

INSPECTION REPORT

Luton Junior School

Chatham

LEA area: The Medway Towns

Unique reference number: 118318

Headteacher: Ms S M Russell

Lead inspector: Jan Sullivan

Dates of inspection: 01–03 March 2004

Inspection number: 256800

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:	365
School address:	Luton Road Chatham Kent
Postcode:	ME4 5AW
Telephone number:	01634 844149
Fax number:	01634 843582
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Tony Goulden
Date of previous inspection:	1–3 March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Luton Junior School is a larger-than-average school situated in Luton, Medway, Kent. There are 365 pupils on roll, 193 boys and 172 girls, aged from seven to eleven years. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals at 21.5 per cent is broadly in line with the national average (20 per cent). The school is located in an area of significant social and economic deprivation, with a higher-than-average mobility rate. In these circumstances, this free school meal figure does not adequately reflect the school's context. Data provided by the school, based upon their informed knowledge of local families and catchment area, would put the free school meal figure at closer to 39 per cent. A small proportion of pupils (approximately 8 per cent) are from assorted minority ethnic backgrounds, no single group predominates. Two pupils speak English as an additional language. There are 126 pupils (35 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs of whom 44 are on School Action Plus. This is well above the national average (17.5 per cent). Half of these pupils have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Two pupils are in public care. There are six pupils (1.6 per cent) with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is close to the national average for primary schools (1.7 per cent). Children from the local on-site infant school enter the junior school with attainment that is below average; for those pupils who enter the school after the first point of transition (the beginning of Year 3), attainment on entry is most usually well-below average. The school works hard to provide a safe and caring environment for its pupils and to offer a curriculum enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and learning-support initiatives. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark for Primary Schools in 2002, the Inclusive Schools' Quality Mark in 2003, Stage 1 of the Healthy Schools' Charter Mark in 2003 and during the inspection received notification that it has achieved a 'Playgrounds Initiatives' Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3205	Jan Sullivan	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Religious education
19677	M Cumbers	Lay inspector	
22033	Peter Nickoll	Team inspector	History Geography Design and technology Special educational needs English as an additional language
32399	Peter Goringe	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education
24104	Michael Marsh	Team inspector	English Modern foreign languages Music

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Limited

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Luton Junior School is a fairly effective school, which provides satisfactory value for money. Overall, this is an improving school, operating in difficult circumstances. Standards of attainment in national tests are low but have remained broadly consistent over the past three years; this is despite significant changes in the school's catchment area that have resulted in an increasing number of pupils with special educational needs and a rising mobility rate. In lessons pupils attain at least the standards expected for their age in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, with good standards in music and PSHE. Achievement is satisfactory across the curriculum, with some good achievement made by pupils with special educational needs in their literacy and numeracy recovery programmes. There is also good achievement by pupils in music, PSHE and French. The achievement of the higher attainers is not secured in English because too many lessons do not build sufficiently upon their prior learning. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory with overall good teaching in science, ICT and music; there is very good teaching and learning in PSHE. Effective leadership and management procedures and good school governance secure an enriched curriculum that meets statutory requirements for all pupils and is complemented well by a very wide range of good quality extra-curricular and learning-support opportunities.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school operates very well as a caring community.
- Strategic planning for school improvement is underdeveloped and does not often enough secure measurable outcomes associated with pupils' learning.
- There is too little good teaching in English and mathematics.
- Across the curriculum, too few pupils make consistently good progress in their learning.
- Tasks set for pupils in lessons are not sufficiently varied to meet the needs of different groups; teachers make too little use of their day-to-day assessments in lessons to promote high expectations and to ensure the tasks set offer appropriate challenge for pupils of all abilities.
- The curriculum provides very good opportunities for enrichment.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs in learning recovery programmes.
- There are good links with parents, local community and other schools and colleges.
- The headteacher and other key staff share a well-defined vision for the school and governors offer good support.

Overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Strengths of the school identified at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and all issues for development have been acted upon. The school development plan appropriately reflects outstanding issues from the previous inspection. Leadership and management systems are now in place and they are effective in securing all pupils' entitlement to the statutory curriculum.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement. **The achievement of all pupils**, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs **is satisfactory**.

Most pupils have entered the school aged seven from the local infant school with attainment below the national average in writing and mathematics. Standards in reading have been average and standards in science good. There are a significant number of pupils who enter the school after this first point of admission. Many of these have special educational needs; in 2003 all pupils who entered the school after this first point of admission were on the special needs register. Standards at age eleven in 2003 national tests were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools results were slightly better in English and science, but were still below the average. Standards in mathematics remained well below the average for similar schools. School results for 2003 show that the progress pupils have made between the national tests in Year 2 and those in Year 6 is well below average in English and science and in the bottom 5 per cent of schools nationally for mathematics. Approximately one quarter of the pupils who took the Year 6 tests in 2003 had not attended the school for the full four years, and a significant number of pupils had entered the school as late as Year 5 and Year 6. This high mobility makes comparisons with similar schools unreliable. Trends over the past three years show overall consistent standards in English and mathematics, with a slight rise in standards in science. This reflects at least satisfactory progress for most pupils, given the declining standards of attainment on entry. Following a further analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils at the time of the inspection, standards for most pupils not on the SEN register are judged to be average in English, mathematics and science. As a consequence, pupils' achievement in these subjects is judged to be broadly satisfactory.

Pupils' personal qualities are good. **Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory, moral development is good and social development is very good.**

Attitudes. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and a commitment to their learning.

Behaviour. In and around the school the pupils' behaviour is good.

Attendance. Attendance is satisfactory, although there are high levels of authorised absence.

Punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory overall and all statutory requirements are fully met.

Teaching. On balance, **the quality of teaching is satisfactory**. Teaching is best in science, information and communication technology (ICT), PSHE and music. Good teaching promotes good learning in these subjects and there is evidence that standards of attainment are rising. Across the school there is too little good teaching in English and mathematics, where insufficient account is taken of what pupils already know and can do in lessons that frequently have too little regard for some of the key elements of the National Strategies, especially focused group teaching. The good range of learning opportunities provided by the school is enhanced by extra-curricular activities. However, in a significant number of lessons across the curriculum there were too few opportunities for pupils to work with their teacher in small group situations that promote more interactive dialogue and active learning opportunities. Learning tasks set as part of whole-class lessons do not always match closely the needs and interests of individual pupils or ability groups. All pupils are cared for and well supported in their learning, especially pupils with special educational needs. Provision is also available for family learning opportunities for parents and carers of pupils at the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The senior management team establish a clear vision for the school and promote high aspirations, although strategic planning is not always fully

effective in translating these into practice. **Management strategies are effective** in collecting and disseminating self-evaluation data and using this to inform action plans. Governance of the school is good. The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and targets for improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and carers are very positive about the school. They feel welcome in school and believe their child is treated fairly. Pupils are happy in school; they feel valued, listened to and trusted.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in English and mathematics, to include more interactive teaching with groups of pupils and further opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding through practical activity and discussion.
- Ensure that assessment of pupils' ongoing learning is undertaken consistently and is systematically used to inform planning.
- Ensure that all school development programmes are appropriately associated with key improvement targets that will make an impact upon raising pupils' levels of attainment and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards of attainment on entry are below average; standards in national tests for the seven-year-olds that transferred from the local infant school in 2003 were below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The standards of attainment on entry for pupils who arrive at the school after this first point of transfer in Year 3 are often significantly lower, with many pupils arriving with special educational needs. In 2003 all pupils who were admitted to the school after the first point of entry were placed on the special educational needs register.

