

INSPECTION REPORT

LINDOW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wilmslow

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111031

Headteacher: Mr P S Beaumont

Lead inspector: Mr J J Peacock

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th November 2004

Inspection number: 272033

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:	97
School address:	Upcast Lane Wilmslow Cheshire
Postcode:	SK9 6EH
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Sexton
Date of previous inspection:	March 2000

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is smaller than the average primary schools with 97 pupils on roll, 60 boys and 37 girls. This represents a significant reduction from the previous inspection in March 2000 when 135 pupils attended the school. The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds but there are five pupils for whom English is an additional language. These are mostly Japanese and French. About half of the pupils travel to the school from out of the normal catchment area where pupil numbers have fallen. Pupils are from a wide and varied range of socio-economic backgrounds and their attainment on entry to the reception class is generally above average.

The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, at 19.5 per cent, is about average. There are 8.2 per cent with a statement of special educational need, which is well above average. The number is higher than expected as four pupils attend the hearing impaired unit, which is attached to the school. Currently, there are 19 pupils on the register for those with special educational needs and the school meets the needs of four of the pupils with special educational needs from its own resources. Specialist help is provided for the rest, most of whom who have problems with hearing, speech or communication. There has been a very high level of mobility in the past two years making the movement of pupils in and out of the school a significant factor for the school to manage. The current headteacher started in June 2004 and he is the fifth person in three years to take on the role. In spite of all this disruption, the school has received two school achievement awards for its results in the national tests for seven and 11 year-olds in 2002 and 2003. The latest figures show that only 2.2 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25344	Mr J J Peacock	Lead inspector	Special educational needs
			English as an additional language
			English
			Science
			Geography
			History
			Physical education
			Religious education
8943	Mrs M Manning	Lay inspector	
17784	Mr D Hardman	Team inspector	Foundation stage
			Mathematics
			Information and communication technology
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school where the many strengths outweigh the few weaknesses. As a result, pupils achieve well. This was not the case over the past two years when the school had an unsettled period with standards dipping and questions were raised over the quality of teaching and the curriculum. During this time, the school received two achievement awards. However, a detailed analysis by the local education authority highlighted significant underachievement by some pupils. Efforts to improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum in order to address the underachievement were begun. The current experienced and dynamic headteacher was appointed in June. His knowledge, energy and determination have inspired staff and together, they have turned the school around. It is now providing good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very effective leadership and management by the headteacher.
- The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Pupils in Year 6 are achieving high standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching and learning is not consistent in all classes, varying from very good to unsatisfactory.
- The role of subject co-ordinators is not sufficiently developed.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to write in some subjects and their work is untidy.
- The very good provision in the hearing impaired unit has been maintained since the previous inspection.
- Great care is taken to meet the specific needs of all pupils and fully include them in all activities.
- There are very good links with parents and this enhances the quality of provision.

The improvement since the last short inspection, taking into account the period of difficulty the school experienced, has been satisfactory. The latest curriculum guidance has been adopted and teachers now plan well for the range of attainment in each class. Weaknesses in the curriculum for religious education and design and technology have been overcome by using the expertise of teachers with specialist knowledge to teach each class. Although subject co-ordinators now take responsibility for standards, they do not yet have an effective role in monitoring the quality of teaching in their subject. However, working effectively as a team, staff have improved the overall quality of teaching and the curriculum. This is beginning to successfully address the underachievement by some pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The table shows the results achieved by 11 year-olds based on average points scores in national curriculum tests.

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

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

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. This includes those with special educational needs, pupils in the hearing impaired unit and the few who speak English as an additional language. It is evident from the table above that pupils' overall performance compared to similar schools last year was not as good as it should be or as good as it has been in the past. Weaknesses in the quality of teaching, above average numbers with special educational needs and high levels of pupil mobility contributed to this. Only 15 pupils were tested in Year 2 so care needs to be taken when analysing

the results of this relatively small sample. Overall standards were well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Pupils' performance in the national tests at seven and 11 did reflect some significant underachievement in both year groups. As a result trends in results overtime have fallen to below the national trend. The 14 children in the reception class achieve well in all six areas of learning in their curriculum because of the very good teaching they receive. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in the infant class and good, overall in the junior classes. This links directly to the quality of teaching found in these parts of the school. Overall, standards in English, mathematics and science for the eight pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are above average and well above average respectively. Standards throughout are typical of those expected in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education. Inspectors found no substantial evidence of any significant underachievement in all the lessons observed or in the scrutiny undertaken of all pupils' work in Year 6. However, the neatness of pupils' work throughout the school is unsatisfactory.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development are good. Pupils have a positive attitude and behave well. Bullying is not a problem at the school. Despite a fall last year during the unsettled period, attendance remained above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning overall, are good. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning varies from unsatisfactory to very good and this is affecting the quality of learning and pupils' achievement. Very good teaching was seen in the two classes covering the Foundation Stage and Year 5 and 6 and also when specialist teachers supported pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs. The very good teaching, reported previously in the hearing impaired unit, has also been maintained. Relationships with pupils and generally high expectations are strong features, helping all pupils to achieve well. Teaching elsewhere is satisfactory, overall. In one lesson, teaching was unsatisfactory as pupils became bored with the discussion and switched off. In Years 1 to 4, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to complete written work in history; geography and religious education and all teachers allow pupils to produce untidy work. The school provides good support and guidance for its pupils and has developed a very good partnership with parents, who are effectively helping to raise standards.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governance is also satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. He has made a tremendous difference since his appointment, winning the confidence of everyone and successfully raising staff morale. However, subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in improving teaching in their subject and so good practice is not being shared. Well over half of the governors are newly appointed and they are keen to become more involved, working closely with the headteacher and local education authority personnel to improve identified weaknesses.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are extremely loyal and supportive. Pupils know their views are important and take their involvement in the school and class councils seriously. Parents and pupils alike appreciate the family atmosphere at the school and warm friendly relationships with the caring staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Further improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 4.
- Develop the role of subject co-ordinators to make them more accountable for the quality of teaching and learning in their subject.
- Plan more opportunities for pupils to write in history, geography and religious education.
- Improve the neatness of pupils written work in all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The overall level of achievement for most pupils, including those with special educational needs is good. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6. Achievement in Years 1 to 4 is satisfactory as the quality of teaching and learning is not as high in the two classes, which cover these year groups.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in Year 6 is good with pupils attaining standards that are well above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Children do well in the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning.
- All pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils' handwriting and the neatness of their work are both unsatisfactory.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.5 (17.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.7 (15.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.7 (16.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.6 (28.7)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.6 (32.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.2 (31.3)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1 Understanding the recent history of the school and the impact this has inevitably had on the standards being achieved is important. In the previous short inspection report in 2000, standards in the national tests in Year 6 were reported as being in the top five per cent nationally for the previous three years in English, mathematics and science. The high standards were maintained from 2001 through to 2003 giving the school a very good record in the national tests for 11 year-olds for a six year period. In 2002 and 2003, the school received achievement awards in recognition of pupils' performance. However, standards in the national tests for seven year-olds were more variable and generally not as high as in Year 6. This was in some part due to the relatively small number tested and the high percentage effect of one pupil not reaching the expected and the number with special educational needs. However, it also reflected weaknesses in the quality of teaching. Just over two years ago, in a detailed analysis of individual pupils' performance, the local education authority found that a significant number of pupils were not reaching the targets set for them. This was linked to weaknesses in the quality of teaching and the curriculum. Governors did not agree with this assessment of significant underachievement and the views of both sides polarised, culminating in the resignation of the headteacher and to a breakdown in the relationship between the school and local authority. After an unsettled period with three temporary headteachers, the fifth headteacher in three years was appointed. During this time, numbers locally were in decline and the school began to take an increasing number of pupils from out of the normal catchment area. Some of

these had challenging behaviour and the proportion of pupils in the school with special education needs rose to above average levels. There was also significant levels of mobility to contend with. Five of the eight pupils currently in Year 6, for example, were not in Year 2. This made it difficult for the school to make reliable comparisons with pupil's prior attainment when assessing their progress. It is not surprising that staff morale was low, affecting the quality of teaching, attendance levels fell and in 2004, there was a significant dip in the school's performance in the national tests. The current experienced headteacher quickly identified the key areas for improvement to tackle the identified weaknesses. He has worked very effectively with staff and the local authority and together, they have turned the school around.

