

INSPECTION REPORT

IBSTOCK JUNIOR SCHOOL AND SPECIAL UNIT

Ibstock

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119931

Headteacher: Dr D. G. Harries

Lead inspector: Mr G. Jones

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 24th March 2004

Inspection number: 256534

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	267
School address:	Melbourne Road Ibstock Leicestershire
Postcode:	LE67 6NP
Telephone number:	01530 260481
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J. Bird
Date of previous inspection:	27 th April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Ibstock Junior School and Special Unit is average in size, having 267 pupils on roll aged between seven and 11 years of age. It serves a large ex-mining village that has economic and social deprivation. The Special Unit has ten places for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and draws from the surrounding villages and urban areas. There are nine classes and 12 teachers, including the head teacher, deputy and part-time teachers. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average. Virtually all pupils are from white English speaking backgrounds. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils provided with free school meals is close to the national average. Just over 22 per cent of pupils have special educational needs and this is above the national average. Five per cent of pupils have statements of special educational need, which is well above the national average. In addition to moderate learning difficulties, the special needs are concerned mainly with communication problems, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and hearing and physical problems. Since the last inspection in 1998 the school has been assessed successfully for the Investor in People status.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11816	Mr G. Jones	Lead inspector	Science Physical education Music
14141	Mr E. Marshall	Lay inspector	
14976	Mr P. Dexter	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology History Religious education
20404	Mr J. Evans	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Geography Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The leadership and management of the head teacher, senior staff and governing body are satisfactory. Although standards in English, mathematics and science are below average pupils' achievements are satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is also satisfactory. Processes to improve pupils' achievements further have not been consistently implemented and opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning are not always sufficient to evaluate strengths and weaknesses, particularly in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science. **The school provides satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Although standards in English, mathematics and science are below average pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' attitudes towards school and learning are good.
- Pupils are not encouraged sufficiently to be independent in their learning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have been improved since the last inspection and are now average.

The school was last inspected in April 1998 and has made satisfactory improvement since then. The school's results in the annual national tests for all three main subjects have shown a trend that is above the national average improvement. There are still insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills and the role of a small number of subject co-ordinators still does not regularly include monitoring and evaluating lessons. Standards in ICT have been enhanced and the provision for pupils with special educational needs has also improved. There is now a better sense of direction for the school and the initiatives contained in the school development plan are being implemented but there is no mechanism for judging whether these have been successful.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. This is reflected in the satisfactory progress made by pupils between the time when they were in Year 2 and when they took the national tests in Year 6. While standards in the 2003 tests were well below the national average in English and below average in mathematics and science, pupils attained the standards reached in similar schools. The present Year 6 pupils' standards are below average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily because of the sound teaching they receive. Standards in ICT have improved since the time of the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. It was not possible to make accurate judgements in geography, art and design, music and design and technology. More able pupils achieve satisfactorily in mathematics and science but less so in English.

Pupils' personal development is good. The provision for their spiritual, moral and social development is good. Provision for their cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They behave satisfactorily in class and have responsibilities to undertake a range of tasks. Older pupils take care of younger ones and look after them during times when the

weather prevents them from playing in the playground at break times. Most members of staff have high expectations of behaviour and teach the differences between right and wrong well. This results in satisfactory standards of behaviour. Punctuality and attendance are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils also acquire knowledge, skills and understanding satisfactorily but their acquisition could be improved if there were more opportunities for them to practise the literacy and numeracy skills they have learned by using them in different subjects across the curriculum. The assessment system used by teachers is used effectively to make sure that pupils are provided with work that is suitable for their needs. Teachers still do not give enough opportunities for pupils to work independently and this slows the pace of their learning. Teaching and learning also have good features in most classes and are particularly good in Year 6.

The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory but the balance of the school day is affected because of the high percentage of time spent on English and mathematics and the fact that curriculum time is just below the recommended minimum. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively in most classes and particularly well in Year 6. Pupils are cared for effectively and receive sound guidance from adults in the school. Provision for health and safety is satisfactory, as are procedures for child protection.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. School leadership is providing a more positive sense of direction than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' progress is checked and the school's test results are analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. Some subject co-ordinators, however, have had insufficient influence on the work of the subjects they lead because very few checks have been carried out to identify what needs to be improved. The management of the school enables the school day to run smoothly but there is a degree of inconsistency in the way policies are implemented. The governing body is fully informed about the school's standards and carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily. Governors do not challenge the school enough to ensure that pupils' achievements are continually improved. The school complies with all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Questionnaires and comments received from parents were varied. They felt that their children were expected to work hard and do their best and also that they were comfortable about approaching the school with problems. Concern was expressed about pupils' behaviour, bullying or harassment at school. A significant number felt that the school does not explain how parents can help their children at home. With regard to pupils' behaviour and the possibility of bullying, the inspection team felt that pupils' behaviour was generally satisfactory. No bullying was noted during the inspection period. Responses from pupils indicate a good level of satisfaction with the school. They enjoy school and feel that teachers are fair and support them well with learning, but pupils' perception in a few classes indicates that they think other pupils' behaviour is poor.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science throughout the school.
- Ensure that the implementation of agreed policies is consistent throughout the school.
- Improve the balance of time spent on different subjects within the curriculum.
- Provide more varied opportunities for pupils to practise literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects.
- Enable pupils to become more independent in their learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Pupils' achievements are **satisfactory**. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. More able pupils are challenged appropriately in mathematics and science but less so in English.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6 pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science are below average but they achieve satisfactorily in all three subjects.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection.
- Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection.