In 2003 national tests for eleven-year-olds, standards in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average. Accommodated within these results are a significant number of pupils who will not have spent the full four years at this school. The majority of pupils transfer to this school from the local infant school. Standards of attainment in Year 2 national tests were below the national average for similar schools (FSM) for the cohort of pupils that transferred from the local infant school in 1999. When compared against the same national (FSM) benchmark, this same cohort of pupils achieved similar results in their Year 6 national tests in 2003. This suggests broadly satisfactory progress in English, and, to a lesser extent, also in mathematics for these pupils. Standards in national tests have fluctuated in recent years, especially in mathematics. Taking the average over the past three years, there have been consistent standards in English and mathematics and a slight rise in standards in science, despite the school's increasing intake of pupils with special needs and rising mobility rates. Evidence of attainment in lessons, scrutiny of work and in discussion with pupils indicates standards that are broadly average in all three subjects. In the supported context of lessons where activities are carefully structured and adults offer good encouragement and advice, standards of achievement are significantly better than national test results indicate. The majority of pupils are judged to make satisfactory progress in these subjects. Taking all the data together, achievement is also judged to be satisfactory, with most pupils working appropriately within their abilities.

Standards in art and design and ICT have improved since the last inspection; they now match national expectations. Standards in design and technology and PE also match national expectations; high standards in music have been maintained and standards in personal, social and health education (PSHE) are good. Because of limited evidence during the inspection, no judgement on standards in history and geography was possible. Standards in religious education are well matched to expectations outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. Across the curriculum pupils achieve satisfactorily and make appropriate progress. Pupils make good progress in French as a result of the integrated nature of learning accommodated well within other subject lessons. Progress for the higher attainers in English is slower than for other pupils as a result of too narrow an interpretation of the National Literacy Strategy, which does not take sufficient account of their prior learning in lesson plans and pays too little attention to small group teaching.

Good progress is made by pupils with special educational needs in literacy and numeracy recovery programmes and their learning is well supported by teaching assistants in normal class lessons. There is no significant variation in achievement of boys and girls; whilst the attainment of girls is better than that of boys in reading and writing this mirrors standards nationally and the school is developing strategies to overcome this difference (e.g. the "Oh Boy!" extra-curricular writing club). The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with English as an additional language is promoted by the good support they receive from teaching assistants and is similar to the achievement of other pupils from across the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Over the past three years, standards of attainment in national tests have been consistently below the average for similar schools in English, mathematics and to a lesser extent also science.
- There has been a slight improvement in standards in science since the previous inspection and trends in science that are broadly keeping pace with improvements in standards nationally.
- Music is a strength of the school, with good standards of attainment and achievement.
- There has been good improvements in standards in art and design and ICT since the last inspection.
- Standards in PSHE are good.
- Achievement in French is good.
- In class lessons across the school, standards are rarely below national expectations in subjects across the curriculum, despite the declining standards on entry.
- Achievement is broadly satisfactory and is promoted well by pupils' good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in lessons.
- There is too little good teaching in English and mathematics.
- Across the curriculum, there are too few pupils who make consistently good progress in their learning.
- Pupils' with special educational needs make good progress in literacy and numeracy recovery programmes.
- Progress of the higher attainers in English is too slow.
- Progress of the highest attainers in subjects across the curriculum is too often slower than for other pupils.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.7 (25.6)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	23.9 (26.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.2 (27.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 93 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Commentary

1. In 2003, standards in English were well below the national average and below the average for similar schools (schools with a similar percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals). Standards in mathematics were well below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Standards in science were well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. In comparison with standards in schools that admit pupils with similar prior attainment, standards of achievement were well below expectations in English and science and in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally in mathematics. High mobility rates affect this data, since a higher-than-average percentage of pupils join or leave the school between Year 3 and the time when national tests are undertaken in Year 6.
2. Standards in mathematics are lower than standards in English and science. Standards in mathematics over time are also more variable than standards in other subjects. It is the school's belief that this has a direct relationship with the specific difficulties experienced by the high number of pupils with special educational needs. The school has introduced a variety of 'catch-up' programmes for these pupils, including participation in a local authority (Wave 3 numeracy) pilot project. The special needs co-ordinator is also trialling new approaches to the teaching and learning of mathematics, with an emphasis upon practical activity and play. The

school successfully achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2002 and the Inclusive School's Charter Mark in 2003.

3. Teacher assessment strategies lack coherence and a whole-school structure. Consequently, there are often wide discrepancies between teacher assessment judgements and national test results. The quality and use of teacher assessment data is a key issue for attention by the school.
4. School targets set in negotiation with the local education authority set high expectations and are frequently not achieved. The school sets itself targets based upon the prior achievement of individual pupils as they move through the school. As a result, the school achieved these targets in 2003 and has set appropriately challenging targets for 2004.
5. It is the judgement of the inspection team that most pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning across the curriculum in line with their abilities as they move through the school. Where progress is slower, this is often as a consequence of teaching in whole-class lessons that does not fully accommodate the pupils' prior learning. This impacts most noticeably on the achievement of the higher attainers in English and, occasionally, also the highest attainers in other lessons across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well the targets set for them in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs) as a result of the good support offered in special needs support groups and by teaching assistants in normal class lessons.
6. Too little good teaching in English and mathematics means that pupils do not make consistently good progress in these subjects; to a lesser extent this is also reflected in the pace of learning demonstrated in pupils' workbooks in most other subject lessons. Good standards are sustained in music and PSHE as a result of teachers with good subject knowledge and high expectations. The timetabled music curriculum is well supported by good quality extra-curricular clubs and PSHE learning is well integrated into normal class routines through regular circle times and a caring school ethos. Good improvement to the standards achieved by pupils in ICT and art and design is the consequence of effective improvements in provision. There is now a well-resourced ICT suite and a technical expert available to support learning within the ICT curriculum. A coherent programme of work has been adopted to support teaching and learning in art and design.
7. The application of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum is under-developed. The emphasis upon recording and worksheet tasks in many lessons results in more incidental opportunities for the application of literacy skills than for numeracy or ICT. There is no systematic approach to the overall development and application of these key skills in other subject lessons to secure progression and maximum achievement. The school is beginning to identify cross-curricular links within lessons, but this is at an early stage.
8. Careful tracking of pupils' attainment and progress across the school by curriculum co-ordinators is used well to identify curriculum development initiatives. The day-to-day assessment of the achievements of individual pupils is less effective and is not used sufficiently to secure good progress for all pupils in normal class lessons. Individual literacy and numeracy targets are set for Year 6 pupils and discussed with them to promote their commitment to achievement in the Year 6 national tests.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are good. Behaviour is generally also good. This helps to keep unauthorised absence rates at an acceptable level and promotes good punctuality. Overall, attendance is satisfactory, although authorised absence rates are too high. The school applies a creative behaviour policy consistently and only excludes pupils as a last resort. Provision for the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils is good. Their social development is very good; relationships throughout the school are mostly caring and respectful.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attitudes to learning are good; this helps to promote good punctuality and a willingness to learn.
- Pupils demonstrate good behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils are developing a strong sense of the school as a community, with a clear appreciation for their role and responsibilities in promoting moral codes of conduct and fair play.
- The school promotes good relationships between all members of the school community.
- There are no significant weaknesses.

