

INSPECTION REPORT

CLIFFEDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Grantham

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120393

Headteacher: Mr R D Young

Lead inspector: Mr K Bardon

Dates of inspection: 10th – 12th January 2005

Inspection number: 270970

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	321
School address:	Northcliffe Road Grantham Lincolnshire
Postcode:	NG31 8DP
Telephone number:	01476 568740
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Booles
Date of previous inspection:	1 st March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Cliffedale is a larger than average sized primary school, situated on an estate of privately owned modern houses about a mile from the centre of Grantham. The school is full and pupil numbers are stable year to year. Sixty per cent of pupils live in the immediate vicinity of the school and the remainder travel from various districts in and around the town. The social and economic profile of the area is slightly above the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very small and well below the national average. Twenty-one pupils have special educational needs, mainly for learning difficulties and / or physical disabilities and three pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Both these figures are below average for a school of this size. While the majority of pupils are from families of white British heritage, one in eight of the pupils is from a minority ethnic background, predominantly Asian. A small number of pupils have English as an addition language but there are none who are at early stage in learning the language. Broadly speaking, children's attainment when they first enter the school at the age of four is typical of the age group. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Investors in People and received a Schools' Achievement Award in 2001, 2002 and 2003. During the inspection three classes were taught by temporary teachers and another was taught by a teacher who had only just taken up the post.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11807	Keith Bardon	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education English as an additional language
19557	Elizabeth Halls	Lay inspector	
27777	Robin Greenall	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs
22113	Aileen King	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Science Geography History Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Cliffedale is a good school in which pupils of all abilities and home backgrounds achieve well. The school has a very strong ethos based on very good relationships and an atmosphere that encourages pupils try their best and to work hard. The school is well led and effectively managed and provides its pupils with good quality teaching and learning. Parents have confidence in the school and pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons. The spending on each pupil's education is below the national average and represents very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils leave the school attaining high standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The clear leadership and high expectations of the headteacher provide the school with a strong sense of purpose, although the vision of how well the school is functioning as a whole is restricted to too few members of staff.
- Pupils show very mature and positive attitudes to learning and behave very well but they are given too few opportunities to be creative and independent learners or to contribute significantly to the decisions of the school.
- The school provides its pupils with a high quality of care and welfare and ensures that they all have equal opportunities to learn but, in general, the curriculum lacks excitement and innovation.
- Good provision in the reception classes provides children with a secure start to their education in school.
- The school does not make sufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT).
- Very productive links with the local community contribute strongly to pupils' learning.

Since it was last inspected in 1999 the school has made satisfactory progress. Many of the positive aspects the last report featured have been maintained and throughout the period National Curriculum test results have been generally high. Improvements have been made to the size and quality of the building which have enhanced the learning environment. Despite initial problems the provision for ICT has been extended although more remains to be done to make full use of the opportunities this now provides. The school has made steady progress in developing strategies for self-evaluation and the tracking of pupils' progress and has sound plans in place to extend these.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. Children achieve well in the reception classes and meet or exceed the targets for their age by the start of Year 1. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average and pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good.

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

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

Year 6 pupils consistently attain high standards in the National Curriculum tests for mathematics and science. In three out of the last four years, including 2004, the school's results in mathematics have been in the top five per cent nationally. Up to 2004 results had also been high in English. However, about a quarter of the pupils who took the English test last year lost a large number of marks because they misinterpreted the writing question. Consequently results in English dipped and

did not represent pupils' true attainment. The school has taken steps to ensure that this does not happen again. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good and standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well above the national average by the end of Year 6. Pupils develop a high level of competency in all aspects of these three subjects and leave the school with a very good range of literacy and numeracy skills. Standards in ICT are broadly average but pupils' progress has been adversely affected by the technical problems the school has encountered. Pupils' knowledge of how to use computers to aid their learning in different subjects is the weakest aspect of their attainment in ICT. Pupils generally achieve well in religious education and attainment exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils who have special educational needs receive effective support and maintain a similar rate of progress to that of other pupils. Pupils who have English as an additional language are given good opportunities to learn and achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good. They are thoughtful individuals with very mature attitudes to learning. Pupils of all ages behave very well both in and outside of lessons. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Levels of attendance are very good and pupils arrive at school punctually each day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is good in the reception classes and in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory with good features in Years 1 and 2. Lessons are planned thoroughly and build systematically on what pupils have previously learned. Teachers provide good quality information and teach effective methods of working. However, in too many lessons, pupils are not given enough opportunities to make decisions for themselves. Pupils of all ages show very good levels of concentration and apply themselves well to the task in hand. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum which promotes the core subjects of English, mathematics and science well but lacks creativity in other areas. Very effective links have been forged with the community and with other schools which make a very positive contribution to pupils' education. Pupils receive a very good level of care and welfare and their development is monitored closely. Constructive links with parents enhance pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher provides the school with clear and focused leadership. The work of the school is monitored carefully, but up to now only a small number of senior members of staff have been involved. The need to broaden the base of the self evaluation and to further improve its effectiveness is recognised and a new management structure has been formulated. The rationale for this is sound. The school is managed well and runs smoothly and efficiently. Governance is good and statutory requirements are met. Governors carry out their responsibilities conscientiously and make an appropriate contribution to school development. Finances are managed carefully to ensure that the school obtains very good value for the money it spends.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are pleased with the education their children receive and with the progress they make. They find staff approachable if there is something they want to discuss and feel that the school is run well. Pupils are happy at school and enjoy its friendly atmosphere. They do not mind having to work hard because they know that help will always be provided if they encounter a problem.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do now are:

- Rigorously implement the new management structure and monitor its impact thoroughly and systematically.

- Enliven the curriculum and improve the opportunities for pupils to be creative and independent learners who contribute significantly to the decisions of the school.
- Make effective use of ICT as an aid to teaching and learning, leadership and management and school administration.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Across the school as a whole pupils' achievement is good. Children enter the reception class with broadly typical attainment for their age and leave at the end of Year 6 with standards of literacy, numeracy and science that are well above average. Pupils' achievement is good in the reception classes, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In general, pupils perform very well in the National Curriculum tests.
- In Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is good in English and mathematics and by Year 6 standards are well above the expected levels.
- Children make good progress in the reception classes and the majority reach or exceed the targets for their age by the time they move into Year 1.
- Standards are maintained at an above average level in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils' achievement in science is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Year 3 to 6.
- While pupils acquire a satisfactory range of basic skills in ICT they do not develop sufficient knowledge and understanding of how to use these skills to help them learn in different subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those capable of high levels of attainment make clear and sustained progress.
- Pupils who have English as an additional language achieve well.
- Pupils' attainment in religious education exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

Commentary

1. Year 2 pupils consistently attain standards in the National Curriculum reading and writing tests that are well above the national average and significantly better than those of schools in a similar context. Year 2 pupils' performance in the National Curriculum mathematics tests is above the national average and much the same as that of pupils in similar schools. Broadly speaking, these levels of performance have been maintained since the school was last inspected. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.2 (17.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	17.3 (17.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.0 (17.7)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Pupils' attainment in reading and writing in Year 2 is above average and their speaking and listening is well above average. This evaluation of reading and writing is a little lower than the test results but takes account of all features of these two subjects and the way in which pupils use them in their learning. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 promote pupils' speaking and listening skills well and pupils' achievement is good. Standards in mathematics are above average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, the curriculum and the teaching lack some of the challenge and stimulus needed to accelerate pupils' achievement and to enable more pupils to attain at a higher level. Pupils achieve well in science in Years 1 and 2 by the end of Year 2 standards are above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (29.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	30.7 (29.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.3 (31.1)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. After being well above the national average for several years, the results attained by Year 6 pupils in the National Curriculum English tests fell to around the national average in 2004 and to well below similar schools (based on the results they attained in the tests as seven year olds). However, much of the downturn in results can be traced to changes in the writing test and a significant number of pupils making the basic error of not reading the question properly. The results attained by Year 6 pupils in the National Curriculum mathematics and science tests in 2004 continued a trend of high standards which has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils' performance in mathematics has often been in the top five per cent nationally and in both subjects the standards attained in 2004 were well above those of pupils in similar schools. There is little difference in the results of boys and girls in mathematics and science. While there is a tendency for girls to perform better than boys in the English tests, this is not reflected in the work they do in lessons, which is of an equally good quality. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well in all aspects of English and mathematics. By Year 6, pupils use a wide range of literacy skills with confidence and competence and show considerable ability with all forms of mathematical calculation. Pupils achieve very well in science in Years 3 to 6 and by Year 6 standards in all elements are well above average.

