

INSPECTION REPORT

BARLEY MOW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Barley Mow, Birtley, Chester-le-Street

LEA area: Gateshead

Unique reference number: 108373

Headteacher: Mr D.Hewitson

Lead inspector: Dr J.N.Thorp

Dates of inspection: 29th September – 2nd October 2003

Inspection number: 255427

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:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	241
School address:	Pembroke Avenue Barley Mow Birtley Chester-le-Street
Postcode:	DH3 2DJ
Telephone number:	0191 410 2758
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor N.Weatherley
Date of previous inspection:	July 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Barley Mow Primary School is located in the Barley Mow district of Birtley. The present primary school is an amalgamation of the former separate infant and junior schools. It also includes a nursery. The school serves a fairly wide area; while most children come from the surrounding estate there are also a number who are bussed to the school from some distance away. There are currently 224 pupils on roll, the vast majority of whom are white, organised into seven classes and a nursery. There is some mobility of pupils, with 14 joining the school other than the usual time of first admission last year and 10 leaving. The area around the school is very mixed and there are variations in attainment on entry, but overall it is well below average. There are 46 (21%) pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, which is broadly average compared with schools nationally. Most of these pupils have learning difficulties. A very small number of children speak English as an additional language. The school achieved the Healthy Schools Award in 2002 and 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6327	Dr J.N.Thorp	Lead inspector	English; English as an additional language; information and communication technology; history; music
13462	Mrs R.Mothersdale	Lay inspector	
16971	Mr R.W.Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematics; science; design and technology; physical education
17877	Mrs C.Ingham	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage; art and design; geography; religious education; special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school. The good leadership of the new headteacher is already having a positive impact and the changes he has introduced are now enabling the school to improve more rapidly. Teaching is better than it was; while it is satisfactory overall it is particularly good in the nursery and in Year 5. Throughout the school pupils' achievement is good; pupils do well to reach expected standards in most subjects. The school's strengths outweigh any weaknesses identified, although standards are not yet high enough in mathematics and writing. The school provides **satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- ? The headteacher provides good leadership, with a firm commitment to improvement
- ? Standards in mathematics and writing are not high enough
- ? Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) too slowly; all pupils have too few opportunities to use the computers in other subjects
- ? Provision for children in reception is good and in the nursery it is very good
- ? Pupils are not always sufficiently clear how to improve their work
- ? Time is not used as effectively as it could be; some lessons are too long
- ? Individual co-ordinators are not yet making an effective contribution to subject leadership
- ? Very good opportunities are created to enrich the curriculum

There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The school's curriculum for religious education is now fully in line with the local agreed syllabus and pupils achieve average standards. There is now appropriate provision for pupils' spiritual development. There has been a significant improvement in standards in ICT in Year 3 to 6, boosted by further staff training and substantial improvement in resources. The majority of parents have positive, and pupils very positive, views about the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	D	D	A
Mathematics	D	E	C	A
Science	D	E	E	A

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

Achievement is good throughout the school. Children start school with well below average overall attainment. They achieve well and a minority attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2, with pupils doing well to reach expected standards in reading and mathematics. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 3 to 6, although standards in writing and in mathematics remain below average by the end of Year 6. Work seen indicates that standards are in line with those expected in most other subjects. Standards are higher in science than indicated in the results of statutory assessment in 2003.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good throughout the school. Relationships are very good and behaviour is good. Attendance is satisfactory overall, but there are a few pupils who are not as punctual as they should be.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although it is very good in the nursery and in Year 5. In some lessons teachers make insufficient use of assessment to help them match work accurately to what pupils already know. Teachers generally provide too little guidance for pupils on how to improve their work. Teachers manage behaviour very well and have good relationships with their pupils, which helps them promote positive attitudes to learning.

High levels of care, guidance and support ensure that pupils' varied personal needs are identified and met. The **curriculum is satisfactory** overall, but teachers make insufficient use of computers to support teaching and learning in other subjects. The school provides a **very good range of activities to enrich the curriculum**. Pupils are increasingly involved in the school and a School Council is planned. The school has satisfactory links with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall **leadership and management are satisfactory**. The **headteacher provides good leadership**, with a firm focus on ensuring the school continues to improve. **Management is satisfactory**, but subject co-ordinators are not yet contributing effectively to managing the curriculum.

The school's strategic planning for further development is good and there is an exciting vision for the creation of a real community school. **The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily**, making an appropriate contribution to the management of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The **majority of parents have a positive view** of the school. They are pleased with the progress their children make, believing that teachers expect their children to work hard and do their best. A significant number of parents indicate they receive insufficient information about how well their children are getting on. Some parents are also concerned about bullying. **Pupils have positive views** about school. They enjoy coming to school and most feel that their teachers are very good. They are very enthusiastic about the proposed School Council. Very few pupils have any concerns about bullying, but they indicated that behaviour at lunchtimes could be better.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ? Raise standards in writing and mathematics
- ? Improve the rate at which younger pupils develop their skills in ICT
- ? Extend the opportunities all pupils have to work with the computers
- ? Provide more information so pupils understand how they can improve their work
- ? Revise the time available for some lessons, ensuring it is appropriate for pupils of different ages
- ? Develop the roles of the curriculum co-ordinators

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall pupils' achievement is **good**. Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage, even though a minority attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Achievement is good in Years 1 to 6, particularly in reading, science, ICT and religious education, in which pupils do well to attain average standards by the time they leave the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Pupils achieve well in reading and do well to reach average standards by the end of Year 6
- ? Standards in writing are below average throughout the school
- ? Standards in mathematics are not high enough
- ? Pupils achieve well in ICT, but standards are lower than expected by the end of Year 2