2 Children in reception enter with generally above average skills for their age. They achieve well and quickly attain the goals expected in all areas of learning well before the end of their reception year. All make good progress because of the very good quality of provision for them. Children quickly gain confidence and willingly answer questions or explain their views. This is the only single age class in the school and the 14 children benefit from a very spacious classroom and the close attention of adults, who work very well as a team. The attractive and imaginatively set out teaching areas and good range of resources make this an exciting place for children in which to learn.

3 In the national tests in 2004 for seven year-olds, pupils performance was well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics compared to all schools. When compared to similar schools, the school's performance was very low in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. In the teacher assessments for science, standards were below average for the proportion achieving expected levels but well above average for those achieving the higher level 3 with 47 per cent of pupils reaching this level. Fifteen pupils were tested and the relatively small numbers make the interpretation of results and trends for the year, or over time problematic. However, there is no doubt that the results show some significant underachievement by pupils. Inspection evidence shows that this has been eliminated largely due to the very effective leadership of the new headteacher. He has achieved much in a short time and the impact is beginning to show in the standards being achieved. In Year 2, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science and achievement for all eight pupils is now satisfactory.

4 Standards in Year 6 have always been much better than at Year 2. In the past, this was attributed to the cumulative effect of seven years at the school. Currently, the quality of teaching in the Year 5 and 6 class is very good and this is largely responsible for the good achievement of pupils. Inspection evidence shows that the eight pupils are attaining standards, which are well above average in English, mathematics and science. This represents a significant improvement over the performance of pupils last year in the 2004 national tests. In 2004, there was significant underachievement in mathematics and science with standards being in line with those expected when compared to all schools. In English, overall standards were well above average. When compared to similar schools, the school's performance was in line for English, well below in mathematics and below average in science. A detailed assessment of all pupils work in Year 6 shows that all pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment and no significant underachievement was found in the standard of pupils work or in the tasks set for them in lessons. Evidence for this was found in the detailed assessment records enabling individual pupils' level of achievement to be carefully tracked as they move through the school. However, pupils' handwriting is a weakness throughout, affecting the neatness of written work in all subjects. This detracts from the quality of pupils written work. The school has its own adopted style but high levels of pupil mobility means that new pupils are bringing a variety of styles. Teacher expectations need to be raised over this aspect.

5 Standards throughout are typical of those expected in ICT and in line with those expected in religious education. The school is very well resourced with computers and these are used effectively to support pupils learning in most subjects. As other subjects were only sampled, there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgement on overall standards.

6 The provision for all pupils with special educational needs, which includes those who speak English as an additional language and the pupils in the hearing impaired unit, is very good. All

pupils have a detailed individual education plan which is their personal contract and it clearly sets out specific targets for improvement. As a result, all these pupils achieve well and are fully involved and included in school life both in and out of the classroom. The school makes good use of the expertise available through the local authority to benefit pupils. The support for those struggling to understand English is very good as they are given individual tuition weekly and care is taken to make sure they understand instructions. As a result, these few pupils achieve well. The strength of the provision for the small number of hearing impaired pupils was recognised in the previous inspection. This high level of provision has been maintained and pupils benefit greatly from the attention they receive individually and from being fully integrated into lessons with pupils of their age. They work hard and make an equal contribution to class discussion. All pupils with special educational needs behave well and try hard to meet the high expectations of their teachers. The small numbers ensure that high attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged and any with a particular talent are well provided for. As a result, they also achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in school are good, relating to the good attention the school gives to their personal development. Attendance is good and pupils are punctual. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very strong, harmonious relationships with each other.
- They become increasingly confident and mature throughout their time in school.
- The school sets high standards for pupils' behaviour and expects them to respond accordingly.
- Bullying is not a problem at the school.

Commentary

7 It is particularly noticeable that pupils get on very well together. They play very well with each other outside and respect each other's opinions. Quite large groups of pupils organise their own games to amuse themselves at break times and lunchtime. They are keen to take part in extra school activities with each other and attendance at these is high. They are very sociable and there is never any suggestion that any pupils are excluded from groups.

8 The school is very inclusive in its approach and pupils as a result accept all differences as being a normal part of their way of life. They look out for each other and are kind. The youngest children show very good attitudes to school life and are happy and by the time they reach Year 6 pupils become very confident and mature. They have learned to listen to each other in class well and are not afraid to voice their own opinions. They are very polite to visitors and while they may be very enthusiastic and keen to ask questions, for example, of a professional footballer, they do not forget their manners.

9 One of the first tasks for the new headteacher has been to restate the school's policy on behaviour, making it clear to pupils what they can and cannot do in school. This is effective in preventing any slippage into unacceptable behaviour in lessons. His decisive action has had the full support and co-operation of parents. Parents do not find bullying is a problem and the school has had no reason to exclude any pupils.

10 The provision for pupils' personal development is good. Pupils' positive attitudes towards school and learning reflect the good expectations of teachers. Pupils arrive promptly each day eager to join in all the activities offered to them by the school. Children in the Foundation Stage have only been in the school a short time, but they already leave their parents or carers readily and settle quickly to activities each day. Teachers are good examples for the standards of behaviour they expect from pupils and this results in the good behaviour seen during the inspection. Pupils understand the importance of certain rules and they work together to make sure everyone is safe and happy.

11 The headteacher is strongly committed to raising pupils' cultural and multi-cultural awareness and understanding. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There have been visits from people of different cultures, pupils learn about the religions of Judaism and Islam as well as Christianity and pupils have studied Japanese gardens for their projects to improve the school environment. Pupils and parents are very supportive of the school and comment very favourably on the wide range of activities provided for them.

12 Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness are seen through many aspects of their work in school. Pupils are taught the importance of human rights including their rights as children. As a result, they have a sympathetic understanding of the plight of those less fortunate than themselves. This is shown in the collections being made for the "Samaritans' Purse" charity. Pupils are given responsibilities, for example, some are "Buddies" and help younger children when they first start school. The school and class councils are responsible for consulting classmates on how to improve their school. Their contributions are valued and this reflects the school's ethos of a family where everyone has a role to play. From starting school, children are taught that their ideas and opinions are important.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (96.6%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	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.