Commentary

1. By the time pupils have reached the age of 11 their standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. This represents an improvement in standards over the previous year's annual test results in English but no overall improvement in mathematics and science. However, the percentage of Year 6 pupils with statements of special educational need last year was well above the national average and this depressed the school's overall performance. Standards on entry to the school are below average and pupils of different abilities make satisfactory progress because work is matched appropriately to their needs.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.3 (26.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.0 (27.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.1 (27.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The table above shows that standards in the national tests in 2003 were well below average in English, and below average in mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils reaching higher levels is close to the average for mathematics and science but below average for English. Compared with similar schools in the country the school's results were average for mathematics and science but below average for English. Although the school's standards have fluctuated, and are below average, the overall rate of improvement in standards for all three subjects taken as a whole has been above the national trend over the past five years.
3. At the time of the last inspection it was judged that the work planned for pupils with special educational needs did not always meet their needs. They were often asked to undertake the same work as the rest of the class and usually found the tasks too difficult to make the progress of which they were capable. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs, including pupils attending the Special Unit, is now satisfactory and parallels the achievement of all pupils. These pupils progress well in terms of their personal and social development and satisfactorily in relation to their identified learning needs.
4. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in ICT were unsatisfactory. Due to hard work from the staff of the school and the very good leadership and management of the ICT co-ordinator, these are now improved and are firmly in line with what is expected nationally.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance rates are close to the national average and are satisfactory. The school is acting positively to improve the situation. Punctuality is also satisfactory and registration complies with statutory requirements. In class, pupils have good attitudes to their work and their behaviour is generally satisfactory and contributes to learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic in their approach to school work and respond well in lessons. Satisfactory behaviour and good attitudes make a positive contribution to learning.
- The school makes good provision for developing pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils form good social relationships with others and this enables them to work well together.
- The good relations extend between pupils and the staff and this contributes positively to their progress.

Commentary

5. The school expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils and encourages them to discuss and adapt the behaviour code into classroom rules to match their own views of what is acceptable and what is unacceptable conduct. As a result, pupils show satisfactory behaviour in class and a respect for each other's feelings and opinions. Their attitudes to learning are good. They listen well to instruction, concentrate on the tasks they are given, and are happy to show their completed work. They will work well together in groups or pairs when required and will share resources sensibly. There is mutual respect between the staff and their pupils and this ensures pupils can feel and say they are treated fairly. Pupils respond well to the school's provision for their spiritual, moral and social development as they move up through the age groups. Pupils' knowledge of the effect of growing up in a multi-cultural society is rather limited.
6. The harmony generated in lessons, however, does not always extend into the playground where play is occasionally boisterous. These incidents involve only a small minority of older pupils and are quickly and effectively dealt with by the teaching staff and the mid-day supervisors. No bullying or other form of harassment was noted during the inspection period. There are no recorded exclusions. There is no evidence of any persistent bullying or other form of harassment.
7. Pupils' personal development is good. They are willing to take on a number of additional jobs in the classroom, help in assemblies, and keep a watch on both good and bad behaviour during lunchtime. Older pupils take care of new entrants at the beginning of the autumn term until they have settled into their routines and gained confidence to mix with others. These same older pupils help look after younger ones during bad weather when play has to be taken indoors. However, although pupils take on responsibilities around the school they are provided with insufficient responsibilities to become independent learners. Competitive sport and the annual residential visit for the older pupils help them develop social responsibilities, leadership, and team-working skills.
8. Through lessons, assemblies, visitors to school and off-site visits, the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong. Art and music and the close links with the church add to their spiritual experiences. Social responsibilities to each other in school are extended by pupils' willingness to help others when taking an active part in fund raising for charities. The school has ensured pupils have a good knowledge of their own culture and knowledge of other faiths, but opportunities to explore the impact of living in a modern multi-cultural society are not fully developed.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.6
National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete 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	258	0	0
White – any other White background	4	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
Black or Black British - Caribbean	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is satisfactory. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in English, mathematics and science as a result of satisfactory teaching overall with much that is good in Year 6. Sound support is provided for pupils with special educational needs. Assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is satisfactory because the information is used satisfactorily to enable all pupils to make the progress of which they are capable in most of the lessons.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is satisfactory because the needs of groups of pupils are met sufficiently during lessons, resulting in satisfactory achievement for pupils. Pupils told inspectors that teachers help them when they are 'stuck'. Satisfactory support is given to pupils with special needs. Assessment is satisfactory and is used appropriately for planning lessons. These factors contribute effectively to the **satisfactory learning** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The examples of very good lessons interest pupils and motivate them to learn.
- Unsatisfactory teaching in some lessons does not allow pupils to achieve satisfactorily.
- An over-dependence on duplicated worksheets for pupils in Years 3 and 4 does not promote improvements in standards
- The quality of teaching in ICT is good.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	4 (13%)	10 (33%)	14 (47%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	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.

9. In the very good lessons the teachers questioned pupils rigorously, inducing them to think carefully and challenging their understanding. Very good questioning enabled teachers to check successfully whether pupils had understood the content of previous lessons and to find out to what extent pupils comprehended what was being taught at the time. In a very good religious education lesson in Year 6 the good relationships and trust between teacher and class enabled pupils to have the confidence to express their own ideas and opinions forthrightly. For example, one pupil raised the problem of the evils of racism and another spoke about the futility of war. These lessons are stimulating for pupils because they are also given opportunities to use interesting resources for learning such as selecting and downloading images to use and incorporate in *PowerPoint* presentations or observing the behaviour of newly hatched chicks as part of a fascinating lesson on the life cycle of a chicken. Pupils with special educational needs are very effectively included in the lessons through relevant application of ICT that motivates them and enables useful practice of important skills.
10. Where the teaching was unsatisfactory or worse, pupils did not make sufficient progress in the lessons. This was due partly to ineffective management of pupils' behaviour and partly to unsatisfactory lesson planning that did not match appropriate work to the needs of the pupils. When the teacher's behaviour management is not good enough a number of pupils converse whilst the teacher is talking or explaining to the whole class. This distracts pupils who want to listen and disturbs the concentration of the majority. When the teacher did not plan suitable activities for pupils their achievement was unsatisfactory because all pupils in the class were given the same task and no allowance was made for the different levels of attainment within the class.
11. In a significant number of classes, particularly in Years 3 and 4, teachers rely too much on the frequent use of duplicated worksheets for pupils to use; this does not benefit their progress in learning and reduces their capacity to work independently. This was identified in the previous inspection and has not yet been addressed sufficiently. In a number of classes pupils are expected to complete sentences in printed worksheets by filling in blank spaces with a single word or group of words; this limits their opportunities to practise and refine their literacy skills. Recordings of scientific investigations are ready planned and they simply have to complete the blanks for their specific experiment, with no opportunities to write up their findings in their own words. This does not encourage pupils to become independent in their learning and does not promote self-reliance. Pupils rely too heavily on pre-prepared sheets and some subsequently find it difficult to cope with having to set out their own work by themselves. In addition, this practice prevents them from taking advantage of opportunities to compose their own sentences, or longer explanations, in order to improve the standard of their written English. The latter is important because it is the weaker aspect of their English attainment.
12. The quality of teaching in ICT lessons is good. The teachers have improved their personal subject knowledge of ICT considerably since the time of the last inspection and this has had a marked effect on pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding in this subject. The pupils' application and productivity during lessons are a direct result of the strong feeling that ICT is enjoyable and interesting. Teachers feel secure in their subject knowledge and so lessons are relaxed; this means lessons are good humoured with very good relationships between adults and pupils. There is a business-like, yet happy, atmosphere for learning which has a strong

impact on standards. Teachers have a clear awareness of pupils' individual achievements and lessons are planned successfully with the aim of extending the skills that each has.