Commentary

1. Children enter the school with wide ranging levels of attainment, but attainment is broadly well below average overall. Young children's spoken language and their understanding of number are particularly poor. They make a good start to their time in school in the nursery and achieve well. This good achievement continues through reception, but by the time they enter Year 1, many have not achieved the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in each area of learning other than personal, social and emotional development and physical development. The very good provision made for these children contributes most positively to the good start they make to their education.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.7 (15.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.9 (14.4)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	15.3 (15.3)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. This table shows that standards in 2002 were broadly average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. Test results in that year indicated that while a higher than average proportion of pupils achieved the expected Level 2, fewer than average achieved the higher levels. Similarly in writing and mathematics, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was broadly average, but there were fewer than average doing better than this. There was some improvement in both reading and writing over the previous two years, although this was not sustained in 2003. Standards in mathematics have been consistently below the national average over the past four years.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (24.5)	27 (27)
Mathematics	25.6 (26.1)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	27.2 (27.9)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. This table indicates that standards in 2002 were below average in English, mathematics and science. More detailed results also indicate that pupils did significantly better in reading than they did in writing. Although there had been a significant improvement in English since the previous year, this was not sustained in 2003. Standards in mathematics were consistently below average over the previous four years, but there was a slight improvement in 2003. In both English and mathematics, however, a significantly fewer than average number of pupils achieved the higher Level 5. Standards indicated in science tests appear below average, but inspection evidence suggests that standards are higher than this.
4. Pupils achieve well in reading throughout the school because they are well taught. Standards are consistently much better than they are in writing across the school. By the end of Year 2 pupils read appropriate texts accurately, with higher attainers able to use good expression to help them communicate meaning. By the end of Year 6 most pupils read fluently and expressively. Many have developed clear preferences and can discuss their favourite books. Work seen during the inspection indicates that pupils achieve less well in writing, which is below average in standard throughout the school.
5. Pupils make good progress in mathematics through Years 1 and 2. Their learning is good and they almost reach expected standards. This represents good achievement. Progress is not so good through Years 3 to 6 and, although achievement is satisfactory, pupils attain standards below those expected nationally by the end of Year 6. While there has been some improvement recently, standards are not yet high enough.
6. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in science and standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. This is because teaching is good and pupils enjoy their lessons. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make good progress and do well to achieve standards which are close to average. Although the results of statutory assessment in 2003 indicated that they were well below average by the end of Year 6, work seen indicates that standards are better than this. Pupils who are currently in Year 6 are on course to reach standards around the national average. This represents good achievement.
7. Pupils' learning and achievement in ICT are good. Pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2, although by the end of Year 2 their attainment is below average. They continue to make good progress in developing their skills and by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average. Very effective subject leadership has contributed positively to major improvements in provision since the previous inspection. Teaching is also much better, so that it is now satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Further training has enabled teachers to develop their skills and so they are much more confident in teaching the necessary skills, especially in Years 3 to 6. Both of these factors are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement and the standards that they now reach.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are good. Attendance is satisfactory. A few pupils are not as punctual as they could be, although this has improved over the previous school year. Overall pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and reflects their keenness to take part in a wide range of activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Procedures to promote attendance and improve punctuality are good, resulting in considerable improvement over the last school year
- ? Pupils' behaviour is good
- ? Pupils think behaviour in the dining room could be better
- ? The school's assertive discipline strategy has been successfully introduced
- ? Pupils are interested in their work and activities and work well together
- ? Good opportunities are provided for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5	School data	0.6
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

8. Good strategies are in place to check on and improve attendance and punctuality, which have improved dramatically over the last school year. There are close links to the education welfare service and the school liaises regularly with the health adviser to follow up cases of absence that are linked to illness. The school rewards good attendance amongst pupils and regularly requests parents not to take their children on holiday in term time so their learning is not disrupted. Pupils who come to school by bus from out of the catchment area are punctual.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	230	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	26	0	0

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

9. Pupils behave well in school. They have helped to create *Our School Rules* that define the different sets of rules for playground, dining room and classrooms within the school's recently introduced assertive discipline strategy. Younger pupils benefit from the imaginative use of photographs to illustrate these rules. Around the school pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors, and at lunch and break time pupils play well together. However, behaviour in the school dining room is not always as good as it could be, something which pupils themselves were keen to point out. There have been no exclusions. The school deals swiftly with any incidents of bullying and last year pupils were pleased that teachers responded quickly when a number of older children from a secondary school made a nuisance of themselves around the playground. Most staff have received training in the assertive discipline strategy, but lunchtime supervisors have not.
10. Pupils enjoy school and have a good attitude to learning. They enjoy lessons and the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them. They work well together and share information generously. In a history lesson where Year 5 pupils needed to investigate aspects of Greek warriors, pupils wasted no time in looking up information in books and on the Internet and also shared information that they had researched at home.
11. Opportunities for pupils' personal development through spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Through religious education lessons and 'special days', pupils become aware of the range of different faiths in contemporary Britain. Assemblies are themed and offer pupils opportunities to develop and think about their feelings and celebrate achievement and good behaviour. This has improved since the previous inspection. In a celebration assembly, pupils communicated their pleasure at awards for themselves and their friends for good work or effort. Pupils voluntarily care for a school garden and were observed helping a member of staff to trim back lavender and weed the soil. In their questionnaire pupils were very positive about liking their school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education enabling pupils to learn appropriately. The curriculum is **satisfactory** and there are **very good** opportunities provided for pupils to learn outside of lessons. Teaching is **satisfactory** and pupils are **well** cared for.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **satisfactory** overall, although the teaching of children in the Nursery and in Year 5 is **very good**. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 make **unsatisfactory** use of assessment to enable them to plan appropriate learning activities. Pupils' learning and their achievement are **good** and they do well to achieve average standards in most subjects. However, it was not possible to make judgements about standards in design and technology, geography and music during the inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Teaching in the nursery and in Year 5 is consistently very good
- ? Teachers in Years 3 to 6 make insufficient use of assessment to inform their planning
- ? Teachers manage behaviour well
- ? Pupils are not made sufficiently aware of how they can improve their work

Commentary

12. Overall teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. In more than six out of ten lessons seen in this inspection teaching was good or very good; there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Such teaching has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to work and to the effectiveness of their learning throughout the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7 (16%)	22 (50%)	15 (34%)	0	0	0

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

13. There is very good provision made for children in the nursery, and teaching is consistently very good. The teacher and nursery nurse provide a very good range of activities to capture interest and engage these young children. They promote independence right from the start, encouraging children to choose what they do, but then exploit these opportunities to extend them with skilful interventions. They are good at joining in children's play to support and develop what they do. These enable them to promote children's learning very effectively. There is an appropriate high priority given to verbal interaction, with every opportunity taken to stimulate conversation, pose questions or extend vocabulary by encouraging children to name objects or things they work with. There is also appropriate emphasis on children's personal development and right from the start good co-operation is successfully encouraged, which also has a positive impact on children's learning.
14. Teaching is also very good in Year 5. Planning for lessons is very good, enabling the teacher to provide very effectively for the different groups in the class. She communicates her expectations of her pupils very clearly and pupils respond very positively. This ensures that learning is good. There is a clear identification of appropriate learning objectives for each lesson, the careful explanation of which enables the teacher to make very effective links with pupils' earlier learning. She provides very good feedback to pupils on how well they are doing, which is effective in engaging them in reflecting on their own learning. In some lessons, the teacher enables pupils to learn from each other by engaging them in discussion about what they have done. The teacher understands her pupils' learning needs and provides appropriate and interesting activities to engage and extend them. In this class teaching is stimulating, enthusiastic and consistently challenging.
15. Generally teachers in Years 3 to 6 make insufficient use of assessment to inform their planning. There is appropriate information available for monitoring pupils' academic performance and good systems for tracking progress have been introduced very recently. However, this is not yet fully established and although these procedures are good, teachers are not yet making the best use of them to inform their planning for further learning. Consequently, in some lessons, the needs of all pupils are not sufficiently carefully addressed, because not enough use is made of assessment information to ensure that activities are appropriately demanding and well matched to pupils' learning needs.
16. Teachers manage behaviour well. They are able to draw on a range of strategies to ensure that classrooms are orderly. This ensures that pupils are able to learn. The recently introduced approach to assertive discipline is already having a positive impact and is developing well. Teachers respond positively to pupils' good behaviour and are consistent in communicating