Commentary

9. As at the time of the last report, pupils still behave well and have a good attitude to learning. Pupils want to come to school and feel happy and secure there. They are willing to learn, although they are sometimes keener to take part in the range of extra-curricular activities provided for them than their lessons, which do not often enough promote spirituality by inspiring awe and wonder. They are eager to undertake various duties for the good of their community, such as the School Council and peer mediation. They develop a mature attitude, as well as a strong sense of right and wrong and fairness, encouraged by the ethos of the school. The school works hard to promote the pupils' developing appreciation of their own cultures and those of others.
10. Relationships within the school are supportive and respectful; they are promoted well by teaching staff, who are good role models. The school tries to be a "telling" school where issues of bullying, racism or harassment are brought out into the open and are tackled using initiatives such as restorative justice and peer mediation. The pupils are confident that when incidents occur the school will handle them promptly and successfully, and that all pupils can find a member of staff to whom they can talk about any worries. Monitoring of problem behaviour is also good.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

There were seven incidents of exclusion during the academic year 2002/3, involving five pupils. All were temporary exclusions of no more than a couple of days, associated with poor behaviour. All exclusions were undertaken with full co-operation of the local education authority and the pupils' parents/carers.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

No of pupils on roll
336

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
7	0

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

11. The overall attendance rate in the academic year 2002-2003 was well below the national average. However the rate of unauthorised absence was broadly in line with the national average.
12. Procedures for promoting attendance, and the efforts of most parents to ensure attendance, are both good. However, authorised absence rates remain high. Punctuality is good and very few pupils are regularly late. Most pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. The school follows up absence promptly and works closely with outside agencies and parents to try to improve attendance. The provision of a breakfast club also encourages prompt attendance and attentive pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is satisfactory overall. On balance, teaching across the school is satisfactory; it is better in science and the foundation subjects than in literacy and numeracy. Across all year groups, there is too little good teaching. The best teaching is located in lessons for the oldest pupils. Curricular provision meets statutory requirements and is well supported by a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and support groups. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory, although not always used to best effect.

Teaching and learning

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 53 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	7 (13%)	18 (34%)	23 (43%)	5 (9%)	0 (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.

How effective are teaching and learning?

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory. Teaching is best in science, information and communication technology (ICT) and music but there is too little good teaching in English and mathematics. One of the reasons for this is that the quality of assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. In lessons, insufficient account is taken of what pupils already know and can do.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- As a result of good teaching in science, ICT and music, the pupils develop new skills confidently and at a good pace.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and make a good contribution to the pupils' learning.
- Consistent procedures for making and recording ongoing assessments of individual pupils' learning are not in place.
- Too often the tasks that are planned are not varied to meet the needs of different groups, resulting in a lack of challenge for more able pupils.
- Homework is used well to consolidate and extend learning.
- Often, though, there is too little variation in what is expected of groups of pupils and individuals. One reason for this is the inconsistency in procedures for making and recording ongoing assessments of pupils' learning. The school has gathered a great deal of data from the analysis of tests and uses these to set numerical targets for the pupils' attainment. This information is also used to assign pupils to English and mathematics sets and, in some cases, to identify topics that many are finding difficult for attention in future lessons. However, there is not yet a systematic approach for identifying the next steps in learning for all pupils. As a result, all pupils tend to attempt the same task and the more able are insufficiently challenged.

- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour in lessons.
- Teachers do not give enough importance to teaching groups during the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lesson.
- In many lessons pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to explain their ideas and understanding to one another.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported well.
- Pupils are not always clear as to how well they are doing and how they can improve.

Commentary

13. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and provide suitably challenging tasks. In science, the pupils rose enthusiastically to the challenge of using a torch to hit a target, without shining directly at it. They co-operated well, sharing their ideas. An appropriate task of finding information about periscopes was set as homework. During a singing lesson, the teacher demanded a very high level of performance in terms of the pitch and the length of the notes, and the pupils responded positively. In an ICT lesson, the more able pupils were expected to produce a detailed analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of different web pages. Teaching assistants generally work with pupils who find learning more difficult. They are well briefed and provide good support throughout lessons.
14. The school development plan indicates that formative assessment is intended to be a focus for development and in-service training shortly.
15. In lessons in English and mathematics in particular, exposition and demonstration by the teacher is often too lengthy. Individual pupils respond to questions, but they are rarely given the chance to share their ideas and clarify their understanding through discussion with one another. In some classes, the use of personal whiteboards helps to ensure that all pupils are engaged in learning. When pupils are asked to work independently, teachers tend to circulate around the class, giving brief assistance and encouragement and ensuring a good standard of behaviour. They miss out the direct, focused group teaching that is a key element of raising standards through the Literacy Hour and the daily mathematics lesson. When a class was given the task of writing a biography, for example, the teacher did not take the opportunity to work intensively with a group to give structured guidance, and the results produced by most pupils were disappointing.
16. A visiting teacher provides some timetabled support in lessons for the small numbers of pupils for whom English is an additional language. This is effective in developing their speaking and listening skills, which are good.
17. Appropriate targets are determined for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory; they make the expected progress towards their targets. This is closely linked to the good quality support that is provided. As a result of lively and well-focused teaching, achievement is good for pupils with SEN in Year 3 engaged in withdrawn targeted support in the Learning Resources Room.
18. Whilst there are some examples of teachers marking pupils' work in a way that makes clear how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve, this is not done systematically. Similarly, there is some use of individual and group curricular targets. In Year 4, pupils were very clear as to their personal writing targets, which their teachers had arrived at, having analysed their unaided writing. This approach is not yet used widely in all classes and subjects. Similarly, the plenary session at the end of lessons is not used consistently to review learning with the pupils and to deal with any misconceptions that have arisen. On many occasions, insufficient time is allowed and the teacher is able only to tell the class how their work will be developed in succeeding lessons.

The curriculum

The range of curricular opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular provision are very good. The accommodation is of a satisfactory standard and resources are satisfactory. Equality and access for all pupils to the curriculum is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a very effective programme for personal, health and social education.
- There is a successful recovery programme for the less able in numeracy, which is run by the Learning Resource Manager. There is a similar programme for phonics.
- Equality and access for all pupils to the curriculum is good.
- Pupils have access to homework clubs after school to support their learning.
- The school strongly promotes participation in sports, arts and cultural events outside the school day.
- Teaching assistants support teachers well to meet the needs of pupils.
- There is some slippage of time when assemblies have finished and before curriculum work begins.

