

INSPECTION REPORT

BROADSTONE HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Heaton Chapel, Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106034

Headteacher: Mr A Heaton

Lead inspector: Mr K Bardon

Dates of inspection: 12th – 14th January 2004

Inspection number: 255623

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	264
School address:	Broadstone Hall Road South Heaton Chapel Stockport Cheshire
Postcode:	SK4 5JD
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Stanford
Date of previous inspection:	April 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Broadstone Hall is an average sized primary school on the outskirts of Stockport, catering for 264 pupils in the 4 to 11 age range. Most pupils live close to the school in a residential area made up mainly of owner-occupied semi-detached housing. The social and economic indicators of the locality are generally positive and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Twenty nine pupils have special educational needs, mainly for moderate learning difficulties, and four pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Both these figures are average for a school of this size. Fifteen pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds (with no one group predominating) and six pupils are at an early stage in the learning of English. The majority of children have the expected range of basic skills when they first join the school and their attainment on entry is average for their age. Over a third of the teaching staff have changed since the last inspection and during the current inspection two of the classes were taught by temporary teachers.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11807	Keith Bardon	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education English as an additional language
9928	Alan Dobson	Lay inspector	
31012	Ann Welch	Team inspector	English Geography History Music Special educational needs
8839	Michael Egerton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage of Learning Mathematics Art and design Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Broadstone Hall is a satisfactory school with good features. The school no longer has serious weaknesses and pupils of all ages achieve well. Good quality teaching promotes effective learning and results in standards that are above average in key subjects. Parents are generally supportive of the school, pupils enjoy their lessons and a pleasant, friendly atmosphere prevails. Leadership and management are sound although the headteacher has yet to extend his leadership to the whole school community. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is good in English, mathematics and science and, as a result, pupils do well in the national tests. However, pupils do not achieve enough in design and technology.
- Pupils of all ages learn well because they are taught effectively, show very good attitudes to school and work hard.
- The good provision that is made for children in the Reception class gives them a solid start to school and lays a secure foundation for their future learning.
- The school lacks clearly defined aims to headline its work and does not communicate with and involve parents well enough.
- The school development plan is not sharp enough and this makes it difficult to use as a management tool.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language receive thoughtful and well-conceived support and guidance and, as a consequence, they make good progress.
- Pupils are cared for well and good curricular leadership ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn

Since it was last inspected in 2002, the school has made satisfactory progress and improved its effectiveness by successfully eliminating the serious weaknesses it had at that time. The principle issues from the last report have been addressed productively and development is continuing. Constructive changes have been made to organisation and practices that have helped to raise standards. A number of new staff have been successfully inducted into the school and the quality of teaching is better. Communication with parents remains a weak area.

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	C	B	B
mathematics	E	A	A	A*
science	E	C	A	A

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

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and attain, or in a significant minority of cases exceed the targets for their age in all areas of learning by the end of their time in the Reception class. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good and standards, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics and science, are generally above average by the end of Year 2.

Year 6 pupils performed well in the national tests in 2003 and results were much better than those attained by pupils in similar schools to Broadstone Hall. Results in mathematics were in the top five per cent in comparison with similar schools. These very positive results are reflected fully in the

quality of the work that junior pupils are presently producing. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good and by the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and science. Mathematics is a strength and throughout the school standards of achievement are often well above expectations in all aspects of the subject. In contrast, standards are weak in design and technology and pupils in the junior classes do not achieve enough. As a result of the well-judged support they receive, pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language maintain a good rate of progress.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they develop into sensible and responsible individuals with a good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils' attendance is good; they behave well and show very positive attitudes to learning and to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education with strengths in teaching and learning but weaknesses in links between the home and the school. The teaching and learning are good in the Reception class and in Years 1 to 6. Careful planning ensures that lessons run well and good relationships between staff and pupils produce a pleasant and productive atmosphere. Pupils' work is assessed regularly and the information used productively to guide decision-making. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and good in English, mathematics and science. The school has focused closely on these three core subjects but has not yet had a close look beyond them at the development of the curriculum as a whole. The school's partnership with parents is unsatisfactory because parents are not given sufficient opportunities to contribute their opinions and ideas. The school provides a good level of care for its pupils and pays close attention to their welfare.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory with some good features. The headteacher has been instrumental in strengthening the school and enabling the serious weaknesses to be addressed. The quality of management is satisfactory and the school runs smoothly day to day. Procedures are effective and staff are clear about their responsibilities. Governance is satisfactory and statutory requirements are met. Governors support the school well and in recent times have started to challenge it more. This is increasing the effectiveness of their work and helping the school to move forwards. Financial management is good and funding is spent efficiently.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally satisfied with the education their children receive but a significant number feel that the school does not communicate with them well enough. Most pupils are happy at school and enjoy the good relationships they have with their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do now are:

- Establish aims for the school that clearly define the principles on which it bases its work.
- Improve links with parents so that they are kept better informed and have more opportunity to contribute to the decisions the school is taking about their children's education.
- Increase the effectiveness of the school development plan.
- Raise standards of achievement in design and technology.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the Reception class and in Years 1 to 6 is **good**. Standards are above the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in mathematics and attain high standards in all aspects of the subject.
- Standards in English and science are above average and pupils' achievements are good.
- There has been a significant improvement in standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science since the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve well in the Reception class and make a secure start to learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress.
- Standards are too low in design and technology.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (17.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.7 (16.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.4 (18.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. In 2003, Year 2 pupils' results in the reading and writing tests were above the national average and better than those attained by pupils in schools similar to Broadstone Hall. Results from the mathematics tests reflected the national average and were much the same as those attained by pupils in similar schools. The school was a little disappointed with a fall in reading and mathematics results and puts this down to the strong emphasis that had been placed on improving pupils' writing. The balance has been redressed. Year 2 pupils are currently attaining standards that are above average in reading and writing and, as a result of the carefully considered curriculum, well above average in mathematics. Pupils' speaking and listening skills develop at a slower rate than other aspects of their English and, by Year 2, standards are broadly average. Overall, these levels of attainment represent good achievement in English and very good achievement in mathematics for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils also achieve well in science and, by Year 2, standards are above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.6 (27.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.4 (29.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.6 (29.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In 2003, Year 6 pupils attained test results that were above the national average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. In comparison with the standards they attained as seven year olds, pupils' performance was good in English and very good in science. Pupils did exceptionally well in mathematics and results reflected a very high degree of progress. Results in science and mathematics were better than in English mainly because a higher proportion of pupils attained a level higher than typically expected for their age in the tests.
3. Pupils in the junior classes achieve well in English and science and very well mathematics. Standards in Year 6 are currently well above the national average in all aspects of mathematics and above average in both English and science. As with the younger age group, pupils' speaking and listening is not as well developed as their reading and writing, but progresses steadily and, by Year 6, is a little above average. Rather surprisingly, considering the quality of the content of their written work, too many of the older pupils have yet to acquire a cursive style of handwriting. By Year 6, pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding is strong but many have still to acquire a full range of scientific enquiry skills. As a result, pupils' overall attainment is a little lower than the test results would indicate. However, this is still a very creditable level of attainment.