what they expect. Teachers are good role models and have good relationships with their pupils. This helps promote pupils' positive attitudes to learning.

17. Pupils are not made sufficiently aware of how they can improve their work. Teachers' marking is inconsistent across the school, but generally they provide insufficient guidance in their comments for pupils about what they could do to improve, develop or extend their work. As a result pupils have insufficient understanding of how they can improve. The recent introduction of group targets is helping pupils consider the next steps they need to take in their learning but the development of individual targets will make this even more effective.

The curriculum

The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced and **satisfactory** overall to meet the needs of most pupils. There are **very good** opportunities created to extend learning outside of lessons. Accommodation and resources are **good** and used effectively to support learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs
- ? The curriculum provided for children the Foundation Stage is very good
- ? There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities and effective use is made of visits to enrich the pupils' learning
- ? There is very good use of accommodation and resources to support learning in the Foundation Stage
- ? There are inconsistencies in teachers' short-term plans
- ? There is insufficient and inconsistent use of ICT to support learning

Commentary

18. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs who have full access to the curriculum through modifications to the lesson content and from the good support given through withdrawal groups. A strong emphasis is given to supporting the pupils in literacy and numeracy in these sessions. Good use is made of national programmes to boost pupils' reading, writing and mathematics, both in class and during additional activities.
19. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. A real strength is the emphasis given to practical experiences and the use of play both indoors and out to develop children's communication skills. Staff modify the curriculum appropriately in response to assessment outcomes.
20. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities provided. Pupils participate enthusiastically in a very good range of school clubs including music, gardening and cookery. The very good range of sporting activities enhances the physical education curriculum effectively. Visits are planned to support the pupils' learning in the humanities and creative subjects.
21. The indoor accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage is safe, bright, vibrant and spacious, where resources of a high quality are readily accessible to the children. The organisation of the rooms is outstanding and ensures all areas of learning are covered. Good use is also made of outside areas to extend children's learning, especially for physical development and development of knowledge and understanding of the world. The spacious buildings and extensive grounds provide additional space for a variety of activities.

22. There are inconsistencies in the way teachers prepare short-term plans. A format for short-term planning is not prescribed although guidance on what to include is given by the headteacher. However, there are inconsistencies in short-term plans and often insufficient detail is given to reflect how the needs of different pupils will be met, other than for those with special educational needs. It is not clear how assessment outcomes are used to inform the learning objectives.
23. While the teaching of skills is often good in Years 3 to 6, there is insufficient use made of ICT as a resource to support learning in other subjects. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use the computers either in the computer suite or in their classrooms to support their learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have too little access to computers and this slows their progress in acquiring appropriate ICT skills.

Care, guidance and support

Overall care for pupils is **good**; the care of children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The support and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their personal and academic achievements are **satisfactory**. Action to involve pupils in the work and development of the school is also **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Pupils are well known to all the staff; pupils feel there are adults in whom they can confide
- ? Induction arrangements for children entering the school are good
- ? The school actively promotes pupils' health
- ? Insufficient numbers of staff have had training in child protection
- ? The school's travel plan is a good initiative

Commentary

24. Pupils are well known to staff. In their response to the pupil questionnaire and in discussion with inspectors, pupils all stated that they would know an adult to go to if worried. Pupils consider that the school is interested in their views and that there are adults they can talk to if they have problems. Although opportunities for pupils to comment on aspects of school life are not formalised, in a School Council for example, pupils expressed no concern about this because they feel that teachers are approachable. They think that teachers make good use of circle time and discussions at the beginning of the school day to talk over any issues or questions pupils may have.
25. The school's induction programme for children entering the school is good. Entry is staggered to allow time both for children to settle in and for staff to identify their particular needs. This arrangement works very well indeed and ensures that starting school runs smoothly.
26. The school actively seeks out opportunities to improve the health of pupils. It has again received the Healthy Schools Award. Newsletters regularly implore parents not to send their children to school wearing jewellery and graphically point out the dangers of earrings or body piercing, especially in physical education lessons. Parents are encouraged to voluntarily provide fruit for a snack at the morning break time for the youngest pupils, whilst the juniors are encouraged to bring water bottles for refreshment and not to eat crisps and sweets at break times. Cycling proficiency initiatives, for Year 5 and 6 pupils, effectively support pupils' personal safety away from school. The school responds swiftly to health and safety concerns identified by regular risk assessments, for example improving pupils' security on the school site. The school benefits from the regular visits of an outside health adviser who can deal with first aid

issues, and offer advice, support and guidance on medical and non-medical issues. All staff in school hold first aid qualifications.

27. Insufficient numbers of staff have had training in child protection. Only the headteacher has had appropriate training. However, the school is seeking opportunities for all staff to be fully trained in child protection procedures. The school's health adviser is aware of the school's child protection procedures.
28. The congestion outside school at the beginning and end of the school day remains a cause for parental concern. The school has initiated a school travel plan to address this issue, and is receiving good support for its ideas to improve road safety, encourage walking and initiate pedestrian training.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established **satisfactory** links with parents. Links between the school and the community and other schools are also **satisfactory**. The school is actively seeking to improve links with parents and the community by consultation on planned developments.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? The secretary plays an important role in monitoring pupils' absences and in maintaining links with parents
- ? Parents receive good information about what is going on in school
- ? Home visits provide valuable opportunities for liaison with parents right from the start
- ? A significant number of parents take pupils on holiday in term time, which disrupts their children's learning
- ? The school is improving links with the wider community
- ? Few parents are involved in helping in school

Commentary

29. The secretary plays an important role in monitoring pupils' absences. She maintains close contact with parents on a day-to-day basis. This enables her to monitor and establish reasons for absence effectively and to act as a focal point for exchange of information between parents and teachers.
30. Parents receive good information about what is going on in school. They appreciate the timely information about the work to be covered by their children and are pleased that the school has an expectation that the whole family will help with any aspects of homework. Good use is made of reading diaries for dialogue between parents and teachers. Parents find newsletters helpful in keeping them informed on main events in the school. They feel that the school offers a genuine open door policy and that teachers always have time to talk to them.
31. Home visits provide valuable opportunities for liaison with parents right from the start. They help the school establish a strong link with parents as their children enter the nursery and provide opportunities for the clear communication of information about the children and their needs.
32. A significant number of parents take pupils on holiday in term time, despite the school's best efforts and frequent newsletters asking them not to. This accounts for the high rate of authorised absence.

