater use of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in all subjects.
- Develop the accommodation to improve facilities for the Foundation Stage and a suitable school hall.

*\*The areas identified above are to receive attention as highlighted in the school development plan.*

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Achievement overall is satisfactory. It is satisfactory in most aspects of English, mathematics and science across all classes. Standards in English, mathematics and science are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. In ICT, standards are at the expected level and achievement satisfactory for pupils by the end of Year 2, however, by the end of Year 6 achievement is unsatisfactory and standards are below expectations.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement in ICT in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory and standards are below expectations.
- Pupils' achievement in speaking and listening and children's achievement in personal and social development in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should at times.
- When supported, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets.
- Pupils' mental and problem solving skills in mathematics are not high enough at age seven and eleven.

#### **Commentary**

- 1 National test results in 2004 show standards in Year 2 were below the national average in reading, average in writing and above average for mathematics. When compared to those in similar schools standards in Year 2 were below the national average in reading and writing and above average for mathematics. The figures indicate a fall in reading and writing and a rise in mathematics. However, in this small year group there was a larger proportion of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs than is normal for the school. This was confirmed by the work seen in the current Year 3. Proportions of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 were well below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Over the last three years, results in reading, writing and mathematics have varied. This reflects the ability of the groups of pupils taking the tests. As there are such small numbers of pupils involved, comparing results from year to year is not reliable as a source to judge how effective the school is. When comparing the results of boys and girls in previous years, boys have generally done better. However, this was not apparent in lessons or in work scrutiny.
- 2 National test results in 2004 show standards in Year 6 tests were well above average in English, below average in mathematics and average in science when compared to all schools nationally and with similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was above average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Over the last three years, results in English and mathematics have fluctuated whereas science test results show an improvement. This reflects the ability of the small numbers taking the tests. As there are such small numbers of pupils involved comparing results from year to year is not reliable as a source to judge how effective the school is. When comparing the results of boys and girls in the past four years, boys have generally done better. However, this was not apparent in lessons. The school has recognised that mathematics results were not keeping pace with the others and this became a focus for improvement.

- 3 Overall standards have fluctuated in national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 since the last inspection. There are a number of reasons why this is so;
- the quality of teaching has not improved,
  - there has not been a strong enough focus for improvement since the last inspection,
  - little involvement with outside expertise (the local authority) alongside co-ordinators who have not until recently developed detailed action plans aimed at raising standards in English, mathematics and science.
- As a consequence of all of these factors over time, the achievement of all pupils is just satisfactory across classes. This level of achievement is linked to the satisfactory teaching in those classes where there is not enough good teaching.
- 4 Given their low starting points, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their identified targets for the acquisition of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, when they are supported in lessons. This is because their targets are clearly defined, tasks are modified to take into account their prior learning and they receive good support from teachers and extra help from learning support assistants during lessons.
- 5 Gifted and talented pupils' needs are not always met through challenging tasks being provided in lessons but there are good opportunities which they and other pupils have to take part in out-of-school clubs, particularly in sport and music. Throughout the school, girls and boys perform equally as well in lessons, as do higher-attaining girls and boys.
- 6 Test data shows that the knowledge, skills and understanding of the current children who started school in the Reception class this year are very variable. The overall profile is about the level expected for children of this age in all areas of learning. In the past, in some years the profile has varied between below and above average. At times, children have particular difficulties in the areas of communication, language and literacy and number. They get a sound start in the Foundation Stage class that leads to satisfactory achievement. As a result, by the time they reach Year 1 the attainment of the vast majority is likely to reach the national expectation in most areas of their learning. This represents satisfactory achievement in all of these aspects. However, it is likely that most pupils will achieve beyond the expected level in their personal and social development. Achievement in this area is good.
- 7 In English, standards at seven this year are average and are better than the results in the 2004 national tests. This is because of lower proportions of pupils with special educational needs in the current class. However, higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve as well as they should. Limited opportunities to write restrict their progress. At eleven, standards are average but not as high as 2004 test results. This is because of lower proportions of higher attaining pupils and higher proportions of pupils with special educational needs in the current class. Throughout the school pupils show confidence and competence in speaking and listening, reading and writing and there is a clear progression in their work and achievements. However, pupils' literacy skills do not benefit from the work they do in other subjects, this is particularly true of the work done by higher attaining pupils. The focus on developing pupils' speaking skills is consistent across the school resulting in standards that are higher than the expected level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are confident when speaking and on most occasions can clearly explain their thinking or answer questions fully.

- 8 In mathematics, standards at the end of Year 2 are average although pupils are not competent in mental arithmetic or skilled in the quick recall of multiplication facts. Average and lower attaining pupils do not demonstrate a good understanding of place value and are not confident at knowing the value of each digit in a three-digit number, such as 297. They use their number knowledge to solve number and money calculations accurately. Significant numbers find difficulty tackling problems particularly recording the correct calculation in order to answer the question. By the end of Year 6, the standards achieved are average. Pupils do not competently apply mathematical knowledge to everyday problems and pupils are not confident in mental arithmetic or skilled in the quick recall of multiplication facts. The majority of average and lower attaining pupils have difficulties when the problems are written and this is partly due to understandable weaknesses with technical language. Higher attaining pupils are confident in their knowledge and understanding of number patterns, multiples and fractions and work effectively in data handling activities but are not always challenged enough.
- 9 In science, standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average. Achievement is sound by the time pupils leave the school at the age of eleven. This is mainly because most pupils are not becoming sufficiently well skilled at predicting, planning, carrying out investigations independently and drawing accurate conclusions. This is closely linked to the teaching where there is too much teacher direction and lack of opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigation and draw their own conclusions from their results. Most pupils will reach average standards by the end of the year. Higher attaining pupils are good at classification and recording and have a good understanding of forces. However, they are not always sufficiently well challenged at times.
- 10 At the end of Year 2 pupils achieve the expected level in ICT and achievement is satisfactory. At the end of Year 6 pupils do not achieve the expected level and achievement is unsatisfactory. This is a decline from the findings of the last inspection. The main reasons are a lack of:
- up to date hardware and software
  - time allocated to teaching of ICT
  - opportunities for pupils to use computers in other subjects. This is a significant reason for the weak achievement of pupils and needs to be further developed.
- 11 In art and design and history pupils' achieve the expected level for their age at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In design and technology, geography, music and physical education there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards and achievement.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are extremely interested in the activities provided for them.
- Very good relationships make positive contributions to the school ethos.
- Attendance is within the top ten per cent of schools across the country.

- Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is very good and good for cultural.

## Commentary

- 12 Pupils behave well in lessons. They occasionally lose concentration or fidget in lessons which are uninteresting or where the lesson is dominated by teacher talk and goes on too long. Their attitudes to work are good and pupils beaver away all day at whatever they are asked to do even when the task given is mundane or uninteresting. The social behaviour of pupils is good resulting in an absence of bullying. Pupils work together well in pairs and in small groups, taking turns and sharing resources. They recognise the needs of others, for example, in the limited size of the playground. Older pupils take a growing responsibility through their school years. This makes a positive contribution to all pupils' personal development. There have been no exclusions in the last two years.
- 13 The very good relationships between pupils and adults are an important part of the school's moral code; this contributes to pupils having a very positive attitude towards their learning. Pupils are well motivated and want to perform well in lessons. There is mutual respect for all adults and peers, and this plays a significant part in the harmony that exists in the school. The wide range of experiences provided are appreciated and valued by pupils.
- 14 The personal development of pupils is a part of the school's caring ethos in which all are valued equally. The very good provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is consistent throughout the school. Members of staff know pupils well and this gives them a strong knowledge of their individual needs. As a result, pupils feel secure, making it possible for them to develop confidence and self-esteem as they learn. A school council enables pupils to contribute effectively to the life of the school.
- 15 The very strong church links that have been developed over time enhance the very good quality of pupils' spiritual development. The school promotes pupils' moral development very well through its positive behaviour code. Social development is extensive and contributed to through a very good range of out-of-school activities. Good cultural awareness has been developed from an extensive range of visits, visitors and curricular experiences. The school has, with almost equal success, striven at locating wider multi-cultural experiences for pupils' enrichment and understanding.
- 16 Attendance rates are well above national rates. The school monitors attendance and punctuality very well and is very active in promoting parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality. The strong family ethos means that children are very happy to come to school. The table below shows the attendance figures for the school.

### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.9%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.0
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.*

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Strengths include the care shown to pupils and the good teaching in some lessons. Further strengths are the very good links the school has forged with its parents and with the community. Pupils receive an appropriate range of learning experiences. However, there is a need to set targets for pupils and to improve the way the school checks on how well pupils are achieving. There are not enough lessons where the teaching is of good quality.

### **Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and the needs of all pupils are appropriately met most of the time. In the 16 lessons seen all the teaching was at least satisfactory, and it was very good in one lesson taken by a teaching assistant. As a result of the quality of teaching, pupils achieve satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6. Over recent years there has not been a sufficiently strong focus on improving the teaching through observing teachers and professional discussion. The new headteacher has a clear plan to introduce this.

The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen across the school.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	1	5	10	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good quality teaching in some lessons helps children to achieve well.
- In too many lessons the quality of teaching does not exceed a satisfactory standard and there is not enough good teaching across the school.
- There are weaknesses in the teaching of mental mathematics and a lack of opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in everyday practical situations.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations in science or to use their literacy, mathematical and ICT skills as learning tools across all subjects.
- The procedures for checking on how well pupils are learning are unsatisfactory and no individual targets are set to help pupils and teachers know exactly what pupils are expected to achieve.

**Commentary**

17 The quality of teaching and learning for children in the Reception class is satisfactory. The teacher has a secure understanding of the social, emotional and educational needs of the children, and she plans an appropriate range of activities. On most occasions she has suitably high expectations of both work and behaviour, and this contributes to the sound progress the children make. The teacher has a pleasant, helpful and encouraging manner with the children, and gives them much praise for their work. A suitable range of strategies is used in teaching the children, and satisfactory use is made of the limited classroom space available. In the best lessons the pace is brisk, and all children make a full contribution for example, as they made pancakes, describing what was happening as they cooked. Procedures for recording how well children are doing are satisfactory, and the teacher and the nursery nurse complement each other well in ensuring that the children are provided with tasks that are suitable to their needs. However, at times the higher attaining children are not sufficiently challenged. They are taught together with Year 1 and 2 pupils and at times the older pupils tend to dominate the introduction of the lesson. At other times, the lesson is planned to the national curriculum and not to the Foundation Stage. This was the case in a science lesson.

18 The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. A particularly strong aspect is the good teaching of basic skills, particularly speaking and listening skills. For example, in a literacy lesson the pupils were producing a short drama drawn from the folk tale 'Jamil's Clever Cat'. Pupils developed good vocabulary and ideas that will help them with their story writing. In good lessons, teachers use methods that challenge pupils and the management of pupils is good. For example, in a physical education lesson, the teacher got the pupils to work in groups to produce balancing shapes. Pupils began to improve their spacial awareness and co-

ordination. At times, the task given does not challenge higher attaining pupils for example, in a mathematics lesson when pupils spent time colouring in a bar chart.