Commentary

19. Since the last inspection, the school has worked diligently to improve curriculum development in information and communication technology, design and technology and art and design and this has led to standards of pupils' work being raised in all three areas.
20. The curriculum is carefully and thoroughly planned to meet all statutory requirements and includes a planned personal, social and health education programme and French. The well-structured programme for personal, social and health education has a direct impact on improving the pupils' attitudes and behaviour in and around school. For example, pupils in a Year 4 class discussed and suggested sensible tactics and strategies for avoiding confrontation. Careful planning of liaison activities means that pupils look forward to the transfer to secondary education with confidence. There is good provision within PSHE lessons for sex education, with parents offered opportunities to view sex education video footage and to discuss this with their children at home. There is also good provision for drug awareness to prevent drug misuse; this is given particular emphasis since the school is located in an area where drug misuse is a significant issue. Health education is appropriately integrated across the curriculum with food and hygiene appearing in other subject lessons such as science.
21. The school has begun to make cross-curricular links with other subjects. An example of this was in a Year 5 history lesson where pupils recorded information they had gathered from an investigation into the structure of Tudor houses in the form of an estate agent's details, using skills they had learned in a literacy lesson.
22. Recommended hours are met with defined allocations of time given to subject areas, although there is sometimes slippage of time between finishing assembly and beginning curriculum work. The setting by prior ability within mathematics enables pupils to receive a curriculum well matched to their identified needs. However, the curriculum offered to pupils in English and some foundation subjects is not moderated sufficiently to take account of the needs of the pupils with SEN or those that are more able. There is a successful recovery programme for the less able in literacy and numeracy, which is run by the Learning Resource Manager. The Learning Resource Centre is a well-resourced room for pupils with special educational needs, which all staff have access to.

23. There are plenty of opportunities to represent the school in sporting, musical and cultural events and there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are extremely well attended by pupils. Appropriate educational visits support learning and good use is made of the local environment. The oldest pupils enjoy a residential trip to North Wales and pupils in Year 5 have a camping weekend, with parents invited to join in for one evening. The curriculum is also enriched through a number of visitors to the school, such as Indian dancers, musicians and a range of specialist PE co-ordinators.
24. There are sufficient teachers with the necessary qualifications and experience to meet the demands of the curriculum, as well as a good provision of well qualified support staff, many of whom have significant skills in developing pupils' understanding. Accommodation is satisfactory, although some of the classrooms are quite small and this confines teaching and learning practices. There is a large play area for team games and the school is beginning to develop the library that into a comprehensive study centre. Resources are generally satisfactory across all subject areas, with some good ICT resources now available in the newly developed ICT suite.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures for ensuring that pupils and staff work in a healthy and safe environment are good. Overall, provision for support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is also good. Pupils of all ages are appropriately involved in school strategies that seek, value and act upon their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships of care and trust throughout the school between adults and pupils.
- Very good induction arrangements for all pupils, including those that enter the school after the first point of admission in Year 3.
- Good links with a wide range of out-of-school pupil support services.
- Monitoring of and support for pupils' care and welfare are very good and is a strength of the school.
- Monitoring of pupils' academic achievement is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

25. Pupil care and the contribution of the PSHE curriculum are both strengths of the school. The school prides itself on the care that it takes of its pupils and their families. The staff use whatever initiatives they can to try to solve problems, whatever the cause. Pupils have access to counselling and advice from a number of sources inside and outside the school, and advice on behaviour problems and support for families experiencing difficulties is also available. Regular questionnaires provide pupils across the school with opportunities to share their ideas and experiences and to have a voice in school improvement initiatives. An active School Council helps pupils to develop as good citizens and promotes well a sense of equality within the school community. Pupils who sit on the council take their responsibilities seriously and feel truly empowered to make a difference.
26. The school is safe, well maintained, clean and tidy, and a pleasant place in which to be. There is no sign of vandalism or graffiti visible. The playground space is rather small for the whole school, and the dining space is also cramped, but the pupils nevertheless behave well. The lunch menus provided for the pupils are healthy, and a Breakfast Club helps ensure a healthy diet.
27. Procedures for child protection are well known to all staff and work efficiently. Pupils confirm that relationships with staff are good and that they would know whom to go to for help if necessary. Initiatives such as playground friends, the buddy system, peer mediators and the provision of worry boxes ensure that the pupils have a sensible and mature attitude to any incidents of bullying or harassment that might occur.

28. Some teachers try to involve pupils in the monitoring of their work, but this is not done consistently. Monitoring of academic progress is unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last report, while other aspects are very good. Reports to parents are brief but to the point. More use could be made of measurable personal targets with which parents could help their children.
29. High mobility rates across the school mean that many pupils join and leave the school at other than the normal times, but induction arrangements are well thought out and flexible, whenever pupils start at the school. These arrangements are complemented by a buddy system linking those in Year 5 with the upcoming Year 2s to increase confidence.
30. The school tries very hard to be inclusive but occasionally some pupils are not fully included in what is going on in the classroom, when much of the teaching is to the whole class, rather than smaller groups.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good, as are links with the community. Links with other schools are very good and contribute to smooth transitions to and from the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works hard to promote parent/carer involvement in all aspects of the school community.
- Staff, especially the senior management team, ensure that there are routine times each day when they are available to speak with parents/carers and to offer support and advice.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to develop their own learning through on-site adult education opportunities.
- Most parents feel well informed about how their child is getting on at school and how they can help at home, although pupils' annual reports are underdeveloped.
- Almost all parents feel comfortable about approaching the school; the school has established very good procedures to deal sensitively and appropriately with parent/carer concerns and to resolve these before they become complaints.
- Most parents believe that the school seeks their views and takes account of their suggestions and concerns.
- The school promotes very good links with other learning and family support services, including local authority child and family support networks, adult education services and initial teacher training as well as other local primary and secondary schools.

Commentary

31. The school still gets strong support from parents, as it did at the time of the last inspection. Parents' views of the school in their questionnaire and at their meeting with the inspectors were mostly very positive. The school prides itself on its relationship with the families of its pupils. The staff make themselves accessible before and after school when necessary to sort out problems. Parents' views are actively sought and acted upon. The school regularly seeks parents' views through questionnaires and informal 'chats'. Complaints are few, but are always taken seriously and carefully documented. The school works hard to solve difficult problems and doesn't give up. When issues such as behaviour are involved, the Home School Worker can access external support for the family.
32. The school tries its best to keep parents informed. More consistent use of home/school books would improve communication. There are regular newsletters and invitations to events at the school, and occasional explanatory leaflets on such topics as how to help with homework, linked with sessions at the school. Despite these good efforts, parents do not help much in school.

33. Links with other schools are very good and pupils' records are passed on for continuity. Transition is well planned at whatever time a pupil leaves, and visits of staff and pupils ensure a smooth start at the next school whenever possible. Opportunities for joint projects with local secondary schools are regularly taken up to cement already strong links between the local schools.
34. The school is considered to be pivotal to the local community, as most pupils live within walking distance. Links are particularly strong with the local evangelical church and sources of external support for families.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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

Governance

Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they work closely with the headteacher and staff of the school in order to bring about school improvement.

Leadership

The headteacher is deeply committed to raising standards and providing an effective learning environment for the children in her care. She works very hard and is supported well by the deputy head and the other members of the senior management team. Strategic objectives within the school development plan focus appropriately on those areas that the headteacher, senior management team and governors have identified for improvement. These many improvement initiatives are not sufficiently prioritised or evaluated; as a result, standards have not been raised sufficiently nor have the initiatives to improve the quality of teaching brought about sufficient change. All staff are committed to school improvement and work well together.