Other aspects of standards and achievement

4. The test results of Year 2 pupils rose sharply in 2002 but fell back somewhat in 2003. However, over the last five years the school's results have risen at a faster rate than they have nationally and present a very positive picture. The good results Year 6 pupils attained in the 2003 national tests built successfully on the marked improvement in performance that had been achieved the previous year. Although there have been fluctuations, over the last five years the school's results have improved quicker than the national average, with the most significant gains in mathematics and science.
5. The 2003 test results in mathematics exceeded the targets the school had set for pupils' performance by a significant margin, primarily because these had been set before the school had made the improvements that are now evident. In English, results comfortably met the target for pupils attaining the expected level but were a little short of the targets set for pupils attaining the higher level. The 2004 targets have been set at an appropriate level to enable the school to consolidate the gains that have been made. Currently, pupils are on track to achieve the targets and it is likely that the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in the English tests will increase.
6. Most children enter the Reception class with the expected range of basic skills. During their time in Reception, children achieve well in all areas of learning and very well in their personal development. With very few exceptions children successfully attain the early learning goals (the standards they are expected to reach by the end of Reception) before they move into Year 1. A significant minority of children exceed these targets and have already started National Curriculum work by the end of their Reception year. The gains children make in basic skills provide a firm foundation for future learning.
7. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology and physical education meets national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6 and, throughout the school, pupils' achievements are satisfactory in these subjects. Similarly, pupils' achievements are satisfactory in religious education and the attainment of both infant and junior pupils meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. By Year 6, standards in design and technology are below expectations because, in the junior classes, pupils are given insufficient opportunity to develop the expected range of knowledge and skills. It is not possible from the small number of lessons seen in art and design, geography, history and music to make judgements of the standards of pupils' achievement in these subjects

8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. This is because teachers plan work to match their specific needs and pupils receive effective support and guidance from classroom assistants. As a result, many reach the expected level for their age by the time they leave the school. The provision the school made for pupils who speak English as an additional language was criticised in the last inspection report. This has improved significantly. As a result, the achievement of this small group of pupils is now good and their progress mirrors that of other pupils. The school has started to identify pupils capable of high levels of attainment and to provide work which reflects their capabilities. However, it is too early to judge how well this group of pupils is achieving.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have a very positive **attitude** to school and their behaviour is **good**. During their time at school, pupils' spiritual awareness, moral standards and social skills develop well. Their cultural development is satisfactory. **Attendance** levels are **above average** and the pupils arrive punctually.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' enjoy school life very much and want to learn.
- Behaviour in the classroom and around the school is good, although a small minority of pupils need periodic reminders of what the school expects.
- Pupils develop into sensible and responsible individuals with a good understanding of right and wrong.
- Good attendance is seen as important by the school, pupils and parents.

Commentary

9. Pupils like school. They think their school is a good school and they are proud to be there. In lessons they are alert and attentive. They are very keen to join in and appreciate that their answers and ideas will be listened to with respect. They know that their teachers expect them to work very hard at all times and they usually live up to those expectations. Most pupils are enthusiastic about learning and take homework very seriously. Pupils with special educational needs have the same very positive attitudes as other pupils and the same desire to improve and do well.
10. The atmosphere in the school is conducive to learning. The pupils' behaviour is good and, although a few children occasionally behave inappropriately, the teachers have effective strategies to manage the pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand the school rules well and think they are fair. Movement around the school is orderly – vital, given the number of pupils at times moving along the quite narrow corridors. Play times have a happy and friendly feel. Pupils play well together and no signs of harassment were observed during the inspection. Pupils have confidence in the school's procedures for handling bullying. The pupils expressed no concerns regarding bullying, name-calling or racism. There was one temporary exclusion in the most recent reporting year.

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	222	1	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

11. Pupils' personal qualities develop well while they are at the school. Relationships are good and pupils get on well with each other and the staff. Teachers are good role models resulting in pupils learning valuable social skills – the value of a smile, being polite and courteous, not shouting out, taking turns, sharing and collaborating in pairs or larger groups. Social responsibilities are developed well by the school. Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to help in the running of the school, from class-based monitor duties to being members of the school council, and they tackle these roles enthusiastically. The school provides a very good grounding in moral issues. Pupils recognise the need for rules in society and understand the difference between right and wrong. Assemblies allow pupils to reflect on deeper matters, for instance, the meaning of bravery and courage. Pupils' self-esteem is boosted effectively by the school's high expectations of all. The underlying philosophy of 'you can do it' permeates most lessons and pupils know that individual achievement is recognised by praise and rewards. By the time pupils are in Year 6, most have developed into sensible individuals with interesting ideas and a clear sense of responsibility.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 95.3%

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. Attendance is better than that normally found in primary schools and unauthorised absences are negligible. Parents value education and get their children to school regularly and on time. The school strongly disapproves of holidays in term time and parents' co-operation results in a low incidence of these absences.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides its pupils with a **good** quality of education. Effective teaching is combined with a sound curriculum and good quality care, welfare and guidance. However, there are some weaknesses in the links between home and school.

Teaching and learning

In the Reception class and in Years 1 to 6 the teaching is **good** and throughout the school there are examples of very good teaching. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and make productive use of the information this provides when planning their lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned to help pupils achieve their best, although in some lessons pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher.
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and these have a positive effect on the pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour, and pupils contribute effectively to their own learning.
- Teachers have secure knowledge of almost all subjects and match work accurately to pupils' abilities; this is not the case in design and technology.
- The hard work and skills of the teaching assistants makes a positive contribution to the pupils' learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language make good progress because they are taught well.
- Teachers make good use of the information gained from assessment.

Commentary

13. The good quality teaching in the Reception class gives children a secure start, which is successfully built upon in Years 1 to 6. The consistency of teaching has improved since the last inspection and good teaching throughout the school enables pupils to learn well. Many parents hold positive views of the teaching their children receive and of the progress they make as a result.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13 (27%)	23 (47%)	13 (27%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

14. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and organise them well. As a result, lessons have good pace and clear focus and pupils understand what they have to do and are trying to achieve. An important feature of the planning is the care teachers take to make sure the work given to different groups of pupils is matched carefully to their level of attainment, including the higher attainers. In this way, pupils gain success and confidence through doing work that is appropriate and, at the same time, challenging.
15. Teachers have a good knowledge of the majority of subjects (although this is a little lacking in design and technology in the junior classes because of a lack of subject development). The expertise that exists within the staff in English, mathematics and science leads to pupils' good quality learning and achievement. Pupils are given work that builds on prior learning and which progressively moves their knowledge and understanding forward. Opportunities are planned into most lessons for pupils to engage in class or group discussions. Teachers stress the importance of using the correct vocabulary, giving detailed information and being able to explain the thinking behind an answer. Pupils respond well to this approach and their learning

progresses because they are prepared to think for themselves, make decisions and contribute their ideas. All answers are valued and pupils are given praise and encouragement which raises their self-esteem.

