

INSPECTION REPORT

**BROCKHOLES CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL**

Brockholes

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107713

Headteacher: Mrs A P Hever

Lead inspector: Mr J Brennan

Dates of inspection: 10th – 12th January 2005

Inspection number: 266503

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: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 203

School address: Brockholes Lane
Brockholes
Holmfirth
West Yorkshire
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Audrey Jones

Date of previous inspection: January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Brockholes is an average sized primary school situated in the village of Brockholes. The school has grown since the last inspection largely due to new housing in the village so that mobility, especially into the school, has increased somewhat of late. Most pupils who attend the school live in Brockholes or other nearby villages. They come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. At present 16 per cent of families are entitled to free school meals. This is broadly average. Most pupils come from a white British background, with approximately ten per cent of pupils from a mixed white and black Caribbean background. In addition a small number of pupils are of Asian origin. 15 per cent of pupils have special educational needs. This is broadly average. Five pupils have a statement for their needs. This is also broadly average. Pupils' special educational needs range across those with moderate learning difficulties or with specific learning needs, such as dyslexia, or social and emotional needs. Pupils' attainment on entry to school represents the full ability range but is largely typical of that found nationally. The school received an Achievement Award 2002 and the Activemark in 2003 it is currently working toward Investors in Pupils and Healthy Eating Awards.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2109 4	John Brennan	Lead inspector	Art and design
			Design and technology
			English
			Religious education
			English as an additional language
			Special educational needs
3267 8	Kathryn Dodd	Lay inspector	
3101 2	Anne Welsh	Team inspector	Music
			Physical education
			Science
			Foundation Stage
3213 8	Tim Plant	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
			Geography
			History
			Mathematics

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school. Successful leadership fosters pupils' personal qualities very well. Although standards are above average they have dipped of late and achievement is not as strong as it was. This reflects some shortcomings in the way leaders check up on the work of the school. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership has put in place very effective strategies for fostering pupils' personal development, leading to an ethos of mutual respect, relaxed relationships and very positive attitudes and behaviour by pupils.
- Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics to reach standards that are above expected levels.
- Achievement in writing, although satisfactory, is not as strong as other areas of English.
- A lack of emphasis on investigative science holds back the achievement of higher attaining pupils.
- Leaders are not doing enough to ensure that actions taken to promote school improvement are working well enough.
- Good provision is made for pupils with social and emotional needs.
- Pupils enjoy a very good range of extra curricular activities but not enough thought is given to making learning and the curriculum interesting by linking work across subjects.
- The school gives great consideration to seeking and acting upon pupils' views.
- Marking does not give pupils a clear enough idea of how to improve.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school has met with mixed success in addressing the issues of the last inspection. Standards have improved in information and communication technology (ICT) and work seen suggests that this is also the case in design and technology. There has been a modest improvement in the fostering of mathematics through other subjects but more could still be achieved. Co-ordinators are still not doing enough to monitor their subjects effectively. Besides these issues, standards have improved in mathematics and science but have fallen in writing. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils and the school's promotion of these is even better. Better provision is made for pupils who have social and emotional difficulties. Partnership with parents is not as good as the last inspection and the overall quality of management is now only satisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A*	B	B	D
mathematics	A*	B	B	D
science	A*	C	B	D

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

Pupils' achievements are good. Achievement has been stronger in the recent past than in that seen in lessons where, apart from in Years 1 and 5, the progress pupils make has stalled of late. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in their personal development. Achievement in acquiring language and literacy skills, mathematical skills

and in children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. The great majority of children are on course to meet the early learning goals and a minority likely to exceed them. Results in the national tests of 2004 for pupils in Year 2 were above average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics. Results in the national tests for 2004 for pupils in Year 6 were above average in English, mathematics and science. However, when compared to similar schools results were below average in these subjects. Following the last inspection results rose until 2003, since then they have slipped. The trend of results, therefore, has been below the national trend. Inspection findings show that standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, average in writing and mathematics and pupils reach expected levels in science. In Year 6 standards are above average in English and mathematics and science. In English pupils achieve well in speaking and listening and in reading. They achieve less well in writing because teaching does not always show pupils clearly enough how to structure their writing and enable them to write in interesting ways. Although standards are average some pupils are capable of more. In mathematics an emphasis on key skills helps pupils achieve well in acquiring these but too little is expected of pupils in terms of solving problems. In science a lack of investigative work hinders the achievement of higher attaining pupils. Satisfactory achievement in ICT helps pupils reach expected levels. Satisfactory achievement in religious education ensures pupils meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils reach expected levels in physical education, although achievement is satisfactory there have been recent improvements to provision. It was not possible to make an overall judgement about standards in other subjects.

