

INSPECTION REPORT

KING STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Spennymoor, Co Durham

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 130946

Headteacher: Mr Paul Ashton

Lead inspector: Mr Andrew Scott

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th March 2004

Inspection number: 256615

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	228
School address:	High Grange Road Spennymoor Co Durham
Postcode:	DL16 6RA
Telephone number:	01388 816078
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Brian Wilcockson
Date of previous inspection:	8 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

King Street Primary School is an average-sized urban school with 228 pupils. Pupils mainly come from the immediate neighbourhood, which includes areas of some deprivation. The socio-economic background of pupils overall is, therefore, below average. The percentage of pupils who claim free school meals is 23.4 per cent which is broadly average. All of the pupils are from white British extraction and there are no pupils with English as their second language. The school does not have a nursery, but most pupils receive some nursery education before they start school. When they enter the reception classes, children usually have skills and abilities that are below average. Twenty per cent of pupils have special educational needs and this is slightly above average. Most of their needs concern moderate or severe learning difficulties but a few have emotional, social or behavioural problems. Six pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is broadly average. The school has been involved in the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools. There is an information and communication technology (ICT) partnership with Spennymoor Comprehensive School.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27545	Andrew Scott	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology
19365	Gordon Stockley	Lay inspector	
23319	Vincent Leary	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, science, music, physical education, religious education
2883	John Manning	Team inspector	English, geography, history, special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. With the recent appointment of a new headteacher, the school has consolidated well and now is poised to improve further. Pupils usually enter school with below average abilities. Teaching is satisfactory overall so pupils achieve satisfactorily. The standards of pupils in the current Year 6 are average and this too represents satisfactory achievement over time. The leadership of the headteacher is good, and the leadership of key staff and the management of the school are satisfactory. Governance is satisfactory. **The school gives satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the clear, firm and thoughtful leadership of the headteacher ensures that the school has a strong sense of purpose and that all staff are committed to school improvement
- standards are not good enough in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 2
- the good relationships between staff and pupils produce good behaviour and social development, as well as a good working climate in lessons
- teachers do not always provide work which is sufficiently based on pupils' abilities so that all pupils are consistently stimulated and well challenged
- the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- staff absences mean that not all subjects are led and managed as well as they might be
- there is an unsatisfactory level of attendance and punctuality
- the school's accommodation has been improved substantially recently
- the School Council has a positive impact on school life and is seen as valuable by all pupils

There has been a good improvement overall since the last inspection. Standards by the end of the reception classes are better, and pupils with special educational needs now make good progress. Pupils' behaviour is better, with far fewer exclusions. The accommodation has distinctly improved, as well as resources for the Foundation Stage, ICT and English, in the form of a new library. There are good systems for assessing pupils' progress, and curriculum planning is far more structured. There are better procedures for inducting new teachers into the school and there are more teaching assistants. However, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is lower and the spiritual provision for all pupils is not as good as it was. The level of attendance is lower.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 achieve satisfactorily by the time they leave the school. Children's achievement in the Foundation Stage is currently good. They enter school with below average abilities and achieve most goals expected of them by the end of reception. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is below average in reading, writing and mathematics, but average in science. Their achievement is satisfactory, since there is a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and this slows learning in this year group. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in ICT are well below national expectations and their achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year

6 and have average standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. This shows an improvement since the 2003 national tests, when pupils' results were below average. Nevertheless, the results achieved last year were better than similar schools, when based on progress since Year 2. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Pupils develop well as individuals. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** They have satisfactory attitudes to work and they behave well. However, their rate of attendance is well below average, and their punctuality is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory. In the reception classes, teaching is good and children make good progress in most areas of learning. Teaching is satisfactory elsewhere, with much that is good in the Year 5/6 and Year 6 classes. The school's curriculum is satisfactory. There is good provision for pupils' personal development and for pupils with special educational needs. However, teachers do not develop literacy, numeracy and ICT enough through other subjects. The new library and computer suite should soon have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school provides satisfactory care and support for its pupils. There are good relationships between pupils and teachers, and the school seeks and values pupils' opinions, especially through the School Council. Partnerships with parents and other schools are good, and links with the local community are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is good and provides a clear, purposeful direction for the school. The leadership by key staff and the management of the school are satisfactory. The co-ordination of several subjects is not dynamic enough to develop them fully. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is supportive and knowledgeable, and maintains a reasonable check on how well the school performs.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a good opinion of the school. They feel that teaching is good, staff are fair and approachable and that teachers have high expectations of their children. As a result, they are happy that their children like school. Parents also praise the leadership of the school. The inspection team supports these views. Some parents have reservations about behaviour, homework and communication with the school, but the inspection team found little cause for concern. Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and value their rapport with staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve standards in English, mathematics and ICT by the end of Year 2
- ensure that teachers provide work which is sufficiently based on pupils' abilities so that they are consistently motivated and well challenged
- make sure that all pupils benefit from a stimulating and multi-layered curriculum
- improve the level of attendance and punctuality

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 6 and standards are average in English, mathematics and science. Children currently achieve well in the reception classes and, by the end of the year, their standards are mostly average. Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 2 is satisfactory but the class has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and so standards are below average. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. There is little significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Compared to the previous inspection, standards by the end of Year 6 are very similar but, by the end of Year 2, they are lower than they were.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and ICT are below average by the end of Year 2
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school in reading but they are less successful with writing
- The achievement of children in the reception classes is good
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well

Commentary

1. Standards in the Foundation Stage are mostly in line with what is expected for children of this age. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. When children begin school, they usually have skills and abilities that are lower than average. Through their reception year, children achieve well in most areas of learning because the teaching is good. As a result, children are likely to achieve the goals identified for their age in most areas of learning. However, children's achievement is only satisfactory in personal and social development and language skills, and so standards in these areas of learning remain below average by the end of the year.
2. In the national tests of 2003, the standards of pupils in Year 2 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Not enough pupils achieved the expected levels and too few higher attaining pupils achieved the higher levels. Standards were also well below average when compared to similar schools although, in mathematics, pupils' results were on a par with those in similar schools. Standards in science were also well below average. Overall, standards had not been keeping pace with the national trend. However, the year group had a higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.6 (12.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.8 (13.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.3 (16.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The standards of pupils in the current Year 2 are below average. This year group also has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, but they benefit from very focused support for literacy and numeracy. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils' achievement overall, though, is satisfactory. Standards for all pupils are below average in reading and writing. They read familiar words satisfactorily but are insecure about sounding words out. They can write simple sentences, but spelling is weak and

handwriting is inconsistently formed. Pupils lack confidence when speaking and their responses are brief and sometimes indistinct. In mathematics, standards are below average because higher attaining pupils are not achieving well enough, although pupils' use of number is sound. Pupils' attainment in science is average, because they have sound skills in simple investigative work.