13 Attendance rates dropped from well above average to above average in the last school year, which was a time of some turbulence with high levels of pupil mobility and no permanent headteacher in charge.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll
White – British	81
White – any other White background	4
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1
Black or Black British – African	1
Any other ethnic group	1
No ethnic group recorded	7

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good, overall. The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. Children in reception are well cared for and the level of care elsewhere is satisfactory. There are very strong links with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. However, the quality varies from unsatisfactory to very good throughout the school. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and teachers make satisfactory use of assessment information in their planning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff work well as a team in reception and teaching is very good as a result.
- Teaching in Year 5 and 6 is consistently good, enabling pupils to achieve well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- The provision by teachers for all pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Those who speak English as an additional language are supported very well.
- The pupils in the hearing impaired unit are taught very well by an enthusiastic teacher.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils in the two classes covering Years 1 to 4 are not high enough.
- Pupils produce very little written work in history, geography and religious education in Years 1 to 4.

Commentary

14 Although the school received an achievement award in 2002 and 2003 for pupils' performance in the national tests, an analysis of individual pupils' performance showed that some were not achieving the targets set for them. Improving the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that every pupil reached their full potential became a key priority for previous headteachers as well as the new headteacher. However, without strong leadership and management, the quality of teaching had slipped in some classes and resulted in falling standards. Much work has been undertaken over the past two years with the support and advice of the local education authority personnel. The new headteacher has made a tremendous difference since he was appointed in June this year. He has taken the sole responsibility for monitoring the quality of provision and discussing strengths and weaknesses with individual teachers and the staff collectively. His determined efforts to bring about improvements have not had sufficient time to make an impact on all aspects and the quality remains variable throughout the school.

15 Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory in the infant class and good overall in the junior classes. This latter judgement reflects the consistently good and often very good teaching found in Years 5 and 6 and the satisfactory teaching in Years 3 and 4 which are covered by a temporary teacher due to the long term illness of the class teacher. The quality of teaching in the hearing impaired unit, noted as a strength in the previous inspection, has been maintained and continues to be very good. For example, during the inspection, pupils were excited about a shopping trip to buy food to provide their headteacher with a healthy lunch after he told them he only had time to eat some chocolate for dinner that day. The hearing impaired pupil's benefit from high quality individual tuition in the spacious and well-equipped unit and from joining pupils in other classes for some lessons. They are always very effectively supported in class. Specialist staff from the local education authority effectively enhance the quality of provision for them in regular weekly sessions.

16 In the reception class, teaching is very good in all six areas of learning, which make up the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. During the inspection, teaching was never less than good and in half of the lessons seen it was very good. The very good relationships, which exist between children and all adults, are a key feature, helping children to settle in quickly and gain in confidence. All staff plan lessons together and work very well as a team. All have very high expectations of the children and they provide a very good and imaginative curriculum, which meets children's needs extremely well. All children, whatever their ability or special needs are supported very well during lessons. Information from effective assessment procedures is used well to plan work at the correct level for all children, including those with special educational needs. As a result, all children build successfully on the generally above average standards on entry and achieve well in this class.

17 Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. They plan work carefully to take account of the mixed age groups in each class and usually engage pupils well. Lesson observations and teachers' planning clearly show that care is taken to provide tasks, which suitably challenge pupils of all ability levels. In some lessons in the infant class, noise was allowed to build up and this affected some pupils' concentration levels. This meant that pupils' progress was not as good as it could have been in these sessions. All teachers make good use of teaching assistants and specialist teachers for the deaf or for pupils who have English as an additional language. Equality of opportunity is promoted well for all pupils and care is taken to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in lessons and set appropriate tasks. Teachers take account of the specific targets for these pupils in the very well written individual education plans when planning work for them.

18 Other than in the reception class, all the very good teaching was seen in Year 5 and 6. Teaching of this high standard occurred in almost half of the lessons seen and was characterised by the excellent rapport between the teacher and pupils, a good pace being maintained, which ensured pupils concentrated throughout, good use of computers and challenging tasks. In a history lesson on poor children in Victorian times, for example, pupils had to use their literacy, numeracy and computing skills throughout as they calculated increases in population figures for towns developing factories and used computers to write a diary depicting a typical day for a working child.

19 Teaching is not up to the same standards in Years 1 to 4. However it is satisfactory overall in these year groups. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, pupils in Year 3 and 4 quickly lost interest in the discussion on the similarities and differences between the town of Chembakolli in India and Wilmslow. The short session before lunch lacked structure and by the end, at least half of the pupils had switched off. The teacher ignored the high level of inattention and as a result, the majority of pupils achieved little from this poorly planned lesson.

20 In Years 1 to 4, the key areas for improvement are teachers' expectations of pupils and pupils' application and productivity in lessons. The quality of learning in the infant class is adversely affected by noise levels, which rise above acceptable limits at times. The scrutiny of work clearly highlighted low expectations in some subjects by teachers of pupils in the two classes covering Years 1 to 4. There was not much written work produced, particularly in history, geography and religious education and the work was untidy. In fact, the neatness and presentation of pupils work in all classes is an area for improvement.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8	10	10	1	0	0

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides good opportunities for enrichment, including extra-curricular provision. The overall quality and quantity of the accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs is very good because of the school's totally inclusive approach.
- Pupils participate in a wide range of activities outside normal lessons.
- The quality of the curriculum is enhanced in religious education, ICT and design and technology by the use of subject co-ordinators to teach their own subject.

Commentary

21 There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection and the curriculum now meets statutory requirements in all subjects. All pupils are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum whatever their ability and this is a strength of the school. There is a significant number of pupils with special educational needs and the support they receive is very good. The few pupils in the hearing impaired unit attached to the school and those for whom English is an additional language are also very well provided for in lessons. Teachers make very good use of the specialist teachers from the local education authority to ensure that these pupils can be fully integrated in lessons and benefit from very effective support. Pupils come to the school from diverse backgrounds and the school provides for all their needs very well. The work they do is very carefully matched to their needs and well trained teaching assistants support this work very well.

22 There is a vibrant curriculum for children in the reception class that is very well planned so that children use what they have been taught in a range of exciting and relevant activities. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage provides a good range of opportunities that ensures children achieve well. Foundation Stage displays are bright and interesting and at the time of this inspection included models made from clay, colour shading and an attractive display for the science topic on materials.

23 Provision for religious education and design and technology has improved since the previous inspection and now meets requirements. The use of specialist teaching in religious education, ICT and design and technology is having a positive impact on the curriculum.

24 Recently, the curriculum has been made more interesting and relevant by linking subjects together within a topic. For example, when finding out about the work of Dr Barnardo, older pupils used the Internet for research and used the information gained to list the most important features of Barnardo's work that helped children to have a better life. This type of work enriches the curriculum and makes it meaningful.

25 The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities outside of school hours and these are very well attended by pupils. Parents very much appreciate the effort that staff put into these. A wide range of sporting activities takes place during and after school. They include football, netball and gymnastics. A specialist from the local lacrosse club regularly takes lessons and visitors are used to make subjects more interesting. For example, a player from a Premier Football Club visited class 5 and 6 to answer pupils' questions about his lifestyle. Additional support for learning outside the school day includes visits to places of interest, including residential visits for older pupils.

26 Accommodation and resources for the Foundation Stage are very good and are used to good effect to provide interesting and lively learning activities. The hearing impaired unit is spacious and very well resourced. Overall, resources are good and their effective use has a positive effect on both teaching and learning. The accommodation is well organised, scrupulously clean and well maintained. The number of staff is adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. There is a good number of support staff who contribute well to the achievement of those pupils with special educational needs. Outside play areas are attractive and varied and pupils on the School Council are consulting classmates on how to improve the environment further.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes satisfactory care of its pupils. It provides them with good support, advice and guidance based on monitoring and gives them good opportunities to become involved in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to become involved in the work of the school.