16. A marked strength of the teaching and learning is the very good relationship pupils have with their teachers and the teaching assistants. There is a strong bond of mutual trust between the staff and the pupils, teachers show respect for the pupils and, in return, pupils try hard to repay this through good work. Pupils feel comfortable and cared for and this produces a positive working environment where they feel confident to answer questions and contribute their own thoughts and suggestions. These positive relationships promote high standards of behaviour, both in classrooms and around the school. It is rare to hear a teacher reprimanding a pupil; a quiet word is all that is needed to quell a moment of over-exuberance. In some lessons, the amount of time pupils spend listening to the teacher is too long and the pupils' concentration wanes. This often leaves too little time for practical activities or for pupils to work individually to practise and consolidate what they have been taught. In the most effective lessons, teachers use lively questions and a wide range of strategies to generate high levels of interest, keep pupils on their toes and to establish a climate in which pupils have to concentrate hard to keep up with the lively and productive pace of the lesson. Very occasionally, the tasks set require pupils to do too much for themselves and because they do not have the necessary skills, many struggle to meet the teachers' objectives.
17. Teaching assistants are well trained and work very effectively alongside the teachers. As well as supporting pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, they lead lessons in information and communication technology in the computer suite and provide additional help for groups of pupils who are falling a little short of the targets for their age. In all instances, the teaching assistants provide confident and valuable teaching which has a positive effect on pupils' learning.
18. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are generally taught alongside the rest of the class, but on occasions are withdrawn so that they can receive specific help. A strength of the teaching stems from the care teachers take to match work to the targets on pupils' individual educational plans. Close liaison between teachers and support assistants ensures a consistent approach to teaching and this contributes to the good progress made by these pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive equally effective teaching. They are carefully and skilfully drawn into all activities and given work that progressively builds their confidence and language skills. All pupils are fully valued and included in all aspects of lessons.
19. Assessment procedures are effective and enable the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils to be regularly monitored. This information gained is used well to inform planning so that the teachers can move pupils forward, support those who are falling behind and challenge the higher attaining pupils. In the Reception class, detailed assessments are made at the beginning of the year and these are used very effectively to identify the starting points for individuals and to ensure their learning progresses at a good pace. For pupils in Years 1 to 6 assessments are used to set targets that will ensure the pupils appreciate what they have to do to improve. Pupils' work is marked regularly and comments are often included to ensure that pupils know exactly where and how to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs have a clear understanding of how they can improve because they are set clearly focused individual targets, which are regularly assessed and reviewed.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall. It is enriched by a good variety of additional activities. Accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is inclusive and provides all pupils with equal opportunities to learn.
- The school provides a good curriculum for pupils in the Reception class.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of learning English get a good, well-balanced curriculum.
- Additional activities that enrich learning add to the value and interest of the curriculum.
- The curriculum for design and technology is unsatisfactory.
- There are insufficient resources for geography and design and technology.

Commentary

20. The school has successfully addressed the issues relating to the curriculum from the last report. Joint planning by teachers ensures that pupils of similar age, but in different classes, have the same opportunities to learn, and adjustments to the timetable have rectified the problem of pupils missing out on the same subject each time they have music tuition.
21. Curricular planning is particularly effective for English, mathematics and science and, as a result of comprehensive coverage of the National Curriculum and teachers' effective use of the National Strategies, pupils' achievements are good or very good in these subjects. Numeracy skills are used well across the curriculum and improvements have been made for the use of literacy skills in other subjects, particularly the use of writing. The stimulating and interesting curriculum children receive in the Reception class enables them to make substantial progress in all the areas of learning.
22. Co-ordinators now take an active role in monitoring the curriculum in their subjects. Because of the emphasis that has been placed on the core subjects, other subjects have, to some extent, taken a back seat. While this has not had a significantly adverse effect on most subjects, design and technology has suffered badly. The design and technology curriculum is not structured well enough and fails to provide pupils with sufficient opportunity to acquire the skills they need to design and make things effectively. Overall, the curriculum is sound but it tends to lack innovation and character. Now standards in the core subjects have been put on a firm footing, the school is in a stronger position to review the curriculum. Provision for personal, social and health elements of the curriculum, such as sex education and drugs awareness education, is satisfactory.
23. The curriculum is enriched by many visits. These include a residential visit for older pupils to Wales, when work is planned to form very natural links between the arts and other subjects such as history and geography. Extra-curricular provision is good and participation in sporting activities is very good. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs remains strong. Pupils facing difficulties are identified at an early stage and receive additional support to meet targets that are clearly set out. Teachers and support assistants work collaboratively to ensure that pupils are fully included in all the learning activities. This is particularly so for pupils with physical difficulties. The provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language has improved and is now good. Well judged support ensures that these pupils have an appropriate curriculum and teachers skilfully draw them into all activities.
24. The school is staffed well with qualified and experienced teachers and a good number of competent support staff. Resources for learning are adequate, except in design and technology and geography where there is insufficient equipment or it is badly out of date. For example, a lack of modern atlases hinders the development of pupils' mapping skills in geography.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are well cared for and are given **good** support and guidance. Procedures for seeking pupils' views are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well looked after in a friendly caring community.
- Procedures for ensuring the protection of pupils are very good.
- Support is based on good knowledge of the pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well.
- Induction arrangements for Reception children are very good.

Commentary

25. The school is a friendly community where pupils are well cared for and treated with respect. Concerns are listened to sympathetically. Pupils express confidence in their teachers' ability to sort out any problems. Supervision is good at all times and pupils feel safe and secure. Parents are right to feel that when their children are at school they are treated fairly and are in a safe environment. Arrangements for the induction of children into the Reception class generally work very well and parents appreciate the smooth introduction to school life that this provides for their children.
26. At the last inspection, provision for child protection was found to be unsatisfactory and became a key issue for improvement. The school has worked very hard on this aspect, including introducing a new policy, extensive training for staff, giving the child protection a higher profile within the school and greater involvement of governors. Provision has improved significantly and is now very good.
27. The school uses assessment information well to give good support for pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils have clear targets so that they know what they have to do to improve. Their personal development is monitored continually on an informal basis and, as teachers know their pupils very well, any guidance is based on good background knowledge. The quality of the comments on personal progress in the pupils' annual reports is good.
28. The school caters well for pupils who have special educational needs. Targets on their individual educational plans are reviewed and revised regularly and their progress through school is carefully tracked. They benefit from the extra guidance they receive from teachers and support assistants. Those pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need receive support from learning assistants over and above their entitlement.
29. The school is at an early stage of developing procedures for seeking and acting on pupils' views. A school council was formed at the beginning of this academic year and is already having a positive impact on school life. A budget has been put at the disposal of the council and the council has chosen to invest in playground games to improve the quality of playtimes. Council members are enthusiastic and take their role seriously. Pupils throughout the school think the school council is a good idea and appreciate the opportunities it presents.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **unsatisfactory**. The school has **satisfactory** links with the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a lack of consultation with parents on school developments and the headteacher is viewed by many as too remote.
- The quality of written information for parents is unsatisfactory.
- Parents think highly of the teaching, the high expectations of the staff and the way their children mature at school.
- Good homework procedures encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning.