Other aspects of standards and achievement

4. The results Year 6 pupils attained in the National Curriculum tests in 2004 met the targets the school had set for attainment in English at the nationally expected level but, for the reasons given earlier in this section, were well short of the target for attainment at the higher level. Results in mathematics exceeded both the target for the nationally expected level and the target for higher level attainment. The targets for 2005 targets have been set at a similar level to those of previous years to help ensure that high standards are maintained in mathematics and that the fall in English results in 2004 is reversed.
5. When they first enter the school, many children have a typical range of basic skills. During their time in the reception classes children make significant progress and achieve well and with very few exceptions are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals (the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception) before they move into Year 1. Standards in ICT are broadly in line with those expected of primary age pupils and achievement is satisfactory. However, pupils' attainment is lower than in subjects such as mathematics and science because they have not had the same opportunities to learn. While many pupils have a reasonable range of core skills their ability to use ICT as an aid to their learning is unsatisfactory. Pupils' achievement in religious education is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6 and the attainment of most pupils exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. It is not possible from the small number of lessons seen in other subjects (art and design, geography, history, design and technology, music and physical education) to make secure judgements of the standards pupils attain.
6. Teachers pay due attention to the learning needs of pupils who are capable of high levels of attainment and those who require additional support in order to learn effectively. Consequently pupils who are academically gifted or who have special educational achieve at a level comparable with most other pupils, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The small number of pupils who have English as an additional language are given

every opportunity to participate in lessons and to extend and develop their language skills. As a result, throughout the school, these pupils achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal qualities are very good. Their personal development is very good, with spiritual, social and moral development all positive features. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The stimulating and caring school ethos permeates all activities and helps to promote very good relationships, attitudes and behaviour.
- Staff provide very good role models for pupils in their conduct and relationships.
- Children make very good gains in their personal and social skills in the reception classes.
- Effective promotion of pupils' moral and social development underpins their very good behaviour but pupils are given only limited opportunities to show initiative.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and as a result attend regularly and arrive punctually.

Commentary

7. Pupils' positive attitudes and very good behaviour are strengths of the school that have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are very well behaved, polite and courteous and respond well to the caring and stimulating school ethos. They enjoy coming to school and show considerable pride in being members of the school community. They are interested and eager to be involved in the range of activities provided in lessons and out of school hours. Parents are very happy with the values the school promotes. Staff deal quickly and effectively with the very few incidents of inappropriate behaviour that occur and the school is calm and orderly.
8. Very good provision in the reception classes enables the school's youngest pupils to make rapid progress in their personal development. They quickly become sociable, communicative children with a clear understanding of right and wrong. Their sense of self worth increases rapidly as their knowledge and understanding grows and they learn to listen to and value what others are saying.
9. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, mix well in class and at break time and lunchtime. The school places a very strong emphasis on promoting friendship in assemblies and during class discussions, called circle time. Pupils report that there is very little bullying, but are confident that any incidents of bullying brought to the attention of staff would be quickly dealt with.
10. Pupils show increasing levels of self-discipline and maturity in their lessons and activities as they move up through the school. When given opportunities to work independently or in groups they work co-operatively, sharing and valuing ideas, and concentrating well on tasks. They are keen to take responsibility and to be helpful in and around the school. Older pupils carry out responsibilities sensibly but have only limited opportunities to work outside the classroom or take responsibility for their own learning. For example, in the questionnaire they completed before the inspection, a significant group of older pupils reported that they did not feel that they were always trusted to do things on their own.
11. Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are very good and have a positive impact on their learning. They are supportive of each other and interact pleasantly with their teachers. Pupils with special educational needs experience success in their learning, and play an increasingly confident and fruitful part in school life because staff and fellow pupils support and include them well in all activities. Pupils are happy and secure, and enjoy school life in an atmosphere where all are valued. They respond well to the help provided and appreciate the

praise that is often given. They enjoy receiving rewards for excellence in their work and for their behaviour. Rewards are strong motivators, especially for younger pupils, but pupils of all ages strive to achieve them. Pupils are also encouraged to share their successes at home with family and parents. Good quality additional support and guidance is provided for those pupils who find making and sustaining relationships difficult.

12. Promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The taught curriculum makes a good contribution through art, music, history, science, religious education and personal, health, social education. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is developed satisfactorily and contributes to the school's success in promoting good relationships. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds relate well to each other. The range of extra-curricular activities is limited but residential visits enhance the personal development of older pupils.
13. Pupils learn to respect the views of others and develop appropriate social skills. They learn to act according to their own principles and to challenge things that they consider to be unfair. However, while they are given some opportunities to exercise their initiative and take responsibility, these are somewhat limited. For example, they carry out a range of duties in class and around the school. The school has initiated steps to establish a school council and pupils are keen to be more involved in decisions about the school and in sharing their views and ideas.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 96.1%

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.9	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.

14. Attendance is above the national average and levels of unauthorised absence are below the national average. Parents ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive punctually. The school takes effective action to promote good attendance and registration practice is efficient. Most absences arise through sickness or medical visits, although a minority of parents withdraw their children from school to undertake holidays during term time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education. Effective teaching is combined with a satisfactory curriculum, very good care and welfare and productive links between home and school and with the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good in the reception classes and in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory with good features in Years 1 and 2. Teachers make satisfactory use of the information from assessments when planning lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have clarity of purpose and plan challenging lessons but provide too few opportunities for pupils to make decisions and to think independently.
- Pupils learn well because they are prepared to think hard and concentrate throughout the lesson.

- Lessons are prepared thoroughly and organised well although there are inconsistencies of practice throughout the school and at times national guidance is not used flexibly enough.
- Well structured teaching in the reception classes ensures that pupils make a good start to their learning in school.
- Teachers make insufficient use of ICT as an aid to teaching and learning.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The assessment of pupils' progress over time is good but it is less effective on a day-to-day basis.
- Teachers set clear learning objectives but do not always review them fully with the pupils.

Commentary

15. During the inspection two of the three classes in Years 1 and 2 were taught by teachers who were new to them. Across the school as a whole three classes were taught by temporary teachers covering for staff illness and another was taught by a teacher who had only been in post a few days. Under these circumstances it is to the credit of the staff and the pupils that lessons ran as smoothly and productively as they did. There were no lessons in which the teaching had major weaknesses although most had areas for development which were discussed constructively with staff. Taking into account the number of positive features from the last report that have been maintained and the high proportion of good and very good lessons seen by inspectors, improvement in teaching and learning since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5 (12%)	29 (69%)	8 (19%)	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. One additional short lesson was seen in which there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching.