- The youngest children are settled into school life very well and good care is taken of pupils who arrive at other times.
- Pupils are well supported in their academic work and personal development.
- A relatively high proportion of pupils do not feel that there is an adult they could go to in school.

Commentary

27 Parents are confident that their children are happy and safe in school and are right to be so. They appreciate that all staff have the welfare of all pupils uppermost in their minds. Nevertheless there are times in the school day when many pupils say that they do not feel comfortable going to an adult for help. These situations mostly arise out of lesson times when pupils are having lunch or playing outside. The school has given supervisory staff extra training to help them to relate to pupils and become more involved with them. However the results of the pupils' questionnaire show that there has not been sufficient change. Most staff know the pupils well in this small school and generally give them good support.

28 Children joining the reception class settle in very well because of the very good care taken to get them and their parents familiar with staff and routines before they start school. There are plenty of opportunities for parents to talk to staff so that they can find out how to make the transition to school easier. Similarly the large numbers of pupils who start school after the reception class are supported well but without too much fuss. The school makes sure their parents get a good look around the school when making their choice.

29 The school is systematic in setting targets for pupils both in their schoolwork and for their life skills. In the past two years, a significant number of pupils were not achieving the challenging targets set for them. However, pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are well on course to achieve the targets set for them. All pupils have clear individual targets for literacy and numeracy, which are set each term. This means that they are checked regularly to show what progress they have made and they receive good support. Additionally the school takes care to set personal targets with the regular involvement of parents to help pupils develop well as rounded human beings.

30 As well as the school council for the whole school, each class has its own council. These are used well to give pupils of all ages the opportunity to be involved in some aspect of the school's work and have a say in what goes on. Because each class has chosen its own project pupils show pride in working together to make improvements for the benefit of all, for example, to the environment.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are very effective. Those with the community and with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very welcoming to parents.
- Parents support the school very well in a variety of ways.
- Pupils benefit well from the good links with businesses and with other schools.
- Although the school makes good efforts to inform parents about the curriculum it is presented in a formal manner.

Commentary

31 The school is genuinely open to parents and welcomes their views. Parents know they can talk to teachers easily at the beginning and end of the school day if they want. Also there are plenty of more formal opportunities for them to find out how their children are getting on. Parents appreciate that they have been involved in updating the behaviour policy and having a say in the format of their children's reports, which are very well drawn up.

32 Parents' support of the school is longstanding and they are generous with their help. They raise remarkable amounts of money, which go towards buying equipment and helping improve the environment inside and outside the school. They have rolled up their sleeves and become directly involved in improving the outside play area for the pupils. Parents also regularly give their time, for example, to help pupils and the youngest children with their reading. They are very well represented on the governing body, not only to put forward parents' views but also in a variety of capacities which help direct the school's work well.

33 The school receives good support through its links with businesses, which help fund such things as printing the prospectus and some extra French tuition. Further, its co-operation with other schools is good and pupils benefit particularly from sporting links from the area small primary schools and the main secondary to which they go. Additional good curricular links with the secondary school are in place for science teaching.

34 Parents appreciate that they receive regular information about the curriculum for each class. This is very thorough and systematic however it is not presented in such a way that they can easily relate to what their children are doing in topic work. Some parents expressed the view that they would like simpler descriptions of topics, for example, so that they would be able to help their children more directly.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. Governance is satisfactory and the governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Leadership by key staff is satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is a key aid to improving the quality of provision and the main barrier to learning is the variation in the quality of teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The extremely conscientious and experienced headteacher demonstrates very good leadership qualities and these are responsible for moving the school forward.
- Leading by example, he demonstrates a very strong commitment to the equality of opportunity for all pupils and the needs of individuals.
- The management of special educational needs is effective.
- Subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and this is a barrier to disseminating good practice and bringing about further improvement.
- Governors are very supportive and keen to become more proactive but their role in evaluating the school is limited at present.

Commentary

35 The school has been through a period of some turmoil and lacked clear and consistent leadership and management. Many pupils were found to be not reaching the targets expected of them by the local authority and this was put down to weaknesses in the quality of teaching. However, the overall performance in Year 6 resulted in the school receiving two school achievement awards with consistently well above average results in the national tests going back as far as 2000. Governor and local education authority views about how effective the school actually was resulted in tensions which culminated in the resignation of the headteacher and in an unsettled period with a series of temporary headteachers. Parents remained fiercely loyal and supportive of the school throughout. During this period, the school also had to contend with a decline in numbers and with high levels of pupil mobility. Many of the new pupils came from out of the normal catchment area and some had challenging behaviour, resulting in an above average number of pupils with special educational needs in the school.

36 Inspection evidence shows that although there are still some areas of weakness to be overcome, there are many strengths making this an effective school. The new headteacher has made a tremendous difference and achieved much since his taking up his post in June. He was

presented with a 50 plus point plan for improvement by the local authority and quickly identified the key elements as the quality of teaching and the quality of the curriculum. Some work had already been undertaken to successfully address some of the previous issues for the school. For example, assessment information is now used more effectively to plan work for pupils of different abilities in the mixed age classes and the curriculum in religious education and design and technology has been improved. The latest curriculum guidance has been adopted by the school for all subjects and teachers with specialist knowledge teach the above subjects to each class. At present, however, not enough progress had been made in developing subject co-ordinator roles. The headteacher's very effective leadership has resulted in staff working more effectively as a team and in a substantial improvement in the quality of teaching and the curriculum on offer to pupils. He has achieved this by leading by example and personally taking responsibility to monitor and evaluate with staff the quality of teaching. In the two classes where teaching is strongest, pupils achieve well. The impact has not been the same in all classes however, one of which has a temporary teacher and the variability in the quality of teaching remains an issue to be resolved.

37 A clarity of vision, very strong sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school and its pupils has ensured that the extremely hardworking and dedicated headteacher has successfully motivated staff and pupils. The promotion of equality and concern for the needs of the individual are very strong features and promote very good relationships between staff and pupils, as well as racial tolerance and understanding. Staff morale has improved and all are taking responsibility for continually monitoring pupils' achievement to make sure that they are achieving to their full potential. No significant underachievement was found during the inspection for any group of pupils because the teaching has improved. Arrangements to monitor the quality of the curriculum are good and there are strengths in the way the school uses teachers' expertise, in music, design and technology and religious education for example, to raise standards and improve the curriculum. However, the subject co-ordinators role in monitoring quality in teaching and disseminating good practice is underdeveloped at present. As a result opportunities to share good practice and for teachers to learn from each other are missed.

38 The management of special educational needs is very effective. The close family atmosphere in the school ensures that the specific needs of each pupil are effectively met and this enables pupils to achieve well. Specialist teachers from the local authority inclusion and school improvement service very effectively support pupils who speak English as an additional language. Each pupil, for example, has a clearly written individual education plan with specific targets. Very good relationships have been established with these pupils, most of whom speak French or Japanese as their first language. Hearing impaired pupils also benefit from very well planned support. Individual education plans are of a high quality being written in the first person for every pupil on the register for those with special educational needs. This gives pupils ownership of the targets they say that they will tackle. All the targets are detailed and practical and often include input from appropriate outside agencies. Monitoring and review includes parents and carers and is thorough and regular. The special needs of pupils who have a special gift or talent are also well documented and provided for by teachers. In a physical education session, for example, pupils with special talents were called upon to demonstrate for other pupils.