33. Links with the extended community are improving and provide a wide range of resources in the form of visits and visitors for the school. The Extended Schools Pathfinder Initiative, for example, is improving transition for pupils moving on to secondary school and opening up additional specialist areas such as sports and arts opportunities for pupils. The extra-curricular activities the school provides through the residential experience and outside visits also make a significant contribution to pupils' wider curriculum and achievements.
34. The school is actively seeking greater parental participation and involvement, for example by inviting parents of Year 1 and 2 children into school to sample school meals, or asking local parents to keep an eye on the sunflowers grown for a competition entry for a new computer. Support is being given to a group of parents who are keen to set up a Home–School Association. Parents are being consulted about the plans for a new school building and about travel and road safety arrangements around the school. There are currently no parent helpers who come into school regularly and the school recognises that this is a rich resource that is lost to them. The school would like to involve parents more although currently there are no invitations to parents to help in school newsletters.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The leadership of the school by the headteacher is **good**. However, the lack of an effective contribution to subject leadership by co-ordinators is a key unsatisfactory area. Management of the school is **satisfactory** and the school runs smoothly. The governors are led well by an informed chairperson and the governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? The headteacher leads the school well and there are clear plans for further development
- ? The provision for the youngest children and for those with special educational needs is managed well
- ? Co-ordinators are not yet contributing effectively to subject leadership and curriculum development
- ? Not all governors are sufficiently aware of strengths and weaknesses in the school
- ? The school is not making full use of the ICT suite
- ? The school manages its finances well

Commentary

35. The headteacher leads the school well. He has a strong sense of direction and a clear vision for the further development of the school. The staff and governors are fully aware and share his aspirations and they fully support him. The school faces many challenges as it seeks to improve, but with high staff morale and good teamwork it is well placed to face them. Although in post for just a year the headteacher is already making a positive impact. He has introduced firm and effective routines which staff apply well and which have a positive impact on pupil behaviour, which is good throughout the school.
36. The headteacher and staff are committed to raising standards and this is reflected in the priorities outlined in the way the school is planning its future developments. Last year the school had as a priority the need to raise the level of achievement of the more able pupils in the school. Although not being entirely successful in this endeavour, the school managed to raise the level of attainment of these pupils quite considerably in mathematics. In looking to the future the school appropriately seeks to broaden its involvement in the community.

37. As a result of good leadership and management the youngest pupils in the school get a very good start to their education. Pupils with special educational needs are also well provided for and this aspect of the school's work is managed well. Pupils' special needs are identified at an early stage and good provision is organised to meet them.
38. Co-ordinators are not yet contributing effectively to subject leadership and curriculum development. They have little opportunity to evaluate and support the development of teaching and learning and neither are they able to influence colleagues by modelling good practice or demonstrating teaching skills while working in others' classrooms. As a result they have insufficient knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching in the subjects for which they are responsible and so are unable to play an effective part in contributing to improving the quality of teaching and learning.
39. Although the headteacher keeps governors well informed about standards, not all of them are sufficiently aware of strengths and weaknesses in the school. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is a frequent visitor to school and observes pupils and teachers working in classrooms. This gives her a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in this area. This good practice is insufficiently extended to other aspects of the work of the school. The governors with responsibility for literacy and numeracy, for example, rely on the respective subject co-ordinators and the headteacher to keep them informed about standards of work and the quality of teaching in these areas. There is a need to extend the involvement of governors in monitoring the work of the school.
40. While the accommodation in the school is generally used well, insufficient use is being made of the valuable ICT suite. This is one reason why standards in ICT are not improving as rapidly as they could in Years 1 and 2 and why all pupils do not have enough opportunities to work with the computers.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April [year] to March [year]

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	588,376	Balance from previous year	13,765
Total expenditure	570,934	Balance carried forward to the next	31,207
Expenditure per pupil	2,204		

The school manages its financial spending and resource allocation well. Spending of money allocated for the education of pupils with special educational needs provides a good example of how prudent spending, linked to careful planning, is helping to raise pupils' attainment. Provision in this area is good and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. A fall in the number on roll has led to recent cuts in the finance available to the school. This has led to the governors having to take difficult decisions from which they have not shied away, including the reduction in staffing.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good** and is a strength of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall and very good in the nursery
- ? There is effective teamwork and management of learning
- ? The quality of curriculum provision is good
- ? The use of accommodation and resources to support learning is good

Commentary

41. Children are admitted to the nursery in September after their third birthday on a part-time basis. They transfer to reception in the year in which they are five. On entry to the nursery, early assessments identify that many children have a poor level of attainment particularly in their spoken language skills and understanding of number. Their social skills are identified as well below average. Children achieve well, however, and make good progress in their learning because teaching is very good and because teachers make a careful assessment of their learning as they plan further activities. By the end of the reception year, the children's attainment is below the expected levels in all areas of learning, except in personal, social and emotional development and physical development where it is average. However, this represents a significant achievement and reflects the high quality of the teaching and support the children receive.
42. Children in the nursery and reception class are well provided for and are taught well. During the inspection all lessons observed were good or very good in the nursery and good in the reception class. There is very effective teamwork, where staff are flexible, imaginative and committed to providing well-resourced activities to generate interest, enthusiasm and excitement in learning. The staff in the nursery are very accessible to the children and do not direct activities but allow the children to choose what they want to do and then intervene to take the learning further.
43. Strengths of the curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage are the links across the areas of learning and the commitment given to the use of play and practical activities as the foundation for learning. Assessment procedures are very thorough. The staff regularly observe and monitor the children's responses to tasks and keep ongoing notes of their progress and so they have a good overview of each child.
44. The children significantly benefit from the spacious, attractive, bright and lively classrooms, which are exceptionally well organised. This has a positive effect upon their interest and desire to learn. Learning resources are of good quality, stored and maintained to a very high standard.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Children's achievement is good in this area of learning
- ? Good induction procedures help children settle quickly into the nursery
- ? Children are encouraged and helped to become independent
- ? Relationships are very good
- ? Staff are very good role models