The provision the school makes for **pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good**. Attendance rates and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Throughout the school relaxed relationships help create a very positive climate for learning. Teaching in Year 1 and to an even greater extent in Year 5 is better at exploiting this atmosphere because more challenging tasks are set for pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs make steady progress and their achievement is satisfactory. Very clear strategies for managing behaviour and the good work of teaching assistants results in pupils who have emotional and social needs achieving well in relation to their goals. The school tracks pupils' progress carefully but does not always make the best use of its information. Marking does not give pupils a good enough idea of how to improve. Pupils have access to a very good range of clubs and the frequent use of trips and visits adds interest to the curriculum. There is scope for improving the way the school works with parents. Reports tell parents what their children have done but do not give enough information about what children need to do next. The school goes out of its way to take on board pupils' views.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Good leadership succeeds in creating a school with a very positive ethos. Management practices are less successful in evaluating the impact of changes it has made to teaching and learning and so there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and in how well pupils learn. Governors are supportive of the school but are not proactive enough in seeing how well the school is doing. They have not met all their statutory duties because their Annual Report to Parents has some omissions.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a satisfactory view of the school. They feel the school looks after their children well and offers a very good range clubs. A significant number are concerned with how the school works with them, feeling that recent changes, in particular to parents evenings, have not always worked as well as they might. Pupils have a very good view of the school and feel the school listens to them and that they have someone to talk to if troubled. They like the theme days because they are able to work in different ways. Inspectors would agree with these views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- The way leaders check up on the implementation and impact of changes it has made to teaching and learning.
- The consistency with which teachers set pupils interesting and challenging tasks.
- The achievement of pupils in writing and of higher attaining pupils in science.
- The quality of marking.

And, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the governors' Annual Report to Parents contains all prescribed information.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall achievement is good and pupils attain standards that are in the main above average. However, because of differences in the quality of teaching pupils achieve better in Year 5 and, to a lesser extent, Year 1 than in other classes. After a recent period of very good achievement, in which pupils progressed rapidly, achievement has of late been less strong and on the whole during lessons seen was satisfactory. Consequently pupils' progress has slowed in recent times. Achievement for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in their personal development.
- Pupils' achievement in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics is good and standards exceed expectations in Year 6.
- Some pupils are capable of achieving more in writing.
- Higher attaining pupils do not achieve well enough in science.

Commentary

1 Although attainment on entry can vary somewhat from year to year, it is generally in line with that typically found so that children begin school showing the full ability range. As a result of teaching which places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development, and the supportive ethos of the school, children achieve well in this area of learning. Many begin Year 1 as well adjusted learners having already exceeded the goals normally expected of children of this age. Achievement in language and communication, in mathematics and in children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. Many are on course to reach the goals expected of children in these areas of learning by the end of Reception with a minority of children likely to exceed them.

2 Following the last inspection standards rose sharply and were for some time well above average in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils left the school. The Achievement Award for 2002 stands as testimony to this and the indications are that pupils were achieving very well. However, over the past two years standards have slipped and as a consequence, the overall trend of results has been below average in both the infants and the juniors. Last year the school fell short of achieving its targets in the national tests in Year 6 in English and mathematics. School tracking shows that in recent times pupils' progress has slowed. There are a number of factors that account for this. Not least is the somewhat higher proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, evident, for example, in last year's Year 6. In addition a period of significant staff absence has also disrupted learning. These factors have tested the schools quality assurance work, which has not proved robust enough and so it has taken some time for the school to fully investigate the downward trend and to take proactive action. Key strengths in the management of pupils and the building of relationships conducive to learning have been maintained. However it is only in Year 5, and to a lesser extent Year 1, where consistently stronger teaching builds on this and consistently maintains good achievement in lessons. Pupils have achieved very well in the recent past, as test scores, which were for a period well above average indicate, but achievement has now become more inconsistent and in lessons seen was often satisfactory. This means that although pupils have achieved well from an average base to reach standards that are above average much of this was done in previous years with progress tapering off.