16. Reception class teachers provide the children with stimulating activities which promote their enjoyment of learning and encourage them to observe, investigate and try things for themselves. Key language, communication and number skills are taught clearly and systematically so that children gain knowledge, understanding and skills at a good pace. Children's application to learning in the reception classes is better than that often found at this age. They listen carefully to what is said to them, concentrate well and try hard to meet the demands of the tasks the teachers set.
17. Teachers expect pupils to work hard in all lessons and to give careful thought to what they are being taught. They instruct pupils clearly in the methods they should be using and provide good quality information that helps to build reliable and accurate knowledge and understanding. However, on occasions, teachers do too much of pupils' thinking for them and to give information that pupils could work out for themselves. These lessons provide too few opportunities for pupils to make their own decisions about how best to set about a task or solve a problem and this inhibits their development as independent learners.
18. Pupils generally learn well because they are keen to find out new things and discover new ways of working. Good relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils result in constructive interaction and a productive pace of learning. Teaching assistants are given a clear role to play in each lesson and support pupils' learning with competence and skill. In many instances they assist lower attaining pupils or those with special educational needs, helping them to maintain focus and achieve well in their various tasks. Consistently good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants provides a good role model and ensures that the less able pupils are included fully in all that the teaching offers.

19. Teachers put careful thought into the preparation of their lessons, giving due consideration to what pupils already know and can do and what they need to learn next. However, there are times, particularly in Years 1 and 2 when teachers do not use sufficient professional judgement to enliven the curriculum and allow national guidance to dictate too much of the content of their lessons. When this happens the fit of task to learning needs is not as good and the level of challenge is not as high.
20. Teachers have reliable subject knowledge and in most lessons they are very clear about what it is they want pupils to learn. Key learning objectives are displayed prominently and discussed with pupils at the start of each lesson. These provide pupils with a clear understanding of what it is they are trying to achieve and establish an effective starting point for their learning. In the most effective lessons these objectives are revisited periodically and at the end of the lesson they become the focus of a discussion on the progress that has been made. However, in a significant proportion of lessons this important final step is missed and pupils are left wondering how successful they have been.
21. Although the teaching in the school has many strengths, the good practices found in some classroom are not always replicated in others. For example, the quality of marking varies from teacher to teacher. In the best examples pupils are given clear indications of how successful they have been, how to correct any mistakes and what they need to focus upon in order to improve their work in the future. Other marking consists simply of ticks and praise when warranted which is of far less use to the pupil. Pupils of all ages show a very mature attitude to learning and any information they are given about their own learning is acted upon conscientiously.
22. The use of ICT is not yet firmly embedded in teacher's work. The school's computers have proved unreliable in the past and this has adversely affected the adoption of ICT a major teaching resource. However the facilities and equipment are now much better and teachers should be making more use of them, not only to aid pupils' learning but also to assist their own planning, lesson provision and administration. Pupils do not see their teachers making extensive use of ICT in their work and therefore lack a positive role model. As a result pupils have too little appreciation of the benefits that can accrue from the effective and regular use of ICT.
23. Teachers apply a range of effective strategies to assess the progress pupils are making over time. The information these provide is used constructively to guide decisions about pupils' learning. Day-to-day and short term assessment is satisfactory but less effective because the strategies used are inconsistent and some are more effective than others. For example, teachers are using their own procedures for setting individual learning targets for pupils, some of which are working better than others. A common weakness is a lack of pupils' involvement in the setting and reviewing of targets.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements. Enrichment opportunities are also satisfactory. The school's accommodation and resources are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum takes very good account of pupils' different needs, disabilities, talents and ethnic backgrounds.
- Pupils in reception and Year 6 are prepared well for the demands of the next stage of their education.
- Adherence to national guidance is overly strict and pupils have too few opportunities to do demanding creative and independent work.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is consistently good, and the good quality of the learning support staff is a strong factor in this.

- The use of ICT to support pupils' learning across the curriculum is unsatisfactory, although the new facilities promise well.
- The accommodation is much improved and now good, following the recent additions and extensions.
- Although there are some good lunchtime and after-school activities, these opportunities lack range and do not extend to younger pupils.

Commentary

24. The school's ethos, values and practices consistently promote inclusion. It works hard to ensure that different groups have equal access to all the learning opportunities it provides and do as well as their capabilities allow. As a result, pupils of diverse needs, disabilities, talents and ethnic backgrounds work happily and learn successfully together. The taught curriculum gives high priority to promoting good achievement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Across the school, but particularly in the junior years, planning in these subjects reflects a keen awareness of the need to challenge the more able pupils, of whom there is a high proportion in most classes. This is balanced by good support for lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs. The curriculum for special needs is good, largely because individual education plans give clear and detailed guidance for relevant approaches and resources. The well-trained and skilful support staff work closely with teachers to make sensitive and effective use of this guidance. The younger pupils in the mixed-age classes are the most able of their year group. Planning for these pupils steadily aims to ensure that they benefit from the challenge of working with older pupils, and then maintain their increased rate of progress to higher levels the following year. All these good arrangements, together with good liaison, help to ensure that pupils can progress smoothly to each next stage of their education.
25. In information and communication technology (ICT) delayed developments in resources and staff training mean that the school lags well behind many primary schools. The curriculum for the teaching and learning of basic skill is sound but unsatisfactory in the planned use of pupils' growing skills in ICT to support their learning across the curriculum. For example, ICT seldom supports pupils' creative work in music, art or writing, and provides little support the learning of pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum is good for religious education and satisfactory in other non-core subjects. The use of national guidance materials gives consistency, clarity and balance to the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in each subject. However, provision in these subjects is rather narrow and development restricted, often by strict adherence to the guidance. Links between subjects are not imaginatively exploited and pupils' role as learners is not always active enough to develop their independent learning skills. Most creative work is small in scale, and opportunities for pupils to extend their creative and study skills through larger projects are very rare. In recognition of this, and in response to national initiatives, the school aims to move towards a more unified, rich and exciting curriculum. Included in these proposed developments is the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship. An evolving programme of lessons through the school satisfactorily covers requirements, including sex and relationships education and drugs awareness, although it does not yet fully match the school's aims.
26. Beyond lessons, opportunities to enrich learning are satisfactory. There are some strong features that are available to all pupils. For example, a good programme of visitors to the school and of outside visits, including a residential visit for Year 6, enhances learning across the school. Many pupils also participate in fund-raising initiatives and year-group productions. Extra-curricular activities and opportunities for instrumental tuition are restricted to pupils in Years 4 to 6, and are limited in number and range. Their quality, however, is good and some opportunities in sports and the arts form part of the school's provision for pupils who have recognised talents in these fields.

27. The newly remodelled and greatly extended accommodation significantly improves the school's scope for enriching its curriculum. Resources are satisfactory overall, but with a particular strength in books and library provisions.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, health and safety is very good. Pupils have good access to helpful support, advice and guidance.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The extent to which each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in the school is very good.
- Pupils are confident that they will be listened to and that staff will take action regarding their concerns.
- Good induction arrangements help pupils settle into school quickly.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well.
- Staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils' health and welfare needs are met.