Management

The school is organised effectively, taking account of the needs of all its pupils; this results in a school where all pupils are well cared for. The headteacher, senior management team and core subject co-ordinators monitor the quality of education that the school provides and, as a result, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and staff have established a school in which all pupils are valued and cared for.
- The headteacher has a strong desire to provide the best quality education that she can for the pupils in her care.
- The governing body is very effective in helping to shape the vision and direction of the school.
- The governing body effectively challenges and supports the headteacher and is well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The school improvement plan accurately reflects the school's areas for improvement; however the implementation of the plan has not yet brought about sufficient improvement to the quality of teaching or raised standards.
- The headteacher and staff provide good role models for all the children in the school.
- The governing body and headteacher have a good understanding of the principles of 'best value' and have applied these in their decision making.
- The special needs co-ordinator manages the special needs arrangements well.

- The role of the foundation subjects co-ordinators is not as well developed as the co-ordinators roles for English, mathematics and special needs. The school has identified this as a strategic objective within the school improvement plan.
- Leadership is good in English, ICT, music, and PSHE.
- Financial management is effective.

Commentary

35. The headteacher, with the support of the deputy headteacher, has been chiefly responsible for setting a positive ethos throughout the school. It is very obvious that the school takes full account of the needs of all its pupils, and decisions are made to ensure that they are safe and cared for well. The introduction of peer mediation and the concept of 'restorative justice', together with a good personal and social development programme have supported the staff and have ensured that all pupils are not only safe but well cared for. The school has an extensive range of activities of interest to pupils and keeps them occupied for the times that they are outside of the classroom. These arrangements have had the desired effect, which is to improve the quality of behaviour of the pupils.
36. The school improvement plan 2004 to 2006 identifies many improvement initiatives. The analysis of areas for improvement is based upon the effective and substantial monitoring arrangements that the headteacher, senior staff and governors undertake. The analysis identifies most of the areas that the school needs to undertake in order to raise standards. However, the success criteria identified within the plan and the monitoring arrangements for the progress of each initiative are not sufficiently detailed to provide the school with checks to ensure that the improvement initiatives are bringing about the desired improvements. As a result, some initiatives have not brought about the desired intention of raising standards and bringing about an improvement to the quality of teaching and learning that the school provides.
37. The governors are effective in supporting and challenging the school. The governing body meets all its statutory duties. Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. In order to gain this understanding, individual governors have subject responsibilities and make visits to the school to meet with the appropriate co-ordinator and are also 'teamed up' with a year group. In their decision making, governors take note of this and other information given to them both by the headteacher and other staff. In discussions during the budget-setting process, they took good account of the need to improve standards in English and mathematics across the school, and decided to increase the amount of classroom support for teachers.
38. The special needs co-ordinator leads and manages special needs throughout the school very well. She has a good understanding of the statutory responsibilities, which are carried out efficiently. She leads a skilled team of teaching assistants, who provide well for the pupils with special needs. The support and guidance she provides for both pupils and their parents is very good. The English, science, ICT, music and PSHE subject leaders lead and manage their subjects well. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within their subject and have appropriate plans that should bring about the desired improvements. However, there are insufficient checks taken to ensure that the planned improvement initiatives are having sufficient impact. Systems need to be put in place to monitor the progress of each improvement initiative to ensure that the intended improvements are being made and to modify the plans where necessary. This model of subject leadership is not as well developed for other curriculum areas. The school is aware of this and has identified the need to improve this within the School Improvement Plan for 2004-2006.
39. The school has a balance in excess of the five per cent recommended as needed to meet the expected levels of contingency. However, the governors and headteacher have to allocate a significant proportion of this to staffing and have increased the number of teaching assistants in an attempt to raise standards of attainment throughout the school. A significant proportion has also been spent on refurbishing and developing the 'pavilion' in order to provide for pupils

an area separate from school but where they can meet for Breakfast Club and other educational and social gatherings. It is expected that the level of contingency will be within the recommended level by the end of the next financial year.

40. The expenditure per pupil is close to the median for all LEA maintained primary schools.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	671,573
Total expenditure	684,374
Expenditure per pupil	1,875

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	147,210
Balance carried forward to the next	144,544

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

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision for English is **satisfactory** and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. There are both strengths and weaknesses in this provision. All teachers make appropriate reference to National Literacy Strategy learning targets in English lessons across the school, although too often teachers choose not to follow the recommended lesson structure with the result that there are too few planned opportunities for focused group teaching. The subject is led well by an experienced and high quality subject leader.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the subject is good.
- The questioning of pupils by most teachers is good and enables them to gain a clearer understanding.
- The support offered to teachers by teaching assistants is good.
- The management of pupils' behaviour is good and enables them to make learning gains.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to review their learning during plenary sessions, either at the end of a lesson or at times throughout the lesson.
- In some lessons work is not matched to all pupils' abilities and there is insufficient challenge for more able pupils.

Commentary

41. Standards attained by the eleven-year-olds in national tests in 2003 were well below the national average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard (Level 4) was below the national average, while the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 5) was well below the national average. The senior management team attributes these poor results in 2003 to a large percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the group, many having only been in the school for a short amount of time.
42. The standards of work in reading and writing seen in lessons and in the pupils' books were satisfactory overall. Achievement for most pupils is satisfactory, as a result of satisfactory teaching.
43. The inclusion of all pupils in lessons is good and the provision for pupils with special education needs is satisfactory. There is some evidence that attainment by boys (in national tests) is significantly lower than that of girls. This mirrors the national trend and the school is working hard to address this issue through extra-curricular support for boys, such as the "Oh Boy!" writing club.
44. Teaching is of a satisfactory quality overall, with some examples of good and very good teaching. Where teaching was at its best, for example in a Year 6 class, pupils were fully engaged in their learning and had good opportunities to work both independently and collaboratively when investigating arguments for and against. There were good examples of pupils reviewing their learning effectively and being offered opportunities to respond to open questions, which helped them to make genuine learning gains. Further good teaching was seen in a Year 5/6 lesson where pupils with special educational needs worked at a brisk pace when writing Haiku poetry. This work was well matched to their abilities and they received very good support from both teachers and teaching assistants.

45. In some lessons, pupils' learning is more limited. The following are the reasons for this:
- In too many lessons, work is not matched to all pupils' abilities and there is insufficient challenge for more able pupils.
 - Teachers spend too long on introductions, which limits the time for active engagement by pupils in their learning.
 - There is little direct teacher input with groups of pupils during independent sessions or lessons.
 - Teachers seldom revisit learning objectives during the lesson and leave little time at the end of the lesson for pupils to reflect on what they have learned.
 - The pace of lessons is often too slow; this impacts most noticeably upon the progress made by the higher attainers.
 - Teachers use too limited a range of teaching and learning strategies, such as teacher modelling of writing activities.
46. The subject is well led by an experienced and highly qualified subject leader. She has carried out rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and provided helpful feedback for staff and governors. Using this information and also the information gathered from a thorough analysis of the pupils' test results, areas for development have been identified, such as improving standards in writing, and these have been included in the school development plan. The co-ordinator has outlined clear and effective actions to bring about an improvement in standards of achievement and teaching and learning and the school is now working on these.
47. Since the last inspection, improvements in standards have been slow. However, many improvements have taken place recently in this subject area, such as the development of the co-ordinators role, better resources to improve pupils' reading and writing, the introduction of curricular targets for all pupils and extensive professional development for all staff. These have now placed the school in a good position to make better progress. Therefore, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. This is a developing feature of the school's provision. Good evidence to support this judgement was provided in a Year 5 history lesson where pupils were encouraged to record their findings about Tudor houses as though they were estate agents. Having developed their skills as historians by investigating secondary sources, they then produced writing for different audiences by producing estate agent details based on the features of buildings from the time.