4. By Year 2, standards in most other subjects are average and their achievement is satisfactory. However, their achievement is unsatisfactory in ICT because their levels of attainment are well below average. Pupils have very weak skills on computers and other devices because teachers do not provide enough opportunities for all pupils to develop their potential fully. It was not possible to judge how well pupils achieve in music, as there was too little evidence available during the inspection.
5. Year 6 pupils had below average standards in the national tests of 2003 in all the main subjects. In English, standards were just below average. However, standards were better than similar schools, when based on the progress made since Year 2. Standards have fluctuated in recent years but have kept close to the national trends in English, mathematics and science. One of the reasons for the standards was that not enough higher attaining pupils achieved the higher levels in the tests. There was little difference between the standards of girls and boys.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.0 (26.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.9 (26.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.1 (27.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. Standards of pupils in the current Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. Their achievement over time is satisfactory. Standards are better this year because the teaching is more effective and there are few pupils with special educational needs. This means that standards are now comparable to those at the time of the last inspection. In English, pupils are developing useful reading skills such as scanning for important information, and they write both fiction and factual accounts competently. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory because they know how to weigh up different opinions and give clear reasons for themselves. In mathematics, pupils have a firm grasp of number and so are increasingly adept at solving problems. In science, pupils have a sound scientific knowledge and are capable of carrying out proper experiments on their own.
7. Pupils' attainment in ICT in Year 6 is average. Pupils exude confidence when at a computer and can word-process competently, as well as use the Internet for research and compile a multi-media presentation. Standards in most of the other subjects are in line with expectations. It was not possible to evaluate pupils' attainment in music because too little evidence was available. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, especially in withdrawal groups, because of the very precise individual education plans and close support from teaching assistants.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to work are **satisfactory**. However, their behaviour and personal development are **good**. The provision for pupils' social and moral development is good but their spiritual and cultural education is satisfactory. Attendance is well below average and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' good behaviour helps to produce a positive atmosphere in lessons
- There are good relationships between pupils and staff
- Attitudes to work can be good but vary according to the quality of teaching
- Pupils develop well as individuals, both socially and morally
- The low level of attendance has an adverse effect on standards

Commentary

8. Pupils behave well in lessons because teachers have clear expectations of what is acceptable. This is a better picture than at the time of the last inspection. Though some children start school with undeveloped social skills and a significant minority have behavioural problems, they become well integrated into lessons and learn to get on well with other pupils and teachers. In the playgrounds and during break times, pupils play together harmoniously for the most part. With only one pupil excluded in the past year, the number of exclusions has reduced greatly since the last inspection.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

No of pupils on roll
228

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1	

9. Attitudes are satisfactory overall but good in those lessons where teachers set practical tasks and pupils are motivated. These often occur in the older classes, especially in the Year 5/6 and Year 6 classes, where teachers make learning more immediate and catch the pupils' attention, as in the quick-fire science sessions first thing in the morning. Pupils enjoy the challenge of quizzes to test their knowledge at regular intervals and respond well to probing questions from teachers. In assemblies, pupils are quiet and attentive but rather passive because adults do not always involve them enough. In some lessons, particularly in Years 1 and 2, pupils are expected to sit for too long listening when they want to be active.
10. The school provides good experiences for pupils to develop their social and moral understanding. Pupils are responsible around the school and are mostly considerate in the playground. Older pupils can apply for places on the School Council and have to prepare a speech outlining what they would do to improve the school for the others. In addition to preparing them for aspects of citizenship, this process helps them to develop confidence in public speaking. The School Council has worked hard to provide better facilities for all pupils at play times. Pupils' understanding of important issues such as the need to preserve the world's scarce resources is well taught in geography in the junior classes. There are a few examples of spiritual awareness as seen in the sensitive comments made by pupils in Year 6 about the artwork of other pupils. Pupils receive visits from representatives of different cultures and they study the development of Spennymoor over time in history. However, spiritual and cultural education is no more than satisfactory.

Attendance

The level of attendance has dipped recently and, last year, was well below the national average. The school tries to encourage better attendance by rewarding classes for full attendance and by reminding parents of their responsibilities. The school also has a satisfactory liaison with the welfare services. However, these procedures are currently not having much effect. Punctuality at the start of

the day is unsatisfactory. Most pupils arrive on time but a small number are often late. The low attendance and unsatisfactory punctuality disrupt the continuity of pupils' learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) - 2002/3

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	8.1	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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education that the school provides for its pupils is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The curriculum and provision for pupils' personal and social education are satisfactory. The good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that all pupils are satisfactorily looked after and cared for. There are good partnerships with the parents and other schools, and satisfactory links with the local community, all of which improve pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** overall. In the reception classes and the Year 5/6 and Year 6 classes, teaching is mostly good. In the other classes, teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Pupils' learning matches the quality of teaching. The school has good systems for assessing how well pupils learn but teachers do not consistently make full use of its data to match work to pupils' abilities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most lessons have a good working atmosphere
- Teachers have good strategies to ensure that pupils respond well
- Not all teachers expect enough from pupils and set work which is challenging for them all
- Teachers do not always provide lessons which are stimulating and exciting for pupils
- Teaching assistants are often deployed well but not in every lesson