Commentary

28. All staff know pupils well; their academic progress is monitored on a regular basis and tracked carefully. Pastoral care is given a high priority, although procedures to record progress in their personal development are largely informal. Staff use information about pupils effectively to ensure that they have access to well-informed support, guidance and advice that they are happy at school. The guidance and support given to pupils with special educational needs are effective because the assessment records and individual learning plans on which they are based maintain a clear and accurate picture of each pupil's needs and progress. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and make a significant contribution towards pupils' good achievement. Staff pay close attention to their individual requirements, both academic and personal, and pupils benefit from the school's effective liaison with outside agencies.
29. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being are very good. First aid provision is appropriate and most staff are trained to provide assistance in the event of an emergency. Safe practice is promoted well in lessons both in school and when out in the community. Equipment is regularly checked and tested and governors and staff carry out regular risk assessments. Child protection procedures work effectively because staff are experienced, well trained and vigilant.
30. Induction arrangements are good for the youngest children when they start school and for pupils joining the school in other year groups. Pupils from abroad are given particular attention and are helped to settle quickly into their new surroundings. These arrangements help to develop good and trusting relationships between pupils and staff and give pupils the confidence to seek support and guidance when they have a personal problem or when they want to share news of something special. Staff appreciate the importance of forging trusting links with pupils at all times provide a positive response to such requests.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good and links with the local community and other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very happy with what the school provides for their children.
- The school's partnership with parents makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning although pupils' annual reports lack information about what they need to do to improve.

- Links with the community and with other schools enrich pupils' learning and provide very good opportunities for personal and social development.
- Parents and other adults support and enhance the work of the school.

Commentary

31. Staff and governors give a high priority to developing and maintaining positive relationships with parents. The pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting with parents showed a very positive view of the school and reflected an overall high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the school's provision. A very small minority of parents expressed some concerns about bullying. Inspectors agree that there have been occasional bullying incidents in the past but judge that the school has worked effectively to eliminate any further reoccurrence.
32. Overall the quality of information provided for parents through newsletters, meetings and pupils' annual progress reports is satisfactory. The school prospectus is informative but not fully up to date with regard to the curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage. A significant minority of parents did not agree that they were well informed about the progress their children were making. Inspectors found that pupil's annual progress reports demonstrate teachers' good knowledge of pupils but do not always inform parents what their children need to do to improve and to progress to the next stage in their learning.
33. A key factor in the school's good links with parents is the 'open door' policy. Parents have access to the school at any time if, for example, if they wish to discuss their children's progress. Staff normally manage to resolve any concerns of parents informally. However, in the event that a parent should wish to make a formal approach, there are effective procedures. The school warmly welcomes parents into the school and a number of them come on a regular basis, contributing well to pupils' progress, for instance in reading, swimming and helping on school trips. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of individual targets and progress, and have good opportunities to play a full part in the process of review and support.
34. The Parents and Friends Association is run by a small but hardworking committee and through events such as the Christmas Fayre, successfully raises funds to provide additional resources and learning opportunities for pupils. Their hard work is greatly appreciated by staff and benefits pupils well.
35. Pupils benefit academically and socially from the school's close links with the community. A range of visits and visitors provide good enrichment of the curriculum and support pupils' personal and social development well, broadening their experiences and giving them opportunities to learn about the local and wider community. Links with other schools are very effective and Cliffedale plays an active part in the local group of schools. Links with the most of the local pre-schools and the main feeder secondary schools are very good. Arrangements support the transfer of pupils to secondary education well by providing opportunities for them to visit high schools and gain an understanding of the next stage of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and direction for the school. Leadership of other key staff is satisfactory overall. Management and the governance of the school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, ably supported by senior teachers, provides good strategic leadership, has clear priorities and is very committed to inclusion and equality of opportunity.

- The day-to-day running of the school is good but only the school's most senior managers have a complete picture of how well it is performing.
- Governors are supportive, knowledgeable and share with the headteacher a clear direction and vision for the school.
- Subject co-ordinators do not have enough opportunities to carry out the full range of their responsibilities.
- Too little use is made of ICT to aid school management and administration.
- Day-to-day financial control is efficient and good financial management supports school improvement.

Commentary

36. The headteacher provides good leadership with clear vision and a strong sense of direction. He gives careful thought to how to maintain the school's many strengths while at the same time moving it forwards. Parents have confidence in the headteacher's leadership and the school maintains a well deserved reputation as a place in which pupils learn well. There is a sense of togetherness amongst all staff and good team spirit within the school. There have been a significant number of staff changes recently, both temporary and permanent, and it is a measure of how well the school is led and managed that these have caused a minimum of disruption to pupils' learning. The school's clearly stated aims are placed firmly at the centre of its work and are promoted effectively by staff and governors.
37. The headteacher and members of the senior management team provide good role models for their colleagues in the effective way they monitor the work of the school and take key decisions. Although management is good overall, whole school evaluation has, up to now, been undertaken by a small number of senior staff and it is only they who have a clear vision of how well it is doing as a whole. Other members of staff have been made aware of the issues facing the school but have not had sufficient opportunity to gain a complete picture for themselves. For example, while curriculum co-ordinators are well-motivated and lead developments in their subjects conscientiously they have had insufficient opportunity to evaluate provision in their subjects across all age groups. This adversely affects their ability to guide whole school development. As a result school improvement has been steady rather than rapid since the last inspection and some inconsistencies, such as those reported earlier in the certain aspects of teaching and learning, have crept in. This weakness in management has been recognised and a new structure which makes far better use of the skills and expertise of all staff is currently being implemented. This shows considerable promise but will need close scrutiny and careful evaluation to ensure complete success.
38. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well and has a significant strategic influence in leading school improvement. The chair of governors works in close partnership with the headteacher. He has a good awareness of school issues and leads the governing body effectively in its work. Through regular meetings, discussions and visits, governors support the work of the staff and evaluate the school's performance well. They have a secure understanding of the challenges facing the school and contribute effectively to strategic decision making.
39. Governors and staff make a strong commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The systems for identifying and assessing pupils' special educational needs, and for supporting and tracking their progress, are managed effectively. This is reflected in the good progress the pupils make.
40. The school development plan is used constructively to inform both maintenance of the schools strengths and to guide improvements. However, it is an extremely wordy document and the school's most important priorities do not stand out as clearly as they should. This reduces the plan's efficiency as a management tool. Governors and staff contribute to the plan and this helps to reinforce the shared sense of purpose in the school. Parents and

pupils have little involvement the school's self-evaluation and decision making, something that has been recognised by senior management and which is currently under review. Performance management procedures for the headteacher and teaching staff are effective and objectives often link directly to priorities in the school development plan. Support staff are well deployed and managed and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	704,960	Balance from previous year	37,630
Total expenditure	686,149	Balance carried forward to the next	56,441
Expenditure per pupil	2,138		

41. Day-to-day financial management is efficient. Governors' knowledge of, and involvement in, financial decision making are good. The budget is constructed carefully and with due attention to the school's priorities for development. Spending patterns are monitored regularly and controlled through regular reports and finance meetings. The school makes appropriate use of best value principles. It effectively compares its results with those of other schools and seeks good value for money by operating a competitive tendering system when appropriate. Governors evaluate spending decisions carefully and make sensible decisions in the use of specific grants and allocation of resources.

42. Recent major extensions to the school building have consumed large amounts of finances but careful budgeting had ensured good quality fixtures and fittings. In particular resources for ICT have been enhanced significantly and the school now has good quality facilities, including a designated classroom fully equipped with modern computers. This is a major step forward in driving up standards in this subject. However, while the technology is in place but there are too few signs of ICT being used extensively to aid management and school administration, for example to assist with data analysis, monitoring and evaluation.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for the youngest children in the Foundation Stage of learning is **good**. The children make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals; they achieve well and have very positive attitudes to their learning. The children come into school with attainment which is typical for their age and by the time they leave the reception year they are achieving above expectations. Effective teaching results in good progress in the children's learning, and in particular in their personal social and emotional development. The staff are well aware of the curriculum for young children and use good methods which enable the children to learn quickly. Staff work together as an effective team and plan effectively taking into account the children's different needs and abilities. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good, with clear expectations for what the children are to achieve. A minor weakness was identified in the last report in the provision for outdoor play. Since that time the outdoor area has been significantly improved and overall, a satisfactory rate of improvement has been maintained.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are secure and trusting, which means children are happy and settled in school.
- Expectations for behaviour are high and children behave very well as a result.
- Children have very positive attitudes to their learning and each other.