Commentary

30. Parents have many good things to say about the school. They find the quality of teaching to be good, they think their children have to work hard, they like the progress their children make and they approve of the way the children mature while at school. The inspection confirms all these positive views. Most parents think that the amount of homework is appropriate. The inspection found that homework throughout the school is well organised and regular, with parents being given useful information that allows them to be involved in their children's learning and able to aid their achievement.
31. A significant minority of parents, however, has serious concerns about levels and quality of communication between school and home, information on their children's progress, the way the school is led and managed and the extent to which decisions are taken without any involvement by the parents. These concerns were expressed forcefully to the inspectors on the questionnaire, at the pre-inspection parents' meeting and in conversations with parents during the inspection.
32. The school is aware of these problems and is in the process of introducing a programme of parent partnership meetings. Prior to this, there has been insufficient attempt to sample parents' views. In recent times considerable changes have taken place in the school's procedures and systems to which the parents have had no say. Letters to parents on changes are often written in a very formal style giving the minimum of background information and extremely short notice of the implementation of the changes. The school has insufficiently sought and valued parents' opinions. This is unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has been preoccupied with addressing the key issues and eliminating the causes of serious weaknesses. The headteacher is rarely seen outside the school or at the school gate, and to many parents is a remote figure. Although most parents are supportive of the school and what their children gain from the education, the partnership between the home and the school is underdeveloped.
33. The school has a good programme of meetings for parents to discuss their children's progress with their teachers; however, pupils' reports are a curate's egg. The basic grades given for effort and attainment for every subject allow parents to monitor closely their child's progress from year to year. However, most reports contain little information on subjects apart from English, mathematics and science. Parents are not given a sufficiently clear picture of what their child can do (or cannot do) across the curriculum as a whole. This is unsatisfactory and is not in the spirit of the official guidance on reports. Meetings are held both formally and informally with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and parents are quite rightly pleased with their children's achievements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory**. The quality of leadership is satisfactory with some good features. The quality of management is satisfactory. The quality of governance is satisfactory and statutory requirements are complied with.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has successfully led the school out of serious weaknesses but has yet to extend his leadership to the whole school community.
- There is a determination to continue the improvement that has taken place over the last two years but the school development plan is not yet sharp enough.
- The new management structure is working well and the school runs smoothly day-to-day.
- The school has a positive ethos and provides all pupils with equal opportunities to learn but it lacks a set of clearly stated aims.
- The governing body has recognised its past shortcomings and has started to hold the school to account.
- Financial resources are utilised well.

Commentary

34. Overall, there has been sound improvement in leadership and management. The headteacher is providing the school with stronger and more focused leadership than was the case at the time of the last inspection. He has taken good advice on how to improve the school and has been instrumental in addressing the causes of serious weaknesses identified in the last report. The headteacher has the support and confidence of the staff and, under his leadership, there is a determination to continue the school's development and to further raise standards. The school ethos is positive, the atmosphere is warm and friendly and pupils enjoy learning. However, the school lacks clearly defined aims and objectives to headline its work. Some aims are listed in the centre of the prospectus but these fail to provide the necessary commonality of purpose or to make clear statements of what Broadstone Hall strives to achieve for its pupils.
35. The headteacher has implemented many changes which are benefiting pupils. These include the reorganisation of classes so that better provision can be made for pupils of differing abilities, a review of the management structure and the introduction of more effective procedures for evaluating pupils' progress. He does not, however, have a high enough profile in the school community and, in particular, his relationship with parents is underdeveloped. As a result, a significant proportion of parents feel distanced from the school and unable to contribute in the manner they would wish.
36. There have been a relatively large number of staff changes in a short space of time. Good appointments have been made, new staff have received effective induction and the changes have been managed well to minimise any disruption to pupils' learning.
37. All data the school receives or collects itself is analysed thoroughly and the information used to guide decision making. Systems for monitoring the work of the school, including teaching and learning, are satisfactory and provide an accurate picture of what is going well and what needs further attention. The school development plan contains all the relevant details but the information is not easy to access. The school's key initiatives tend to get buried in a plethora of less important information. This reduces the effectiveness of the development plan as a working document considerably because it makes progress harder to evaluate and any informed changes more difficult to make. Governors, in particular, have problems using the school development plan as a management tool.
38. The headteacher made constructive use of the opportunity the appointment of new staff presented to reorganise school management. A well-formulated three-tier pyramid of management has been constituted in which information flows from subject co-ordinators to senior teachers and ultimately to the headteacher. This has only been in operation a short time but is working well because all teachers have management responsibilities and can contribute to school development. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has brought new ideas which are already beginning to improve the provision the school makes for its pupils.

39. Provision for special educational needs and for pupils who speak English as an additional language is managed well and, as a result, these pupils make good progress. The co-ordinators maintain effective contact with staff, parents and outside agencies. The necessary documentation is in place and updated regularly. The school uses funding for pupils with special educational needs wisely, particularly in terms of the employment and training of learning assistants. Procedures to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn are good. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection and fully justifies the decisions that have been taken and the strategies that have been put in place. A clear and constructive race equality policy has been written and procedures implemented.
40. Many governors have close links with the school and regularly visit the classrooms to meet the staff and pupils. Consequently, the governing body has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the direction in which it needs to develop. Governors support the school well and meet regularly to discuss its work and to take strategic decisions affecting pupils' education. However, until recently, governors have not been active enough in holding the school to account. This is changing, and there is a strong determination amongst the more experienced governors and the significant number who have recently joined the governing body, to provide independent evaluation which not only celebrates success but also challenges the school to do better. There has been a satisfactory improvement in governance since the last inspection.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	551,891
Total expenditure	546,512
Expenditure per pupil	1,945

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	12,170
Balance carried forward to next year	5,379