Commentary

11. Classrooms are happy places. Pupils want to learn because teachers have good expectations of pupils' contributions and efforts. Teachers prepare lessons well and are confident in subjects like mathematics and geography, so that they can explain and demonstrate new concepts skilfully. The teacher of a Year 3 lesson helped pupils to appreciate a tropical rainforest with very visual scenes and a background noise of torrential rain. In good and very good lessons, teachers set challenging and interesting work so that pupils are really motivated to do well. In a good mathematics lesson, pupils in a Year 5/6 class had to predict the sizes of angles in a triangle and double-check their accuracy with a protractor. They took great care to be as precise as possible, down to the last degree.
12. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, which is similar to the findings of the last inspection. However, teaching is improving and there is much good teaching in the reception classes and in the Year 5/6 and Year 6 classes. Teachers know how to manage pupils' behaviour subtly without disrupting the flow of lessons. They draw in all the pupils through careful questioning, and encourage individual thought. As a result, pupils feel valued and they are usually willing to offer opinions and ideas. Teachers sometimes make good use of resources to stimulate pupils' interest. In one reception lesson, children were spellbound by the novelty of exotic fruit – their textures, aromas and what was inside them. They were partly prepared for the size of stone

within an avocado but aghast at its sliminess. They were transfixed by the ‘ball-bearings’ inside a papaya.

13. However, teachers do not consistently expect the best from their pupils. Too often, all pupils receive the same or very similar work. This is appropriate for average pupils, and pupils with special educational needs receive good support in groups. However, the similarity of work restricts the progress of higher attaining pupils, notably in Years 1 and 2, and in subjects like mathematics and ICT. The level of challenge in ICT for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very low, because teachers do not teach pupils the basic computer skills; the quality of this teaching, therefore, is unsatisfactory. Expectations of pupils in religious education throughout the school are variable, because not all teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers assess pupils’ progress regularly and efficiently in the main subjects; however, they do not consistently use the resultant information adeptly to set work which will challenge all pupils.
14. Sometimes, too, lessons can be routine and uninspiring. This is particularly the case when teachers use standard planning, without enriching it, and when they rely on repetitive tasks on worksheets. Similarly, in some lessons, teachers give pupils too much guidance and do not allow them to learn for themselves. In a Year 2 English lesson, pupils relied heavily on human resources, rather than explore dictionaries or word lists to write sentences. In good lessons, pupils relish the chance to do work on their own. In a Year 5/6 science lesson, pupils’ eagerness to investigate dissolution prompted some good questions, such as “Why does icing sugar dissolve immediately?” Pupils also made very good progress in understanding the process of a fair test.
15. The quality of teaching has not substantially changed since the last inspection. However, most teachers are beginning to grow in confidence, as a direct result of the support and guidance of the headteacher, and there was some good teaching in most year groups during this inspection. Teachers still have to improve the ways in which they use the contribution of teaching assistants. When they work with individual pupils or groups, teaching assistants give sensitive and effective support. However, too often, they play an inactive part in lessons, especially when the whole class is working together.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7 (15%)	17 (37%)	22 (48%)	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.

The curriculum

The curriculum provides a **satisfactory** range of worthwhile experiences which caters for the needs and interests of all the pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Accommodation and resources are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although the curriculum is satisfactory overall, literacy, numeracy and ICT are not developed enough through other subject areas
- Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for
- Some pupils who receive extra support in literacy and numeracy miss out on other elements of the curriculum
- There have been substantial improvements in accommodation and resources
- There are some good activities after school

Commentary

16. The school provides a relevant and well-structured curriculum for the pupils. This is a clear improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum places an appropriate emphasis on the main subjects of English, mathematics and science and, as a result, pupils' achievement in these subjects is improving. The school has begun to improve the curriculum further by encouraging pupils to develop their thinking skills through good quality questioning by some teachers. However, this provision is at an early stage of development. A few teachers provide good opportunities to promote literacy, numeracy and ICT through other subjects. For example, in science, in both the Year 5/6 and Year 6 classes, teachers encourage pupils to discuss their ideas, predictions and conclusions during their investigations. This is an important element in the improving standards in both science and literacy. However, this is not done consistently throughout the school, and so pupils miss vital opportunities to develop their basic skills in context. For example, pupils do not develop computer skills enough by producing graphs in mathematics or by word-processing historical accounts.
17. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers know their pupils well and provide good individual plans to guide pupils in their learning. Targets for learning are relevant, clear and regularly reviewed. When in small groups, pupils make good progress because they can do their work at their own pace, with the benefit of close adult support and good advice. When working in whole-class sessions, pupils do not learn so well and contribute less to discussions because they tend to find the work too hard.
18. Some pupils do not share the same curriculum as all other pupils. The school has identified pupils who need extra help in literacy and numeracy, and provides extra lessons at the same time as other subjects. As a result, although this support is effective in raising achievement in these important subjects, pupils miss part or whole lessons and there are no systems for them to catch up. In a Year 3 ICT lesson, for example, several pupils missed half the lesson. When they returned, they were given easier work to do, thereby limiting their chances of making up lost ground.
19. Since his appointment, the headteacher has brought about substantial improvements to the quality of the accommodation and resources throughout the school. The extensive redecoration and refurbishment have produced a positive and bright learning environment where pupils are happy to be. This is especially true of the Foundation Stage, although there is still no dedicated external area for these children and this restricts their outdoor structured play. The school has also increased the number of support staff and this is helping to raise achievement in the reception classes. There is a new, well-stocked library and a large, freshly upgraded computer suite, but these facilities are too new to be impacting significantly on standards.
20. Pupils take part in many sporting activities and achieved much success last year in football, tag rugby and cross-country running. Experts from local teams visit the school to coach the pupils and pass on their skills. Parents spoke positively about the commitment the teachers demonstrate in ensuring the pupils have a variety of educational experiences.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **satisfactory** care of its pupils. The staff provide satisfactory support, advice and guidance, and involve pupils well in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good and trusting relationships between adults and pupils
- Children in the Foundation Stage are well cared for
- The School Council provides a good opportunity for pupils to have a say in the running of the school
- There has not been any recent training in child protection for the majority of staff