19 The teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory. Evidence from scrutiny of work indicates that when pupils are split into the two teaching groups, the teaching of pupils in Year 5 and 6 is better than Year 3 and 4. Expectations are not high enough at times and pupils do not produce enough work in Year 3 and 4 mathematics and literacy lessons. In the best lessons the teacher's planning clearly links with previous work and tasks are interesting and challenging. For example, in a Year 5/6 literacy lesson the teacher asked the pupils, 'How do we make a ransom note do its job effectively?' From the brainstorming that followed she then introduced a challenging task that involved pupils using their new knowledge and understanding to write their own ransom note. Where teaching is less effective, a common weaknesses is low expectations, for example, higher attaining Year 4 pupils quickly multiplied a set of numbers by two, five or ten and found the work too easy. Another weakness is where work is not well matched to pupils' abilities. For example, in Year 3 the task of writing instructions for making 'gunge' proved too difficult for lower attaining pupils and they did not have the skills to write or organise their ideas. This reflects weaknesses in the systems for checking on pupils' learning and using this information effectively when planning lessons. In addition, a number of lessons are too long. This results in a fall in pace, pupils' loss of interest and a reduction in pupils' work output. In a Year 3/4 science lesson, the time given for the task made it difficult for some pupils to concentrate well for the whole of the lesson.

20 Teaching across the school is also not as effective when:

- pupils are over-directed in their lessons and are not given opportunities to be responsible for their own learning;
- expectations are not high enough and work of poor quality and presentation is accepted;
- lessons do not start on time and time for learning is lost;
- teachers do not always share the learning objective with pupils so that they are clear what they are going to learn.

21 Further areas for improvement are needed where the teaching fails to make good use of the skills that pupils have been taught because:

- there is a lack of opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations in science;
- not enough use is made of pupils' literacy, mathematical and ICT skills across all subjects;
- pupils are not given enough tasks that require them to use their mathematical knowledge and understanding in practical problem solving activities.

These deficiencies restrict pupils' achievement in their ability to solve mathematical problems, plan scientific experiments and further improve their writing and ICT skills.

22 Similarly, some skills are not taught effectively for example, in mathematics, the mental/oral starter has too narrow a focus of questions, teachers fail to allow pupils to explain their strategies and questions are not differentiated. Little use is made of whiteboards to ensure all pupils are fully involved or for teachers to check on their learning. As a result, pupils are not confident or as competent as they should be in answering mental mathematical questions.

- 23 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and they make sound progress towards their targets because planning reflects the targets identified in pupils' individual education plans. Teaching assistants who work with pupils with special educational needs are used well in lessons to offer focused individual and group support. The support offered by these staff is good as they have a good understanding of pupils' academic and emotional needs, which helps pupils achieve well in these sessions. The very good relationships teachers have with their pupils give these pupils the confidence to join in class activities.
- 24 Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and have not improved significantly since the last inspection. In English, teachers assess their pupils appropriately in all activities to highlight any areas of strength or difficulty but this information is not always used to plan work to meet the pupils' needs. Pupils are tested frequently in mathematics. This information is used as a means of checking their learning in classes but this is not always well used in planning lessons. In other subjects, information about individual pupils' achievements is not sufficiently detailed or easily accessible to teachers. As a result, teachers do not have a clear picture of what pupils know and understand, or of the skills they have in these subjects. This reduces the security for teachers in planning the next stage of learning by building on the work pupils have learnt in the previous lessons. This was in evidence in less effective lessons where groups of pupils were not sufficiently challenged at times. Tracking systems are not in place to show the progress that pupils are making towards the targets they have been set and whether this is good enough. As a result, pupils' targets are not reviewed in order to identify pupils who are not doing as well as they should. In most lessons all staff give pupils appropriate verbal feedback on their work, but the marking of work is not always helpful. It does not give pupils a clear picture of whether they have learnt what was intended or how they can improve.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory and there is a good range of activities to enrich learning. Accommodation is satisfactory overall but there are weaknesses in the accommodation for young children. Resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
  - Pupils participate in a good range of additional activities.
  - Resources for ICT are unsatisfactory.
  - There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects.
  - Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- 25 The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There is a strength in provision for personal, social and emotional development so children achieve well in this area. The unsatisfactory accommodation limits the curriculum, particularly in knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, for example there is insufficient outdoor space for children to have regular access to wheeled toys and other large equipment.

- 26 The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall though there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. This adversely affects their achievement in these important skills. Whilst the curriculum for mathematics is satisfactory there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise mental and oral skills and this reduces pupils' accuracy in calculations. There are also limited opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in solving problems.
- 27 The needs of most pupils are met appropriately but the level of challenge is not a consistent picture. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. However, there is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils so that they do not always achieve as well as they can.
- 28 Provision for personal, social and emotional development is good. There is a good emphasis on personal care through visitors such as the nurse who advised about dental hygiene, and in linking with a neighbouring school to learn about "The War on Bugs".
- 29 A strong aspect is the provision of a wide range of activities to extend learning beyond the school day. This shows a strong commitment from staff in such a small school. Visitors to school, such as Indian dancers, enrich the cultural and musical curriculum and make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. Links with other schools extend the curriculum, for example by enabling pupils to compete in netball and football matches. The school's involvement in initiatives such as the Eco Schools and in gaining the Artsmark, enrich learning, as do the residential trips. Older pupils benefit considerably from regular French lessons from a specialist teacher from the high school.
- 30 Accommodation is satisfactory overall but the limited outdoor space and the lack of a hall restricts the physical education curriculum. In addition the games pupils can play at playtime are curtailed. Resources are satisfactory apart from in ICT. The limited and dated equipment is an important factor in the below average standards achieved in ICT by the time pupils leave school.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school's support and guidance of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils make a good contribution to the life of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good relationships exist between pupils and staff.
- Induction and transfer arrangements for pupils are good.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils' opinions to be reflected in the running of the school via the school council.

### **Commentary**

- 31 Staff care well for all pupils equally and the very good relationships existing between staff and pupils provide security. Arrangements for children to enter the Reception class are well planned and effective, helping children to settle quickly into school life.