3 Results in the national tests in 2004 for pupils in Year 2 were above average in reading and well above average in writing. Inspection findings show that current standards in Year 2 are above average in reading and average in writing. In the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2004 standards were above average in reading and writing but when compared to similar schools were below average. Inspection findings show that current standards are above average in reading but average in writing. Throughout the school pupils' achievement in reading is good with pupils in Year 6 reaching above average standards from an average starting point. The same cannot be said for writing where pupils are capable of achieving more. This is because, apart from in Year 5, teaching does not consistently set pupils interesting enough tasks to do or show pupils clearly enough how to structure their work and is therefore not making the most of the very good climate for learning and pupils' very positive attitude to school.

4 Results in the national test for mathematics in Year 2 in 2004 were average and in Year 6 were above average. Compared to similar schools results were below average in Year 6. Current standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and achievement overall is good. Pupils achieve key skills at a good rate but are not able to make as much use of them as they might in investigation and problem solving because this is not a strong feature of teaching. Results in the national tests for science in 2004 were also above average because all pupils reached at least the national average but are below average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that although standards above average in Year 6, some higher attaining pupils are capable of more. Pupils develop a good knowledge of science and the technical language associated with this. However, a lack of confidence in the teaching of investigative approaches in lessons undermines this positive picture.

5 As a result of some of the most recent changes made to teaching, achievement in speaking and listening is good throughout the school. Pupils have ample opportunities to give their views and respond to the views of others. As a result standards in Year 6 are above expected levels and many pupils are mature and able debaters.

6 Achievement by pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory, including writing, because targets are matched to their needs. It is the achievement of pupils who, are hovering at or about the expected level for their age that is of most concern. The school's tracking records show that a significant proportion of these pupils do not achieve well enough, especially in writing. Although the school has spotted this and has made changes to improve the situation, too little is being done to assess the success of these changes or the consistency with which they are implemented by teachers and this undermines their impact.

7 The school has remedied many of the shortcomings noted in the last inspection in ICT and standards now meet expectations at the end of Year 2 and 6 with pupils' achievement being satisfactory. Achievement in physical education is satisfactory and pupils reach standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 which currently meet expected levels. However, there are positive signs of improvement with achievement in lessons being good because of recent improvements in provision and the very positive attitudes pupils bring to lessons which helps them make the best use of time. Achievement is satisfactory in religious education and pupils in Years 2 and 6 meet expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. It was not possible to judge standards or achievement in other subjects.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
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reading	16.7 (15.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.0 (15.9)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.5 (17.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.6 (27.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.1 (28.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.6 (28.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very well thought out systems of setting targets for pupils' personal development helps them to recognise their strengths and areas for improvement.
- Pupils' self-esteem and attitudes to school are boosted by the very high expectations of their behaviour and the school's very effective procedures for praise and rewards.
- The varied responsibilities given to pupils help them to accept their role in how classes and the school operate.
- Although the school goes some way to help pupils to develop a multi-cultural awareness, this is not given as high a profile as other aspects of their personal development.

Commentary

8 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are even better than they were at the time of the last inspection. This is having a positive impact on achievement as pupils are eager to learn and are very self motivated. The school's initiative to take part in the Investors in Pupils scheme has resulted in an ethos that places great value on the individual. The school not only seeks pupils' views but also acts upon them and involves pupils in their implementation. Pupils in each class, for example, decide, along with the teacher, how the reward system will operate. They have a strong voice in determining the outcome for good behaviour and this increases their commitment towards achieving rewards. Pupils in Year 6 say this has made them feel more responsible for their own behaviour and appreciate the importance of being a good role model for younger pupils. As a result, pupils feel appreciated and know that they each have a part to play in how the school operates. The view that pupils like school was confirmed by parents and is reflected in the above average rate of attendance and punctuality. The pupils' response to the many opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular activities, clubs, trips and residential visits is excellent. The small number of pupils with social and emotional problems are managed very well, particularly in Year 1 and incidents of poor behaviour are rare. This is because teachers do not waver from their very high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond very well to the school's very effective systems of praise and rewards. The 'green card' reward system, operated by the midday staff for good behaviour at lunchtime, is very popular with all pupils.