Commentary

43. This area of learning is very well-promoted, daily routines are well-established and the children feel secure and confident as a result. Teaching and learning are very good and children make rapid progress towards the Early Learning Goals, enhancing their personal and social skills to achieve standards above expectations for this age group. The children behave very well and have very positive attitudes which combine to enhance their personal development very well. Staff are very supportive, know the children well and treat them with very good levels of respect, care and guidance. The children in turn respond very positively to this atmosphere of respect and understanding. Children's self-esteem, confidence in their abilities and sense of self-worth are extended very well. Teachers and teaching assistants listen and respond to the children carefully and sensitively. As a result the children ask questions confidently and approach adults who are known to them with self-assurance. Children's awareness of how to behave towards each other and the difference between right and wrong are developing very well and they are polite and well-mannered.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop a clear understanding of the sounds letters make within words.
- Good practice is offered in recognising simple words.
- Children are making good progress in writing simple words, using their knowledge of the sounds letters make.
- Classrooms lack designated role-play areas in which children can use their language creatively.

Commentary

44. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well in communication, language and literacy. Many are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. There is a good emphasis on literacy in the activities provided and the children are making good progress in communicating and using their skills in language. The staff present good role-models for the children to follow in conversation and in the way they speak to each other and the children. The children's skills in making marks and developing their skills in writing are progressing well. They understand that marks made on paper have meaning and their skills in producing writing, which is recognisable and tells a story, are emerging quickly. Higher attaining children write their names clearly although some are not yet using upper and lower case letters correctly or forming letters properly. As a result of the good, clearly focused teaching they receive, many children confidently identify the initial sounds in simple three-letter words and recognise simple words. The children use role-play equipment well to develop their communication skills, but there are no specific indoor role-play areas for the children to extend their language through imaginative play. Children enjoy handling books and regularly look at them with adults. They listen intently and pay very good attention to the content of the stories read to them. Their comprehension skills are developing well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good practical approach enhances learning.
- Staff use technology well to illustrate mathematical ideas.
- Everyday activities make mathematics meaningful for the children.

Commentary

45. Children achieve well in this area of learning and by the end of reception most pupils are likely to have achieved or exceeded the Early Learning Goals. They are well on the way to counting accurately to ten and beyond, and recognise most numerals to twenty. Many children put numbers in the correct order and identify them well from their names of one two etc. Teacher use an effective practical approach which gives children a good perception of the relevant size of different numbers. Teaching and learning are good, with some very good features. Teachers plan interesting activities which encourage children to investigate and explore ideas about numbers and provide good reinforcement of mathematical language. Staff make sure that mathematical ideas are presented to the children in a way which illustrates the use of counting and solving problems in a meaningful way. Most children explain clearly what they discover and use their rapidly developing language skills effectively to describe position, colour, shape, quantity and size. The children use computers well to support their understanding of mathematics, especially to make repeating patterns, using colour and numerals. The staff also use technology productively to illustrate ideas of number, shapes and patterns.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision for the children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' curiosity is stimulated through the provision of a good range of interesting activities.
- Children make good use of technology, using computers and other communication technology equipment to support their learning.
- Good use is made of the outside area for teaching and learning although pupils' explorations do not always link fully to their indoor activities.

Commentary

46. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are supportive of what the children are learning, and offer a good range of interesting experiences and engaging activities for them to explore, investigate and observe. As a result children achieve well and with few exceptions are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year and many will exceed these by the time they move into Year 1. Staff help the children understand about themselves, other living things and what is needed to sustain life. The outdoor area is used effectively in this work and also to support learning about the environment and characteristics within it. However, there is some lack of continuity between outdoor and indoor activities because the links are not clear in teachers' planning. Staff encourage the children to ask questions, explore possibilities and to make comparisons. In music lessons, children are learning to appreciate the different effects they can make using musical instruments. The children use computers confidently and effectively to enhance their learning especially in mathematical development. They also use tape players effectively to listen to stories and other equipment which develop their ideas about control technology and enable them to become familiar with the role of such equipment within their learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for the children's physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided for the children to develop their hand control.
- There is no age-appropriate climbing frame or cycles for the children to use to develop their co-ordination and strengthen their muscles.
- There are some wheeled toys for them to use to practise negotiating space and other children but other equipment such as age-appropriate climbing frame or bikes are lacking.
- There are satisfactory opportunities to dance, and move with co-ordination and control.

Commentary

47. Children's achievements are satisfactory and most are likely to attain the Early Learning goals in area of learning by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with good features. Physical activities are managed safely and with due concern for health and safety issues. The children negotiate the space in their classes well, move around confidently and handle simple equipment safely. However, although there are some wheeled toys for them to push and pull along, there are no bikes or climbing frames for them to develop and extend more complex movements in co-ordination, which is important for this age group, especially for children with specific needs. Children's skills in hand control are developing well, with most able to use a good range of implements to write, scissors to cut and other tools to build and create models. These fine control skills enable children to use the computer keyboard and mouse properly and to good effect.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of well planned activities enable children to explore materials and to make three-dimensional models.
- Resources for imaginative play, creativity and role-play are underdeveloped.
- Children learn to enjoy exploring sounds and to make and appreciate music.

Commentary

48. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some good features. For instance work in the hall using stories as inspiration are used well to inspire the children and help them develop their own imaginative ideas. The children's achievement is satisfactory and most will achieve or be close to the early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. Through the good opportunities teachers provide, children explore sound, create their own accompaniments to music and develop their singing. Many keep time fairly accurately and can clap a basic beat. In the areas set aside for imaginative play outdoors, children to use various resources productively to develop ideas and stories on their own. Presently, there is no designated area indoors for the children to try out their ideas, work things through and develop their imaginative language. However the children's confidence and enjoyment are still evident when they play imaginatively. When encouraged they explain the stories they are trying to devise, although some children can become boisterous during these types of activities. The children use different materials and media in their creative work, for example to make models. However, this type of work is not sufficiently extended to challenge the children's thinking and inspire them to use their initiative to create their own art work, based on their previously learned techniques and skills.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the majority of classes, many pupils achieve high standards for their age in reading, writing and spoken English.
- Pupils who find literacy difficult receive good support for their learning and usually do well.
- Teachers' use of learning targets and their marking of pupils' work are inconsistent.
- In many lessons pupils have too few opportunities to develop active and independent learning roles.
- The good quality and use of the libraries and book resources support reading development well throughout the school.