39 Over half the governors have changed in the past two years. All governors are very supportive, know the school well and many visit regularly. They are conscious of the difficulties faced by the school and keen to take a more proactive role. Due to the unsettled period and change, none of the governors have been able to benefit from training in performance management procedures. All appreciate the importance of regular and thorough evaluations of all aspects of the school and training has been arranged for December. The financial expertise of some governors is used effectively to allocate budgets and check carefully that the best value is being obtained from all expenditure.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	312,593	Balance from previous year	3,283
Total expenditure	309,310	Balance carried forward to the next	6,566
Expenditure per pupil	3,188		

40 Inevitably, the cost of educating pupils at this school is higher than average because of the relatively small number attending. Given the high standards and good level of achievement for all pupils, the successful improvement of potential barriers caused by the quality of teaching and the curriculum, along with the very effective new leadership and management, the school is providing good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41 Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. Children achieve well from a good starting point and make rapid progress in all areas of learning. Most achieve the targets set for them well before the end of the Foundation Stage. There is a very strong drive for learning in the Foundation Stage and this is one of the many reasons why children are achieving so well. Teaching is very good in all areas of learning. All staff have very high expectations and they provide a very good and imaginative curriculum, which meets children's needs extremely well. All children are supported very well. Very good leadership and management have ensured there are very good procedures in planning, monitoring and assessment. Assessments are used very well to plan work at the correct level for all children, including those with special educational needs. The accommodation is very good and good resources provide children with an exciting place in which to learn.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because staff understand the needs of children very well.
- Very good relationships between children and adults create an atmosphere of highly effective learning.

Commentary

42 In personal, social and emotional development teaching and learning are very good and children achieve well in this aspect of their education. Although they have only been in school for a short time they are already well on the way to reach the targets set for them in the Foundation Stage. The very good relationships between all the adults working with children set an excellent example. Consequently, children learn to take turns and share resources. The staff work very well together to maintain consistently very high expectations of children. All adults give very good encouragement to children which means that children readily join in activities. For example, in a short session of imaginative play, children drove "Santa's Sleigh" and one talked about being Rudolf pulling the sleigh. Behaviour is very good in a range of situations. Children know the routines and keep to them; they behave very sensibly and become more independent. For example, children enter in the morning and hang up their coats before sitting on the carpet waiting to start the morning session. Children of all abilities respond very well and find their work enjoyable because it is pitched at the correct level to provide interesting challenges. Examples of children's previous work shows a very good range of activities that promote their personal development, for example, they show respect for other faiths and their clay pots and candles form part of a display on Diwali.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are plenty of opportunities for children to learn to write through stimulating activities.
- Teaching extends children's language very well.
- Children's listening is very well promoted.

Commentary

43 In all activities, there are very good opportunities for children to develop their language skills. All children achieve well and they are already well on the way to meet the targets of the

Foundation Stage curriculum. Skills in literacy and language are developed systematically through carefully planned activities. Children are encouraged to become aware of the importance of the skills of reading and writing through very well planned focused activities. For example, in a very good introduction to a lesson, the teacher focussed on the letter “s” and reinforced the sound it made by letting children choose an object from a bag that began with the letter. As the teacher read out the words children placed their object in the middle of the circle after saying the word themselves. Through various activities, children are already writing words and a number write their own name correctly. There are very good opportunities for children to use their language skills. For example, they write their own name on the sheet when they go into the outdoor area. Children are given many opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills through purposeful and imaginative play, such as “Santa’s Sleigh” and through responding to stories and repeating rhymes. There are plenty of opportunities for children to share books throughout the day and one day a week a parent volunteer listens to all children read or talk about their books. They enjoy looking at the attractive books in the classrooms. Children enjoy listening to the teacher reading to them and they quickly remember repeating words or phrases. Their learning is fun and highly effective. There are plenty of opportunities for language development to flourish, however, occasionally lessons are too structured and there are too few chances for children to develop their independent skills by choosing their own activity.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve well because teaching is of a high standard and places a strong emphasis on learning through practical activities.
- Mathematical skills are put to very good use across many areas of learning.
- Teaching assistants provide very good support for all activities.

Commentary

44 The high quality teaching of practical activities helps children to achieve well and many are well on the way to achieving their goals. Many mathematical activities are of a practical nature and, together with the good resources, support children’s learning well. This is because of the strong emphasis placed on developing not only number skills but also the use of opportunities in other areas of learning to promote and develop mathematical links. For example, in a very good session using computers, children used the mouse to move a figure on the screen up ladders and down snakes to find the correct number. Adults stress mathematical language right from the start so that children use this when they talk about their ideas. For example, in a very good lesson developing their number skills, children selected the correct number of features to place on a bear’s face and talked enthusiastically about how many eyes there would be if there were three bears. This idea of grouping was reinforced very well by teaching assistants when children were taught to use the language of “more than” or “less than” when talking about how they were making sandwiches. Very good links are made with literacy when children sing number rhymes and they learn to count up to and count back from a given number in the songs.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve well because teachers have very high expectations and a very good knowledge in this area of learning.
- Teaching is very good and provides children with countless opportunities to learn about the world around them.

Commentary

45 Teaching and learning are very good and help to ensure that all children achieve well. Children are provided with a wealth of opportunities to learn about their world. The outdoor area is a very good resource and the teacher ensures that it is used daily to allow children to find out about the weather, collect insects or use the sand tray to find hidden treasure. All enjoy using the puppet theatre for imaginative play. Practical activities help many children to reach the levels above those expected for their age and this represents good achievement so early in the year. The imaginative activities are provided daily, for example, children made porridge and sandwiches for the bears' breakfast, spreading the contents carefully, they excitedly created a feast. The honey and crisp sandwich went down particularly well. In religious education, the children celebrate many of the important festivals of the world, by dressing up at Christmas and listening to stories in assemblies. Children explore the properties of different materials and this work is displayed well to show how they described the feel of each material. Computers are used regularly. At first, children need a lot of adult help but many are already using simple programs independently and they move the mouse confidently to make pictures, patterns and find numbers on the screen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The large hall provides plenty of space for children to develop their physical skills and improve their control and co-ordination.
- Children benefit considerably from being able to use large climbing apparatus each day.
- The teacher plans a wide range of activities that develop physical skills alongside other learning.

Commentary

46 Most children are well on the way to developing the physical skills expected well before the end of the Foundation Stage and this is good achievement. Children use the well resourced hall to develop their sense of space and they move with control and co-ordination. For example, in a very good lesson in the hall, the children helped to move the equipment and they used their imaginations very well to climb over, under and along boxes and benches as they went on a bear hunt. During these sessions, children use climbing and other equipment very well to develop their body control. In this lesson, children knew the importance of warming up and used different ways of moving well as they walked, ran, jumped and skipped round the hall. Many have good awareness of space and work hard to avoid collisions. The use of scissors, paint brushes, pencils and other tools is a daily activity and provides children with many opportunities to develop their physical skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve well because teaching and learning are very good.
- Children are provided with a vibrant range of activities that enrich their learning.

Commentary

47 The teacher plans a wide range of stimulating activities and, with very good teaching and high levels of support, the children achieve particularly well with many attaining above the levels expected for their age. Children learn important skills when they first start school and, therefore, the direct teaching of specific skills is the focus of many activities, along with very good opportunities for play. They are taught the skills needed to mix paint and use brushes to express their ideas in

imaginative paintings. For example, they created imaginative pictures to show the swirls and patterns made by fireworks. They quickly learn how to use clay to make models of a bear and they proudly explain how they made the arms, legs and other physical features. They listen to music and use instruments to make their own simple compositions. For example, in a good session using music as the focus, children showed their own response as the teacher encouraged them to play their instruments as the bear moved through various scenes on his travels. As in other areas, because of the very good support by teaching assistants, there are many opportunities for staff to talk with children as they play in order to extend vocabulary and ideas.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall standards are well above average in Year 6;
- The quality of teaching for Year 5 and 6 is very good, enabling pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils in years 1 to 4 are not provided with sufficient opportunities to write in English.
- The untidiness of pupils written work detracts from the quality of it.