Modern Foreign Language: French

49. The school provides well for pupils to learn French. Learning is well integrated into other subject lessons and this provides pupils with a meaningful context for their communications. Pupils achieve well and make good progress. They are proud of their new skills and delight in opportunities to demonstrate these to others. Most pupils use with understanding a large number of common, every day French words and phrases and engage in some simple two-way dialogue. French contributes well to the enriched curriculum, which is a strength of the school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The senior management team monitors well the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by pupils throughout the school. As a result, the school is well placed to improve provision in the subject.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. The “Number Recovery” programme provides a high quality learning experience and the pupils in the group achieve well.
- In many lessons teachers do not use assessment information to ensure that groups and individuals are provided with suitably matched tasks that reflect their specific needs and abilities. This results in a lack of challenge for more able pupils.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunity to explain their understanding or the strategies they have used.
- Teaching assistants make a very effective contribution to pupils’ learning.
- The pupils’ behaviour in mathematics lessons is good and they have positive attitudes towards the subject.
- Not all pupils have a clear picture of what they have learned in mathematics and how they can improve. This limits achievement.

Commentary

50. Standards attained by the eleven-year-olds in the 2003 national tests were well below average. Just over half of the pupils reached the expected standard (Level 4) and only a small proportion of pupils achieved the higher level (Level 5). One in five pupils did not achieve Level 3. These results represented a significant decline from the improving position in 2002. The senior management team attributes the poor results in 2003 to the fact that there was a large proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the group, many of whom had only been at the school for a short time.
51. The standards of work seen in lessons, in the pupils’ books and noted in discussions with pupils were broadly average, which is better than the test results would suggest. Achievement for most pupils is satisfactory, as a result of generally satisfactory teaching, but there is relatively little good teaching that produces better achievement.
52. The best teaching was in the “Number Recovery” group for Year 3 pupils, where achievement was good, for the following reasons:
- At the start of the lesson, as well as making the learning objectives clear, the teacher emphasised behavioural targets (“co-operating and taking turns”);
 - Pupils took part in a range of exciting, practical activities, well-matched to their abilities and providing an appropriate level of challenge;
 - The pupils worked well together and there was a good deal of discussion about numbers;
 - The teacher and teaching assistant focused on small groups, assessing and developing the pupils’ understanding;
 - At the end of the lesson, the teacher provided pupils with extended opportunities to discuss the strategies they had used, reinforcing their explanations with appropriate mathematical vocabulary; and
 - Pupils are made aware of the progress they are making by a colourful display of learning targets to which the names of those who had achieved them were added.
53. These features of good teaching were not widely seen in other lessons. Although the pupils work in sets based on their abilities, there are wide variations in what they know and understand. Teachers tend not to take account of this and set the same work for the whole group. Often, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to explain the work they are doing in any depth, as teachers do not work intensively with a small group. For example, in a lesson on the properties of quadrilaterals, all the pupils worked on their own on the same task of labelling two shapes, whilst the teacher circulated around the class. Some found this very easy and could have achieved more.

54. As a result of inconsistent practices in marking and the setting of personal learning targets, not all pupils are clear as to how they can improve. Teachers do not systematically provide opportunities both within and at the end of lessons for pupils to share what they have learned or to ask about difficulties they have encountered.
55. The senior management team has undertaken a thorough programme of lesson observation and provides some helpful feedback to teachers. The results of tests have been analysed carefully. The school improvement plan includes a rigorous and perceptive evaluation of the reasons why standards are currently too low and a strong programme of training is about to begin; this is aimed at raising both standards and the quality of teaching. This has been delayed by the current vacancy for a subject leader, which is presently being effectively covered by the headteacher.
56. Over the last five years, improvements in standards and the quality of provision have been rather slow but the professional support teachers receive and the deployment of teaching assistants is much more effective. The school is well placed to increase the pace of development. Overall, therefore, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

There are some examples of the effective application of mathematics in other subjects. These include analysing different types of bread in technology and measuring the lengths of jumps in PE. However, there is not yet a systematic approach to the development of mathematical skills other than in the daily lesson.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in science lessons helps pupils to make good progress.
- Teaching assistants offer pupils good support in their learning, especially the lower attainers.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and sustain good relationships. They work hard in their lessons and behave well.
- Teachers plan their lessons well to secure curriculum coverage and make good use of practical resources to promote the pupils' learning.
- There are too few opportunities for the oldest and most able pupils to engage in personal study and research based upon their own scientific explorations and investigations.
- Teachers know their pupils well, but make too little use of their day-to-day assessments when planning lessons.
- The subject co-ordinator provides a good role model for the teaching of this subject and monitors well the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by pupils throughout the school.

Commentary

57. The proportion of eleven-year-olds reaching the expected standard in science in the 2003 national test was below average. Eighty per cent of pupils attained the expected standard (Level 4) or above, but too many pupils attained below this level and too few pupils reached the higher level (Level 5). As a result of the small number of pupils achieving Level 5, the school's results overall fell to well below the national average. Over the past three years there has been a small overall improvement in school standards in comparison with national test averages. It is likely that the school's increasingly high mobility rate and large proportion of pupils with special educational needs have an impact upon school results in national tests, especially the percentage of pupils able to achieve the higher Level 5.

58. In the supportive context of normal class lessons, the standards of work seen are consistently in line with national expectations. Standards in the pupils' science workbooks and those revealed in discussion with pupils also broadly match age-related expectations. This is a more positive picture than the national tests, but there are still too few pupils who demonstrate attainment consistently above national standards.
59. Most science teaching is good and sometimes it is better. Good teaching is typified by:
- clear and enthusiastic explanations and good use of questioning;
 - teachers who have a good knowledge of the science curriculum;
 - good use made of the results of regular end-of-topic tests and assessment tasks to identify the pupils' learning;
 - well-defined lesson learning intentions that are well matched to National Curriculum Programmes of Study;
 - good use of group work to encourage pupils to share and discuss their ideas and to challenge each other's thinking;
 - appropriate use of practical resources to stimulate the pupils' interest and encourage them to apply what they know to new tasks and situations; and
 - good management of pupils and positive teacher-pupil relationships.
60. Good teaching secures achievement for most pupils that is at least satisfactory and often good. Lessons provide well for the learning needs of pupils working at age-related standards within National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The progress of the lower attaining pupils is mostly promoted well by the good quality support offered by teaching assistants. The progress of the more able pupils is less well supported when lessons do not always take sufficient account of what they already know and can do. Too often pupils across a class are engaged in the same tasks irrespective of their prior achievements. Good teacher questioning helps to appropriately challenge the pupils' thinking at a variety of levels, but over the longer term the achievement of the highest attainers and sometimes also those with special educational needs is slower than for other pupils.
61. In all lessons teachers create a purposeful learning environment and pupils demonstrate good learning behaviours. For example, pupils engaged in an experiment to find out how light travels used torches to reflect light off mirrors, discussing together their findings and questioning each other's solutions. They listened well to each other's explanations and shared the task and the resources sensibly. In the majority of lessons, pupils are eager to please the adults with whom they work, concentrate well, persevere and show pride in their achievements. All pupils readily share their experiences, but many are less confident in the identification of what they need to do next to improve and some pupils rely heavily upon the adults around them for guidance and advice. There are too few opportunities for pupils to independently demonstrate their knowledge and investigation skills through their own experimentation and research projects. When homework is set, these tasks sometimes give emphasis to 'finding out' through independent study and so can help to bridge this gap. Across the school, marking is not always used to best effect; mostly it serves to reward completed tasks rather than to further promote the pupils' thinking.
62. The curriculum co-ordinator offers effective leadership; targets for improvement appropriately reflect the school's needs. Well-established monitoring procedures track curriculum coverage, quality of teaching and standards of attainment across the school. The co-ordinator undertakes some tracking of lesson plans, although there is too little tracking of learning tasks linked to other subjects to prevent repetition. For example, pupils learned about the water cycle in geography and science, with unnecessary repetition.
63. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Whilst standards remain below average and some aspects of assessment require further attention, there have been many improvements to leadership and management of the curriculum. Effective monitoring and evaluation now secure the pupils' curriculum entitlement and there have been measurable improvements to the quality of teaching. These improvements are expected to