Similarly, good arrangements are in place to support pupils transferring onto the next stage of their education.

- 32 Teachers know their pupils' personal qualities and backgrounds very well. Pupils feel that they are well supported. They trust their teachers strongly enough to discuss any worries that they may have about school or personal matters. Through the school council they are able to express their views. The warm relationship with their teachers encourages pupils to air their views freely. Although the staff know their pupils well, and despite their support, because of unsatisfactory assessment procedures, staff can only give them satisfactory, at best, academic guidance.
- 33 Procedures to ensure health and safety and child protection are satisfactory. The governing body has adopted the local authority's policies on health and safety and carries out regular risk assessment. Child Protection procedures are appropriately in place and the designated person, who is keen to develop further whole-school awareness, has training planned.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

Partnerships with parents, the community and also other schools are all very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have very positive views about the school.
- Information given to parents is good.
- The school seeks parents' views and fully involves parents in pupils' learning.
- There are strong links with other schools.
- Parents are very active, both in raising funds and in generating community involvement.

### **Commentary**

- 34 Communication and relationships between the school and parents are very good, aims and any concerns are shared, and achievements are celebrated. The information provided by the school for parents is good. Pupils' reports give parents a clear picture of how their children are progressing. The dedicated homework books both inform of tasks and give supporting information to parents. These assist parents in supporting their children's learning at home. This helps pupils to build effectively on their learning at school.
- 35 Parents are very pleased with what the school provides and they have confidence in the school's ability to develop their children's learning. The school seeks parents' opinions and acts on their views. Some concern was expressed about whether there was sufficient challenge provided for the higher attaining pupils at times and this was evidenced as being correct during the inspection.
- 36 There are very good relationships with the village community in which pupils participate in many activities, such as the Beetham revealed weekend, church visits and performances. There is a strongly supportive parents and community group that benefits the school by strengthening the existing community links. It raises significant additional funds by such events as Christmas events, cake raffles, lottery, bingo and other events to support the school's needs.

- 37 There are very good links with the local high schools as well as other schools in the area for example, the schools uses the sports facilities. There is a strong link though pupils learning French when a member of teaching staff from the high school teaches Years 5 and 6. These links enhance the quality of the academic and personal development of pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership by the headteacher is good. Management overall is satisfactory. The governance of the school is good and finances are managed well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher is a good leader who has a clear vision for the school.
- The governing body is well informed and is a strong and supportive presence in school.
- There is no formal system for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning or for tracking pupils' progress through the school.
- The plan for developing the school does not extend beyond the current year.
- Spending is prudent and is carefully linked to the school's priorities.

### **Commentary**

- 38 After an extended period in which there was no headteacher in place the new headteacher is now providing good leadership through example. This is evidenced in improving the quality of marking and teaching for pupils in Year 5/6, though this is too recent to have had a significant impact on standards. She has a clear vision for the school and is committed to raising achievement for all pupils. Staff have specific co-ordinating responsibilities and there are examples of some subject co-ordinators striving hard to raise standards in their areas. The level of commitment to raising standards is not consistent across the school. For example, the newly appointed ICT co-ordinator is strongly committed, has produced a new policy document and is working with all pupils in Year 3 to 6 to improve their skills. However, these developments are very recent and it is too soon to have influenced standards, thus co-ordination is currently satisfactory.
- 39 The headteacher has set out a clear plan of priorities for development to move the school forward, which includes improving the quality of teaching and learning. She is doing this well by example but her extensive class teaching commitment of four full days each week makes it difficult for her to monitor lessons. The one-year improvement plan replaced the more general three-year plan that she inherited. There is now a sharper focus on evaluating the school's performance but this has not yet been translated into a more extended plan to guide the work of the school over the next three years. Procedures for tracking pupils' progress through the school are underdeveloped and this is a significant reason for standards and achievement not improving more rapidly.
- 40 The governing body is well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and governors are a regular and supportive presence in school. They were dismayed at the sudden departure of the previous headteacher and provided good support to the school until the new headteacher arrived. They share the clear vision of the headteacher and provide a critical ear in discussing the development of the school. The governing body is good, especially in its role as a critical friend and in

supporting the school. Governors use their expertise very well in shaping, but less so on checking on the everyday working and development of the school. Prudent financial expenditure is clearly linked to the school's priorities and the headteacher and governing body rigorously monitors its effectiveness. There is a small negative balance that the school has plans to address. Expenditure per pupil is well above that spent in most schools as is usual for a small school and based on this and the satisfactory quality of teaching, the satisfactory achievement and the good attitudes of the pupils the school gives satisfactory value for money.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004.***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	187,435	Balance from previous year	305
Total expenditure	190,073	Balance carried forward to the next	(2,638)
Expenditure per pupil	3,960		

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well in personal, social and emotional development.
- Speaking and listening skills are developed well.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory and constrains the curriculum.
- Children spend a significant amount of time in class sessions with the older pupils, where the activities are not suited to the needs of young children.
- A very good range of visits and visitors enhances learning.