Commentary

48 The relatively small number of pupils taking national tests each year and significant mobility of pupils makes comparisons with national and local trends problematic. Inspection evidence shows that standards are well above average in Year 6 and above average in Year 2. Consequently, pupils' achievement overall is good in Year 6 and satisfactory in Year 2.

49 Improved leadership and management and better teaching has helped to remedy the underachievement, found by the local education authority when individual pupils test results were analysed. In the detailed scrutiny of pupils completed work and in lesson observations, there was no evidence of underachievement amongst the eight pupils currently in Year 2 and eight in Year 6. Five of the eight pupils in Year 6 are on track to achieve the higher Level 5.

50 The new headteacher made improving the quality of the curriculum and teaching key priorities and teachers, under his very effective leadership have worked effectively as a team to bring about improvements. Work is now well planned for the mixed age groups and for pupils with special educational needs. The infant pupils demonstrate a good vocabulary during class discussions about cameo scenes to illustrate stories they have heard, for example. However, these often go on for too long and this leaves insufficient time for pupils to complete any written tasks. The amount of work produced so far this term was less than expected and much of it was very untidy. Pupils show a good understanding of sentence structure and punctuation when writing simple stories, descriptions and factual accounts. The junior pupils produce a variety of different types of writing, often using computers for this. However, their handwriting is also untidy and completed work shows a lack of pride or care. The poor presentation detracts from the quality of work in English. All pupils have half termly targets for English and these are clearly displayed in pupil's exercise books. Parents know what these targets are and support their children's learning very well. Individual pupils' progress is closely monitored to make sure that every pupil achieves as well as can reasonably be expected.

51 Pupils are given many opportunities to read individually and together. There are regular and effective sessions to learn letter sounds for infant pupils and the small numbers in the class results in every pupil receiving a great deal of individual help, practice and instruction in reading. All pupils quickly develop an interest in books of all types and most become confident and enthusiastic readers by the age of seven. Their teachers encourage them to use their good communication skills to discuss literature and share their opinions. This enjoyment and appreciation of books carries on throughout the junior years and pupils' skills continue to develop well. They record details of their reading and their views on it in lively book reviews. The culture of reading is strong and well supported by good classroom resources and a particularly well stocked library. The school works hard to encourage pupils to take books home and to involve parents and carers in their children's reading. In the Year 5 and 6 classes, there are only three girls with none in Year 6. To maintain boys interest in particular, books and topics are carefully chosen. Many cover topics such as football and sport. In one lesson on writing a biography, a book about a celebrity footballer was used as an example before attempting to write about famous Victorians such as Dr Barnardo. Boy's attention was guaranteed and the girls were also interested!

52 Standards of teaching are good overall. Lessons are well planned and take into account the needs of every pupil. Work is marked well with positive comment and areas for development. Special educational needs pupils and higher attainers are well provided for and challenged. In the infant class, the teacher and teaching assistant work closely together and use a variety of successful strategies to bring out the best in their pupils. The classroom atmosphere is a busy one and there is a warm and trusting relationship between pupils and adults. This has particular benefits for the quality of speaking and listening. Even though a number of pupils speak English as an additional language or have difficulty with hearing properly, all take a confident part in discussion and standards are generally high. This continues in the junior class with pupils involved in long discussions about their work. They are happy to test out ideas and listen well to the contributions of their teacher and classmates. However, this leaves insufficient time to complete written work or for pupils to have the time to take the time to produce neat work. Too much is hurried and untidily written.

53 The headteacher is currently undertaking all the monitoring of the quality of teaching in this and all subjects until he is confident that teachers have an acceptably high standard themselves to make reliable judgements about their own and colleagues teaching. As a result, the monitoring role of the subject co-ordinator has not yet been established. Assessment and monitoring of pupils work and the standards achieved is thorough and rigorous and the new tracking system developed with the local education authority is already having a positive impact, helping to set realistic targets and to eliminate underachievement. There is very good communication between home and school and parents support for their children's learning is appreciated by the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54 The development of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory, overall. Insufficient opportunities are planned for pupils to use their literacy skills in religious education, history or geography, particularly in Years 1 to 4. As a result, the amount of work produced in these subjects this term was limited. However, in the Year 5 and 6 classes, pupils are provided with good opportunities to write in a range of subjects. In history, for example, pupils produce a diary of a day in the life of a Victorian child worker. Pupils demonstrate above average literacy skills as they confidently use computers for word processing and for research in subjects such as history, geography and science. Year 3 and 4 pupils, for example, found out about the functions of the heart and about DNA. They had a good command of the correct terminology and names for the different parts of the human heart. The scrutiny of work for all subjects for all pupils showed that the quality of their handwriting is below the standard expected. This lack of care detracts from the quality of some very good pieces of written work in any subject.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well by Year 6 due to well matched and challenging activities.
- New learning targets are effectively shared with pupils so that they are aware of what they are supposed to know and do by the end of the lesson.
- Teachers know individual pupils well and ensure that suitable work is planned to meet their different needs.
- The co-ordinator is not yet monitoring teaching and learning and so opportunities for sharing elements of good practice with colleagues is limited.

Commentary

55 The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. For the current pupils in Year 2 or Year 6, there are no significant differences in the achievements of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs and those that are gifted or talented achieve well by Year 6. Pupils

achieve well because they work hard, the teaching is often good and lessons are well planned. For example, teachers plan appropriate activities for the full ability range in each class by setting work at different levels. This ensures pupils understand what they are doing and make good progress. Higher attaining pupils achieve well because teachers set different tasks for them at suitably challenging levels. New learning targets are shared with pupils so that they are aware of what they are supposed to know and do by the end of the lesson. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and this motivates pupils to achieve well and to focus on the tasks set.

56 Pupils in Years 2 and 6 have had their education disrupted by staff changes and absence in the past and this adversely affected their National Curriculum test results in 2004. The recent appointment of a new headteacher is already beginning to have a positive impact on their achievements. Pupils' achievements in Year 6 are good because of the very good teaching for these older pupils. Although the number of pupils taking the National Curriculum tests is relatively small, there has been analysis of test results to find out which areas of mathematics need improving. Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, receive good support from class teachers and teaching assistants.

57 Staff know their pupils well and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour which encourages the good attitudes pupils have to the subject. For example, pupils in Year 1 build on the positive start they have in the Foundation Stage through a range of practically based activities. They are keen to count, add and subtract with increasing accuracy. There is good emphasis on the teaching of basic number skills. For example, in Year 2, pupils use number lines to help them subtract numbers. Their previous work shows that they identify and name basic fractions when showing the time on clocks as $\frac{1}{4}$ to or $\frac{1}{2}$ past the hour. In a good lesson in Year 6, pupils showed good attitudes as they worked diligently with numbers and computers to change kilometres to miles when solving problems. Pupils create graphs from information they have gathered and interpret the data correctly. Pupils tackle problems that involve fractions and use the knowledge well when converting fractions to decimals and percentages.