13. The provision for special educational needs has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. It complies with the requirements of the national Code of Practice. There is a strong, shared commitment to inclusion and this is soundly realised for all pupils with special educational needs, including those attending the Special Unit. This is achieved through a combination of satisfactory teaching for pupils with special educational needs in almost all lessons and the sound, carefully planned and timetabled support that teaching assistants provide. Arrangements are flexible and responsive, enabling the emergent and changing needs of each pupil to be satisfactorily met. The teaching in withdrawal settings, for example in the computer suite, is well-planned, sensitively delivered and effective. Arrangements for the care and personal and social development of pupils with special educational needs are good. In a small minority of whole-class lessons teachers do not match work accurately enough to pupils' individual learning needs. This slows progress. Pupils individual education plans are of satisfactory overall quality but, in the cases of some younger pupils in Years 3 and 4, teachers do not specify sharp enough targets or incorporate clear enough assessments to be fully effective in guiding teachers' planning. In a minority of whole-class lessons in these two year groups, the information contained in pupils' individual education plans is not sufficiently heeded and, as a result, the progress of some pupils is slowed.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**.

The provision for personal, social and health education is **good**.

There is a **good** range of activities to support the curriculum. Pupils are prepared **well** for their secondary school. The quality and quantity of the accommodation and teaching resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for enrichment through extra-curricular provision and community links.
- The transfer of pupils to the secondary stage is well organised and comprehensive.
- The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- The computer suite and food area are modern and spacious.
- Links between subjects could be developed further, particularly in the use of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
- The targets in some individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs in Years 3 and 4 are too general.
- The school day is below the recommended minimum time.

Commentary

14. The school has devised a broad curriculum with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, which, together with reading and story sessions, adds up to 60 per cent of the teaching time. The weekly teaching time is below the recommended minimum for this age group. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. However, the high percentage of time spent on literacy and numeracy and the fact that curriculum time is just below the recommended minimum affects the balance of the school day and does not have a significant impact on improving standards in English and mathematics.
15. A number of links are made between some subjects to promote purposeful activities and encourage greater meaning, for example when pupils link design and technology to their work about World War 2 bomb shelters in history. There are links in English, mathematics and ICT to some subjects. However, too few opportunities are given for pupils to practise the skills they

have just learned in literacy and numeracy lessons. There are also too few chances to write imaginatively, for example, about historical events or religious themes, particularly in Years 3 and 4 where there is a predominance of duplicated worksheets. In mathematics some good links are made with ICT, but the wider use of mathematics in other subjects is not systematically planned. There are some good opportunities to use ICT to research information in history and religious education and to draw and measure angles in mathematics.

16. Pupils benefit from the thoughtful way the school seeks to enrich the school day. A substantial percentage of pupils enjoy the basketball, cross-country, netball and football clubs and are keen to take part in competitions. Reading, ICT, recorders and homework clubs are well attended and popular. Visitors such as a 'Roman soldier' and opportunities to enact 'Victorian Days' add an exciting perspective to history. These activities not only add well to pupils' cultural and sporting development, they also contribute effectively to pupils' personal, social and health education. This is embedded in the curriculum so that pupils learn about healthy lifestyles, drugs awareness and sex education in science and through rolling programmes such as the annual 'Life Education Programme'.
17. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. They have good support in the classroom from learning assistants in well-organised learning groups, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Arrangements are flexible and responsive, enabling the emergent and changing needs of each pupil to be satisfactorily met. The teaching in withdrawal settings, for example in the computer suite, is well planned, sensitively delivered and effective. Pupils are integrated into mainstream classes well under the careful guidance of the special educational needs co-ordinator. However, the short-term targets in most of the pupils' individual education plans in Years 3 and 4 are too general and the small specific steps necessary to bring about improved progress and attainment are missing. Arrangements for the care and personal and social development of pupils with special educational needs are good. In subjects such as history or religious education, tasks are tailored to pupils' abilities and understanding. Pupils are integrated well into mainstream classes under the careful guidance of the special educational needs co-ordinator
18. Transfer to the next stage of education is organised comprehensively and well. Pupils work on projects with the secondary school, complete tasks for homework and meet their new teachers. They spend a whole day in their new school to familiarise themselves with everyday routines. There are detailed discussions held between the pupils' class teacher and secondary school teachers so that they know the needs of each pupil before transfer.
19. The accommodation is satisfactory; classrooms and corridors have attractive displays. The computer suite and the food area for design and technology are modern and spacious. These have had a positive impact on improving pupils' skills and raising standards. The outside classroom blocks are vulnerable as they are separated from the main building by a public footpath, but the school manages the general maintenance and access to these well. All subjects are satisfactorily resourced to meet the needs of the pupils and the requirements of the curriculum. The school is actively seeking to improve the storage of resources and their accessibility.

Care, guidance and support

The school satisfactorily ensures that pupils are well cared for. Child protection arrangements, including Internet security, are fully in place. The school and the governing body work together to ensure statutory requirements for health and safety are met. The school is proactive in seeking pupils' own views and suggestions on how the school can improve its work and daily routines.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Involvement of pupils in the consideration of aspects of school life gives them an effective voice in suggesting where and how improvements can be made.

- Well-planned and organised induction into the Year 3 classes ensures that pupils can settle in quickly and make good early progress.
- The targets for a significant number of pupils with special needs in Years 3 and 4 given in their individual educational plans are not effective in ensuring they can achieve as well as they are able.