41. Financial management is good and funds are administered efficiently. Spending decisions are taken carefully and due thought given to the impact they will have on pupils' education. For example, by increasing the number of teaching assistants, the school has been able to improve the support pupils receive and through this to raise standards. The school employs a good level of staffing while maintaining a positive budget balance. Levels of equipment are generally satisfactory. However, in some subjects, such as design and technology, there are inadequate resources for learning and this adversely affects standards. Governors understand the principles of best value and are starting to apply them more effectively as their monitoring of the school improves. However, some of the consultative aspects of best value have still to be fully applied, particularly in regard to the school's partnership with parents.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

When children enter the Reception class at the age of four they have broadly average skills and knowledge for their age. During the time they spend in Reception, achievement, overall, is good. Almost all attain the early learning goals for their age in all areas of learning by the end of the year and a minority have already commenced the National Curriculum when they move into Year 1. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make significant and sustained progress, which matches that of other children. The provision made for children's learning in the Reception class is good and at times very good. Skilful organisation and excellent use of support staff means that this relatively large group of children receive good quality teaching and learning. The system of rotating groups means that each of the adults is teaching in the region of six children per activity, a good ratio for young children. The teaching is frequently good with particular strengths in personal and social education. Teachers and support staff continually monitor and assess the work of the children and these assessments are used very well to plan specific activities that meet the needs of the children and identify links between all the areas of learning. The teacher and the support staff work as a closely-knit team, planning activities together and sharing knowledge and information. The quality of leadership and management in the Foundation Stage is good. The provision made for Foundation Stage children received a very favourable evaluation in the last report and remains a positive aspect of the school's work.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers promote children's learning in this area continuously.
- Relationships between children and adults are very good.
- Children work in a mature and sensible manner in their groups.

Commentary

42. The promotion of personal development is very good. It receives a high priority from the moment the children enter the classroom and, as a result, the learning environment is orderly and civilised. Achievement in this area of learning is very good and children reach a high standard by the end of the Reception year. Teaching is very good. Children are taught routines quickly and effectively and need few reminders to adhere to them. They are quite independent in their day-to-day activities. For example, they find their own equipment and put it away when the task is finished. As groups, they move from one activity to another in a most sensible manner. All the staff are very good role models for the children. They encourage them to take turns during activities, play together and share the resources. There is very good use of praise and encouragement and this helps to raise the self-esteem of the children and makes them want to work hard for the teachers. When getting changed for physical education, the children undress with confidence and line up sensibly at the door ready to go to the hall.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Early reading and writing skills are taught very well.

- Children's speaking and listening skills benefit from the opportunities they have to work with others.
- There are good links with other areas of learning that help the development of language skills.

Commentary

43. In this area of learning, children achieve well and reach standards that are good for their age. A strength of the teaching is the careful and consistent manner in which children are taught to recognise letter shapes and sounds. Throughout the Reception work areas, there is a strong emphasis on books and writing. Books are displayed with care to make them appealing to the children. As a result, they enjoy reading together and will join in quite confidently with the teacher to read a page from a book. Each week the emphasis is on a particular letter sound and this is reflected in attractive displays of things beginning with that letter. As part of their group work, children write the letter shape in their handwriting books, helping them make the link between reading and writing. At the end of their group activity, sharing sessions are held where children explain what they have been doing. The group who had been exploring materials in the school environment used words such as 'smooth', 'rough', 'shiny' and 'dull', to describe similarities and differences between the things they had found, whilst the other groups listened. When children are developing their knowledge and understanding of the world they are constantly encouraged to use the correct language and to record their findings in simple ways. For example, a group exploring sinking and floating had to describe what had happened and then record their findings on a chart, which they did with enthusiasm and concentration.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a very good range of practical activities that stimulate children's ideas.
- Children have a secure knowledge of numbers up to ten.

Commentary

44. Achievement in this area of learning is good. Children reach the early learning goals by the time they reach the end of the Reception class with a number of them beginning to work at higher levels. The good teaching in this area stems from making sure that the children practise what they are learning in many different ways, for example, counting is used whenever it is appropriate so that the children become familiar and confident with numbers. Teachers develop children's understanding of number, shape and the language of mathematics through carefully planned practical activities. For example, before embarking on the task to find out which things will float and which will sink, the children sorted and counted the objects, using circles they made up groups of nine or ten objects. Children become familiar with different shapes by constructing squares, rectangles and circles. The classroom has many displays so that the children see numbers as part of their everyday environment and something that is enjoyable. Children are regularly involved in counting activities and teachers make good use of rhymes and songs to familiarise children with numbers. Many children are already counting confidently with some going to twenty and beyond.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan interesting activities which help children acquire an early understanding of how the world works, but children do not receive as many opportunities as they do in some other areas of learning.
- The tasks in this area of learning are used well to support the development of language skills.

Commentary

45. Children achieve well in this area of learning due to the practical way in which things are taught. In order to help children to gain a good understanding of different materials and their properties, the teachers engage them in investigations. The children experimented wearing a plastic glove, dipping it into water to see what happened. The glove was then changed for a sock and the same experiment was carried out. Children talked enthusiastically about what happened and what was different about the two materials. Their thinking was extended when the teacher challenged them to think of a word that would describe the plastic glove. Eventually they arrived at the word 'waterproof' and added a new word to their language experience. A visit to the local hat museum provides an interesting experience through which children gain an early understanding of how things change over time. Teachers use topics such as "What do we wear in winter?" well to encourage children to write and to make links with the creative area of learning. Very good use is made of the school grounds and the immediate surroundings where children carry out investigations and most are able to use their senses to describe what they find. Children acquire good skills in using the computer and are confident in operating the mouse and carrying out simple operations.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good skills in using small tools and implements for writing, drawing and painting.
- Children are confident when participating in physical activities in the school hall and the outside play area.

Commentary

46. Teaching is good and children achieve well in all aspects of their physical development. Children's confidence in the use of small tools is good. They use brushes well when painting, can join materials together with glue and are able to manipulate paper strips to weave together. At the writing table, they use pencils well to form the shapes of letters and to try to write their names. In the school hall, they are good at finding a space to work in and can move in a variety of ways, developing increasing control over their body movements. In a throwing and catching lesson, all were confident to take part and good use of demonstration by the teacher helped them to learn from others' efforts. In the outdoor area, they have the opportunity to use wheeled equipment as well as climbing, crawling and imaginative play. There was insufficient opportunity to gain a clear impression of how well children perform on this equipment.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links between creative work and other areas of learning are good.
- The quality of the children's work in art is good.