impact positively upon the pupils' standards of attainment in due course and to sustain development of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and the pupils achieve well in lessons.
- Leadership of the subject is knowledgeable and enthusiastic.
- The school is well-resourced and benefits greatly from the work of a technician.
- The breadth of experience for all pupils is not yet sufficiently wide.
- Assessment of pupils' learning is not systematic.
- The pupils have very positive attitudes towards ICT.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum is limited.

Commentary

64. The standards of work seen in ICT were broadly in line with national expectations. Most pupils use a word-processor with confidence and, as they progress through the school, they are able to combine text and graphics in more complex publishing software. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 can make discriminating searches of the Internet and download appropriate information skilfully. The more able pupils can use spreadsheets effectively to investigate patterns and relationships.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Software is usually well chosen to support the lesson learning objectives and, as a result, the pupils make good progress. For example, a lesson on simulations for Year 3 provided a helpful introduction to altering values as the pupils attempted to enable a duck to fly successfully. They worked with great enthusiasm and many became increasingly systematic in the way they changed the variables. In these circumstances good achievement is promoted well by software that enables pupils to review and repeat tasks and to learn from their failures as well as their successes.
66. The school has invested heavily in hardware since the last inspection, and the ICT suite is a valuable facility that is used well. The ICT technician ensures that problems with equipment are kept to a minimum, although a virus restricted the use of the suite for some time. This is one reason why pupils have not yet had access to a sufficiently broad range of experiences. The use of ICT to monitor and control external events has so far been rather limited.
67. The ICT co-ordinator has driven forward significant improvements in the subject. She is knowledgeable and provides a good role model for other staff. ICT has a high profile in the school and many pupils attend clubs outside school hours, including one attended specifically by girls. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards ICT and are highly motivated by using computers. Many have undertaken a programme of training to become "Junior Technicians" and are able to provide support for other pupils and, sometimes, teachers.
68. Although some pupils have a personal competency logbook, this is not systematically used. The assessment of pupils' learning within lessons does not yet provide a sound basis for responding to the needs of individuals and groups.
69. Improvement in ICT since the last inspection has been good. The issues of low standards, teachers' weak subject knowledge and insufficient equipment have been addressed well and there is a good opportunity for ICT to develop into a significant strength of the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. The use of ICT across the curriculum is not well developed. Word processing is used to support less able pupils with their writing and this engages their interest well. Occasionally,

pupils present work using publishing software. For example, pupils in Year 5 made posters outlining the swimming pool safety rules. Well-chosen programs are used by the "Number Recovery" group. However, opportunities to use ICT in other subjects are rarely taken and the computers in classrooms were often not in use.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

It was agreed that the provision for history and geography would not be part of the inspection. As a result, no judgements were made. Standards demonstrated in the pupils' workbooks suggest that most pupils are working within national expectations.

Religious education

Only one lesson was seen, although inspectors looked at class timetables and teachers' plans and observed pupils responding to religious stories during school assemblies.

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**. It is well matched to expectations outlined in the locally agreed syllabus.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning in class lessons is promoted well by the good teaching of religious stories and beliefs by visiting experts, who regularly contribute to assembly themes.
- The curriculum appropriately accommodates different faiths and religious stories.
- Across the school there is an over-emphasis in the pupils' workbooks on recording tasks, worksheets and picture making.
- Pupils' positive attitudes and good personal and social skills promote their learning.
- There are some good links between RE lessons, assembly themes and PSHE lessons.

Commentary

71. Pupils achieve standards broadly in line with expectations as outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. They demonstrate a good knowledge of religious stories, beliefs and practices and are developing an appreciation for how religion can effect lifestyles and choices.
72. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. A scheme of learning and the whole-school curriculum plan secures comprehensive links with the locally agreed syllabus and opportunities for pupils to learn about a variety of different faiths and religious practices. There are also some good links with circle time, PSHE sessions and assemblies, when pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts and reflect upon the views and beliefs of others.
73. The pupils are well behaved and highly motivated to learn. Even in the large groups gathered at assembly times, pupils readily contribute and share their experiences and perspectives with others. In class lessons, the older pupils are sometimes encouraged to reflect upon their own lives; for example, in one Year 6 lesson pupils were asked to write about "things that are special to me....". Overall, there is too little evidence of this sort of self-reflection available in the pupils' workbooks and in lesson plans. The quality of learning is mostly satisfactory, but in class lessons across the school, there is an emphasis upon the acquisition of information and stories, written recording and picture making at the expense of more active, reflective learning opportunities. There are too few opportunities within the curriculum for the older and more able pupils to engage in sustained, structured and meaningful debate around topical religious issues and to develop an understanding of how to achieve greater appreciation and insights in this subject.

74. Systematic teacher assessment procedures in this subject are underdeveloped and not well used to inform lesson plans. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is a good role model for other teachers. Overall effective curriculum leadership and management help to promote improvement, and effective monitoring of whole-school curriculum plans and quality of teaching secures satisfactory provision.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and Design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement since the last inspection is good; the curriculum now adequately meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, and sound leadership and management promote and sustain development of the subject.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning; they enjoy art lessons and behave well in class.
- Good use is made of teaching assistants to support the lower attainers.
- The quality and use of day-to-day teacher assessments of an individual pupil's learning needs and interests are underdeveloped.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to work with independent creativity.