58 Leadership and management of this subject are good. Unlike other subjects, mathematics has benefited from the same subject leader being in post for a number of years. Discussions show that staff work closely together and frequently discuss pupils' progress in the subject. The co-ordinator has completed observations of teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' work, however, the co-ordinator has not yet observed teaching and learning in other classes with a view to sharing good practice. This is intended during the coming year as part of the improvement plan devised by the newly appointed headteacher. Guidance for teachers follows the numeracy strategy closely. Assessment is good and individual targets are set for pupils. As a result, they know how well they are achieving and what they must do next to improve further. The high profile of mathematics in the school has resulted in improved provision for mathematics since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59 Mathematics is used well in a variety of ways across the curriculum and this enables pupils to make progress in other subjects. For example, pupils measure and record temperatures in science, draw plans in geography and collect data in a variety of subjects. There are good opportunities and a range of mathematical programs for pupils to use ICT to further enhance their mathematical skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are well above those expected for pupils of this age.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those in the hearing impaired unit are very good.

- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to conduct investigations or scientific experiments.
- Pupils' written work is not neat enough.

Commentary

60 The level of improvement since the previous inspection has been good with overall standards being maintained at well above average in Year 6 and improved from average to above average in Year 2. A scrutiny of pupils completed work and observations in three lessons shows pupils have more opportunities to conduct experiments and scientific investigations for themselves. This was identified as a weakness previously. Assessment records show pupils level of achievement in Year 2 is satisfactory. In Year 6 it is good. Out of the eight pupils in Year 6, for example, all are expected to achieve the expected standard and five are on course to achieve the higher Level 5 in the national tests for 11 year-olds. All pupils with special educational needs, which includes those from the hearing impaired unit and the few who speak English as an additional language achieve well in science because of the quality of the support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants.

61 The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. Teachers throughout have a good subject knowledge and plan work carefully over a two year cycle to take account of the mixed age groups in each class. All make good use of teaching assistants and specialist teachers of the deaf or English as an additional language. Equality of opportunity is promoted well for all pupils. However, the overall quality of teaching varies from satisfactory in Years 1 to 4 to consistently good in Years 5 and 6. In the lessons seen, there was a strong emphasis on pupils finding out for themselves. All eight pupils in Year 6 are boys and the teacher successfully engaged them in an investigation into air resistance, weighing the air in a balloon. All demonstrated a very good level of understanding of air and its properties and enjoyed constructing different paper aeroplanes to test air resistance. The only weakness in the lesson was in the quality of pupils written work. It was very untidy and showed a lack of care or pride. The same weakness was shown in Year 3 and 4 as pupils completed their writing in the short session before lunch on the effects of exercise on the body. Some used pencil and others a variety of pens. Higher attaining pupils in this class used computers effectively to research information about DNA and muscles.

62 Infant pupils conducted a survey into their favourite fruits and this entailed them using their skills from literacy, numeracy and computing to record their methods and conclusions. Literacy skills, particularly speaking and listening were used well and the teacher was quick to praise pupils who used correct terminology or information from a previous investigation where pupils sense of smell, sight and taste were used to classify various fruits. The new interactive whiteboard was used effectively by the teacher to show how to produce a block graph. However, insufficient time was allowed for pupils to produce their own record of what they had learnt. Pupils' excitement in this lesson occasionally led to noise levels becoming unacceptably high, spoiling the concentration of many pupils. The scrutiny of completed work from this class was limited with very little written work. Most of this was very untidy.

63 The co-ordinator has a clear action plan for improving different aspects of the subject. Teachers' planning is closely monitored by the subject co-ordinator, ensuring that the curriculum meets statutory requirements. There are satisfactory procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress and all test results are analysed in depth. However, procedures to monitor the effectiveness of teaching are in their infancy. The only involvement the co-ordinator has in this aspect at present is to review the quality of pupils completed work periodically. All classroom monitoring visits are currently being undertaken by the new headteacher, in an attempt to quickly identify strengths and weaknesses and eliminate the variability in the quality of teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good resources.
- Pupils' attitudes and relationships are good.
- Pupils in Year 6 use computers confidently to find information on the Internet and to support their work in other subjects.

Commentary

64 Pupils' attainment by Years 2 and 6 in ICT is in line with the level expected for their age. Their achievement is satisfactory. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and many pupils use computers confidently. For example, pupils in a Year 2 lesson improved their knowledge of how to tell the time and the teacher used an interactive whiteboard effectively to demonstrate how to compare recording time using the digital and analogue systems. Pupils were keen to use the whiteboard and were excited when they answered the questions set using information on the screen.

65 Pupils in Year 2 explain how they save their work and how to print the finished product. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes are good and they talk enthusiastically about using the ICT suite. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 lesson, pupils confidently used a program to solve mathematical problems using money as they counted on from a given amount to show on the screen the coins they needed to make the cost up to one pound. Older pupils are confident using ICT and explain how to create a presentation using a "hot link" to move quickly from one page of their multi media presentation to another. Pupils add sound to their work, for example, a pupil used the sounds animals make and these were produced when the picture was clicked on. Pupils often work in pairs on the computers and co-operate and share ideas very well. For example, when writing stories they make valid suggestions to each other on the use of interesting language and discuss which pictures to use to illustrate the story.

66 The leadership and management of the subject are good because the co-ordinator knows the strengths of the subject by teaching all classes in the school. There is clear guidance for the subject that teachers follow and a well developed improvement plan. This plan shows the detailed continuing improvement intended and the appropriate training for staff as new initiatives are started. In addition, the co-ordinator ensures that all teachers use the interactive whiteboards in many lessons which enhances teaching and pupils' understanding of the use of ICT considerably.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67 In some subjects, there is good use of ICT to enhance pupils' work. For example, pupils in Year 6 used the Internet for research into their historical studies of Dr Barnardo. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 show the good use of computers to enhance their mathematical studies when collecting data and producing graphs of the results. The school is making good progress in developing the use of ICT in all subjects of the curriculum. Discussions with pupils across the school show they understand how computers can help them in many aspects of their school life, for example, creating graphs in mathematics, using the e-mail facility to improve their language work and recording the results of experiments in science.

HUMANITIES

68 Too few lessons were seen in history or geography to make a judgement about provision in these subjects.

69 In **geography**, teachers use the latest curriculum guidance to help ensure that statutory requirements are met. A scrutiny of pupils completed work and displays of topic work around the

school show that teachers plan a satisfactory range of topics over a two year cycle, covering the time pupils spend in each of the mixed age classes. This means that pupils do not have to repeat topics in class. Infant pupils study the local area as part of their topic about houses, comparing features on old and new houses. This effectively links with history as they gain an understanding of the past. They make satisfactory use of computers to record work or conduct research about places of interest. However, the amount of written work produced is minimal and often untidy. Years 3 and 4 showed in a discussion that lasted for the whole of a session that they have a sound grasp of the similarities and differences between a town in India and Wilmslow. There was no written task for them to do and by the end of this unsatisfactory lesson, well over half had lost interest. Girls played with one another's hair and boys chatted. Pupils in this class have produced very little written work in geography this term. In Year 5 and 6, pupils' geographical studies are approached through local and international news stories. Pupils follow up news stories and research information from the Internet to put these into a geographical context. From the limited evidence available, standards in Year 6 appear to be typical of those expected for pupils of this age. Topics such as Conservation, Pollution, The Weather and a village survey comparing one in India to their own show the breadth of the curriculum provided.