9 Provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved because they are involved in the setting of their own personal development targets and they are encouraged to think more deeply about what they value and what motivates them. They say that they feel special when their achievements are appreciated, particularly by the public recognition they receive during reward assemblies.

10 The School Council has a high profile and is used very well to give pupils a voice, which, in turn, develops their sense of citizenship. Older pupils watch out for younger ones well. The 'befrienders' do a great deal to help those who need support or familiarising with routines. Two Year 6 pupils, who were newcomers to the school, both said they had been made to feel very welcome from the word go and had quickly made friends. Pupils say that they are not aware of any racial harassment. One commented 'our school wouldn't let that happen'. Pupils also said that they enjoyed the social aspects of the wealth of extra-curricular activities, clubs and visits, particularly residential visits.

11 The school has maintained the good provision for cultural development and continues to use the curriculum, visits and visitors to widen pupils' understanding of both their own cultural traditions and those from other cultural backgrounds. Some consideration has been given to developing pupils' multi-cultural awareness. For example the 'arts' week included opportunities for pupils to work with an Indian dancer. However, this is not given the same prominence as other aspects of pupils' personal development and there is scope to build on the work the school currently does in order to widen their understanding of other people's values and beliefs.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.5%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	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 provided by the school is satisfactory. Although there are examples of some very good and excellent teaching in the school these are few and far between. There are signs of the school experimenting with the curriculum to make it more interesting but these are at an early stage. However, the school ensures that pupils experience a very board range of experiences beyond the usual curriculum.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory, although there are variations from year to year. The quality of assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers establish very positive relationships with pupils. This creates a very good climate for learning.
- Teaching does not consistently set pupils interesting tasks to do.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with groups of pupils in class but on occasions are underused in whole class teaching.

- Marking does not give pupils a good enough idea of how to improve.

Commentary

12 A consistent strength of the teaching is the quality of relationships teachers establish with pupils. Teachers treat pupils with consideration and respect and because of this and, the use of effective strategies for managing behaviour, pupils work hard. At the centre of the warm and encouraging atmosphere that pervades many classes is the use of praise. Teachers are quick to praise pupils' academic and personal efforts and pupils say that they appreciate this approach. This is most effective when praise is made tangible through the use of beads and other tokens. Year 1 pupils watched with bated breath to see if the beads they had earned were enough to fill the 'accumulator' [a glass vase] and because this was not quite filled set about their work with renewed determination. The upshot of this positive approach is that pupils feel that they can give of their best and classrooms become pleasant places for pupils and staff to work in.

13 Not all teachers build well enough on the atmosphere they create and, although there are pockets of good teaching dotted throughout the school, it is only in Year 5 and to a degree in Year 1 that teaching is consistently very good or better and builds on the very good achievement of the recent past pupils by making sufficient demands on them. There are two key features, which form the hallmark of the best teaching:

- **Participation by pupils in class teaching is high, and pupils think deeply.** All teachers have received training on how to better promote pupils' thinking and participation in lessons. The school sees this as a key tool in maximising achievement. Where this works well it succeeds in the twin aims of ensuring that through increased participation and deeper thinking pupils' work improves. However, teachers respond to this strategy with mixed success. For instance, an increasing number use a think, share, discuss approach at the beginning of lessons. Pupils in Year 4, for example, were given time to reflect upon what they knew about Islam before talking this through with a partner and joining in with a class debate that gathered views together. This resulted in a buzz of activity and ensured that all pupils played an active part when the class was being taught as whole. However strategies such as these can sometimes be only short episodes within a lesson of more ordinary practice. Such active learning can, for example, be contrasted with occasions when teachers fall back to questioning pupils by choosing individual pupils with their hands up to answer individual questions. Where this happens, pupils sit for too long and become fidgety. Follow up work is less successful because not all pupils have been prepared thoroughly enough in the first instance. This is one reason for the patchy achievement of less confident pupils who are more prone to remaining quiet in this sort of discussion and are less likely to benefit from the help of teaching assistants in group work.
- **Tasks are thought provoking and demand much of pupils' thinking.** Not all teachers build on their increasing ability to orchestrate class teaching by setting pupils interesting tasks. When this happens teaching does not make the most of the previous gains pupils have made and is key reason why the school has had difficulty, of late, in maintaining the momentum of past successes which saw pupils achieve very well. For example, the promising beginning to the lesson on Islam in Year 4 was let down by a poorly thought out activity. Pupils went on to record their thoughts on Islam on a mind map, a pictorial way of organising their thoughts, and further example of how the school is hoping to boost achievement through the use of recording methods designed to promote deeper thought. However, once again teachers are meeting with mixed success and because of this the impact of such methods on learning are reduced. For example, where these maps are used as an end in their own right they become little more than aide-memoirs, in which thinking is restricted to setting the map out. They are used much more effectively, as is often the case in Year 5, as a step towards further work. Here pupils used mind maps to organise researched facts about the Holmfirth Flood in preparation for writing a newspaper report. This work was of a good quality because of the framework for thinking given by the teacher and the thought provoking nature of the written task. In a similar way in both mathematics and science a lack of emphasis on investigative work, in which pupils are expected to solve

problems, does not make the most of the key skills that have been successfully acquired. Allied to this is the inconsistent use of other subjects as vehicles for the thought provoking application of skills. While there are examples of work across subjects sprinkled throughout the school the lack of consistency and purposeful planning for this reduces the times when this approach is taken. For example, pupils in Year 6 have produced little writing of interest in their history work during the last term.

14 The partnership teachers establish with teaching assistants is of mixed quality. Assistants are particularly effective when pupils are working with groups and, in particular, when helping pupils who have special educational needs. They use group occasions well to question pupils and to ensure that they are able to complete tasks, which are often well matched to pupils' ability. However they are often no more than bystanders in the opening part of lessons and while this prepares them for knowing what pupils are to do it misses the opportunity to assess and encourage pupils' responses. Where they do attempt to join in by talking to pupils this is not targeted so that on occasions they simply talk to the nearest pupil. The exception to this is the help given to pupils who have social and emotional needs, especially those in Year 1. Here assistants who are assigned to particular pupils not only ensure that pupils behave well but also help them join in with the rest of the class.

15 Teachers conscientiously mark work, which succeeds in motivating pupils to work hard as it praises their efforts. However, it is not leading to improvement over time because it does not make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve. The school has put in place systems for setting pupils targets for improving aspects of English and mathematics. The impact of this initiative is undermined by the lack of monitoring by senior managers, which has not followed up on how well these targets are being used. Apart from in reading, the targets do not get to the heart of pupils' needs. They are rarely referred to in marking or in lessons and so are not at the forefront of pupils' minds when they set to work. The potential for these to improve learning is therefore reduced.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (7%)	2 (7%)	9 (30%)	16 (53%)	1 (3%)	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 quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. There are very good opportunities for curriculum enrichment which draw on expertise from within and beyond the school. Accommodation and resources are good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in the rest of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Better curriculum planning has led to improvements in design and technology and ICT.
- There are early signs of a more innovative approach to curriculum planning which adds variety to pupils' experiences.
- There is very good enrichment of the curriculum which adds greatly to pupils' experiences, especially in sport.
- Opportunities for promoting key skills through the study of other subjects are not fully thought out.
- The school makes good use of outdoor areas to aid study.

Commentary

16 Since the last inspection, improved curriculum planning for design and technology and ICT means that the school is now covering all of the required elements. In design and technology the use of a longer spell of time for the completion of work is proving popular with pupils and reflects some early signs of creative thought being given to curriculum organisation.