Commentary

21. A key strength in the social climate of the school is the bond between pupils and staff. Pupils are well aware that teachers care for their well-being and that their insistence on good behaviour and hard work is perfectly understandable. They know too that, if they have any personal problems, there is always a sympathetic adult to turn to. Members of the School Council know that their views are respected by staff, and may well lead to subsequent action.
22. Children feel happy and secure in the reception classes. Teachers have clear routines and work hard to ensure that children know and respect them. Children know quickly where they stand but they also realise that teachers are very supportive and caring. Consequently, there is a distinct atmosphere of trust, seen particularly when children occupy themselves in independent activities, whether delving in the sandpit or assembling a toy tractor. Staff are keen for children to be mindful of danger and constantly remind them of risks to themselves or to others, such as how to run without colliding in games activities.
23. The School Council is well established and influential. It contains representatives from most year groups and meets regularly to discuss concerns and other matters raised by staff or pupils. The council appoints officers, such as a secretary and chairperson. The secretary produces minutes, which are word-processed, and the council also produces a termly newsletter, using a desk-top publishing program. One of the council's most successful ventures is the organisation of fund-raising events. One such event raised a significant amount of money, which the headteacher doubled from the school budget, allowing the council to choose new play equipment for the school. Council members also operate a rota for playground duties, such as looking out for lonely or unhappy children. The council makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and involves pupils well in the day-to-day running of the school.
24. Whilst the teachers and other adults working in the school have a caring nature, there are some aspects of care that are not currently of a high enough standard. The headteacher has recently attended training in child protection, but many of the staff have not had recent training in this important area of their work. However, plans have been made for all staff to attend training in the summer term. Additionally, important information about the special requirements of pupils who have particular medical needs is not readily available to staff who may need access to it from time to time. The governors do not currently carry out health and safety inspections. The school has good procedures for safeguarding the pupils' use of the Internet.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents and other schools and colleges. Links with the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides good quality information for parents, including clear reports which show how well their children are doing
- Parents have the opportunity every week to discuss their children's progress with teachers
- Good links with other schools improve the quality of pupils' education
- The school regularly seeks and responds effectively to parents' views or concerns

Commentary

25. Teachers produce clear, informative annual written reports that explain to parents what progress their child has made in each subject. The reports also include specific and relevant targets for English, mathematics and science, and a section describing clearly the child's personal development. They do not, as yet, explain whether a pupil's achievement is good

enough, but this has been identified by the headteacher as an area for improvement next year. Also identified as an area for development is the school's website. This currently shows a lot of information about sport and contains links to an impressive range of educational websites. It does not yet, however, have a wide range of information, such as copies of the current or previous newsletters, for example.

26. Teachers are available to see parents by appointment each Thursday during term time. This very good innovation ensures that parents can find out how well their child is getting on, or discuss any problems they may have encountered, without waiting for the usual annual parent consultation evening. This new system allows for unhurried discussion and many parents are taking advantage of it. A small number of parents help in school on a regular basis, listening to readers and assisting teachers in practical lessons. The parent-teacher association organises a number of social events to raise money to purchase items such as computers and equipment for physical education.
27. Pupils benefit significantly from the school's good links with its local partner secondary schools. These links allow pupils to benefit from improved ICT facilities, sports training and opportunities in practical design and technology. There are also good procedures to ensure the smooth transfer of pupils between the schools, including taster visits for pupils in Years 5 and 6, and joint work projects. There are plans to introduce a buddy scheme between Year 6 and Year 7 pupils for the next transfer programme. The links with nursery schools are less well developed.
28. The school is eager to involve parents in its work and to find out their views on various aspects of school life. In order to do this, it frequently asks questions of parents in newsletters. The school informs parents of the results of these surveys so that they are aware of the majority view. Most parents are happy with the way in which the school responds to their concerns. Complaints are investigated thoroughly and fairly. Although the school cannot always take the action that parents wish, it explains the reasons, so that parents understand.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school overall are **satisfactory**. The headteacher provides good leadership but the leadership by key staff and the management of the school are satisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a very clear direction and is raising the school's aspirations
- Although teaching and learning are monitored well, the quality of teaching is not consistent throughout the school
- The co-ordination of some subjects is under-developed
- The school evaluates its own progress very well but does not act decisively enough on the outcomes
- Training for staff is good and has given many a new confidence in their teaching

Commentary

29. The new headteacher has started to make a real impact on teaching and learning in the school. His leadership is good. He has correctly identified areas of concern and has introduced good systems to support teachers and pupils. Beginning by improving the working environment in the school, he has now set out clearly the need for higher expectations of pupils as an important next step. His leadership is an improvement since the last inspection. The good relationships in the school are the result of greater clarity of purpose and a more communal approach to decision making. The school improvement plan is a good working document agreed by all staff and governors and has a distinct focus on raising standards.
30. The newly created senior management team is gaining in confidence, although the burden of subject leadership falls on the shoulders of too few staff at present. This is the result of a

significant amount of staff illness in recent months, not leaving enough experienced staff to lead all the subjects. Though some subjects, such as English and science, are well led and managed, others are not as successful yet. The monitoring of teaching and learning is only undertaken by the headteacher. This has been astute and has led to the identification of relevant training for staff. However, it has not yet extended the good practice that exists throughout the school.

31. The governors provide sound support for the headteacher and staff. They are well aware of the main strengths of the school. They are becoming more involved and knowledgeable about certain aspects of curriculum, but they do not question the school incisively enough about areas of obvious weakness, such as the below average standards of attainment in Year 2. The quality of governance shows little change since the last inspection. The school's management systems are efficient but still relatively under-developed. The analysis of data about pupils' performance has given teachers a better view of what is needed to help pupils to improve, but the results are not yet evident in test results. However, the work seen in the school shows a more focused approach to assessment, which is leading to better lesson planning.
32. There are good procedures to manage the performance of staff. The headteacher has made staff development a priority and this is gradually leading to better teaching and learning. For example, the stronger teaching in Years 5/6 and Year 6, and increasingly in Year 3, is a direct result of the headteacher's guidance. He has acted to support teaching through good deployment of classroom assistants, especially by reducing class sizes where proportions of pupils with special educational needs are high, and by providing withdrawal groups. The broader deployment of teaching assistants is not always as effective as it might be because in some lessons they are under used in the introductory sessions.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	565,240
Total expenditure	548,474
Expenditure per pupil	2,168

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	11,234
Balance carried forward to the next	28,000

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision in most areas of learning has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. On entry to the school, children's skills in speaking and listening, numeracy, and personal and social qualities are mostly below average and a significant minority have poor social, speaking and listening skills. Only a small number of children are likely to achieve the goals set for them in personal, social and language development. However, the majority of children are likely to reach the goals expected of children by the end of the reception year in mathematical development and other areas of learning.