70 In **history**, there was a shortage of work to examine in Years 1 to 4. The infant class topic on houses and a trip to a museum had produced very little written work. However, teachers' planning shows that the subject is satisfactorily covered by topics over the two years that pupils remain in the class. Lower junior pupils are studying the Tudors, but they too have only a minimal amount of written work in their exercise books and it is also untidily presented. The current topic in Year 5 and 6 is the Victorians. All pupils have a good understanding of the lifestyle of rich and poor people in this era and attractive displays of photographs in the classroom comparing then and now add interest for pupils. In their topic, effective use is made of their literacy, mathematical and computing skills. However, the handwriting of all eight boys in Year 6 is untidy! Pupils use computers to write imaginative accounts about the daily lives of Victorian children as if they were there and analyse population figures to appreciate the dawning of the industrial revolution. All competently research facts from the Internet about famous Victorians such as Lord Shaftesbury and Dr Barnardo.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions.
- Good use is made of a teacher with specialist knowledge in religious education.
- Assemblies make a significant contribution to pupils learning.
- The amount and quality of pupils' written work in Years 1 to 4 is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

71 Although only one lesson was seen, a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that standards and achievement are broadly average. The weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have largely been overcome. Religious education as a subject has much more prominence on the school curriculum and is taught to most classes by a teacher with a recognised expertise in the subject. In addition to this, assemblies are well planned and often reinforce pupils learning on religious ceremonies associated with Christianity and other world religions such as Islam and Judaism. Topics are sensibly organised on a two year cycle to take account of the two years pupils spend in each of the classes.

72 Teaching is satisfactory, overall in the junior classes but there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in the infant class. Teachers use the latest curriculum guidance when planning lessons and have successfully integrated the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, ensuring that statutory requirements are met. Pupils study the major religions of the world and during the inspection, Year 5 and 6 pupils demonstrated a sound knowledge of the Muslim faith. They

displayed a lively interest and there was some useful discussion as they attempted to translate the Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammed into everyday language. Defining 'malice' in the saying, 'Give gifts to one another because gifts take away malice' meant that pupils had to draw on their literacy skills. Some were quick to reach for a dictionary!

73 The neatness and presentation of pupils written work in Year 5 and 6 as well as the other infant and junior classes is unsatisfactory. The quality of most pupils' handwriting in their exercise books is unsatisfactory and does not reflect the above average content of their work. Moreover, in Years 1 to 4, the amount of work completed in pupils' books was sparse. In discussions with pupils, they demonstrate a sound knowledge about the features of different places of worship and enjoy taking part in discussions about moral issues such as honesty, which was the assembly theme for the week. However, teachers are not providing pupils with sufficient opportunities to write in lessons. As a result, details about other faiths are not recorded and not always remembered.

74 Curriculum planning is satisfactory and includes the opportunities for pupils to visit the local church and to meet visitors from a variety of faiths. Positive moral and social messages are constantly presented in lessons and in assemblies. Subject management is satisfactory, overall. However, the subject co-ordinator's role in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning is under-developed at present. The strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers have not been properly evaluated and as they leave the teaching of this subject to the one teacher with specialist knowledge whilst they teach her class, there is no opportunity for them to improve the quality of their teaching in religious education.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75 The only subject from this section to feature in the previous short inspection report was design and technology because of weaknesses in curriculum provision. Since then teachers are guided by the latest curriculum guidance. Two lessons were seen in art and design, one in design and technology and none in music. In physical education, only three lessons were seen but one of these was taken by a visiting Lacrosse coach. It is not therefore possible to make firm judgements about overall provision in any of these subjects. The subject expertise of teachers is used in design and technology and a music specialist comes in regularly and teaches all the pupils. Inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work, examined teachers' planning and spoke to pupils about what they had learned in the subjects.

76 There were some good examples of younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 using different materials to create firework pictures in **art and design**. In addition, they worked with children in the reception class to mould clay as pots for candles in a display for the Diwali festival. Pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class linked their work to history when they studied portraits of Henry VIII. They watched, fascinated, as the teacher drew the face on the whiteboard then followed instructions well when starting their own picture, because they used their pencils very lightly to make any future changes easier. Older pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class study famous artists such as Monet, Picasso and Lowry and create their own observational drawings in the style of Monet. In one imaginative session, pupils compared still life paintings of famous artists with their own work. They discussed the artists' use of contrast, the media used and whether the pictures had texture.

77 There were displays in the Year 1 and 2 class of pupils' work in **design and technology** when they wrote instructions for making a cup of tea or a pizza. The pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class know safe practices and ensure that hands are clean before they make chocolate chip cookies. The pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class develop this kind of work well when they design their own bread. Pupils benefit from the expertise of the co-ordinator who takes each class for design and technology each week. Discussions with older pupils show they understand how to use tools carefully and select a range of materials to make examples of model cars.

78 In **music**, pupils listen to famous composers, such as Mozart, when entering the hall and they sing well in assemblies. The use of a visiting specialist enhances the subject and in singing practice, pupils quickly learned a new song and followed the rhythm and melody well. There was no other evidence of music during the inspection.

79 The range of opportunities for pupils in **physical education** is good. However, due to timetabling arrangements there was insufficient time to evaluate these thoroughly. Teachers' planning shows all aspects of the curriculum are covered throughout the year and in addition, pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities. The school also uses the expertise of visiting coaches to enrich the curriculum. A national coach for Lacrosse taught pick-up, catching and throwing skills to Years 3 and 4 and older pupils enjoyed meeting professional footballers from Manchester United. During the year, swimming tuition is provided and all junior pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit where adventurous activities such as water sports and orienteering can be tried. The three girls in the Year 5 and 6 class enjoyed playing tag rugby on the playing field and all pupils quickly mastered the principles of marking one another. In this particular lesson, the teacher used pupils with a particular gift or talent in sport to very effectively demonstrate skills to other pupils. In the satisfactory gymnastics lesson with Year 1 and 2 pupils, pupils were asked to describe one another's sequences rather than say how each one demonstrated could be improved. Achievement in this lesson was satisfactory and all pupils demonstrated standards, which were in line with those expected for the age of pupils. Pupils benefit from the spacious hard play areas and a very large field with space for at least two full size football pitches.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

80 Too few lessons were seen in PHSCE to make a judgement about provision.

81 Parents at the meeting prior to the inspection were full of praise for the way the school helps pupils to develop both socially and academically. They appreciate the school's efforts to turn out well-rounded pupils and the lack of pressure to only do well in the core subjects in order to move the school up the local league tables. They see both the advantages of having relatively small numbers at the school where individual pupils needs can be addressed effectively within a close and friendly relationship with each of the staff members. Carefully formulated policies and detailed planning shows that the school places much importance to promoting pupils' personal and social skills and their awareness of citizenship. In a citizenship lesson observed in Year 5 and 6, pupils readily contributed to a discussion about the role of parliament and MPs. The very good links with parents and good links with the local community provide other opportunities, which further enhance the quality of provision. Initiatives such as the school's pupil council and class councils further enhance pupils sense of responsibility. Through this, pupils' views can be heard and they are encouraged to play their part in the day-to-day organisation of the school. Those helping in the dining hall, for example take their jobs seriously.

82 Clear policies exist for the promotion of pupils' awareness about racial equality, drugs and for their sex education and relationships. The school is very good at teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe and well; for example, all are taught about the benefits of a healthy diet and lifestyle. School assemblies are well planned and provide pupils with time to reflect on a range of issues such as caring for one another or honesty. They make a significant contribution to pupils' moral and social development.

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

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