Commentary

45. The children are making good progress in this area and are on course to achieve average standards by the end of the reception year. The children in the nursery settle very quickly because the induction procedures are very carefully planned. The staff establish very warm and friendly relationships with the children and these play a significant part in the children's learning. One feature of the very good teaching is the teachers' adherence to set routines that ensure children know what they are expected to do, such as returning aprons to the pegs and finding the milk bottle with their own picture label. The children's independence is well promoted through the organisation of resources that the children can easily select for themselves. In the role-play area, for example, the children co-operated well and sustained their conversation as they prepared a meal without adult intervention.
46. All staff show the children their efforts are valued and there are very trusting relationships between staff and children. This encourages the children to confidently try activities and use tools that are new to them. In the reception class the children become increasingly independent and initiate their own ideas during choice activity times. The staff set good examples in their treatment of each other and model the behaviour they want the children to develop. These examples are demonstrated at snack times, in helping children to take small responsibilities and saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Throughout the Foundation Stage the staff take prompt action to address any unacceptable behaviour. As a result, children's behaviour is good, including those recently admitted to the nursery.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Children's achievement is good in this area of learning
- ? There is an appropriately strong focus on improving children's spoken language
- ? Children make good progress in reading, but less so in writing

Commentary

47. In communication, language and literacy, the majority of children make good progress. Although the children work hard, most will not reach average standards at the end of the reception year. On entry to the nursery a significant number of children have very restricted speech, diction is unclear and they use only a limited number of words. The staff are sensitive towards those children who are reluctant to speak and prompt those whose understanding is

far greater than their abilities to express their ideas orally. Teachers skilfully encourage conversation. This is particularly good when adults work alongside the children and chat, question and encourage the children to participate. As a result by the time the children reach the reception class they have developed the confidence to initiate their own conversations. The teaching of vocabulary is a particular strength that is developed through direct teaching, practical activities and role-play.

48. The nursery children develop an interest in books and reading, as opportunities to read are part of nursery life. In the nursery and reception classes words and pictures surround the children and the adults use them during the course of activities. During the reception year the children are still in the early stages of matching sounds and letters. They are beginning to read and some higher attaining children can talk about the illustrations, recall some words and predict the story course. However, the majority are unable to read words without prompting. They are, however, interested in stories and reading because of the ability of the staff to make stories come alive through very good story telling skills.
49. The children are gaining an understanding that writing is a form of communication through role-play activities in 'the office' and use of the computer keyboard. The children do not achieve as well in writing. They learn to write their name and to copy and trace adults' writing but are slow to write independently.

Mathematical development

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Children make good progress from a low starting point and their achievement is good
- ? By the end of reception standards could be higher
- ? There are good opportunities for practical work to extend children's learning
- ? Insufficient time is available for mathematical activities

Commentary

50. From the low starting point on entry to the nursery the children make good progress in the development of their mathematical skills. However, by the end of the reception standards are below average.
51. The children's learning is developed effectively through practical activities in small groups. In the nursery, the children enjoy playing with a large dice and trying to count and match groups of objects to three. In the reception class, the children had confidence to count forwards to ten but were less secure in their competence to count backwards. Because many activities are based in a problem-solving situation the children can use their mathematical knowledge, for example when they had to ensure each bear had a chair. The range of mathematical activities is effectively promoting the children's learning. However, the time allocated to mathematical activities is less than the time the children have for choosing other activities, particularly in the reception class. Teaching is satisfactory, but more structure to the organisation is needed so that greater emphasis can be given to the development of mathematical skills, particularly number.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Children's achievement is good in this area of learning
- ? Good use of resources stimulates and supports children's curiosity

Commentary

52. Children make good progress in this area of learning both in the nursery and reception classes but standards are below average. When the children first start school, many have a very limited general knowledge. Teaching is good, with staff ensuring that children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm are enhanced by providing resources, displays and books and by asking questions to promote their learning. For example, children developed an awareness of the range of minibeasts on a hunt in the garden. The use of a digital camera and immediate printing was successful in reinforcing the children's learning. In the nursery children investigated light and darkness as they used torches. Most children begin to gain an understanding of the past as they celebrate birthdays and special events. The children become increasingly confident using computers because they are always accessible as a choice activity.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Children achieve well in this area of learning and many of them are on course to achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception

Commentary

53. The children achieve well in this area and most are on course to achieve average levels by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good, with the outdoor areas used imaginatively to allow the children to make good progress in the development of their physical skills. Children learn to use space well when involved in physical activities, showing an awareness of others, and they do so with confidence. In the reception class children build on these early skills and demonstrate increasing skills as they move around the hall in different ways and at varying speeds. They develop control of equipment such as beanbags because they are taught how to do so and have opportunities for regular practice. Their finer physical skills are developed through daily planned opportunities to use a wide range of small tools and implements, including construction pieces for building, playdough for modelling and scissors for cutting shapes. Through well-focused questions the children learn safety when using equipment and when moving around the classrooms, hall and outdoor areas.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Children make good progress and achieve well in this area of learning
- ? There are good opportunities to work with a wide range of tools and materials
- ? Displays of children's work helps create a stimulating environment for learning

Commentary

54. Most children attain below average standards in this area by the end of the reception year. However, they have made good progress and achieve well from the low starting point because of the good teaching, extensive range of imaginative activities and opportunity to explore a wide range of resources. A striking feature of the nursery and reception areas is the display of the children's own creative efforts. In their first weeks in the nursery, the staff use children's natural fascination with paint to develop the children's recognition of colours. Learning is extended, for example, when staff introduce new tools such as very wide paintbrushes to help the children understand these are better for covering large areas. The staff have set up inviting role-play areas, and by introducing new resources the children's learning is extended. In the nursery, the children often produce scenes from home as they dress up as family members and prepare meals.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**. Overall standards are not high enough, because although pupils do well in reading and attain average standards throughout the school, by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 work seen indicates that standards are below average in writing.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Good provision for reading enables pupils to make good progress and they do well to reach average standards overall by the end of Year 6
- ? Older pupils have too few opportunities to develop their writing skills and standards are below average by the time they leave the school
- ? The development of pupils' speaking and listening skills is not given sufficient priority
- ? Teaching and learning in lessons are often good
- ? The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent
- ? Subject leadership is under-developed