Commentary

49. Standards of attainment are above average overall in Year 2, and well above by Year 6 in all branches of the subject. Boys and girls attain equally well. Taken overall, achievement is good, but better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. Groups of differing attainments, including pupils with special educational needs and from different ethnic backgrounds have equal access to all the learning opportunities the school provides and achieve well in relation to their capabilities. The picture is good, but, as the school recognises, it could be better.
50. Test results since the last inspection have been consistently high or very high at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. The single exception to this very strong pattern occurred in the Year 6 writing test in 2004. The sudden and unexpected drop in results has been investigated both by the school and the inspection team. The evidence presented by the test papers and by pupils' work throughout the year shows very clearly that results fell because of a specific and serious misjudgement by several pupils in one important question, and not because of any decline in the actual writing standards achieved by this very able cohort.
51. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average throughout the school. Pupils achieve well, although the use of assessment and pupil targets is relatively limited in this area. Pupils are thoughtful and articulate speakers, and attentive and skilful listeners. They are eager and able to extend their own answers and to develop those of others. When they talk together in pairs or small groups to solve problems or explore texts, they cooperate as effective partners in learning, negotiating agreements purposefully and raising each other's skills and understandings. In some lessons, however, the teaching reinforces passive rather than active roles for pupils, and gives them too few opportunities to share and extend their thinking and reason things out.
52. Attainment in reading is above average in Year 2, and well above in Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2; good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers, support staff and parents work together well to ensure that younger pupils develop secure basic skills and the habit of reading frequently and with success. However, the more able pupils are not always moved on at their best rate, particularly in their understanding of different kinds of books. In the junior years, most pupils are eager and confident readers, ready to explore books and use libraries. Pupils in Year 6 have good library skills for their age, and make discerning choices between authors or when using books to support their learning in different subjects. Many show advanced skills in 'reading between the lines' to inform their response to an unfamiliar text, but they are less adept at tracing their inferences back to specific features of the text.

53. In writing, attainment is good in Year 2, though progress through Years 1 and 2 is uneven, particularly for the more able pupils in composition. Teachers throughout the school promote and expect high standards in handwriting, spelling and punctuation. As a result, pupils learn to set exacting standards for themselves in the accuracy and presentation of their work. By Year 6, pupils write fluently in different styles, suiting language choices to purpose. The most able achieve strong impact on the reader by adept variations of vocabulary and grammar. Most writing, however, is rather brief and often depends heavily on models used by the teacher. There is some lack of opportunity for pupils to write creatively and at length, making independent authorial judgements and learning to control more extended structures and information.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Almost all the lessons seen were good, and none was unsatisfactory. The evidence of pupils' work showed that teaching is consistently effective over time in Years 3 to 6, but more variable in Years 1 and 2. Significant common strengths are: teachers' secure command of the subject, their high level of expectation, their clarity of structure and explanation, their use of time and resources, and the strong working relationships that enable them to manage and promote good learning. In the very best lessons, teachers coupled these strengths with a more interactive approach that drew pupils into more active roles and that worked with their ideas and reasoning skills to make learning stronger and more engaged. Lack of this element is a shortcoming in much of the teaching, and it leads to teachers telling, rather than asking, pupils what they have learned at the end of lessons. It also leads to weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work, because some teachers do not readily see pupils as autonomous learners who can use targets and suggested improvements. Pupils apply themselves well to the tasks they are given, happily working together to the mutual benefit of all those around them.
55. The leadership of English is good and subject management is satisfactory. High standards have been vigilantly maintained, and the response to any hint of decline is urgent and rigorous. However, while subject leadership promotes good teaching and learning, the monitoring of provision is not sharp enough to pick up inconsistencies in marking, learning and the use of targets which would improve the teaching further.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Overall, English and the rest of the curriculum support each other satisfactorily. Teachers provide good and regular opportunities for pupils to reinforce their good skills in literacy and spoken English to enhance their learning in subjects such as history and geography. On the other hand, these opportunities seldom stretch pupils' reading and writing skills to achieve new learning. Writing tasks in other subjects are not always matched to pupils' actual capacity as writers. The significant under-use of ICT for reading and writing magnifies this issue.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Challenging teaching in Years 3 to 6 elicits a very good response from pupils and results in a good rate of progress.
- Pupils acquire secure basic skills in Years 1 and 2 but have only limited opportunities to develop more advanced number skills.
- The school provides very well for the individual needs of all its pupils in mathematics.
- Pupils' long term development is assessed and monitored well but procedures for setting targets for improvement have yet to be established fully.
- Procedures that enable the subject coordinator to gain a full picture of the subject from reception through to Year 6 are only just becoming established.

- There is insufficient use of ICT as an aid to learning.

Commentary

57. Year 6 pupils' performance in the national tests in 2004 was very high and for the third year out of the last four, the school's results were in the top five per cent nationally. Almost all pupils reached the expected level for their age and over two thirds exceeded it. Since the last inspection, high standards have been maintained in mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Both girls and boys in these years are continuing to achieve well and currently standards in Year 6 are well above average. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in mathematics because they taught and supported well and are interested in learning.
58. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are good. Pupils calculate quickly and accurately because they are taught effective methods of working, and encouraged to work mentally and to be selective in the strategies they use. The teaching for this age group provides a very good level of challenge and the tasks pupils are set make them think hard. In response pupils listen attentively and concentrate very well. All this creates a lively, positive and stimulating atmosphere in lessons and many older pupils identify mathematics as one of the subjects they enjoy most. Pupils from a diverse range of background work harmoniously together, sharing ideas and enjoying each other's success. The school successfully includes all pupils in the opportunities for learning it provides in mathematics.
59. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. In 2004 a good proportion of pupils attained the expected level in the national tests but a relatively small proportion attained at the above average level 3. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and provides pupils with a secure knowledge and understanding of standard methods of calculating. However, teachers' extensive use of commercial workbooks and strict adherence to the structure of the national strategy for numeracy leaves little time for pupils to play the exciting number games that would help them to develop more advanced computation skills.
60. Pupils' progress over time is tracked carefully and test results are analysed thoroughly. National Curriculum targets are set for each pupil annually but the school has yet to develop a consistent approach to the marking of work and the setting of learning targets which would provide pupils with a clear picture of what they need to work on next in order to improve. Teachers take great care to ensure that all pupils are included in the learning they provide. Those who are particularly high attaining are given work that is challenging and often work alongside but at the same pace as older pupils. Pupils who have English as an additional language are encouraged to answer questions and talk about their work, which they readily do. As a result this small group of pupils achieves well in mathematics.
61. Subject leadership is good and has been instrumental in ensuring that standards at the end of Year 6 remain high. Management of mathematics is satisfactory. Pupils are provided with a broad and effective curriculum and their development over time is tracked closely. However, the subject coordinator has little opportunity to evaluate the subject in depth across the school as a whole and issues concerning the subject are often addressed within classes or year groups. While this promotes satisfactory subject development, lines of communication are less efficient than they should be and there is no guarantee that all members of staff are receiving the same information. This leaves the school vulnerable to inconsistencies in practice. This weakness has been recognised by the school and a more comprehensive management structure is currently being implemented which has the required refinements.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Teachers make satisfactory use of the opportunities other subjects present to extend pupils' learning in mathematics and to encourage the application of numeracy. In science, for example pupils make effective use of graphs and charts to aid the recording and interpretation of the data they are collecting. The use of ICT in mathematics is under developed. Older pupils have some linked skills, such as how to use simple spreadsheets, but the benefits that computers and other technology can bring to pupils' learning in this subject have yet to be fully exploited.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are maintained at a good level in Year 2 and at a high level in Year 6.
- The practical approach teachers adopt promotes pupils' enquiry skills very well.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to science and are very keen to learn.
- At times in Years 1 and 2 the tasks do not provide enough challenge for higher attaining pupils.