The teaching and learning are good in most areas of learning identified for this age group. As a consequence, children in both reception classes make good progress and achieve well overall. However, teaching is not so effective for personal, social and language development. Learning is an enjoyable and challenging experience. The teachers, supported well by learning support staff, use a good range of teaching strategies and techniques, that encourage children to be independent, active learners. The staff know their children well, keep a sharp eye on their progress and set work accordingly.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. There is a clear view of what the Foundation Stage provision should be, and there has been good improvement in the teaching, curriculum and accommodation in most areas of learning. However, the co-ordinator has little time to develop the provision further. Opportunities for teaching and learning outside are limited, especially because the current accommodation for structured outdoor play is unsatisfactory. The school is aware of this and there are plans to overcome this shortcoming.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The varied opportunities for children to work together in well-planned activities increase their independence and social skills
- Children gain confidence and learn how to sustain concentration, because of good support and encouragement from staff

Commentary

33. Children settle in well to the routines of the reception classes. The calm, welcoming atmosphere presents children with a wide range of interesting and purposeful experiences and, together with the good interaction between staff and children, develops an eagerness to learn. Children are encouraged to make their own choices of stimulating activities so that they develop confidence and independence in taking responsibility for their own actions. For example, children learn how to take out and put away equipment. However, children are not as confident and competent as they should be for their age at looking after themselves.
34. Children develop the ability to persevere with a task until it is completed, particularly older children. For instance, when creating paintings of wallflowers, children were quite absorbed right until the final brushstroke. Children baking gingerbread men showed their developing skills in relationships when patiently taking turns in the preparation of their biscuits. Most children make satisfactory progress in developing personal, social and emotional skills, but will not achieve the goals expected of them by the end of the year. A few children make good progress and are on course to achieve their goals. Children with special educational needs achieve as well as other children. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Sensible planning by teachers ensures that children build on their skills steadily
- Activities provided are relevant in developing children's communication skills and enjoyment of language

Commentary

35. Most children are unlikely to reach the goals expected at the end of the reception year, although a few children will. Good opportunities and experiences, such as role-play, are provided for children to develop speaking and listening skills. At present, children pretend to be shoppers in a garden centre and talk about the different types of produce for sale. Staff share stories and picture books with children, who learn to listen to, enjoy and join in with stories and rhymes. This develops a love of books and the exciting possibilities of learning to read, starting with the initial letter sounds in words. Children enjoy turning the pages of picture books in the library area and some of them are able to read simple sentences and talk about the characters. There are some opportunities for children to use writing in their play. For example, the higher attaining children made lists of items to purchase from the garden centre in clear, uniform print. However, children have too few opportunities to talk about what they have experienced to staff and other children, and miss out on chances to improve speaking and listening skills further. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching helps children develop their skills step by step
- Interesting practical activities help children develop mathematical skills across the curriculum

Commentary

36. By the end of the reception year, most children are likely to reach the goals expected of them. A few children will exceed them. Activities are well planned to help children build up their skills systematically. Most children use number names and make correspondingly accurate taps up to 20 and beyond. In a class session relating to number pattern making, the teacher used clever ideas to develop children's understanding of calculating. The children had to work out the number of frogs on individual lily pads. This helped them to understand how numbers can be divided into groups. Throughout this activity, teachers insisted that children used proper mathematical vocabulary. The expectations of staff ensure that children achieve well in work that is well matched to their abilities. Learning is enriched because teachers develop mathematical skills through other areas of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff create a lively learning environment to simulate children's curiosity
- The outdoor area limits the range of children's investigations

Commentary

37. Most children achieve the required standards in this area of their development. The staff create a rich environment and plan topics, which stimulate children's interest. The good teaching results in children achieving well. For instance, in one lesson, children were amazed and thrilled at the textures and shapes of a range of tropical fruits. This well-organised session provided the children with opportunities to taste, smell and handle the various fruits. The language flowed and the children's knowledge and appreciation of the fruits of other countries were enhanced.
38. Children also learn well through a variety of other experiences. They begin to appreciate cultural diversity through looking at various faiths. Children become familiar with the computer and learn to use the mouse and keyboard, but exploration is limited to a narrow range of ICT resources. The outdoor area is limited and restricts children's exploration of the immediate environment, such as learning from close observation of the changes in the growth of plants or mini-beasts.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use a range of materials to express ideas

Commentary

39. Children develop a range of skills, using creative materials and tools. They produce attractive paintings, drawings and collage pictures, which decorate the classroom and celebrate their achievements. Children learn, through their dance sessions, to mimic the movements and shape of animals. These sessions are well organised by staff allowing the children opportunities and time to enjoy and experiment with movement. However, the acquiring of skills and knowledge through the use of ICT is limited. Overall, children achieve well because of the good teaching, and the majority of them are likely to reach the goals expected of children by the end of the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn how to control their movements
- Learning outside is limited with few opportunities for child-initiated activities

Commentary

40. Physical development is taught well and children achieve well over the year to reach the standards expected by the end of reception. Teachers organise lessons well and so increase children's skills in control and co-ordination. Most children are adept at manipulating different tools and equipment safely, and with increasing control. They are developing a sense of space and an awareness of how to share the hall floor area sensibly and safely with other children in the class. The teaching is clearly focused on developing not only physical skills but making children aware of the importance of movement as a means of keeping healthy. However, the outdoor area is under-developed as a facility for developing the children's physical skills.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 2
- Achievement in reading is good but standards in writing are below average
- Pupils lack confidence in speaking at length
- There is some very good teaching in the junior classes which is helping to raise pupils' aspirations
- The use of literacy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory
- The leadership of the subject is good although management is less effective