Commentary

20. Members of staff know and care for their pupils well, ensuring they work in a safe and secure environment. The good relations developed encourage pupils to show an interest in the life and work of the school and to have the confidence to want to suggest how improvements, beneficial to others, can be made. The school uses the local authority's annual pupil attitude survey to test opinions on how pupils see elements such as how interesting are lessons, how well staff help if pupils are stuck, and how good is discipline. The school consults pupils on the type of activity they would like to have provided in the good range of after-school clubs. Clubs are popular and well attended as a result.
21. To increase the level of pupil involvement, a school council consisting of volunteer members from each class and elected by their classmates, has recently been established. The members have been busily engaged in drawing up procedures for gathering suggestions and presenting them for discussion. The pride in membership and the level of enthusiasm are clear and encouraging.
22. Induction of new pupils into Year 3 classes is well planned and effectively implemented. The infant school is immediately adjacent and this enables staff from both schools to maintain close and regular communication. All prospective parents are invited to attend a meeting in the junior school where they can meet the staff, tour the premises, inspect pupils' work and discuss any problems. A comprehensive induction pack, giving helpful information and guidance, is distributed. During the summer term, Year 3 members of staff make frequent visits to the infant school to ensure pupils will recognise them later. This terminates in a half-day teaching session by the Year 3 visiting staff and Year 2 pupils coming into the junior classes for a further half-day sample session. The arrangements are effective in ensuring new entrants can quickly gain trust and confidence and continue to make progress.
23. Induction into the Special Unit is also well planned and organised to ensure the small number of pupils involved can be carefully assessed and have appropriate levels of support arranged that will enable them to settle in quickly. The effectiveness of this process is demonstrated by the pupils being able to join in most of the usual lessons with the rest of the pupils in school.
24. Pupils with special educational needs receive a good level of support in class that is provided by the staff and supplemented by the services of a good range of visiting specialists. However, in Years 3 and 4 the individual educational plans prepared for them do not always contain relevant and measurable targets that would maximise the progress that they all could make.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and carers are good. The level of parental involvement at home and at school is presently satisfactory but the school is actively seeking to increase the number of parents helping in school on a regular basis. The school also has good links with other schools and colleges to provide additional support in the classroom and is further developing its links with parents and with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's links with parents are good.
- Productive links with the community support learning by offering a wider range of opportunities to stimulate pupils' interest and to help with resources.

- Effective links with other schools and colleges give the school the opportunity to secure additional adult help in classrooms, support for staff training and ensure smooth transfer of Year 6 leavers.
- Management of the Special Unit is effective in bringing its pupils into mainstream education.

Commentary

25. Parents are kept well informed about their children's education. There are three consultation evenings per year for parents to meet their child's teacher and discuss the strengths and weaknesses in their child's learning. Booklets are written and provided by the school so that parents can help their children with mathematics and English, as well as informative meetings that parents can attend on this aspect. The head teacher writes regular and informative newsletters to keep parents informed and they also receive written information about what is to be taught in each year group so that support can be provided at home. Parents receive two written reports each year informing them about the progress their children are making.
26. Links with the local community are well established and the school uses them well to enhance pupils' learning. The Friends of the School Association has been re-established during the current calendar year. The head teacher and governors are actively promoting the school to encourage greater involvement by community groups and by parents associated with them. The level of information provided for parents, particularly about what is being taught and the progress pupils are making, is improving. The school responds quickly to parental concerns. The school provides the use of its hall for another village primary school with no facility of its own. There are links with the local police, one of whom is a member of the governing body. The fire service personnel provide valuable instruction for pupils' personal safety. The close link with the local church provides good support for assemblies and work in religious education. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the unique manner in which moral and spiritual themes are taught by the vicar during assemblies. The school has also established productive links with local businesses that provide help with resources such as copying paper and plants for external decoration. Adult family education courses, such as basic computer instruction, are arranged and supported by the school. This encourages parents to attend and gain skills to enable them help their children.
27. The head teacher has established good links with other school groups and colleges. These connections produce benefits for both staff and pupils. Joint training initiatives with other schools are effectively used for staff development and improve the quality of support staff can give to their pupils. The close co-operative link with the local high school ensures smooth transfer of the Year 6 leavers. Reciprocal visits by staff and the carrying out of work commencing in the summer term and extending over into the autumn term provide good continuity for the leavers. The school's links with the colleges provide opportunities for placements in school for trainee assistants. The school also provides placements for student teachers through its association with universities. Two students are currently in the school. The additional adult support in the classroom is a positive contribution to learning.
28. Pupils in the Special Unit are also helped by their association with a community primary school. The joint management arrangements provided by the school for the Special Unit are effective and the unit's pupils are well supported as a result. The outcome ensures the unit pupils can be absorbed into the school's own classrooms and take full part in lessons alongside other pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are now more fully involved in development planning and better informed about standards and progress than they were at the time of the previous inspection.

- Since the last inspection, the leadership and management of the head teacher and other key staff have enabled the school to sustain improvement in overall results somewhat better than the national trend.
- The school evaluates its results thoroughly but planning for improvement is not always as effective as it should be because some procedures are not consistently implemented.
- There are close, constructive links between the school and the Special Unit and these are underpinned by a strong, shared commitment to inclusion.
- Financial planning is good.