Commentary

47. Much of the work children do is linked to other aspects of their learning and makes a strong contribution to their understanding. The work on "What do we wear in winter?" has produced some very good pictures and there are some excellent paintings of snowmen linking with the time of the year. Cutting pictures of clothes made of wool from a catalogue improves children's skills in handling a pair of scissors, which are well up to expectations for their age and in some cases beyond. The good range of art activities increases their skill with different materials. Work on exploring the colours red and blue then leads to high quality work on looking at sunsets and the bright colours they produce. Children gain considerable pleasure from their work in music. During their second lesson on ostinato, the children delight in clapping to a beat and, as the Elephant and Spider music plays, they use different body parts to quietly keep the rhythm. When given the opportunity to use percussion instruments, they do so in a very sensible and mature manner showing how well their personal skills are developing in all the areas of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards in reading and writing are above average. Standards are relatively lower in speaking and listening.
- Teaching and learning are good and standards in writing have been successfully raised.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good.
- Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills.
- Too many pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not use cursive handwriting consistently or fluently.

Commentary

48. Year 2 pupils performed well in the 2003 national tests and standards in both reading and writing were above average, justifying the focus that teachers in Years 1 and 2 had placed on improving the pupils' skills in writing. Year 6 pupils also achieved results that were above average in English, but with wide variations between reading and writing. Almost two-thirds of pupils attained the higher level in reading but only one pupil attained this level in writing. To redress this situation, teachers in Years 3 to 6 are allocating more time to writing, beyond that spent in the literacy hour, and making sure that pupils have more opportunities to produce written work in all subjects. These strategies are proving successful and more junior pupils are producing work of an above average standard. In both the infants and juniors standards in writing are currently above average and pupils' achievements in this aspect of English are good.
49. The above average standards pupils attain in reading stem from the effective teaching they receive. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are taught the strategies they need to decipher unfamiliar words and given the confidence to successfully tackle more difficult books. Pupils' good progress continues as they move through the school because there are plenty of opportunities to read every day, as a class or in groups or individually. Teachers act as good role models when they read aloud and, consequently, pupils follow suit and read with expression and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to read at home, and parents are supportive of the school's approach. Consequently, pupils enjoy reading a wide range of books, both fiction and non-fiction. As a result, by Year 6 most pupils are reading independently and select books based on their preference for particular styles and interests.
50. Pupils' achievement in speaking and listening is not as strong as in reading or writing, although many leave school having reached standards that are a little above average. Teachers are aware that this is the weakest aspect of pupils' English and use a range of different strategies to help them improve. They encourage pupils to talk to partners and the class as, for example, when pupils in Year 4 gave their opinions during a discussion about how to deal with bullying. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 explain unfamiliar words and extend and repeat pupils' responses. It is rather too early to judge securely how well these strategies are working but there are already some promising signs of increasing skills.
51. There are several strengths to teaching that make it good overall. Lessons are planned thoroughly to take account of the progress that pupils are making and targets are set to help them to improve. Much of the marking is thorough and comments make it very clear what pupils need to do to improve their work. There are also high expectations of the pupils' achievement and behaviour and, consequently, pupils take care to do their best and complete their work on time. The school's success in raising standards in writing emanates from the many well-chosen opportunities pupils are given to write for different purposes and audiences.

Teachers are good at highlighting challenging areas for pupils to work on, such as when pupils in Year 6 use a range of connectives in their balanced argument about the use of mobile phones in school. Another reason why pupils achieve well is because they are constantly encouraged to punctuate work properly and to use adjectives and adverbs to make their writing more interesting.

52. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language benefit from working with skilled teaching assistants. Homework is used well to consolidate and extend work covered in lessons, including using research skills as, for example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 did to find out about the War of the Roses. A weakness in teaching is a lack of insistence on pupils in Years 3 to 6 using cursive handwriting and this is a weakness found during the last inspection that has not been addressed. The handwriting of some teachers is not a good model for pupils.
53. Leadership and management are good. Much has been achieved since the last inspection, not least the raising of standards in reading and writing. Assessments are very thorough and track pupils' progress carefully. The co-ordinator has an action plan that sets out planned improvements, which include continuing the good work in raising standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall. Pupils' skills in English are improved and used effectively when they research, discuss and record the findings of investigations in mathematics and science. Skills are also used well when they write to express their views and understanding in history. Literacy skills are used to a lesser extent in geography and religious education.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are high and have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection.
- The curriculum in mathematics is very effective and promotes very good achievement in all aspects of the subject.
- The teaching is good and challenging lessons ensure effective learning.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and their attitudes in lessons are very good.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

55. Pupils of all ages achieve very well and standards for pupils in Years 2 and 6 are well above average. Year 6 pupils attained very good results in the national test in 2003; the improvements that have been made since the last inspection are real and sustained. Test results for Year 2 pupils were rather disappointing in 2003, but the school has responded sensibly and there is every likelihood that they will be better this year. Higher attaining pupils are given challenging tasks and many achieve standards that are well above expectations for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are very well supported by the classroom assistants and make very good progress, often meeting the national targets for their age group.
56. The way in which the curriculum is organised is having a significant impact on the standards the pupils are achieving. When pupils are taught a new concept or skill they work at it over a period of time, practising it in many different ways until the teacher is quite sure they know and clearly understand it. Those pupils who acquire the understanding quickly are given more

challenging work to do so that their abilities are extended. A strength of the teaching is the way in which the group and individual tasks are very accurately matched to the needs of the pupils, enabling them to work on their own with confidence while moving their knowledge and understanding forward at a good pace. Very effective learning is aided significantly by the high levels of concentration that pupils of all ages show.

57. The quality of teaching is good and at times very good. Lessons are planned in detail, always begin with a lively mental session and continually provide pupils with opportunities to engage with mathematical ideas and number concepts. A lesson seen in Years 3 and 4 began with a brisk mental session which consolidated the work done in the previous lesson. The teacher then used a lively numbers game to engage the interest of the pupils and to assess how much the pupils had remembered and how confident they were in dealing with the range of numbers. Secure in the knowledge that pupils had retained what they had learned previously, the level of challenge was raised with the teacher continually asking pupils to explain how they had arrived at a particular answer. Pupils of all levels of attainment are expected to explain their working out clearly and precisely when answering questions. These detailed explanations make a significant contribution to the understanding of all the pupils. Teachers use good questioning skills and a wide range of teaching methods to generate interest and keep lessons moving at a brisk pace. In their planning, teachers identify vocabulary that will be emphasised during the lesson and this provides a good link with the work in literacy.
58. By planning interesting and stimulating lessons, the teachers ensure that the pupils find mathematics lively and enjoyable and they develop very positive attitudes to the subject. During the mental mathematics sessions it was noticeable how confident the pupils were in answering questions and making suggestions as to how they might work out the answer. At the beginning of a Year 2 lesson, the pupils teamed up with their numeracy partner and discussed with each other, in a very sensible manner, the answers to the questions. Using this approach, the pupils help and learn from each other and they willingly provide support for those who are having difficulties.
59. The subject is very well managed by a co-ordinator who has a clear understanding of the way mathematics should be taught within the school. Very regular assessments are made of pupils' performance and data is used to establish targets for pupils and to inform the content of lessons. The co-ordinator is continually looking at ways of improving the standards of teaching and learning. For example, the monitoring of groups of pupils has recently been increased to ensure that individual pupils are in the correct group and being given appropriate tasks.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. Opportunities to use mathematics in other areas of the curriculum are utilised well to give the pupils real experiences in using their knowledge. For example, in history lessons pupils use their calculation skills when dealing with Roman numerals, centuries and adding different periods in history onto their time line. In order to do this, they draw on their mathematical knowledge of sequence and of rounding up numbers. Data handling and measuring skills are frequently used in science to ensure that the information being collected is accurate and easy to use.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by Year 2 and by Year 6, although, because of weaknesses in the past, older juniors lack some of the more advanced enquiry skills.