Commentary

75. Improvements since the last inspection have had a positive impact upon standards. By eleven years of age, most pupils attain standards in line with national expectations. Below-average standards in art and design represented a key issue at the time of the last inspection, an issue that the school has successfully addressed. Standards of work are better in 2D art forms and picture making than in 3D art forms, as a result of a continuing emphasis upon picture making and drawing across the school. Overall, effective leadership and management of the subject have helped to raise standards and to secure satisfactory curriculum planning and development and broadly satisfactory teaching and learning. Whole-school developments, such as the introduction of sketchbooks, have helped to promote continuity and progression. The curriculum is complemented well by an annual art week and opportunity for pupils and staff to work alongside and with artists-in-residence. Well-established monitoring procedures track curriculum coverage across the school and 'spot check' standards of attainment.
76. Teachers identify clear learning intentions and plan appropriately. Pupils demonstrate commitment and pride in their tasks, although they do not always know how best to improve their work. Too little attention is paid to the quality of teachers' day-to-day assessments of the particular needs and interests of individual pupils, and how such information might best be used to inform lesson plans. In too many lessons, the work produced by pupils of different abilities is too similar. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily; lower attainers are well supported in lessons by teaching assistants. Across the school pupils have too little opportunity to freely apply their knowledge and skills to creative tasks developed in response to their own interests and preferences. In these circumstances the higher attainers are not always building most effectively upon their prior learning and are not always sufficiently challenged in their tasks.
77. Teachers' subject knowledge has improved; teachers benefit from the insights offered by artists-in-residence and the support of a whole-school scheme of learning. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory and the school is well placed to secure continuing improvement of provision.

Music

The provision for music is **good**, which is in line with the judgement made at the time of the last inspection. Since the last inspection a music specialist has been appointed to the role of music co-ordinator and this has supported continuing improvements in the subject. Additional improvements since the last inspection include:

- a good improvement in the range of musical resources available to staff and pupils;
- a good scheme of work for the subject, which has increased staff subject knowledge;

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management by the music co-ordinator, who has carried out monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, teaching and learning, highlighting strengths and weaknesses in the subject.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities that develop skills in singing and playing instruments, which are well supported by boys and girls alike.
- Good standards in singing by Year 6, with most pupils able to demonstrate a clear diction and pitch control when singing songs in unison and two parts. In their singing they demonstrate an ability to respond appropriately to dynamics (loud; quiet) and tempo (fast; slow).
- There is good use of music from other cultures.
- Pupils' ability to represent music using imaginative symbols and standard music notation.
- A range of visiting musicians who perform to the school.
- Participation in a wide range of community musical initiatives.
- There are no significant weaknesses.

Commentary

78. Overall, standards of attainment by eleven are above national expectations; pupils make good progress and achieve well. In Years 5 and 6, pupils sing in two parts, with clear diction and good control of pitch. Pupils in a Year 5 lesson composed a musical composition using their own and standard musical notations, which other pupils in the class performed using a range of musical instruments. In a Year 5 recorder lesson pupils played a tune by following musical notation, demonstrating control and the accurate use of rhythm, while playing in a small group. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was good overall. Learning intentions are made very clear and shared with pupils effectively. Teachers use a good range of musical vocabulary, which they revisit throughout the lesson. In a Year 5 lesson pupils were encouraged to evaluate their work and the work of others in order to improve their musical compositions. Overall, the quality of learning is good; it is promoted well by high expectations, the pupils' enjoyment of performance and opportunities to learn to play an instrument in extra-curricular music clubs. During assembly time pupils across the school show enthusiasm when singing and they listen with care and appreciation to the music that is played at the beginning and end of the session. Leadership of the subject is good. The music co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is very enthusiastic; she has a clear vision for the improvement of the subject, which is outlined in the subject action plan. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has carried out monitoring and evaluation of the subject and has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for further development. The subject has a comprehensive policy document and there is a scheme of work, which ensures that teachers cover all the strands of the music curriculum.

Design and technology

Provision for design and technology is **satisfactory**.

No lessons were observed in design and technology. However, from an examination of pupils' work on display throughout the school, the portfolios of work produced by pupils from each school year group and by an examination of the subject leader's portfolio, standards are judged to be in line with

national expectations. Standards in design and technology have therefore improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be below expectations. Improved planning now enables the pupils to have full access to the National Curriculum Programme of Study.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good improvement has been achieved since the last inspection.
- Design and technology is well led by the subject leader.

Commentary

79. A thorough review of the curriculum taught to the pupils has resulted in all aspects of the National Curriculum Programme of Study being taught, including the designing process. All pupils are expected to evaluate the effectiveness of the products that they make and this helps to promote effective learning across the school.
80. Leadership of the subject is good and management is sound. The subject leader has undertaken a thorough review of the subject since the last inspection. There is a helpful policy and scheme of work to support the teachers in the teaching of this subject. The subject leader has also produced a portfolio for each year. This helps teachers to determine what it is they need to teach to each year and also advises them on the standards of attainment expected; this appropriately promotes challenge and, as a result, the achievement of most pupils is broadly satisfactory. The subject leader has provided professional development in order to build the teachers' confidence in the teaching of this subject. The co-ordinator undertakes thorough monitoring of both the teaching and learning.
81. The resources have been improved since the last inspection.

Physical education (PE)

Because of the limited amount of evidence obtained, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in PE.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, both teaching and learning were good in the lessons observed.
- The pupils took part with controlled enthusiasm and the standard of their work was in line with national expectations.
- The lessons contributed well to the pupils' social and cultural development.
- Owing to limited time, in some lessons the pupils received too little indication as to how their performance could be improved.

Commentary

82. Pupils worked effectively in groups in all lessons and co-operated well; this helped to promote at least satisfactory achievement for most pupils. In a lesson on Indian dance, the teacher used video effectively to introduce pupils to the movements they would need to incorporate, emphasising the need to maintain body tension to assist balance. The pupils responded well. The karate teacher led a series of vigorous and exciting activities for a Year 6 class. Pupils were very enthusiastic, but maintained control in their movements. The teacher stressed the importance of respect and self-discipline in martial arts, making some good links with the pupils' personal development to include emotional as well as physical self-control.
83. Two of the lessons were rather brief. This meant that there was insufficient time for the pupils to evaluate in any detail their own performances and those of others, as a basis for improving in subsequent lessons.

84. Leadership and management of the subject are effective in securing the contributions of outside specialists who successfully promote good teaching and learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Only one PSHE lesson was observed. Inspectors looked at timetables and plans and observed pupils working and playing together in lessons and around the school. Pupils' work was also seen.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their personal confidence.
- There are positive relationships of trust and respect throughout the school between pupils and staff. Pupils readily accept responsibility for each other and will 'look after' each other, including engagement in a system of peer support - 'buddies' - for children experiencing difficulties or distress.
- Sex education and drugs education are integrated well into PSHE programmes.
- Through PSHE lessons pupils are encouraged to consider and challenge stereotypes and some of the reasons for antisocial behaviour, including bullying and disrespect.
- PSHE is well led and managed.
- The school has a School Council to influence school change and development.

Commentary

85. The school places particular emphasis upon the pupils' personal and social development.
86. The PSHE programme, linked to circle time, is timetabled and promotes well pupils' positive attitudes to their learning and their good behaviour throughout the school.
87. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed was very good. Positive relationships of trust and respect between pupils and their teachers help to promote interest, confidence and self-expression.
88. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic about the topics they explore and debate. They readily take part in class discussions, learn well from each other in collaborative group situations and respond sensitively to the needs and interests of those with whom they work.
89. Leadership of this subject is good and management is good. The curriculum co-ordinator sets high standards and has a clear vision for the subject. She has good subject knowledge and expertise and has developed a comprehensive programme of work to support teaching and learning throughout the school.

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	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
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).