Commentary

41. Standards of attainment are below average by the end of Year 2. However, considering the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, achievement is satisfactory. Standards are better by the end of Year 6 and most pupils reach average levels of attainment. Achievement is satisfactory based on their progress from Year 2. However, teaching in the Year 5/6 and Year 6 classes is very well planned and helps pupils to learn with greater focus. The best progress is in reading where the school's clear concentration on raising standards through the Better Reading Partnership is having a positive effect. Pupils in Year 6 are making good progress in developing advanced reading skills such as scanning for essential information, and drawing conclusions about characters in stories. The extra support for pupils with special educational needs and good teaching are ensuring that they too achieve well in their early reading skills.
42. Progress in writing and speaking is not as rapid, however, but is satisfactory. Many pupils are not accurate enough in spelling and punctuation, and handwriting is often untidy and poorly controlled. Pupils do not have enough practice at reading out their work aloud to appreciate the purpose of punctuation. Teachers are beginning to plan more opportunities for role-play in lessons and they provide good examples for pupils to follow. However, most pupils in Years 1 and 2 are still uncertain how to participate, lack confidence and are sometimes inaudible. In discussions, their answers to questions are often monosyllabic and their ideas are under-developed. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are making better headway in their speaking and in their writing as a result of more structured lessons to support thinking skills. In a Year 6 lesson, a boy argued very convincingly why his interpretation of 'deduce' was as good as the teacher's. He used his knowledge of the meaning of the prefix 'de-' to support his view. In the same lesson, another boy drew from his earlier reading of *Goodnight, Mr Tom* to explain to the class the similarities with a short story they were reading at the time.

43. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching and learning in the Year 5/6 and Year 6 classes are usually more effective because the expectations of pupils tend to be more demanding. Teachers probe and prompt with searching questions that help pupils express themselves more effectively. In the best lessons, teachers use interactive whiteboards and imaginative displays of good quality writing to stimulate pupils' ideas. As a result, the responses, especially from the more able pupils, are lively and interesting. One pupil came up with the intriguing simile, '... with a face as long as a railway line'.
44. The subject is well led, and satisfactorily managed. There is a clear and good plan of action for future development. The assessment of pupils' progress is good, with the marking in most classes being consistent and detailed enough to help pupils to see how to improve. The monitoring of teaching and learning is regular and efficient, but the outcomes are not yet used decisively to extend the good practice throughout the school. Progress in the subject since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

45. Teachers do not develop language and literacy effectively enough through other subjects. There is a lack of consistency in helping pupils to improve their reading and writing, but good opportunities do exist. For example, pupils have the chance to research historical information for their topics during English lessons. In geography, pupils in Year 6 write lively holiday brochures to promote the island of St Lucia. Pupils in Year 6 produced some very succinct evaluations of the artwork of their classmates. They perceptively referred to distinctive shades and contrasts in colour and line, as well as giving a clear personal response, such as, "I have a sense of a happy person here". These instances are not widespread, however, and tend to be confined to a few classes. Many opportunities are missed, for example in design and technology for pupils to write up their design plans and ultimate evaluations. The use of ICT to support writing is also rather narrow.

MATHEMATICS

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a positive learning atmosphere in lessons
- Teachers do not consistently motivate all pupils to achieve as well as they might
- A recent impetus has raised standards by the end of Year 6
- Although the subject is adequately led and managed, the development of the curriculum is not good enough
- The development of mathematics through other subjects is unsatisfactory

Commentary

46. Pupils are keen to learn because they have a good rapport with their teachers. Pupils know that their contributions are valued and that teachers want them to succeed. As a result, behaviour is good and pupils listen well in lessons. Teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and usually start with a lively activity, which gets pupils going. Building on a brisk practice of square numbers, like $9^2 = ?$, a teacher in the Year 5/6 class extended the scope of the work to $7^2 - 4^2 = ?$. Consequently, all pupils were kept on their toes and enjoyed the mental challenge. Teachers make it clear what they expect pupils to learn, so pupils feel comfortable about what they have to do to achieve it. Teachers use resources adeptly to reinforce learning. Interactive whiteboards certainly motivated pupils in most lessons and a large egg-timer gave pupils in Year 1 a precise illustration of the length of a minute.

47. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Despite its various strengths, teaching can often be unenterprising and mundane. Teachers' planning tends to be taken straight from standard formats without much individual input. Teachers also rely too heavily on routine worksheets which direct pupils' learning too much. In these situations, pupils steadily lose interest and so the pace of the lesson and their learning slows down. Teachers are not skilful enough at providing different work to meet the needs of all pupils. This helps to explain why standards at the end of Year 2 are below average, although the current year group has a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs and this slows learning. Generally, these pupils are well supported in small groups but higher attaining pupils do not regularly receive challenging work in most classes, except the Year 5/6 and Year 6 classes.
48. The school has rightly made mathematics a priority over the past year. The whole-school approach has been successful in developing pupils' mental agility and use of number. As a result, pupils' attainment is gradually beginning to improve, particularly by the end of Year 6 and, this year, pupils' standards are average. Teaching in the top two classes is more dynamic and sharply focused, and teachers have good expectations of pupils. In one lesson, lower attaining pupils rose well to the challenge of calculating different angles within triangles. The more able pupils within the set were then able to suggest that equilateral triangles must have three 60° angles.
49. There are now good systems for assessing how well pupils are progressing, and teachers are increasingly using information from these to guide their teaching better. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, although there is no co-ordinator at present to oversee and spearhead its development. The headteacher has temporary responsibility and is monitoring teaching well, steadily improving it. However, there has been little overall change in the subject since the last inspection, and attainment by the end of Year 2 is weaker.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. The development of numeracy within other subjects is unsatisfactory. Mathematics tends to be taught in isolation and teachers do not seek ways of putting it in context. For example, pupils rarely use ICT to depict the pie-charts and graphs arising from their data-handling work.

SCIENCE

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is more effective in Years 5 and 6
- Although pupils are improving their skills of scientific enquiry, there are too few opportunities for them to design their own investigations
- Teachers do not use their good assessment of pupils to ensure that work is well matched to abilities of all pupils

Commentary

51. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve average standards in science. This reflects standards achieved at the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall but, in Years 5 and 6, pupils' achievement in science is good. This is the result of consistently good teaching and the very positive attitudes to their learning displayed by the pupils. Since the previous inspection, standards in scientific enquiry have improved. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to undertake practical science activities, with many opportunities for higher attaining pupils to carry out their own systematic investigations. In a Year 6 lesson on dissolution, for example, pupils were able to ponder just how liquids at different temperatures would react with solids.