- Throughout the school, pupils' achievements are good because they are taught, and learn, well.
- Effective subject leadership has enabled the school to address many of the weaknesses found at the time of the last inspection.
- Pupils of all ages show an enthusiasm for the subject and readily set about discovering things for themselves.
- The curriculum is comprehensive and gives pupils frequent opportunities to investigate for themselves.

Commentary

61. As a result of the significant improvement the school has made in this subject, standards are much higher than they were two years ago and pupils' performance in the national tests at the end of Year 6 is considerably stronger. The issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been addressed well under the focused and determined leadership of the co-ordinator, and pupils have been the main beneficiaries. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well because the provision made for their learning effectively promotes the systematic and progressive development of their scientific knowledge and skills. By Year 6, pupils use a good level of technical language with understanding. For example, they refer to micro-organisms when describing the mould that forms on old bread, and to the way blood carries oxygen and carbon dioxide when discussing circulation.
62. Throughout the school, learning is good because teachers use a wide range of productive strategies to promote pupils' understanding of key ideas and to extend their enquiry skills. Many of these have a practical base so that pupils are learning at first hand about how and why the world around them functions as it does. As a result, by Year 2, pupils are confident investigators with a good grasp of the basic principles of scientific enquiry, such as the importance of making a test fair and how this can be achieved. As pupils get older they become increasingly independent as investigators, so that by Year 6 many are able to contribute to procedures and, in some instances, decide for themselves how they will carry out a test. Some of the shortcomings of the past are still evident in the investigative work of older juniors. For example, few Year 6 pupils know what to do if anomalies arise in results and, while they recognise that a conclusion brings everything together, many have yet to grasp that this involves drawing on scientific knowledge to try to explain why things have occurred in that way. This is why, on balance, standards are above average, whereas test results, which are more knowledge-based, have been well above average. The subject is continuing to strengthen and there is every likelihood that these limited weaknesses will eventually be eliminated as the full effects of the improvements that have been made are felt.
63. A feature in all lessons is the high level of challenge that teachers build into the activities. Pupils are required to think hard, answer probing questions and make decisions for themselves. Pupils of all abilities respond by applying themselves well, showing high levels of interest in what they are doing and trying hard to meet the targets they have been set. Pupils are often required to work co-operatively in small groups. They do this very well and lessons buzz healthily as pupils discuss the task in hand, share ideas and put forward sensible suggestions as to how they could do things better. They enjoy the opportunities the curriculum frequently provides for them to discover for themselves, an improvement since the last inspection that has not gone unnoticed by pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are confident in the use of the computer and appreciate how it can be used to aid their learning in other subjects.

- Pupils are given clear instructions to extend their knowledge and skills but do not always have sufficient time to experiment and try things out for themselves.
- Teaching assistants effectively extend pupils' learning in information and communication technology.
- The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of how the subject needs to develop but has yet to identify how to systematically monitor the impact of teaching on pupils' learning

Commentary

64. Standards by Years 2 and 6 are broadly average overall and, throughout the school, pupils make steady and sustained progress. This represents sound achievement for pupils of all ages and abilities. A minority of pupils in all years attain standards that are above the national expectations, often because their learning is extended at home. Very few pupils struggle with this subject and pupils' confidence in their own abilities is high. They independently log on to computers using their personal password, call up programs, save their work on their own files and print it off when they have finished. A strength of pupils' attainment is their ability to word process text in different styles. For example, Year 2 pupils produce continuous prose, verses of poetry and shopping lists, all of which are correctly laid out. Younger juniors write well-presented play scripts and older juniors construct newsheets, combining text and graphics. Not all aspects of pupils' learning are as strong. For example, pupils' understanding of sense and control is not as well developed because they do not have as many opportunities to learn.
65. Teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and instruct and guide the pupils confidently and methodically. As a result, pupils systematically gain new knowledge and skills. Lessons have a quick pace and efficient use is made of the time pupils have on the computers. However, pupils do not often have time to investigate the programs they are using and teachers and teaching assistants are quick to jump to their aid if they have any problems. While this gives pupils the security of knowing there is help at hand if they are having difficulties, it does not encourage them to find out for themselves or to try and solve their own problems, and opportunities to develop their independence are missed.
66. In a significant proportion of lessons, groups of pupils are taught in the computer suite by teaching assistants while other pupils are involved in associated work in the classroom with the class teacher. This arrangement works well because the teaching assistants are competent and are able to promote pupils' learning against the lesson objectives that the teachers have set. In a good lesson for upper junior pupils, the teaching assistant extended the more able pupils with challenging work on the class computers while the class teacher provided more introductory activities for the majority of the class in the suite. This arrangement worked well and ensured that all pupils were learning at a pace that was appropriate to their individual needs.
67. The co-ordinator has only held the post for a short while but has correctly identified the school's immediate priorities. The development of assessment to allow pupils' targets to be set is one such priority. Constructive strategies are being put in place in which the pupils themselves play a full part. The co-ordinator is not as clear about how the subject will be regularly monitored to ensure the school is providing a high standard of provision for its pupils. Since the last inspection, teachers and teaching assistants have participated in a programme of national training and during this period there has been satisfactory subject development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. The use of information and communication technology in other subjects is satisfactory overall. In some subjects, such as English and science, good use is made of the opportunities information and communication technology provides to extend pupils' learning. For example, the use of guides to help pupils plan stories and the word processing of play scripts enriches pupils' literacy. Pupils recognise how the computer can be used to aid their learning in science and regularly convert the information they have gathered to graphs using data

handling programs. In contrast, there are subjects, such as music, which would benefit from better links with information and communication technology. The school and the co-ordinator are fully aware of the need for the further development of such links across the curriculum as a whole.

HUMANITIES

There was insufficient evidence to make firm judgements about provision, standards or the quality of teaching and learning in **geography** and **history** as only two lessons in each subject were observed. Teachers' planning was looked at, samples of work analysed and discussions held with pupils.