#### **Commentary**

- 41 At the time of the inspection there were 6 children in Reception attending full time. They are taught in a class alongside pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 for a significant proportion of the day. Children enter school with varying skills but overall attainment on entry is broadly average, with a comparative weakness in writing skills and in recognition of letter sounds. The good links with the pre-school group on site means that there are good induction procedures, which help children to settle quickly into school. Achievement is satisfactory overall and all children make steady progress during their time in the Reception class. By the time that they are ready to start in Year 1, most have attained the nationally recommended early learning goals in all areas of learning, exceeding them in their personal, social and emotional development.
- 42 The curriculum is satisfactory overall and encompasses all the nationally recommended areas of learning. However, accommodation for the Foundation Stage children is unsatisfactory. There is no access to a dedicated outdoor play area to extend the learning environment and this limits some areas of the curriculum, in particular physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In addition, sharing a classroom with pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 inhibits ready access to imaginative play areas and large-scale activities, such as investigating sand and water and large construction toys. The school tries hard to mitigate these factors by making use of the small adjacent room for some activities for the Reception children, but there is insufficient space to allow children to exercise much choice. A strength of the provision is the very good range of visits and visitors that are arranged to enhance learning including visits from Indian dancers and story tellers and visits to the surrounding countryside, a living history venue and to other schools to share experiences.
- 43 Teaching is satisfactory overall and so children learn at a steady rate. Learning is less successful during those times when Reception children are taught as a class alongside the older children. This was seen in a literacy lesson on the carpet, looking at a Big Book where much of the discussion was dominated by the older pupils and the Reception children became restless and disengaged; they did respond well however, when asked a question directly. Learning is more successful when activities are specifically planned for these young children. This was seen in a very good session making pancakes. The skilled teaching assistant took every

opportunity to involve and question children to develop their language skills, read and measure ingredients and watch the changes as the batter was cooked.

- 44 A high priority is rightly placed on children's **personal, social and emotional development** and so children achieve well in this area. Very good relationships between adults and children, and the good example set by the older pupils, help children to develop considerable confidence and self esteem. Children respond well to high expectations to wait their turn and their behaviour is good. They make steady progress in **communication, language and literacy**, and the good questioning helps children to develop their speaking and listening skills well. Children are gaining confidence in letter sounds through activities such as sound of the week and all could identify the pancake, penguin and the purple plate. Children are developing satisfactory writing skills through regular practice. All children can copy a sentence to describe their picture but adults are not always sufficiently rigorous in expecting more able children to try to write on their own. Children make reasonable progress in **mathematical development**. They enjoy acting out a good range of number rhymes and this improves their counting skills so that most can count to at least 20. Children become restless when spending too long on the carpet when working with Year 1. However, learning improved when the teacher led a lively activity, in which children learnt how to recognise and write 11 through trying on and looking at football shirts. In developing **knowledge and understanding of the world** children enjoy making shakers and discovering which makes the loudest noise. However, children do not have sufficient focussed or regular access to a computer to develop their skills more rapidly. In **physical development** children show good control when using a variety of implements such as scissors and pencils. However, restricted space means that children do not have opportunities to use large wheeled toys or climbing equipment to develop larger movement skills. There was little evidence of children's ongoing **creative development**. There were few examples of children's work on display or in progress, and access to the exciting Indian palace was restricted. It is not possible, therefore, to make a judgement about attainment in this area.
- 45 Leadership and management are broadly satisfactory and there is a good sense of teamwork amongst all adults. Assessment procedures are sound but the information is not always used to plan work to suit the needs of individuals, particularly the higher attaining children.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is satisfactory. There has been a barely satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have above average speaking and listening skills because teachers provide a strong focus to developing these skills.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 5 and 6.
- In Year 6 pupils' ability to spell is not good enough.
- Assessment of pupils' work and marking are not fully effective.
- Some higher attaining pupils underachieve, particularly in Years 3 and 4.

- There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to further develop their literacy skills across all subjects.

## Commentary

- 46 Inspection findings indicate that standards are now average in reading and writing and above average in speaking and listening by the end of Year 6. This judgement does not reflect the school's national test results for Year 6 pupils in 2004. In these tests all Year 6 pupils reached the expected level and an above average number reached the higher level. In comparison with similar schools the Year 6 results were above average. Current standards reflect the small cohort of pupils who are not as academically able as the Year 6 pupils in 2004. Inspection findings indicate that standards are currently average in reading and writing and above average in speaking and listening in Year 2. The judgement is higher than the school's 2004 national tests results for the Year 2 pupils. The reason for the higher standards this year is that there are fewer pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 class than last year. Also due to illness, two pupils out of a small year group missed some of the tests last year. Girls do not perform as well in tests as boys.
- 47 Most pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and writing in Year 1 and 2 due to satisfactory teaching, however, at times, higher attaining pupils do not achieve well enough. Teaching and learning are sound in Years 3 to 6, so overall pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There is evidence from scrutiny of pupils' work of good teaching in Years 5 and 6. However, there is evidence in Years 3 and 4 books of low expectations and work poorly presented. There is not sufficient work produced at times in these lessons. All teachers identify early the needs of pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers and support staff give these pupils good extra help so that they achieve appropriately, and at times well, in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. There is no marked difference between the achievement of girls and boys.
- 48 From an average starting point in Year 1 pupils' progress in speaking and listening is good across the school because teachers promote pupils' skills and provide good opportunities for discussion. Most pupils listen well and have a good vocabulary for describing their ideas and experiences. There are a few reasons for the above average standards. A significant number of pupils entered the school with a wide vocabulary and this continues to be the position. These pupils have sufficient vocabulary to understand the difficult words they meet in books or to add interest to their writing. There are regular opportunities to act out a role in front of others and this good practice has been in place long enough to have an impact in Year 6. As a result, Year 6 pupils have no difficulty adapting their speech to the audience and they ooze confidence when they speak in front of others. Across the school in literacy lessons teachers frequently encourage pupils to extend their answers when they ask pupils questions or give pupils activities in which they talk at length, which builds up their skills.
- 49 Year 6 pupils have competent research skills for finding information from books and the Internet. Many higher attaining pupils read accurately and with expression. Average attaining pupils read accurately but find it difficult to understand some of the unfamiliar words they meet. One reason for this is that some teachers sometimes miss opportunities in literacy lessons to promote pupils' better understanding of the texts they read. In Years 1 to 2, the rate of progress is not as rapid as it could be for higher attaining pupils. This is because teachers do not give

the pupils a wide enough range of books that challenge and extend their learning. All teachers assess regularly the achievements and progress of pupils. The assessments are not consistently accurate in order to ensure that teachers plan work at the right level for individual pupils. On these occasions pupils' progress slows down.