Commentary

55. There is good teaching of reading, which is enabling pupils to make good progress in developing their skills. Achievement is good, with pupils doing well to reach average standards. Teachers of younger pupils provide a good range of activities, including intensive work on phonics, which is successful in developing pupils' early reading. Substantial work reinforces older pupils' comprehension. By Year 2 pupils are developing appropriate skills in reading, with higher attaining pupils beginning to read with expression. By Year 6 many pupils read with good levels of fluency and use expression effectively to communicate meaning. Some talk confidently about their reading and enthusiastically about the books they have enjoyed. Pupils gain satisfactory library skills and by Year 6 are capable of using the library appropriately. However, they have too few opportunities to use their skills for independent research.
56. Writing is an area that needs improvement. Younger pupils develop their writing skills slowly. By Year 2 they have good opportunities to write for different purposes and for different audiences, in a wide range of contexts. Among these are stories, including character descriptions like that of *Mildred Hubble*, *The Worst Witch*, instructions, reports, poems and letters. There is good emphasis on pupils understanding structure in writing of different kinds and the use of appropriate vocabulary. Learning and achievement are good with pupils making good progress from a low base. By the end of Year 6 pupils' writing is still below average. They have too few opportunities to develop their own skills in extended pieces of writing. Pupils study writing of different kinds, including story, autobiography and playscript, but they have insufficient opportunity to write in different styles themselves. There is too little emphasis on drafting and re-drafting, so pupils cannot develop skills of reviewing and amending the text to improve what they have written. They have too few opportunities to develop these skills using the computers.
57. There is an inconsistent approach to developing pupils' skills of speaking and listening. Many pupils start at the school with poor language skills and developing their speaking and listening is given high priority at the outset. Pupils generally develop confidence in speaking and most are keen to respond to teachers' questions. Most listen effectively. By the time pupils reach Year 6 most listen effectively and are keen to contribute to discussions, with some useful opportunities provided for them to develop ideas in pairs for example. When the pupils are

asked to work together in groups they do so well and show that they are prepared to listen to others' ideas and suggestions. In many lessons, however, there is too much teacher talk and insufficient opportunity for pupils to contribute or develop their speaking skills.

58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but there are frequent examples of good teaching. Where teaching is good pupils are clear about what they are learning, the level of demand is appropriately high and the pace of learning is stretching. Where teaching is not so strong the pace of learning is sometimes not quick enough. The balance of time on different activities is often inappropriate for pupils in Year 1, who are not yet ready for a lengthy formal literacy lesson. In reception and Years 1 and 2, teachers have created an environment for learning in which there is language all around, to inform, to ask, to challenge or to explain. This supports pupils' learning most effectively. Learning objectives are generally shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and so learning is focused. In some lessons pupils' targets for improvement are also a valuable focus. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and teaching in the smaller withdrawal groups is good, effectively encouraging these pupils, raising their self-esteem and ensuring they build confidence.
59. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. They mark pupils' work regularly, but their comments do not always inform pupils of what they need to do next or of how to improve, develop or extend their work. Some teachers' marking is beginning to engage pupils effectively in reflecting on their work and some provide details of their assessment of the standard, but this is not sufficiently consistent across the school. Teachers' handwriting is not always helpful for pupils trying to read their comments or as an example in trying to improve their own handwriting.
60. Subject leadership is satisfactory but underdeveloped. The co-ordinator is currently temporarily absent, which is enabling the headteacher to act as subject leader. This provides a good opportunity for him to establish expectations, for the creation of a co-ordinator's file for example, as the development of the role of subject leader is a priority across the school. The headteacher is aware of standards and has already identified the need to improve pupils' writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. Language and literacy are supported appropriately in other subjects, for example in science when pupils learn to use appropriate scientific vocabulary, or in art when pupils are introduced to vocabulary such as 'shade' or 'tone' to discuss their work. In some classes there are good opportunities for discussions, as in Year 5 during a religious education lesson in which pupils learned how difficult it is to describe something they cannot see.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**. Standards are improving steadily but slowly. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are doing well and making good progress. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making satisfactory progress and although there has been some improvement recently they are not yet attaining high enough standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well
- ? By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6 standards are too low
- ? Teaching is very good in Year 5 and good in Years 1 and 2
- ? Teaching is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6 and there is insufficient good quality teaching to raise standards quickly enough

- ? Pupils with special educational needs are well supported
- ? Subject leadership is ineffective in supporting improvement
- ? Insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning

Commentary

62. Pupils' attainment is well below average when they start school. By the end of Year 2 a significant number attain standards that are close to the average found nationally. During the time spent in Years 1 and 2 they make good progress with their learning and their achievement is good. By the end of Year 6 in 2003, almost seven out of ten pupils attained at least the average standard, with over a quarter of all pupils exceeding it. This represents good achievement and is a slight improvement on each of the previous three years. However, work seen indicates that overall standards are not yet high enough.
63. The quality of teaching in Year 1 and 2 is good and makes a significant contribution to the good achievement of pupils. For example, in a Year 2 lesson observed, the teacher clearly explained to pupils what they had to do, gave them tasks that were suited to their learning needs, made the lesson interesting and used a good range of resources well to help her explain things. As a result, learning in this lesson was good. Infant pupils respond well to good teaching, enjoying lessons and actively engaging in learning. A significant number of pupils enter Year 1 with low mathematical and language skills and for these pupils a one-hour numeracy lesson each day is inappropriate for their learning needs. These pupils respond well to a practical approach. Their learning needs would be better met initially in Year 1 by using such an approach frequently, but over a short period, until such time as they are ready for a more formal approach.
64. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. In lessons seen during the inspection teaching was never less than satisfactory and one lesson was very good. However, the overall quality is inconsistent and needs to improve until it is consistently good, in order that standards can be raised to the required level. Teaching in the Year 5 class is very good with the result that pupils learn very well during lessons. Features of this very good teaching include its vibrancy and liveliness. In this class pupils enjoy mental mathematics sessions and they are well motivated. The teacher sets a good pace in her lesson and she appropriately challenges pupils of all levels of attainment. However, not all lessons in Year 3 to 6 display these features. Some lack pace and do not engage the interest and attention of all pupils. There are inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work. In the best marking teachers clearly indicate to pupils how well they are doing and what they could do to improve further. Teachers are not exploiting the usefulness of computers sufficiently in order to help pupils learn and to reinforce their understanding of mathematics.
65. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards their targets. Pupils are sometimes taught effectively in small groups and benefit from the close attention they receive in these sessions. For example, in an observed session a small group of pupils in Year 4 quickly learnt how to recognise and name simple two-dimensional shapes. The close attention they were receiving and the practical approach to the task they were doing made a significant contribution to their good learning.
66. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The school analyses test results effectively to find out what pupils need to learn to improve. Realistic targets are set. However, standards have not yet been raised sufficiently. Subject leadership is an area of weakness. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching or work alongside teachers, so he is not in a position to address weaknesses in teaching and learning nor is he in a position to advise them on ways they might improve their performance. At present few strategies are in place to bring about better quality in