Commentary

29. Governors are now appropriately involved in shaping the vision and direction of the school and in planning for improvement. They carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily and draw on a sound range of relevant expertise and appropriate training. Governors analyse the school's results in suitable detail, visit the school frequently and observe lessons to a systematic programme. As a result, they share a secure grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are able to provide satisfactorily informed support and challenge. They manage finances carefully in relation to agreed plans for improvement.
30. When the school's results in English, mathematics and science over the last five years are taken together, the trend in improvement is slightly better than the improvement found nationally. This reflects the positive impact of the present head teacher, whose appointment followed a period of management uncertainty, in bringing to the school improved stability, higher aspirations, more effective teamwork and an enthusiasm for improvement. However, while standards have fluctuated from year to year, mainly because of variations in the groups of pupils, an overall pattern of satisfactory achievement has been maintained. Teachers and classroom assistants collaborate constructively and share a commitment to improvement. The deputy head teacher works closely with the head teacher and with all other staff and makes an effective contribution to the leadership and management of the school.
31. The head teacher and senior staff analyse results of tests thoroughly to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance. This is supported by useful reviews of planning and periodic work sampling. As a result, most teachers have a clear, accurate grasp of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment. However, the action taken to target areas of weakness is not always as effective as it should be. For example, teachers have identified weaknesses in the quality of pupils' writing but have not implemented fully the changes in approach needed to improve quality and enable more pupils to attain the higher levels. Subject leaders, who often set good examples in the quality of their own teaching, have too few opportunities to evaluate teaching and learning in classes other than their own. As a result, they are unable to maximise the impact of agreed policies on achievement and to ensure that they are consistently implemented. The school development plan contains appropriate initiatives for improvement but it does not identify criteria linked to improvements in attainment that could be used for judging success. As a result, teachers are not able to say with any degree of certainty whether recently introduced strategies have resulted in raising standards.
32. There is a strong, shared commitment to inclusion and this is effectively achieved. The overall management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Resources, including support time, are thoughtfully deployed to take account of each pupil's personal, social and learning requirements. Pupils who attend the Special Unit participate fully in the life of the school and are enabled to share in the sound achievement of all pupils. The close involvement of the school special needs co-ordinator and the good levels of teacher and classroom assistant support are key factors in achieving this.
33. Financial management is good. Governors and key staff ensure that spending is rigorously planned and linked to improvement priorities. The school applies the principles of best value well.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	634318
Total expenditure	593337
Expenditure per pupil	2222

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	18256
Balance carried forward to the next	40981

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in national tests at the age of 11 are below the national average but in line with those achieved by pupils in similar schools.
- The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are included effectively, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- The overuse of worksheets slows progress, particularly for the more able pupils.
- Opportunities for pupils to practise the literacy skills they have acquired in subjects across the curriculum are limited.
- The targets set for individual pupils are not consistently well informed and do not do enough to raise achievement.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good.

Commentary

34. Standards are below average in speaking and listening, reading and writing by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. Since most pupils enter the school with below average standards in literacy, this represents satisfactory achievement. Results in the 2003 national tests were in line with those of schools of similar type but were well below the national average when compared with all schools. In lessons and conversation, pupils listen carefully and accurately. However, with the clear exception of the more able pupils, most pupils offer only brief answers, drawing on a range of vocabulary and expression that is relatively limited for their age. Similar limitations affect the quality of pupils' writing. As a result, relatively few pupils reach the higher levels in English. The work of many pupils, other than the most able, is also characterised by weaknesses in spelling and handwriting. Most pupils speak enthusiastically about their reading because teachers take care to match texts for difficulty and interest. The more able pupils read well, with good fluency and understanding. Average pupils approach the expected levels for their age in accuracy and understanding but their research skills are relatively weak. The weaknesses that many pupils experience in these aspects of literacy constitute a barrier to their learning in other subjects.
35. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is consistently good and sometimes very good. In all lessons, teachers manage pupils well and relationships are usually constructive and warm. The arrangements for pupils to be placed in sets according to their abilities are working well, especially in Years 5 and 6, because they enable teachers to plan and provide work that broadly matches pupils' needs. However, within some sets, particularly in Year 4, the work is not always matched accurately enough. This slows progress for some pupils and limits their independence.
36. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who attend the Special Unit, are included effectively in most lessons. The provision in Years 5 and 6 is particularly good. Here, imaginative teaching and sensitive, well-organised support combine to accelerate progress, increase pupils' self-esteem and secure a high level of inclusion.
37. Too many lessons, particularly in Years 3 and 4, depend on the use of worksheets that provide little opportunity for pupils to think for themselves. In a minority of lessons, this drains the vitality from learning, making it an exercise rather than a delight. More generally, it offers too little encouragement to pupils to explore language and use it imaginatively. This slows progress, particularly in speaking and writing. Teachers provide a sound range of speaking and writing

opportunities in lessons such as mathematics, science and history. However, planning does not show clearly enough how these are to be used to improve the quality and range of pupils' expression.

38. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise the skills they have learned in literacy lessons, particularly those associated with writing, in a range of subjects across the curriculum. For example, letter writing skills, biography, adventurous use of words and play settings have all been taught in literacy lessons during the past few months but there have been very few chances for pupils to use these skills in other subjects.
39. A significant minority of pupils fail to meet the targets that teachers set and, while teachers know pupils well, they are not always accurate in their judgement of the levels pupils achieve. This reflects inconsistency in target-setting arrangements. In certain classes, clear, well-informed targets are shared with pupils, while in others pupils themselves are unclear about what they must do to improve. This inconsistency is mirrored in the quality of marking which, in most classes, is constructive and helpful but in others is sometimes negative and does little to help pupils improve.
40. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. In most lessons, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, show interest and work hard. In conversation, pupils are polite and enthusiastic and keen to explain their work. They support one another well, for example in paired discussion. Pupils' behaviour is consistently good.
41. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader is well informed and strongly committed to raising standards. She has a very good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment and good plans for improvement. However, she has few opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. This results in some inconsistency in the quality of provision from class to class and in the way that certain arrangements, such as those for target setting, are implemented. It also limits the opportunity for the very good practice to be found in the school to be constructively shared.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

42. Teachers provide a sound range of speaking and listening activities in lessons such as mathematics, science and history. However, opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills are insufficient and planning does not show clearly enough how these are to be used to improve the quality and range of pupils' written expression.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in national tests at the age of 11 are below the national average but in line with those achieved by pupils in similar schools.
- Planning based on the National Numeracy Strategy is good.
- Pupils work hard, work neatly and try to do their best.
- Relationships are good in all lessons.
- Classroom assistants support pupils with special educational needs well in their learning.
- Marking and target setting are not yet consistent enough in all classes.
- There is too little use of mathematics in the wider curriculum.
- When work is the same for all pupils in the lessons where they are grouped by ability many pupils are not challenged sufficiently.