Commentary

63. Standards are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. Pupils achieve very well given their attainment when they first start school, including those identified as having special educational needs or with English as an additional language. This is confirmed by Year 6 pupils' strong performance in national tests each year.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6 with examples of very effective practice in Years 5 and 6. There are significant strengths in teaching, and pupils' learning builds well on previous work. Good methods are employed to ensure pupils understand what they are observing and staff are skilled in asking relevant questions to stimulate pupils' thinking and keep them very well-motivated, keen and interested. Lessons are carefully planned and successfully build pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in a consistent and progressive manner. Occasionally, lessons are over directed by staff, providing pupils with insufficient opportunities to use their initiative and to decide for themselves how best to organise their investigative work.
65. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lesson are very good. They are very attentive, interested and very well-motivated. As a result of the school's very strong ethos and successful promotion of inclusion pupils from all background get on very well and learn happily together, collaborating closely and sharing ideas constructively. The staff manage lessons very well, with teaching assistants and other adults offering good levels of support for their learning. This confident positive approach to the teaching of science contributes very well to the success of lessons and the enjoyment pupils gain, especially through the good practical methods which are employed. Teachers encourage pupils to use their existing knowledge to hypothesise and to make predictions about what might happen in experiments. Such encouragement and regular opportunities for pupils to find out for themselves provide a solid base for the development of their enquiry skills. Pupils become competent investigators with secure understanding of the science enquiry process.
66. In Years 5 and 6, pupils use scientific language accurately, to describe what they observe, and apply their numeracy skills with accuracy when measuring events or recording data. Written work is usually neat and well-presented and the pupils use their literacy skills effectively to record what they discovered. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are keen to discover new things and to investigate new ideas. However, on occasions, worksheets replace a more open approach, reducing the level of challenge and inhibiting opportunities for pupils to

develop their own recording of investigations. This is particularly limiting on higher attaining pupils who are capable of formulating their own ideas and ways of working. However there is good coverage of the expected elements of the National Curriculum and work pupils produce is of a good standard overall.

67. Information technology is used to support work in science, but its use tends to be limited as yet, as the school has faced problems with resourcing. Leadership and management are good, with effective strategies to maintain standards at a high level. Overall progress since the last inspection is good and the subject forms a valuable part of the curriculum. The use of computers in science and opportunities for pupils to use their skills and natural curiosity creatively have correctly been identified as areas for subject development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for Information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Subject leadership provides clear direction.
- The school now has the good quality resources it needs to teach the subject effectively.
- Pupils show very positive attitudes to the use of ICT and look forward to their lessons.
- Assessment procedures do not provide teachers and pupils with sufficient information.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT across the curriculum as a whole.

Commentary

68. Although there has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection much of this has taken place very recently and its impact has yet to show through in standards and achievement. The school is strongly committed to the development of ICT and to ensuring that pupils obtain maximum benefit from what it can offer. However, for some time the school's plans for development have been frustrated by factors beyond its control, in particular difficulties with contractors and the unreliability of equipment. There have been extended periods when the school's computers have not worked at all, disrupting pupils' learning and denting teacher's confidence. In addition the school was relatively late in receiving the funding it was entitled to through the National Grid for Learning. However, the position has very recently changed with the building of an extension to the school with space for an ICT room and the installation of more reliable computers and ancillary equipment. For the first time teachers are able to plan for pupils' learning with a degree of confidence and bring the whole class together for instruction in a purpose built classroom. The teaching observed during the inspection was mainly satisfactory and occasionally good.
69. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations with pupils demonstrating an adequate range of skills in the use of the computer and in the application of different programs. For example, towards the end of last term pupils in Years 3 and 4 produced attractive Christmas cards using a publisher program, effectively combining text and graphics. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 can construct a multi-media presentation containing several slides of animated text and explain clearly how errors in spelling or grammar can be identified and quickly corrected. However, the range of experiences pupils have had has been narrow and the context in which they have used different computer facilities and aspects of ICT has been limited. Under the circumstances pupils' achievement across the school is satisfactory and progress is beginning to accelerate as they become more familiar with the school's enhanced facilities. The gains pupils have made so far bear testament to the hard work they are prepared to put in and the enthusiasm they show for the subject. Pupils rarely have to be shown something twice and once they have experienced success retain the detail of what they have done very well. The school's very positive ethos and strong commitment to inclusion ensures that pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds have equal opportunities to learn.

70. Subject leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The coordinator had led the school out of its difficulties and brought it to a position where the ICT can be taught effectively throughout the school. However, strategies have still to be put in place that enable the subject, and particularly the standards pupils are achieving, to be monitored and evaluated thoroughly. The coordinator has an accurate overview of the effectiveness of provision and can provide broad based guidance but lacks detailed information to intervene strategically to direct teaching and learning. The assessment of pupils' learning is at a similar stage of development. Teachers are able to evaluate accurately pupils' response to the activities provided, but procedures that enable teachers and the pupils themselves to assess in detail the skills they are gaining have yet to be put in place.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. The use of ICT in other subjects is unsatisfactory. This aspect of teaching and learning has suffered most from the problems the school has experienced and while computers are utilised to aid learning in some subjects this is patchy and does not constitute a cohesive, whole school approach. Pupils are beginning to use the Internet as a source of information and stimulus. Year 1 and 2 pupils thoroughly enjoyed a science simulation program they downloaded following detailed instructions from the teacher. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 pupils efficiently search the web for information to inform their history and science studies. However, there is too little use of key facilities, such as the opportunity the computer presents for pupils to draft and redraft their written work or to handle the data generated during a science investigation. In general pupils have too little understanding of how computers and other technology can aid their learning in different subjects.

HUMANITIES

72. There was insufficient evidence to support overall judgements about provision, achievement or the quality of teaching and learning in geography and history as only one lesson was observed in history and none were seen in geography. Teachers' planning was examined, samples of work analysed and discussions held with pupils. While not providing a complete picture the information these provided left a positive impression of standards in Years 2 and 6 and of the curriculum the school provides.
73. Pupils show a good level of interest in their work in these two subjects, and are particularly curious about events that have occurred throughout history. The curriculum provides the required breadth of study. In Year 2 pupils' work in history includes a study of Florence Nightingale, with good links to geography. This work is quite detailed, although there is a tendency for teachers to use too many worksheets, limiting opportunities for the pupils to record their work independently. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge and understanding about the Ancient Greeks, for example through the study of the history of the Parthenon in Athens. Some of this work, although representing sound content and good coverage, does not initially promote the pupils' research skills. However, as the topic progresses teachers introduce more opportunities for independent research and pupils respond by producing work of a good quality. Topics in history also include local studies of Grantham, for example in Victorian times, and the outcomes of these studies are well-documented by the pupils in their 'diary projects'.
74. Samples of work in geography confirm that the pupils are developing secure skills as they progress through the school. In geography the pupils in Year 2, are learning to make comparisons between two locations, with some constructive links to numeracy, using graphs and charts to record information. Work is marked regularly, but there are few comments to guide pupils' understanding of how to make improvements. In Year 6, the pupils are learning about the water cycle and waterways. Topics include studies of capital cities in Europe, making comparisons about climate, physical and natural characteristics and also about rivers and mountains. There are good individual projects, for example on France and local studies of Lincoln and Grantham effectively promote pupils' map reading skills. Early

settlements are also considered, making comparisons between the local area and rural locations, for instance in India. Good progress is evident in this work and the quality improves significantly, especially in pupils' use of correct subject terminology to describe water features, such as 'delta' and 'flood plain'.

75. The curriculum for both subjects follows expected guidelines, with cycles of study which accommodate satisfactorily the mixed age classes in the school. Links are made to other subjects, for instance in Years 1 and 2, a study about the weather led to further work on testing the permeability of materials in science. Although, there is some use of ICT for research other applications are under-used.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show tolerance and respect for other faiths and beliefs in RE lessons.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils have limited opportunity to visit places of worship of different religions.
- In Year 6, pupils use their literacy skills well to record their work.