teaching mathematics. Unsatisfactory progress has been made in raising standards since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. There is satisfactory use of mathematics in other subjects. There is good use of data in science and geography with findings being accurately displayed in a range of charts and graphs. Pupils measure accurately in design and technology and in science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Pupils achieve well, and most reach or exceed average standards by the end of Year 6
- ? Teaching is consistently good
- ? Assessment procedures are underdeveloped
- ? Aspects of personal development are taught well in science lessons
- ? Pupils enjoy science lessons; they are keen, behave well and participate fully in practical activities
- ? Insufficient use is made of ICT in teaching and learning
- ? Subject leadership is unsatisfactory

Commentary

68. Pupils achieve well in science because they enjoy lessons and receive consistently good teaching. They are often involved in practical activities and teachers succeed in making lessons interesting. Pupils are keen to learn and to find out for themselves. This emphasis on practical activities to enhance knowledge and skills was evident in lessons in which Year 3 pupils were comparing magnetic strengths of a number of different magnets and where Year 6 pupils were studying materials to see which ones could conduct an electric current. In both these lessons pupils became fully engrossed in the activities. The good interest level of most lessons motivates the pupils and as a result they behave well and make good strides in their learning.
69. Teaching is consistently good. Teachers have a good understanding of science topics and this allows them to teach confidently. Before embarking on finding things out for themselves, pupils are encouraged to predict what might happen and they are encouraged to express their ideas. They respond well to teachers' queries with sensible suggestions, often explaining at some length the reasons for their ideas and suggestions. This effectively contributes to the development of their speaking skills. In lessons teachers use questions very effectively to find out what pupils understand and can do. Marking of pupils' completed work is not consistent, however. Where it is effective it is detailed and helpful in giving pupils a good indication as to how well they are doing and what to do next in order to improve. However, too frequently it does not help pupils understand how they can improve and some errors are not noted. The use of more formal assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress is an area requiring further development.
70. Science lessons make a good contribution to personal development. From the youngest classes upwards pupils learn about healthy lifestyles. For example, Year 2 pupils learn why some foods are better for us than others. They go on to use this knowledge to prepare a healthy diet menu. Year 5 pupils develop an awareness of drugs. They learn that some of

these can have a beneficial effect but that they have to be treated with caution. They also learn that some are harmful.

71. Good use of technology was observed being used to help a group of Year 2 pupils learn about the properties of a range of foodstuffs and to help them make sensible choices of foods when compiling a healthy diet menu. However, the school is not yet realising the full potential of ICT in learning in science. There is little use of ICT to measure changes over time such as temperature fluctuations nor is there any extensive use of ICT to present and interpret any collected data.
72. The co-ordinator for the subject is knowledgeable and very enthusiastic. However, she has no opportunity for monitoring teaching and learning and has received no training to enable her to carry out such a function effectively. She has not yet had any opportunity to model her good teaching to other teachers. As a result leadership is unsatisfactory. The role of the co-ordinator needs further development to enable her to be in a stronger position to support the further development of teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Very good subject leadership has secured very good improvement in provision since the previous inspection
- ? Standards are below average by the end of Year 2
- ? In Years 1 and 2 pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn appropriate skills
- ? Teaching and learning of skills in Years 3 to 6 are often good
- ? Pupils have too few opportunities to use the computers in other subjects

Commentary

73. The ICT co-ordinator provides very good subject leadership and this has helped secure very good improvement in provision since the previous inspection. He has considerable expertise and has used this most effectively. Resources for ICT have been improved dramatically and there is now a well-equipped computer suite. Further staff training has ensured that staff confidence and their competence in teaching ICT skills have been significantly improved. This has contributed very effectively to the significantly improved teaching. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and communicates an exciting vision for further development, including the provision of learning opportunities for the wider community.
74. While improved provision and better teaching have ensured standards are rising and are average by the end of Year 6, standards remain below average by the end of Year 2. This is because there is insufficient teaching of specific ICT skills to pupils in Years 1 and 2. Teachers of these younger pupils are not making effective use of the computer suite for this purpose. Consequently teaching and learning are unsatisfactory at this stage.
75. Teaching and learning of skills in Years 3 to 6 are good. Teachers confidently make good use of the available resources. They introduce their lessons purposefully, with clear explanations often enhanced with effective use of the interactive whiteboard. Teachers are good at providing appropriate support for individuals and small groups of pupils as they work with the computers, and they provide good levels of challenge for those higher attaining pupils who are making

progress more quickly. This contributes positively to pupils' good learning and enables them to achieve well.

76. Pupils have too few opportunities to use the computers in other subjects. Although there are some good examples of how pupils' learning in other subjects can be enhanced using ICT, generally they have too few opportunities to work with the computers. Pupils in Year 5, for example, have used the desktop publishing program effectively in their study of key features of effective advertisements in their work on persuasive text in literacy. Pupils in Year 6 have produced work of a high standard in their three-dimensional designs, following a visit to the Gateshead Learning Centre. In a very good lesson observed during the inspection, pupils used the skills they had learned to create a collage picture in the style of Matisse's *The Snail*. There is insufficient of this good work, however, since pupils do not have opportunities to work with the computers often enough.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. Teachers throughout the school make insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects, especially so in Years 3 to 6. Pupils have some opportunities to use the computers in their classrooms for individual or small group work, to pursue some aspect further or complete work in other subjects. At times, when it is not being used for the direct teaching of skills, teachers also make use of the computer suite for work in other subjects. Generally the suite is underused for this purpose, however.

HUMANITIES

Geography

78. It was possible to observe only one lesson in geography in Year 1 since it is not taught during this half term in Years 3 to 6. There was insufficient other evidence to support a judgement about standards. However, a review of planning indicates that provision is **satisfactory**.
79. A strength of teaching and learning in the subject is the promotion of geographical enquiry through visits to places of interest. A residential visit is organised in Year 6 to Dukes House Wood in Hexham, for example. Visits are also made in each year group, for example to Gateshead Quays when pupils followed up their work on a river study.