Commentary

43. Standards in mathematics tests in 2003 were below the national average of Year 6 pupils nationally. When these results are compared to similar schools, attainments are found to be average. However, standards have risen faster than the national average since the last inspection where they were well below average and are now just below average in the current Year 6. There has been some good progress in some areas, such as planning, the development of the National Numeracy Strategy, homework and assessment, since the last report. This has raised both attainment and achievement; the school has received an achievement reward for recent progress. However, more could still be done to raise attainment and achievement further.
44. Pupils are taught in class groups in Year 3 and in ability groups (sets) in Years 4, 5 and 6. This is an effective method of organisation, but in some large sets in Years 4 and 6 pupils are given the same task, which means the more able pupils in the set are not always fully challenged and those less able are not always sure of what to do. Furthermore the mathematical skills learned in these sets are not used in the wider curriculum in a consistently planned way, although they are sometimes used well, in science for example.
45. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 work in five different ability sets so there is a considerable spread of attainment. For example, whereas higher attaining pupils know and use their number facts to 10 x 10 accurately, middle and lower ability pupils are sometimes uncertain of their tables and make more mistakes in subtraction and division tasks. Discussion about how to find solutions to mathematical problems is more easily understood by higher attaining pupils who have a facility with language, whilst middle and lower attaining pupils find 'problems' more difficult. All groups are more certain with shape work; pupils use their ICT skills confidently to represent data. Many average attaining pupils drew and measured acute and obtuse angles accurately, using ICT, during a well-paced lesson for a set of pupils in Years 5 and 6.
46. Although all lessons contain several good teaching skills, overall teaching is satisfactory because there are some improvements needed in all lessons to accelerate learning and improve attainments. All teachers plan well, in detail, basing work accurately on the National Numeracy Strategy. Relationships between everyone are good so that pupils are ready to listen, to try hard and to do their best. Teachers and learning assistants work together well as a team so that they share support to pupils effectively. Teachers give clear explanations to try to make sure pupils know what to do and how to do it. Questions are used well to involve all pupils and to challenge their thinking. They share learning objectives with pupils so they know what the lesson is for. However, each lesson has areas for development. They fall into four main areas:
- some everyday resources such as number lines or the class whiteboard could be used better.
 - marking, as part of assessment and target setting so that teachers and pupils know what to do next, is sometimes superficial.
 - the use of problem-solving language and the planned wider use of mathematics across the curriculum could be improved.
 - in some larger sets, whole-class teaching and the same work for all pupils means for some it is too easy and for others it is too hard.
47. The senior management team, working with the co-ordinator, have already identified these within their updated numeracy action plan for 2004. It charts the way ahead in some detail. However, it is in draft form and has yet to have any impact on attainment and achievement. Leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

48. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils and teachers to use mathematics more widely and readily in other subjects. However, pupils use mathematics in science lessons and ICT is used as a vehicle for teaching mathematics in a number of lessons. Medium-term planning does

not allow for recently taught mathematical skills to be used in a range of other subjects so that these can be made more relevant for pupils' learning and their learning consolidated.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science are below average but pupils' achievements are average because the teaching is satisfactory.
- There is an over-reliance on duplicated worksheets, particularly amongst the pupils in Years 3 and 4.
- The leadership and management of the previous science co-ordinator are satisfactory but have not enabled the subject to develop sufficiently.
- Most pupils enjoy science lessons and this has a positive effect on their learning.

Commentary

49. Standards in science for the school's 11 year olds are below average. However, their achievement is satisfactory because they enter school with below average standards, and maintain their overall level of performance during their time at the school. This is clearly exemplified by the sound progress made by pupils with special educational needs in acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding of science. Their attainment levels remain well below those expected for their age but they make good progress for their abilities. Well-trained support assistants, who work with them closely to enable understanding of scientific ideas, support their learning beneficially.
50. Pupils' direct experience of carrying out investigations and experimentation is adequate. However, many of the school's 11 year olds do not yet have an understanding of how to ensure that a scientific investigation is carried out using principles to guarantee its fairness. Some of the written work carried out during lessons in Year 3 is copied from the teachers' text or from worksheets. This does not allow opportunities for pupils to clarify their own understanding of scientific ideas through the process of wording their own explanations. More able pupils are challenged well in Year 6 classes through good quality questioning from teachers that challenges their thinking and understanding of science. This ensures that these pupils reach appropriate levels for their abilities and is reflected in the percentage of pupils who reached a higher than average level in the latest annual test results.
51. The use of duplicated worksheets for pupils throughout the school is widespread. This practice does not provide opportunities for pupils to develop independence in setting out their work. Nor does it provide enough chances for pupils to practise the important skills in writing they have learned during literacy lessons. In many instances pupils are required to fill in blank spaces with one-word answers rather than usefully being required to explain their understanding at greater length. In addition, there are a significant number of science lessons that focus on duplicated sheets that ask older pupils to interpret data using fictitious results of an experiment. They do not gain enough insight into scientific phenomena and related simple statistical patterns because they do not carry out the experiments themselves. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, pupils had to fill in blank spaces to answer questions connected with data about the lengths of shadows formed by a person at different times of the day. The results would have been more meaningful and the experience more interesting and memorable if they had been provided with the opportunity to carry this out themselves.
52. The science co-ordinator has had the responsibility for co-ordinating the work in science for only a small number of weeks. During that time she has managed to monitor teachers' planning to ensure that the science curriculum has been covered. The previous co-ordinator had also scrutinised a selection of pupils' books from across the school and identified that classes were

not being provided with sufficient opportunities for scientific investigations and experiments. This deficiency has now been addressed but not fully because there are still classes carrying out science activities using data provided for them. Few science lessons have yet been monitored. This means that the school has no means of knowing whether the quality of teaching is good enough to improve pupils' achievements in science. Finally, no consistent process has yet been adopted by the school regarding the identification of strengths and weaknesses in its provision of science. Pupils' overall knowledge, skills and understanding of science are not yet regularly evaluated and the findings fed consistently into the construction of a school development plan in order to improve standards.