- 50 In Years 2 and 6, most pupils write confidently and structure their writing clearly. Most Year 2 pupils punctuate their writing correctly and the standard of spelling is average. Higher attaining pupils join their handwriting but some use a narrow range of words. Across the school teachers miss opportunities to set work for higher attaining pupils that challenges their capabilities and when this happens they underachieve and their progress slows down.
- 51 Most teachers do not have high expectations of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work, so the standards of handwriting and presentation are not as good as they should be. This is not the case in Year 5 and 6 books. However, the spelling of some higher attaining and average attaining pupils are below the level expected for pupils in Year 6. One of the reasons for this is that Year 6 pupils have only had the benefit of good quality teaching recently and this has not been long enough for teachers to remedy the gaps in pupils' previous learning. Also, across the school the marking of pupils' work is not fully effective. A contributory factor is that pupils do not take enough responsibility for improving their writing. The setting of individual targets for pupils to reach is not in place. The school provides lessons in basic skills for reading and writing in addition to the literacy hour. These have been not been successful for handwriting and for punctuation because teachers do not always match the work to pupils' varying learning needs.
- 52 Teaching is satisfactory. It was good in 30 percent of lessons seen and satisfactory in the remaining lessons. In the good lesson the teacher set the work at an appropriate level and promoted pupils' good learning through interesting and enjoyable activities. Features of the good teaching are careful planning and organisation and effective use of the big book to explain clearly what pupils are to do in the lesson. Therefore, no time is wasted and pupils work purposefully. These good features are not as evident in Year 3 and 4. Pupils' behaviour is good because teachers manage them in a firm yet friendly manner. However, at times, the work is not always matched well to pupils' differing capabilities or pitched at the right level for the year group so pupils' progress slows down. All teachers do not make frequent enough use of computers to support pupils' learning.
- 53 The leadership of the subject by the co-ordinator is satisfactory. She has brought about some improvements in the subject since the time of the last inspection. Assessment procedures have been put in place but pupils are not set targets. The co-ordinator uses the information from the monitoring of pupils' work and analysis of assessment and test data to devise an action plan that contains some useful initiatives. However, the information is not always analysed and interpreted to best effect in order to set out clearly what needs to be done to improve standards further.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

- 54 Not all teachers provide a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to use and extend their satisfactory literacy skills in English lessons and in other subjects. However, this is a developing area and there are good examples of teachers promoting different types of writing in design and technology and history, but not in

science. On occasions pupils' reading skills are reinforced appropriately in geography and history, for example when they research information on the Internet. This is not consistent across the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is satisfactory. There has been a barely satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop quick recall of facts, to solve problems and to use ICT to enhance their learning.
- The quality of marking is good in Year 5 and Year 6.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils' to use their sound mathematics skills in other subjects.
- Procedures are not yet in place to track pupils' progress across the school and to set individual targets.
- The new co-ordinator has a clear vision for improvement and is leading well by example.

### **Commentary**

- 55 Pupils attain average standards in Year 2 and Year 6. There is a comparative weakness across the school in pupils' quick recall of facts because lessons do not routinely include opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their mental skills. This hinders the accuracy of their written work. This was seen in Year 6 where pupils' understanding of a method for long multiplication was let down by inaccuracies in recalling table facts. The school has rightly identified problem solving as an area for development. This is currently being addressed in Year 5 and Year 6, though inherited weaknesses remain in pupils' application of skills. Attention to developing problem solving skills has been slower to take effect in other classes.
- 56 Achievement is satisfactory overall in Year 1 and Year 2. However, work planned for higher attaining pupils is not sufficiently challenging and so they do not achieve as well as they could. Average and lower attaining Year 2 pupils do not demonstrate a good understanding of place value and are not confident at knowing the value of each digit in a three-digit number, such as 297. Pupils are not competent in mental arithmetic or skilled in the quick recall of multiplication facts. They use their number knowledge to solve number and money calculations accurately. Higher attaining pupils confidently investigate length, time and shape. Significant numbers find difficulty tackling problems, particularly recording the correct calculation in order to answer the question.
- 57 Achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, but is stronger in Years 5 and 6, where lessons are more interesting and pupils' work is rigorously marked to help them improve. In some lessons, work is not specifically planned to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils so they do not achieve as well as they could. Pupils with special educational needs are suitably supported in lessons and so their achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, pupils do not competently apply mathematical knowledge to everyday problems. The majority of average and lower attaining pupils have difficulties when the problems are written and this is partly due to understandable weaknesses with technical language. Pupils' mental skills are not

as good as they should be and they cannot answer questions quickly with confidence. Higher attaining pupils are confident in their knowledge and understanding of number patterns, multiples and fractions and work effectively in data handling activities.

- 58 Teaching is satisfactory overall and children learn at a reasonable rate. In a lesson judged to be good in Year 5/6, the teacher used questions skilfully to make children think carefully to secure their understanding. For example, asking pupils whether their succinct formula for the number of lines of symmetry for regular shapes applied to a circle. A weakness in many lessons is the fact that the learning objective is not routinely shared with pupils at the beginning so that they do not have a benchmark to focus their attention and to judge how well they have learned. Oral or mental starters are not routinely included in lessons, and in those that were observed the pace of questions was too slow to sharpen pupils' arithmetic skills. The use of ICT is not sufficiently integrated into lessons to enhance learning. There are examples of pupils producing graphs but little use is ICT in supporting pupils' data handling skills or knowledge of shape further.
- 59 The new headteacher assumed the role of co-ordinator at the beginning of the year, quickly identified the areas of weakness and is beginning to manage the subject well. She has a clear vision for developing the subject. Her action plan relating to improved opportunities to apply skills in problem solving and to improving the quality of marking is already having an impact on learning in Year 5/6 and she is leading well by example. Management is satisfactory but there is a weakness in using assessment information to set individual targets and to track pupils' progress through the school. Staff changes over the recent past have stalled developments but progress since the last inspection has been just satisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

- 60 Opportunities for pupils to use their satisfactory numeracy skills in other subjects are unsatisfactory and so opportunities are missed for pupils to improve and apply their skills. Pupils use a range of graphs in science and Year 3/4 produced a detailed timeline in history.