52. However, this approach is not consistently practised throughout the school. Overall, teaching is satisfactory, as it was at the previous inspection. Teachers do not consistently give all pupils enough scope for independent learning. Teachers tend to adhere too much to standard schemes of work and often expect pupils to complete worksheets rather than plan experiments for themselves. This is particularly true in Years 1 and 2, but also in Years 3 and 4. For example, in a potentially fascinating experiment with magnets, pupils in Year 1 quickly realised which materials were magnetic and which were not, but there was limited scope for them to experiment beyond this, especially for higher attaining pupils.
53. The subject benefits from an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has identified sensible ways of raising standards especially in Years 3 to 6, mainly by raising the expectations of teachers. However, she does not have the opportunity to observe the quality of teaching, and so influence the quality of teaching throughout the school. There are good procedures to check how well pupils learn, but teachers do not make full use of this data to set work at the right level for all pupils, especially higher attainers, which, in all likelihood, would help to improve standards. Overall, therefore, the leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is well below average
- Teachers do not make the most of opportunities to develop ICT, especially through other subjects
- The school has a good computer room and resources
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory

Commentary

54. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have weak computer skills. They do not know how to access programs for themselves and are very awkward when trying to word-process, because they are unfamiliar with the keyboard. Higher attaining pupils have slightly more confidence but they struggle to carry out simple tasks, like deleting errors. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is, therefore, unsatisfactory. Teachers simply do not teach the basic computer skills well enough and do not provide other opportunities, such as working with a floor robot. Pupils can, however, use a paint program to make colourful repetitive patterns. Standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations. Pupils are competent at word-processing, use the Internet adeptly for research and know how to compile a simple multi-media presentation.
55. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers are confident at explaining new learning clearly, often using interactive whiteboards, so that pupils understand what to do. Pupils in a Year 3 lesson, for example, quickly understood how to access an e-mail account. Nevertheless, teachers do not plan work for pupils that meets their individual needs. In most lessons, pupils are given the same task, regardless of their abilities, which restricts the progress of some average pupils and, certainly, higher attaining pupils. In the introductory lesson on e-mail, one pupil already knew how to send letters, but still had to do the same work as all the other pupils.
56. The computer room is a valuable resource. All classes work there at least once a week, and pupils clearly enjoy their time there. Pupils are able to work comfortably in pairs and the room enables teaching to be very immediate; teachers and teaching assistants can circulate easily and guide pupils through their work, so that little time is lost if pupils encounter problems.
57. Although the school has done well to upgrade the facilities for ICT, the overall development of the subject has fared less well. There is no subject co-ordinator at present because of staff

absences and so there is not enough supervision to check that the subject is well covered throughout the school. Consequently, some areas such as simulation and monitoring are marginalised. There are good links with a nearby secondary school and pupils are able occasionally to benefit from the senior school's more specialist resources. The assessment of pupils' work is not very effective, so pupils do not know what they need to do to improve. There is little change in ICT since the last inspection. Resources are better but attainment by the end of Year 2 is lower.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. Teachers do not maximise opportunities for developing ICT across the whole curriculum. As a result, provision is unsatisfactory. Older pupils do have the chance to word-process some of their work. Pupils in the Year 5/6 class produced balanced arguments about whether children should have to wear school uniform. However, this kind of activity is done too rarely by other pupils. There are too few instances of ICT supporting mathematics, such as using spreadsheets and graphs. Pupils use the Internet sometimes to research projects, like the work on St Lucia by pupils in Years 5 and 6 but, again, this is an under-developed area.

HUMANITIES

Too little evidence was available in **geography** to judge its provision. This was especially true in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, attainment is broadly average and some of the work is of a good standard. In the two lessons observed, teaching was good in one lesson and very good in the other. The teachers took a very practical approach to the subject and pupils responded very well. The use of ICT and other resources to present information in a Year 3 lesson was imaginative and also effective, because pupils could clearly understand the structure of rain forests and the way that rivers are polluted. In addition to learning about life in different climates, they also had the chance to debate moral and cultural issues.

History

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good recall of historical facts and their powers of deduction are good
- Too little is expected of pupils in their written work
- The withdrawal of pupils with special educational needs sometimes limits their progress in the subject
- Although the curriculum has improved, there is a lack of monitoring of the teaching and learning

Commentary

59. Standards in history by the end of Years 2 and 6 are average, as they were at the last inspection. Younger pupils understand that their clothes and toys are different from those of their grandparents and parents. They also know that most children nowadays tend to have more toys that are made of different materials. In Year 2, pupils have very good recall of key facts relating to the Great Fire of London. They know about famous people like Samuel Pepys and more able pupils can suggest why the fire might have started and was difficult to contain.
60. Much of the work of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is carried out through discussion and pictures. Pupils rarely have the opportunity to write at length about what they learn. This means that they miss out on the chance to consolidate their knowledge and develop their literacy skills. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have more opportunities to express their ideas in writing but teachers do not insist that they write coherent accounts. Many pupils are let down by weak literacy skills but much of their work is copied, which offers little scope for improvement. Many pupils, however, show the

potential to find out and present information from a variety of sources. In Year 4, for example, higher attaining pupils produced well-organised accounts of the advantages and disadvantages of living on the banks of the Nile in ancient Egypt.

61. Some pupils miss important parts of lessons. Pupils with special educational needs, in particular, are sometimes withdrawn from history lessons for extra support in literacy and numeracy. Although, they do not miss the same part of the lesson every week throughout the year, they do miss vital parts of learning and there is no clear method of ensuring that they catch up the other pupils. Whilst it is crucial for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, teachers do not plan to develop them enough through history.
62. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers engage pupils well, present facts clearly and ask good questions to test their understanding of historical events. However, teachers do not expect enough of pupils in writing and in forming their own opinions when finding out information for themselves. Although the co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory, there is no systematic monitoring of teaching and learning. As a result, good teaching practice is not shared efficiently throughout the school and areas of concern are not dealt with swiftly enough.