53. When pupils are not expected to complete quantities of worksheets they enjoy science lessons. On the occasions when teachers provide a range of practical activities they enjoy the lessons. For example, whilst Year 6 pupils were learning about the names and functions of parts of a flower they were provided with a real daffodil flower so that they could examine it carefully and compare the labelled parts of a typical flower with reality. This brought the content of the lesson to life and lifted the lesson to an enjoyable level. In another Year 6 class pupils nurtured fertilised chicken eggs and managed to hatch two baby chicks using an incubator. Again, learning about the life cycle of a chicken became more meaningful and fascinating to the pupils as a result.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for Information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good.
- ICT is used well to promote inclusion and improve achievement for pupils with special educational needs.
- ICT is used well in other subjects.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

54. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were below the expected levels. They are now securely in line with what is expected of pupils by the end of Year 6. Pupils use and understand a good range of programs, use ICT fluently at an appropriate level and speak knowledgeably about its applications in their work and in the wider world. This results from marked improvements in the quality of teaching, in the range and deployment of resources and in subject leadership.
55. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers draw on secure subject knowledge to give clear explanations and demonstrations. They manage pupils thoughtfully, building their confidence and increasing their practical skills and understanding. Teachers' expectations are appropriately high and the tasks set are interesting and relevant. The quality of questioning is good, probing, clarifying and extending pupils' understanding and focusing on improvement. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to both work independently and practise collaboration. This aids pupils' personal and social development.
56. The good teaching, supported by clear, practical planning and secure assessment arrangements, enables pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, to achieve well. In most lessons, teachers modify tasks accurately to match the level of challenge to individual ability. This maximises progress, builds confidence and enables pupils to find satisfaction in learning.

57. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good, reflecting the effectiveness of teaching. In conversation, pupils recall and explain their recent work with obvious enthusiasm. During lessons, pupils of all abilities work closely together supporting one another very well. Behaviour is very good. Again, this reflects teachers' success in engaging pupils fully by means of tasks that are relevant, well planned and interesting.
58. The provision for ICT contributes well to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers use ICT skilfully to side-step the barriers to learning that many of these pupils experience because of below average attainment in speaking, reading and writing. By means of well-chosen tasks and sensitive, practical support, they build pupils' self-esteem by providing the experience of success. The work set builds pupils' ICT skills and, often, at the same time, strengthens their skills in other subjects, for example English.
59. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and sets a high standard in the quality of her own teaching. Her very effective leadership and management have brought about, with the support of colleagues, good improvement in standards and achievement. Provision is now broadly based, contributing valuably to inclusion, to the provision for pupils with special educational needs and to the quality of learning in different subjects. The curriculum is enhanced by two ICT clubs in which pupils follow interesting and challenging activities.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. In most classes, ICT is used effectively to enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum as a whole. This includes good applications in English, mathematics, history and geography. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils made a *PowerPoint* presentation of their work about Victorians, combining images, text and sound from several sources, including the Internet. This strengthened and extended pupils' learning in both ICT and history.

HUMANITIES

Geography

It was not possible to make a judgement on the provision for geography because no lessons were seen owing to the arrangement of the school timetable. An examination of pupils' work during the current school year indicates that standards are in line with national expectations and that teaching is satisfactory.

History

The provision for history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is good.
- Visits and visitors are chosen well.
- Good links are made to a few subjects.
- More use could be made of literacy and ICT skills, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- The co-ordinator has only a small amount of time to support the subject.

Commentary

61. Standards in history for Year 6 pupils are average. Pupils follow a suitably planned series of topics to build their knowledge and understanding of history as they move through the school. Their achievements are satisfactory as a result.
62. Work in pupils' books is neat, well presented and is monitored by all teachers. Pupils take pride in their work. Visits are chosen thoughtfully to give pupils a richer experience. For example, local

visits to the site of the Battle of Bosworth add to pupils' knowledge of Tudors in Year 4. Year 6 pupils visit the Black Country Museum to dress in Victorian costume and experience Victorian life. One visitor sings Tudor and Victorian songs and teaches period dances. These add enjoyment and depth to pupils' understanding of history.

63. The whole-school plans are well thought out and incorporate national guidance effectively. Each history topic has been audited and a collection of some books and a small number of artefacts, supplemented by others from the museum service, have been organised to support each one. This, together with more use of ICT in research, is not yet developed well enough, particularly in Years 3 and 4
64. Teaching is satisfactory overall because there is still an over-reliance on worksheets in some classes, an issue which is still outstanding from the last inspection. This limits the opportunities for the wider use of literacy skills and the development of the skills of historical enquiry and interpretation.
65. However in some classes, particularly in Year 6, there are good opportunities to look at history in a lively way and for pupils to use expressive historical language and write in their own words. A good collection of photographs, artefacts and slides, allied with well-chosen prompting questions, helped Year 6 pupils to understand life for a child during World War 2. Anne Frank's diary was used as a basis for group work so that pupils of all abilities had different and interesting tasks. For example, pupils of average ability researched the life of Anne Frank using ICT with the good support of a learning assistant. Discussions were stimulating; all pupils were keen to contribute. Higher and lower attaining pupils worked readily in pairs to share ideas and record their questions and answers. Teachers maintained good links to literacy throughout, giving pupils very good opportunities to use their speaking and listening skills in particular. Year 6 teachers' approach to history is working well.
66. The co-ordinator has a small amount of time to support teaching and learning in the subject. Each year group or teacher organises the delivery of the whole-school plan with his or her own approach, with some small support from the co-ordinator in planning, resources and ideas for visits. Leadership and management of history are satisfactory.

Religious education

The provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is good throughout the school.
- Well-managed discussions in Year 6 boost pupils' spiritual awareness successfully.
- The co-ordinator has led and managed the subject well since the last inspection.
- There are good links to places of worship.
- Too many worksheets in the lower school limit the use of literacy skills, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject and their own learning.
- The co-ordinator has only limited time to carry out her role fully.

Commentary

67. The school has improved its approach to the local guidelines since the last inspection. It now uses these effectively to make sure pupils reach the expected standard for their age at 11. Consequently pupils' attainment, teachers' planning and their teaching of specific skills, together with assessments, have all improved since the last report. Achievement over time is now satisfactory because the good planning enables teachers to build more systematically on pupils' previous learning.