### **SCIENCE**

The provision for science is satisfactory. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils of low ability achieve well due to the overall good support they receive and the practical nature of the subject. This is less so for higher attaining pupils.
- There is an appropriate emphasis upon pupils investigating and working in a practical manner, but these scientific enquiry skills are not developed systematically.
- The pupils' varying abilities with scientific enquiry skills are not always used as the basis for planning lessons.

#### **Commentary**

- 61 During the inspection, the standards of work seen were average in Year 2 and in Year 6. Teacher assessments show that standards in 2004, in Year 2, were well below the average overall, reflecting the high number of pupils with special educational needs and the low standards when these pupils entered the school. The number of pupils who attained the higher level was well below average. These standards are different to those identified at the time of the previous inspection. At that time, standards in Year 6 were well above those expected for the year group. Due to the small numbers of pupils involved it is not reliable to compare.
- 62 During the inspection, the pupils achieved appropriately in the lessons seen. Marking in books indicates that this is consistently the case and that pupils meet the learning objectives of the lessons. The pupils with special educational needs are frequently well supported enabling them to achieve well. However, over time, the progress pupils make in their scientific enquiry skills is restricted because:
- the development of these skills is not progressively planned;
  - tasks are not always adapted to pupils' scientific ability;
  - at times, higher ability pupils are not sufficiently extended;
  - there is no system in place to track the progress of the pupils and therefore the co-ordinator cannot easily monitor the pupils' long term progress and achievement.
- 63 The teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory. All lessons were well planned to incorporate practical activities to keep the pupils involved. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils used their senses of hearing and sight to observe where sound comes from and how it travels. This was a sound enrichment activity and extended the pupils' experiences well. In all the lessons seen, teachers had secure subject knowledge and good questioning skills that they used well to extend the pupils' understanding. In a Year 3/4 lesson, brisk questioning and clear explanations together with the use of worksheets effectively helped the pupils to learn about the terms 'conclusion' and 'facts'. Resources are used appropriately to hold the pupils' attention and the response of the pupils is good. They very much enjoy the practical nature of the subject and they work well together. This was clearly demonstrated in a Year 5/6 lesson, where the pupils worked together to record the temperature as ice melted. Using a thermometer, they recorded changes in the temperature at intervals of one minute. This caused excitement and puzzled pupils as the temperature changed. Teachers' marking identifies when learning objectives are achieved but makes little comment on how they can improve. At times, the teacher over-directs pupils, provides too much information or does not allow pupils to draw conclusions from their results. This restricts the learning.
- 64 Teachers incorporate aspects of scientific enquiry skills into all their lessons, so that by Year 6, the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of prediction and fair testing. Lower ability pupils do well as they are helped by higher attaining pupils. However, planning does not always sufficiently extend the higher ability pupils. These pupils are not given opportunity to identify their own investigation or to explain why they make their predictions. Most pupils in Year 6 are not yet thinking as a scientist; they do not take sufficient care to make accurate measurements, nor do they recognise the need to repeat measurements. The good level of the pupils' spoken English is not always used as an aid to their learning. Pupils do not find it easy to express their thoughts, observations and inferences. Teachers introduce subject specific vocabulary and opportunities for pupils to discuss, but these opportunities are not yet sufficient.

- 65 The management of the subject is satisfactory. It is a subject recently reviewed and the subject leader is implementing monitoring systems. There are plans to link the planning and assessment systems more closely to the National Curriculum levels and to set targets for the pupils aimed at providing a clear picture on pupil achievement. The use of basic resources is good, but electronic equipment such as microscopes and probes are not used. The use of ICT skills, literacy skills and mathematical skills to develop scientific learning are not sufficiently well planned for in lessons.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. There has been an unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Resources are unsatisfactory, as much is outdated.
- Standards are below the expected level at the end of in Year 6 and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils are familiar with how to use the Internet.
- The planned use of ICT in other subjects is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

- 66 Standards are at the expected level in Year 2. Most Year 2 pupils use the mouse competently, for example when they edit a text on how to make a pattern. The teacher uses the correct terms for the subject so pupils develop well the subject vocabulary. Standards are below the expected level overall in Year 6 because of pupils' insufficient first hand experience in school. There is a particular weakness in pupils' understanding of control technology and discussions with older pupils indicate that most have little understanding of how ICT is used in their everyday lives. A stronger aspect is pupils' facility with using the Internet and they can describe how to use a search engine to find information.
- 67 Achievement is satisfactory in Year 1 and Year 2 although teachers do not plan sufficient work to challenge those pupils who are skilled because of using their own computers at home. Achievement is unsatisfactory in Year 3 to Year 6 because pupils have so few opportunities to use computers in school. They have approximately half an hour of tuition each week, in small groups with a teacher, and for most of the time during the inspection the limited number of somewhat dated computers stood idle.
- 68 It is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning as no lessons were taking place for any age group in the two days of the inspection. However, the fact that this was the case would indicate that planning for specific ICT lessons and for using ICT in other subjects is unsatisfactory.
- 69 Current provision indicates that leadership and management of the subject have been unsatisfactory over time and there has been insufficient progress since the last inspection. However, the appointment of a new co-ordinator has brought a new sense of purpose and vision for developing the subject and raising standards. She

has made a good start in producing a new policy and ordering new equipment, though this is not yet in place. She is providing a sound role model by teaching skills to groups of pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, though it is too soon to have made an impact on standards. Much remains to be done in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and in ensuring that ICT is integrated more routinely into lesson plans.