History

80. It was possible to observe only three lessons in history during the inspection. The available evidence indicates that provision is **good**, and that pupils achieve average standards by the end of Year 6. However, there was insufficient other evidence to support a judgement about standards at the end of Year 2.
81. Teachers' planning is good. In Years 3 to 6 pupils enjoy a good range of activities related to all the required study units. Good opportunities are made to enhance pupils' skills. Pupils satisfactorily develop a sense of chronology, effectively supported by the use of timelines. Very good use of artefacts, as in the current work on the Victorians in Year 6, supports pupils' learning well, extending their understanding of change and enabling them to make meaningful comparisons between the past and present.
82. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6. In Year 3 this enables pupils to begin to distinguish between fact and opinion and by the time they reach Year 6 they are helped to work towards drawing conclusions from evidence. In one particularly good lesson with Year 6 during the inspection, for example, the teacher made very good use of documentary sources to extend pupils'

knowledge and understanding of the working conditions for children in Victorian times. There was good discussion and a clear focus on key questions, with pupils challenged to use the sources provided to confirm or refute particular claims. Such effective teaching contributes positively to pupils' good learning and achievement.

Religious education

83. The overall provision for religious education is **satisfactory**. Since the previous inspection, when teaching was deemed to be unsatisfactory and standards were reported to be low at the end of Year 6, the school has made good improvements and has fully addressed the issues raised. Standards are now average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Implementation of the new scheme of work is good
- ? The study of different religions in Years 3 to 6 is good
- ? Teaching is successful in promoting pupils' thinking
- ? Subject leadership is underdeveloped

Commentary

84. The revised scheme of work clearly shows how all the themes in the locally agreed syllabus are covered and medium-term plans identify the depth of the study. They provide a good guide for teachers in their short-term planning and identify progression in the skills pupils acquire. For example, in Year 2, pupils know the purpose of the Bible and how it informs Christianity and by Year 6, the higher attaining pupils, through their own research, show a high level of understanding of the principles of Sikhism.
85. A scrutiny of work and observation of three lessons show that teaching is satisfactory overall and very good in Year 5. Since the previous inspection, teachers' skills have developed effectively through support from a local education authority adviser and school-based training. This has significantly developed teachers' subject knowledge and awareness of how the schemes of work can be implemented.
86. Teachers successfully stimulate pupils' thinking. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, by linking the Bible story of *The Talents* to a modern story *Cleversticks*, pupils' awareness of the value of all individuals is raised. Such discussions contribute well to the pupils' personal and social development. In a very good Year 5 lesson, the teacher's objectives were to develop the pupils' understanding of the intangible and that individuals see things in different ways, such as 'Gods'. Her subject knowledge was impressive and she very successfully improved the pupils' learning by using the story *The Blind Men and the Elephant* and a 'Feely Bag' activity as illustrations for the learning. At times teaching relies too heavily on telling facts and pupils lose interest when teachers' exposition is too long. Also, there is sometimes an over-reliance on asking the pupils to write about what they have learnt and for many pupils this is a laborious task. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop more interesting approaches to teaching and using a wider range of methods for recording. This is in the plan for future action.
87. Improved resources, such as non-fiction books, videos and artefacts from other religions, are used well to further the pupils' learning. This was evident in work from Year 6 when these resources were used to research the principles of other faiths.
88. The co-ordinator is new to the role. She has an interest and enthusiasm for the subject and is well informed. She has made a significant contribution to the management of the subject, for

example guiding the revised planning. Her leadership role in monitoring and supporting the development of teaching is as yet unsatisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

89. It was possible to observe only one lesson during the inspection. However, there was sufficient other evidence to indicate that provision for art is **satisfactory**. A careful scrutiny of pupils' work on display in classrooms and corridors indicate that pupils achieve average standards.
90. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 experiment with colours when painting. They are introduced to the work of famous artists and alerted to the colours they used. In the junior classes, pupils' work shows the use of a satisfactory range of materials and the development of a range of art techniques such as creating patterns in different styles and with different materials. Teachers introduce the work of other artists, such as Mondrian, to stimulate the pupils' own work and this is then linked to their work on patterns. During a visit to the Gateshead Learning Centre, Year 6 pupils created some very good three-dimensional patterns and pictures using ICT. There was insufficient other evidence to make a judgement about teaching

Design and technology

91. It was not possible to observe any lessons in design and technology. There was insufficient other evidence to support judgement about standards or teaching. Evidence in teachers' planning indicates that provision is satisfactory.

Music

92. It was possible to observe only two lessons in music during the inspection and so there was insufficient evidence to support a judgement about teaching and learning. A peripatetic music teacher, who works regularly with each class in Years 3 to 6, taught both lessons. Such specialist teaching contributes to the **good** provision in music. However, it was not possible to make a judgement about standards because there was insufficient opportunity to hear pupils' work in each of the elements of music.
93. Pupils experience a well-balanced programme of musical activities. They have good opportunities to listen to a range of music and this is carefully chosen to reflect the occasion, as in the choice of *Celebration* by Kool and the Gang at the start of a weekly celebration assembly. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their understanding of rhythm, with good work on rhythm patterns. In Year 6, for example, pupils explore patterns using *Dr Knickerbocker*, with most able to pick out the strong beat. They understand ostinato and are beginning to use this as they perform cyclic patterns. In Year 3, pupils are beginning to explore dynamics and show they can illustrate soft and loud, fast and slow tempo and high and low pitch. Standards of singing are appropriate, with the teacher able to improve the quality with good help with breathing.

Physical education

94. It was possible to observe only three lessons in physical education. Since all were lessons in movement and all in classes in Years 3 to 6 there was insufficient evidence to support a judgement about standards, teaching and learning. Other evidence in teachers' planning, schemes of work and the subject co-ordinator's working file indicates that provision in physical education is **good**.

95. A strength of physical education is the wide range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils. They play competitive games against pupils from other schools and the school has been successful in a number of competitive leagues. These activities enhance the curriculum for physical education. Most pupils' attitude to work is at least good and sometimes very good. These pupils are enthusiastic and work hard. They persevere well to refine and develop skills, working effectively together in small groups. By the time pupils reach Year 6 the standard of movement is average.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

96. It was not possible to observe any lessons in personal, social and health education or citizenship during the inspection. However, scrutiny of planning and discussions with teachers, pupils and parents indicate that provision is **good**.
97. The improvement of attendance is a particular focus of the school's work and in this area there is very effective collaboration with outside agents such as the school Health Adviser, which has already brought some success. Annual residential visits contribute positively to pupils' personal and social education and parents and pupils value these highly. The school is developing a School Council as part of its promotion of citizenship and pupils are enthusiastic about its proposed contribution to school life.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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