68. Pupils take pride in their work and try very hard to present it neatly. However, although pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught about other religions such as Sikhism and have some opportunities to write in their own words about the Bible and the story of the Creation, there is an overuse of worksheets. This restricts opportunities for pupils to explore their own knowledge of their learning and to use their literacy skills more widely.
69. There is a different approach in Years 5 and 6. Every effort is made to give pupils the chance to write in their own words. For example, the story of Esther was written as a play; pupils in Year 6 wrote their own Barmitzvah speech; they looked at elements of a church service and knew about the symbolism of wine and bread arising from the Easter story. This approach increases pupils' knowledge of their own learning, deepens their understanding, improves attainment and accelerates achievement. It is not consistent throughout the school.
70. Teaching is satisfactory overall. This is because of the over-dependence on worksheets in some classes which limits both the more imaginative use of literacy skills and pupils' knowledge of the subject, of themselves and of their own learning. In Year 6 the teaching is good. An imaginative approach using well-organised good quality resources of photographs, slide presentations and real artefacts, combined with challenging questions, which make sure pupils have to think and reason, means there is more depth to their learning and understanding. Pupils are enthusiastic learners because teachers develop good relationships and manage pupils well. Good links are made to local places of worship; pupils enjoy 'virtual tours' of a synagogue or a mosque using ICT. Learning assistants help pupils skilfully with their research. All this was seen in a very lively lesson when pupils in Year 6 explored the Easter story in depth. Their use of expressive language raised their speaking and listening skills, improved their writing and boosted their spiritual awareness.
71. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and leads the subject well. She has brought about good progress since the last inspection, apart from the continued overuse of worksheets in some lessons. The co-ordinator has already identified this during her scrutiny of pupils' work. However, management of the subject is satisfactory because she has little time during the school day to monitor and support developments.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

No art and design lessons could be seen during the inspection and thus no judgement on provision can be made. The quality of work displayed in classrooms and in other places around the school suggests that standards are in line with the expected levels and that achievement is at least sound.

Design and technology

No teaching was seen in design and technology, but it is evident from pupils' work and displays that there is a satisfactory curriculum, which enables pupils to meet the national expectations in this subject by Year 6. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. Pupils plan their projects, record what they will do and the resources they use and usually evaluate the outcome. Models are finished carefully. Assessments of pupils' progress and planning have both improved since the last report.

A strong feature of the subject is the modern food technology area. During the inspection a group of Year 6 pupils designed, prepared and cooked a French meal, coq au vin, followed by lemon drizzle pudding; other pupils had cooked potato cakes and bread and butter puddings linked to their World War 2 project. Both were above average in outcome, confirmed by the subsequent lunch when the food was eaten and evaluated by teachers, pupils and the inspection team.

Music

Insufficient music lessons were available on the school timetable during the short period of the inspection to make a judgement on standards and teaching in music. However, the school works

hard to promote participation and interest in music. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in choral singing as an extra-curricular activity and they enjoy singing religious songs during school assemblies. Arrangements have been made for musicians to visit the school to lead pupils in musical activities. For example, a recent visit by a local musician resulted in a performance of a range of Victorian musical instruments. Pupils dressed themselves in Victorian costumes and the school hall 'became' a Victorian street scene.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **satisfactory overall** but provision for swimming is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Swimming lessons are of good quality and pupils learn well.
- Insufficient monitoring of teaching does not enable weaknesses to be identified and addressed.
- Assessment is only at a rudimentary stage to enable teachers to use the information to improve pupils' performances.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities.

Commentary

72. Swimming lessons for Year 3 pupils are beneficial and enable them to develop confidence in the water and to learn to swim well. Activities are well matched to pupils' attainments and this enables them to be challenged effectively during lessons. For example, most of the less able pupils are encouraged successfully to move through the water by holding a buoyancy aid in front of them and by propelling themselves using their feet. Pupils of average ability for the class are able to swim widths of the swimming pool. This is good achievement for these pupils because many of them were unable to swim during the previous school year. The higher ability swimmers are able to swim very competently in a depth of two metres, each of them using front crawl, butterfly, backstroke and breaststroke styles. The teacher and assistants encouraged and extended pupils throughout the lesson, resulting in hard work and personal satisfaction.

73. Pupils' throwing and catching techniques meet requirements for their various ages and satisfactory teaching enabled them to master throwing a ball from chest height. They are taught successfully how to take a step forward whilst in the act of throwing to obtain more power. Pupils' skills in dance also meet national expectations. They link their body movements to different emotions and enter into the activities with enthusiasm, trying hard to portray a range of feelings in movement and dance sequences.

74. The school provides a good range of sporting activities outside of lesson times. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in competitive sports. There are football and netball teams as well as arrangements for pupils to participate in cross-country running and area athletics competitions. In addition, there are other extra-curricular activities such as tennis, tag rugby, rounders, cricket, basketball and aerobics that enable pupils to join in a wide range of beneficial physical pursuits.

75. As yet, there has been no monitoring of teaching in physical education lessons. The weaknesses that are evident in a small number of lessons, such as not ensuring all pupils are listening whilst the teacher is addressing the whole class or missing opportunities for pupils to discuss in small groups as a way of improving their language facility, have not been identified. In addition, the system used for assessing pupils is not sufficiently refined to enable teachers to use the information to focus on what groups of pupils need to improve. The headings are too general and do not enable teachers to identify the skills that pupils need to improve upon or those they are good at. However, the physical education co-ordinator gives a very good lead to other members of staff through an infectious enthusiasm for the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn how to live a healthy life effectively.
- Social issues are approached in a wide variety of ways.
- Pupils have instilled in them a good sense of citizenship

Commentary

76. Pupils learn about healthy diets in science lessons and become aware of foods that are good for the body and those that are not. They are provided with opportunities to learn about the dangers of taking harmful drugs through discussions and by regular visits from the 'Life Bus' that gives pupils a gradual programme including raising their self-esteem and how to say 'no' to the offer of drugs. They are also given opportunities for sex education lessons that enable them to learn and to have answers to their questions.
77. Social issues are approached sensibly in a wide variety of ways. For example, emotional and social problems are discussed during lessons such as religious education. Pupils grow in confidence at being able to state their views in a secure and caring classroom atmosphere. They discuss the problems involved with racism or the evils of war in a frank way, knowing that their ideas will not be ridiculed. Links are made between personal, social and health education and other subjects in the curriculum. Issues such as bullying are included in dance and drama lessons and pupils have the opportunity to imagine how it feels to be bullied and act out situations when this occurs. This helps pupils to have a greater understanding of the associated problems and to empathise with the victims of bullying.
78. A sense of citizenship is developed effectively through pupils experiencing the democratic process of electing the school council members. Although the school council is in its infancy at present, pupils are aware that there is a process that enables them to air the issues they perceive as difficulties. The school also encourages pupils to participate in fund-raising activities and in so doing enables them to empathise with others who are less fortunate than them. They also have specific tasks that are allocated to help in the smooth running of their classes and pupils undertake these enthusiastically.

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	4
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	4
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	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).