Commentary

76. At the last inspection standards in Year 2 were at the expected level for this age group and above average in Year 6. Since then standards have been maintained in Year 6 and have risen in Year 2 and improvement is good. The school uses the local authority guidelines for religious education effectively to ensure even coverage and to accommodate the mixed age classes in the school. The pupils achieve well overall in religious education, including those pupils identified as having special educational needs or learning English as an additional language.
77. In lessons, pupils behave well and show a mature attitude to their learning, especially about different beliefs, cultures and traditions and how these relate to their everyday lives. Staff are well-informed and confident in delivering religious education accurately and resources provide a good range of interesting and relevant artefacts to give the subject meaning for the pupils, although there are not many resources to support work in studying religious journeys and their significance. Although there are few opportunities available for the pupils to visit a range of places of worship to reflect the cultural diversity of the school population, good use is made of the local area and nearby churches to illustrate aspects of Christian worship.
78. Teaching and learning are good. The staff are well-informed and make constructive use of individual pupils' knowledge and understanding about a variety of religions to promote and broaden the ideas of others. Lessons are well-planned, with good management and organisation. On occasions as in a Year 3 lesson seen during the inspection, teachers provide good opportunities for the pupils to direct their own learning and be independent. Pupils respond very well to such opportunities and gain much from such lessons.
79. In Year 6, the pupils are learning about Christianity and good reference is made to developing the pupils' spirituality and also promoting their moral, social and cultural development. Topics cover Sikhism, Hinduism, including the story of 'Rama and Sita', and a study of different beliefs and traditions, for example on Judaism. The Islamic faith is covered in some detail. Good quality work is produced, which is generally well-presented and detailed, although a lack of comments from teachers in the marking makes it difficult for pupils to appreciate how well they have done and what could have been improved. In Year 2 the pupils are learning about the Old Testament, and produce well-written accounts of bible stories. They use their literacy skills well, work is marked with relevant comments from

staff, and although there is some use of worksheets this is not excessive. Information technology is not used sufficiently to support work in religious education as yet. Leadership and management are good, with good progress in improving attainment. Assessment of what pupils are learning is sound and completed at the end of each unit of study.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. Only one lesson was seen in art and design, two in music, two in design and technology and two in physical education. Together with a variety of examples of pupils' work, this evidence gives good glimpses of the quality of teaching, and also of the standard of pupils' work in some aspects of each subject. However, the evidence is not an adequate basis for firm overall judgements on provision and standards in any of these subjects, though the leadership and management of these subjects is satisfactory overall.
81. In **art and design** pupils across the school explore a wide range of drawing and painting techniques, using different media and subjects. Many studies make quite imaginative use of the work of great artists, imitating and adapting composition or style to good effect. For example, the Year 6 work based on Picasso's 'Three Dancers' and Van Gogh's 'Sunflowers' is striking in its use of shape, colour, texture, tone and composition. Pupils respond well to the various challenges posed, but their work is almost all small in scale, and there is little evidence of extra challenge for the more talented pupils. The emphasis on drawing and painting promotes some good standards of work, but leads to a relative lack of attention to textiles, printing and three-dimensional work. Good teaching was seen in a Year 5 lesson in which pupils used viewfinders to select small features from Diego Rivera's picture of a crowded market place. The lesson was very well prepared, resourced and developed, so that pupils had a rich and challenging artistic experience. Through a well-conducted sequence of stages and activities, the teacher guided and challenged pupils to examine shape, line, colour and texture, gradually raising the level of demand. As a result, pupils were able to create a variety of interesting pastel studies that were clearly informed by the lively and thoughtful discussions stimulated by the teacher's knowledge, enthusiasm and very skilful questioning.
82. In **design and technology**, the curriculum promotes the steady development of skills in designing, making and evaluating products which involve a range of materials, mechanisms and techniques. However, food technology receives little attention; not enough use is made of ICT, and tasks typically lack creative challenge. However, pupils do apply their characteristic care and effort, and their good skills in writing, measuring and drawing. For example, the hand puppets made by pupils in Year 2 are very carefully shaped, stitched and finished on the basis of painstaking planning and drawing. Equally in Year 6, pupils' plan views of their different powered vehicles, show meticulous use of rulers, measurements, labels and pencil skills. The two lessons seen were good. Each was part of a lower junior unit on simple moving mechanisms. Good learning was driven by enjoyable practical activity, very clear step-by-step development, and good opportunities for pupils to work together and use their good speaking and listening skills to support their learning. As a result, all pupils successfully cut and assembled parts to make animal shapes that had moving legs or ears. Both teachers led well-focussed discussions that required pupils to think and learn about the interactions between simple levers and fixed or moving pivots. The lessons ended strongly by involving pupils in explaining the problems they had encountered and the solutions they had found, and in considering the exciting prospect of making books with pictures that 'pop up' and move.
83. **Music** presents a mixed picture. The recorder groups and choir, together with good opportunities to learn to play instruments, enable many pupils to develop musical skills and practical activities to a good level. However, necessary improvements in provision for all pupils have only recently been introduced by the co-ordinator's good vision and initiative. Earlier inconsistencies show in skills that are below the expected level in certain aspects of the subject. For example, the majority of pupils in Year 6 could not make successful use of

a good opportunity to compose and perform a simple cyclic pattern, because they lacked understanding in using pulse and tempo to achieve togetherness. However, the teaching was skilful, stimulating and strongly interactive. Pupils were fully engaged by the variety of instruments, and the interesting and supportive approaches set up by the teacher. Their well-sustained and intelligent response to challenge brought good learning, but it did not fully overcome their lack of skill and understanding in specific elements of music. By contrast, a small number of pupils who received instrumental tuition achieved a good level of success and the contrast with their and other pupils' attainment was all too clear. A satisfactory lesson in Years 1 and 2 showed pupils' readiness to learn and explore the idea that different percussion instruments make sounds of different duration.

84. The teaching was good in one of the **physical education** lessons seen during the inspection and satisfactory in the second. Both lessons were planned well and provided activities which built progressively on previous learning. Year 3 pupils worked with enthusiasm and enjoyment to construct a well structured 'meeting and greeting' dance with various elements which accurately reflecting the music. Pupils showed good social skills and each played an equal part in the dances they produced, including the small number of pupils with English as an additional language. Towards the end of the lesson pupils came together in larger groups to perform for others. The good progress they had made was clearly demonstrated in the quality of their performances. During a gymnastics lesson on the theme of balance, Years 5 and 6 pupils responded well to the encouragement of their teacher and performed at a level that was broadly typical of their age. A small minority of higher attaining pupils demonstrated good skills holding complex shapes with good control. Conversely a number of pupils found the task difficult and were able to maintain a balanced position for only a short amount of time. In both classes pupils showed respect and appreciation for the skills of others and a willingness to learn from each other. The curriculum for PE covers all the required elements and on average, pupils of all ages receive the recommended two hours of physical activity per week.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

85. Only one lesson was seen in this subject area and it is not possible to give secure judgements about standards across the school, or the quality of teaching and learning. The school has a satisfactory learning programme which meets National Curriculum requirements and which adequately covers areas such as sex education and drug misuse. The content is taught through designated lessons combined with and a cross curricular approach within different subjects. At other times, personal concerns are dealt with on a small group or one-to-one basis. However, a lack of whole school monitoring of how topics are taught means that the school can never be sure that the full range of aspects are covered and that important opportunities are not missed. Staff have recognised that pupils are capable of more and have identified this area as a focus for development. In particular the mature attitudes pupils show, lend themselves well to various aspects of citizenship. At present the school does not involve pupils often enough in decision making and is currently embarking on a project to establish an effective school council to broaden pupils' understanding of democracy and to give them experience of social decision making. The very effective teaching and learning that took place in the one lessons seen provided clear evidence of the potential that is there to be realised. Sensitive questioning drew carefully considered views from the pupils about caring for others, made all the more real by one pupil's account of her father's journey to help relatives in Sri Lanka who had become victims of the recent tsunami.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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