Religious education

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn about the importance of courtesy, care and consideration for others
- Teaching is sometimes good when it makes pupils more spiritually aware
- The school makes good use of its links with the local clergy and other faith groups, which extend pupils' knowledge of different faiths and cultures
- The subject is not effectively led or managed

Commentary

63. Pupils in Year 2 and 6 reach the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The above average standards achieved at the previous inspection by Year 6 pupils have not been maintained. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 talk confidently about Christian celebrations and how Jewish people express their beliefs. They are beginning to link religious teaching with their own lives such as knowing that Bible stories provide examples of how to be caring and considerate to others. "Help other people and don't just think about yourself," explained one pupil, catching the essence of how pupils had learned from religion.
64. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, teaching is more effective when teachers make thoughtful use of discussion, writing and drama. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 6 on the meanings behind Easter and the Resurrection, pupils were challenged to empathise with the feelings and responses of the people involved in these events. The high quality questioning resulted in some reflective and poignant comments. Teaching is also successful when teachers use resources to bring the subject alive. Pupils in Year 2 lesson, for example, thoroughly enjoyed making their own Torah scrolls modelled on Jewish artefacts. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write about their learning.
65. Good use is made of the community's clergy who conduct assemblies on a regular basis and invite pupils to their local churches. There are occasional visitors from other faith groups and cultures to the school. This results in an increase in pupils' learning about the beliefs and symbols of Christianity and other faiths.
66. The leadership and management of the subject are currently unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is absent and the school has too few teachers to take on the responsibility temporarily. As a

result, the subject has not been rigorously monitored. The headteacher is currently supporting teachers in this subject and he is aware that some staff require help to improve their expertise in the teaching of religious education. There are satisfactory assessment procedures in place but teachers do not use information from these consistently enough to influence their planning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

As only one lesson was observed in **art and design**, it is not possible to judge the quality of provision, including teaching. However, an analysis of pupils' work showed that standards are broadly average throughout the school, and this is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop satisfactory skills in painting, as well as appreciating how different colours and textures can be used for effect. For example, they arranged orange and red tissue paper behind cardboard facades to represent flames in the Great Fire of London. In Years 3 to 6, pupils develop other skills, for instance in collage and landscape painting. With pastels and paint, pupils made effective, impressionist views of Caribbean scenes. Pupils in Year 6 studied wooden models in order to portray the human body effectively in action in various sports.

In **music**, there was too little evidence to be able to evaluate its provision. Pupils experience a suitable programme of activities. Year 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about their music lessons. They enjoy listening to music and singing songs, and were particularly enthusiastic about their most recent learning, writing their own lyrics to a blues melody. Singing in assembly, though, was rather lacklustre and lacked expression. Some pupils benefit from the chance to learn to play string and brass instruments, and musicians visit the school to give the pupils opportunities to listen to accomplished performances.

There is a satisfactory curriculum for **physical education**. Unfortunately, it was possible to observe only two lessons and so no judgement can be made about its overall provision. Pupils have good opportunities to work with specialist teachers. For instance, during the week of the inspection, gymnastics and games lessons were taught effectively by visiting specialists. The pupils improved their performance skills in gymnastics and ball skills in football. Professional footballers and rugby players provide coaching on a regular basis, passing on their considerable levels of expertise to the pupils. Pupils have many opportunities to play in teams and enjoy considerable success in inter-school competitions, notably in football and tag rugby. A residential experience in the Lake District is planned to give the older pupils an opportunity to take part in adventurous activities such as rock-climbing.

Design and technology

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a clear understanding of the design process
- Pupils have good ideas but do not develop a wide variety of skills
- Teachers do not insist enough on high standards of work

Commentary

67. Standards are satisfactory throughout the school and are, therefore, similar to what they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils fully appreciate that thoughtful designs, together with constant evaluation, are crucial to making things efficiently. Teachers expect pupils to modify their designs as they progress, although pupils are sometimes frustrated by limited resources. One boy, in a Year 5 lesson on musical instruments, spent much time trying to find a matching plastic container so that he could complete the pair of bongos he was trying to make. Other pupils could not make effective necks for their guitars because there were few suitable tubes.

68. The curriculum for pupils is not very broad. As a result, pupils do not benefit from a full range of learning experiences or acquire a variety of techniques. Most pupils undertake two topics each year and, sometimes, they are too repetitive. For example, in the current year, three year groups from Year 1 to Year 5 are working with food, designing fruit salad, sandwiches and biscuits. The similarity of activities like testing textures and flavours is limiting. Pupils are competent at stitching, cutting and attaching materials, but do not have much opportunity to work with more physical tools like hammers and saws, and materials like wood and wire. Pupils in Year 5 found it hard to produce effective sounds from instruments made of cardboard and sticky tape. Nevertheless, pupils do generate good ideas. One pupil recalled how to feather the end of a tube in order to fix it on to a box more securely. Pupils in the Year 5/6 class produced imaginative and colourful designs for the slippers they made.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, sometimes teachers do not expect enough precision from pupils and, consequently, work can be rushed and shoddy. The designs for biscuits by pupils in Year 5 were very casual and not very creative. Pupils stuck with very familiar shapes like stars and hearts, and did little to enhance them. Similarly, teachers do not insist that all pupils draw valid conclusions about their work. Some comments from pupils in Year 5, for example, were quaint but not very constructive. One higher attaining pupil rejected one design for a biscuit because "it might look yuck". The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory but there is not enough monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress to ensure consistency of provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

It was possible to observe only one lesson. However, based on the school's overall approach, it is clear that provision is **satisfactory**. All classes benefit from a special session each week when pupils can discuss personal and social issues openly. Pupils in a Year 5 lesson, for example, learned about the dangers of smoking and discussed how even passive smoking can be harmful. The School Council is good at teaching pupils to be responsible citizens. Teachers make good use of assemblies to promote moral concepts, like honesty and the value of special days like Mothering Sunday. Nevertheless, teachers do not encourage pupils to be independent enough, especially in their learning, or to challenge the values around them for themselves.

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	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	6
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	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	4
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	3
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).