Planning documents show that there is a satisfactory curriculum in both subjects. In discussion with pupils it was evident that visits to places of historical interest and the local area were enhancing their knowledge and understanding of history and geography. An analysis of pupils' work shows that, in history, pupils in Years 5 and 6 gain an understanding of democracy during their study of the ancient Greeks, and pupils in Years 1 and 2 can sequence the events of the Great Fire of London and recognise the importance of the diary of Samuel Pepys for his account of the fire. There was not as much recorded work in geography. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to use a world map to locate popular holiday destinations and to link their popularity to climate. In the lessons seen, pupils' achievement was better in history than in geography, mainly because outdated atlases hindered the progress of pupils' mapping skills. Pupils in Year 5 for example, struggled to identify the main countries associated with dry or wet climates.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Much of the teaching has good features, leading to pupils having a secure knowledge of what they have been taught.
- Religious education contributes well to pupils' personal and social development.
- The curriculum is well organised but not enough work is recorded in pupils' workbooks.

Commentary

69. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainments are similar to those expected for pupils of the same age. Pupils study the major world faiths and they are beginning to understand the similarities and differences between these faiths. They are aware that each faith has its own festivals, holy writings and special places in which to worship. In discussion, pupils talk about the fact that Christians worship in a church and that the Jews visit the synagogue. Lessons are planned with clear learning objectives and always begin with a recap on the previous lessons so that the teachers can assess what the pupils know and understand.
70. Teachers make lessons interesting by linking the learning to the pupils' own experiences. These links to pupils' personal and social development are a feature of many lessons, giving real meaning to their work. In a Year 1 lesson looking at how the Bible has rules, the lesson was clearly linked to the rules the pupils have in the school, whilst in Year 2, this aspect was further developed into discussions about rules that are either good or bad. In many lessons pupils worked with their *talking partner* and showed how well they could co-operate in sensible discussion. In a Year 4 lesson looking at the work of Jesus, the first part of the lesson looked back to the previous lesson on the Good Samaritan and this story was skilfully linked to the pupils' own behaviour and relationships. Time was given for reflection before the pupils were asked to provide an answer so that they could think about what the messages meant to them.

71. The curriculum is well organised. The school's scheme of work gives a clear structure for learning and provides strong support to staff. By using this scheme, and teachers adding to it their own ideas, the work in religious education shows progression and continuity. Much of the work in religious education is done orally. Whilst this engages pupils in meaningful discussions, it means that there is little written evidence to which pupils can refer at a later date and there is little opportunity for them to record their own thoughts and ideas.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only a small number of lessons were seen in **art and design** (1), **music** (1) and **design and technology** (2). It is, therefore, not possible to make secure judgements about the provision in these subjects. Further information was gained from discussions with staff and pupils, observations of pupils' work, hymn practices and music clubs.

Examples of **art and design** work displayed throughout the school are of a good standard and show how the work the pupils do in lessons supports work in other curriculum areas. As well as work related to topics, the pupils have opportunities to explore different materials and develop new skills. For example, Year 4 pupils have produced excellent portraits of each other, skilfully using paint to produce different skin-tones and colours. In discussion, pupils showed a great deal of enthusiasm for the work they did in art and design with many identifying it as one of their favourite subjects. It was quite obvious that pupils receive a varied and interesting art and design curriculum that stimulates them and gives them a great deal of pleasure.

The school continues to employ a specialist to teach **music** throughout the school and the pupils gain a great deal of enjoyment from this subject. In the lesson seen, pupils in Year 4 achieved very well to identify and appraise the variety of accompaniments to a range of different styles of singing. The teacher used her own expertise very well to raise the quality of pupils' singing to above that normally expected for their age. Singing during hymn practices is enthusiastic and tuneful and is accompanied by a small number of talented recorder players. Music continues to have a high profile. The 14-strong school band remains an asset to the school, while the choir flourishes under the guidance of the music co-ordinator. Recorder clubs extend pupils' interest and skills in music.

From discussions with pupils and staff it is clear that the **design and technology** curriculum in the junior classes is inadequate and that pupils fail to develop the range of knowledge and skills expected. As a result, by Year 6, standards are below the expected level and pupils' achievement across the school is unsatisfactory. The subject has not been managed well enough in the past. This has been recognised by the school and the recently appointed co-ordinator is formulating an action plan to bring about improvement. Resources, particularly for the older pupils, are inadequate and do not allow a sufficiently broad curriculum to be taught.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good and all pupils have equal opportunities to learn.
- Most lessons are structured well although some are too short.
- Pupils participate enthusiastically and try hard to improve.
- Pupils have the opportunity to experience and enjoy a wide range of different sports, both during school time and after school

Commentary

72. Gymnastics formed the focus of all five of the lessons seen during the inspection. Standards were generally around the levels expected, but in all classes there are pupils who show above average ability. For example, when asked to balance asymmetrically, most Year 1 pupils tried hard but were unable to remain in position for any length of time. However, one pupil formed a complex shape and held it with control long enough for the teacher to draw the attention of others to this high level of performance.
73. Over the five lessons, the teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good and was predominantly good. Most teachers showed a secure understanding of how a physical education lesson should be structured and challenged pupils to improve their performance with activities that built progressively on what they had learned previously. In the most effective lessons, pupils are required to evaluate the performance of others and give reasons for their assessments. This makes them think hard about what is important and what could be done better, which helps their own learning. One lesson was rather too short for any meaningful development to take place and some of the key elements, such as the warm up, were not adequately carried out. The enjoyment the pupils gain from physical education is very evident in their good behaviour and the effort they put into their performances. Most readily volunteer to demonstrate to others and watch and listen attentively. Teachers take great care to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved in the activities and are able to participate in a manner that is both appropriate and stimulating.
74. The co-ordinator is very new to the profession and has still to acquire a full understanding of what the role of subject manager involves. She has, however, made a good start and, with the help of the headteacher, identified areas in which development is needed. One of her most significant contributions to the school so far has been to establish a cross-country running club, which is much enjoyed by the pupils who take part and well supported by parents. The extra-curricular sporting provision, as a whole, is very good and the school uses its links with outside providers to give pupils of all ages the opportunity to play and enjoy a range of popular sports, such as soccer and netball, and also some less common ones such as lacrosse. The school places appropriate emphasis on all pupils having the opportunity to participate in the recommended amount of physical activity.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Two short lessons were seen and further information was gained from discussions with pupils and staff. This is, however, too little evidence upon which to base a judgement of provision overall. This is a developing subject for the school and addresses topics such as smoking, drugs awareness and alcohol abuse. The curriculum also focuses on aspects of personal development, such as making choices, responsibility, self-discipline and being healthy, which are extended during religious education lessons. In the two lessons observed, achievement was satisfactory. Pupils in Year 4 were given the opportunity to share their views on bullying and how they could help to prevent it, while pupils in Year 6 explored the incidents and situations that trigger positive or negative feelings. Pupils are enthusiastic about the recently introduced School Council, which is helping them to gain a better understanding of citizenship.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
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	4

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	5
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	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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