### **Use of Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

- 70 Pupils have weaknesses in their ICT skills and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop these skills, which are below the expected level at the end of Year 6, in supporting learning in other subjects. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 use a 'paint' program to decorate the Indian elephants and older pupils research information on the Internet. Pupils use the word processor to copy up final versions of their writing but the computer is not used as a tool to draft and redraft their work.

### **HUMANITIES**

- 71 It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision in **history** as no lessons were observed. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 show that their knowledge of history is at the level expected for their age. A good aspect of the provision is the visits undertaken to enhance learning; for example, younger pupils visited a local hall where they dressed up as Victorian servants. **Geography** was not a specific focus of the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about provision in the subject. In discussion with pupils geography is a worthwhile experience that they enjoy.
- 72 The limited work seen suggests that pupils are receiving suitable experiences across the curriculum and developing appropriate skills in both subjects. However, there is insufficient use made of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to support their learning in order to achieve above the standards expected for their ages. Nor is there current evidence of computers being used to support learning in these subjects.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

- 73 No lessons were seen in **art and design**, none in **design and technology**, one in **music**, and one in **physical education**. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision in any of these subjects.
- 74 Through **art and design**, pupils have experienced a wide range of materials and are taught the basic skills appropriately. Six-year-old pupils study the patterns and seven-year-olds use their observational skills well in drawing. By the time pupils are nine years of age, many have learned how to mix colours and use sound brush technique to paint their pictures. Year 6 pupils have developed good observational skills and have produced some good quality sketches reflecting their literacy work. They have a knowledge of painters such as Monet, Lowry and Van Gogh and show their understanding of perspective through their pictures. Discussion with pupils shows that they enjoy their art and design and are proud to show their work. The limited range of work on display, including patterns and careful drawings, would indicate that pupils are working at the level expected for their age.
- 75 In **design and technology** projects there is a strong focus in the teaching and learning on the three key areas of design, making and evaluation. A strength is the

way that pupils are focused at the beginning of a topic on design and technology in the everyday world. By the time the pupils reach the end of Year 2, they have experienced working with a variety of materials, measuring, marking and cutting paper, card and fabrics. In Year 6, they investigate different types of bread, design and make their own bread and evaluate the outcomes.

- 76 **Music** makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and personal development and adds to the quality of assemblies and worship. The playing of an appropriate piece of music creates a quiet and reverent atmosphere for reflection and worship, has a calming effect on pupils and introduces them to music from other cultures. Pupils have good opportunities to play instruments in lessons and approximately half of the pupils are receiving additional instrumental tuition. The school gives a high priority to making music and the successful Christmas production helped to raise pupils' self esteem considerably. In a short singing session for pupils in Year 3 to 6, their singing was tuneful and the accompanying sign language for the hymn made a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- 77 In **physical education**, one lesson was observed and only a very small proportion the overall programme was inspected. Nevertheless, in addition to the lessons, discussions were held with the pupils. In Year 2, standards in gymnastics are at the expected level for pupils of this age. Pupils make good use of space, they move confidently and do well to incorporate jumps and balances into their movements. They control these movements successfully. Pupils have very positive attitudes and their behaviour is good. The school has no hall and physical education lessons take place in a classroom after removing furniture. Large equipment is sparse and as a result this restricts the curriculum offered. The school has no grassed area which, again, has a negative impact on pupils' games skills. Arrangements for swimming are sound and most pupils achieve the nationally recommended standard.
- 78 In the one lesson seen, which was in gymnastics and of good quality, the good levels of energy and enthusiasm shown by the teacher led to very good attitudes and behaviour. She had a good knowledge and understanding of the subject which meant that those instructions were understood and followed. This led to good practice and good use was made of exemplars by the teachers to raise pupils' expectations. The lesson was well planned which led to a pacy lesson that retained the pupils' interest.
- 79 Leadership and management are sound. The co-ordinator encourages pupils to take part in a wide range of activities inside and outside of school time. There are good links with the local high school and with professional and amateur sports clubs that provide specific coaching. The curriculum is limited, but there are opportunities for outdoor and adventurous pursuits made available on visits. In the curricular planning girls and boys of all abilities are given good opportunities to participate in a variety of activities, more varied than is found in most schools. Activities are arranged both in and out of the school day. The subject contributes very well to pupils' personal development, especially their understanding of a healthy lifestyle and all aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a clearly planned programme of work.
- There is a strong emphasis on safety, care and understanding towards pupils.
- The introduction of a school council has provided better levels of pupil involvement in school life.

## **Commentary**

- 80 The school plans for this area of learning to be one of the major building blocks towards the positive outcomes in the life and work of the school. For example, there are lessons that deal with bullying, how to cope with difficulties and the broader issues of citizenship, such as caring for the needy. Great importance is placed on visiting places to broaden social experiences. The school makes good use of visitors to school. The road safety officer and school nurse have made plans to visit, for instance, to give safety and health talks and practical advice and guidance on safe road use. Within the programme there are good and timely references to sex, drugs and relationships education.
- 81 The school is pursuing a healthy eating policy. It has introduced water and fruit for pupils, including snacks at morning break. The good conduct of pupils throughout the school day owes much to the impact and worth of personal, social and health education and citizenship on the work of the school. It plays a very beneficial part in the positive attitudes of pupils in lessons and in their developing understanding of the notion of right and wrong. This is a school where 'family care' succeeds, but only as a result of much hard work and effort.
- 82 All of this is handled with insight and determination by the headteacher and staff. The primary belief is that personal, social and health education is an area that is, and should be, at the core of all that goes on in the school. This approach provides a shared and strong focus for all staff members, going beyond class lessons and across the whole school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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