17 The school has experimented with the curriculum to break up pupils' usual routines and to add interest for them. From time to time pupils in different year groups work together. For example, there has been a 'play day' when pupils were introduced to toys and games from the past. Pupils say they enjoyed this and it contributed well to their historical understanding. Evening presentations of the work studied are occasionally shared with parents. For example, in geography the school hall turned into an airport for pupils to 'visit' various countries and parents were invited one evening to see the fruits of their children's work. Themed weeks such as an 'arts' week have helped raise the profile of the arts in general and have incorporated a good range of events. Pupils and parents speak well of these occasions.

18 The school is currently seeking other ways to make meaningful links between subjects and to identify opportunities to use and practise the key skills of writing, numeracy and ICT in other lessons. There are some examples of good practice. For example, work based on 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' showed how Year 3 had calculated how much it would eat in a day and how much this would all cost. However, the planned use of key skills is not embedded in current practice and this undermines achievement in the understanding of aspects of writing, mathematics and ICT.

19 The school provides very good opportunities to enhance the curriculum and add interest and value to it. Educational visits give pupils valuable first hand experiences. Cliffe House (Local Education Authority facility) is near enough to be used regularly by all pupils and it offers good opportunities for cross-curricular work. Older pupils go on residential visits and to an outdoor pursuits centre that challenges their mental and physical skills to the limit. Pupils also visit local art galleries and the theatre. Visitors provide expertise and enthusiasm in a wide range of curriculum areas particularly the arts. There are many out of school activities including music groups and the computer club. Participation in sport and games is a particular strength and the school is the proud holder of an Activemark Gold Award. There are effective coaching links with local rugby, soccer and athletics clubs and the school takes part in a good range of inter-school competitions including swimming and cross-country running.

20 Accommodation is compact, there is no room to spare but the school makes best use of its available space. The school has put much thought into improving outdoor areas and these are being used well to support work in science and environmental studies.

Care, guidance and support

The overall quality of care for pupils' care, welfare and support is good. Very good provision is made for seeking and acting on pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has many ways of finding out what pupils think about school and involving them in future changes.
- Induction procedures for new pupils help them settle to school quickly.
- The tracking and follow up actions for pupil's personal development are very good.

- The school identifies pupils in need of extra help but action taken to address these needs is not systematically evaluated.
- The schools caring attitude is undermined by a lack of rigour in formal aspects of health and safety.

Commentary

21 The school has put much thought into setting up mechanisms to take pupils' views on board. The system of feeding views from class councils into a school council works extremely well. Not only do pupils have a say in aspects of the school ranging from what playground equipment should be purchased to revising the school meal menus but they also experience democracy working in action through regular elections. Pupils have a great deal of control over the workings of their council and in how their class operates. As a result they say that they feel the school takes notice of their thoughts and concerns.

22 There are good systems for welcoming new pupils into school. Children starting in Reception benefit from a thorough system of home visits and gradual introduction into school. This puts staff in a good position to anticipate needs and to do all that is necessary to ensure that children are helped to settle quickly to school. 'Buddies' are assigned to pupils joining other year groups, which helps to minimise any disruption to learning.

23 The system of setting targets for pupils' personal development enables teachers to keep a close track on progress in this area. As a result, teachers know pupils' needs well and counsel them regularly. Pupils have a strong say in the targets set and the regular discussions they have with teachers about the progress they are making towards them, keeps them fresh and relevant. Pupils who have particular social and emotional needs also benefit from the school's work in this area. Provision for these pupils is good. The school is quick to investigate pupils' needs and seeks outside advice as necessary. Staff appointed to provide extra help are skilled at giving unobtrusive support in class and consistently apply strategies that have been specifically tailored to pupils' needs. This goes a considerable way to maintaining the productive learning environment teachers have worked hard to build. As a result pupils make the most of their time in class and achieve well in relation to their own personal targets. This helps pupils make the best of what the school has to offer by for example, responding very positively to the challenging tasks most commonly set by teachers in Years 1 and 5.

24 The school also tracks the academic development of pupils but actions that stem from this, such as target setting are not followed through with sufficient rigour. Pupils are therefore, much more knowledgeable about what they are working on in terms of behaviour and attitudes than in learning. Pupils whose progress is giving some cause for concern are given additional help in the form of catch up programmes. However, these have not been specifically tailored to meet diagnosed weaknesses in pupils' learning and tend to operate separately from what pupils study in class. Class teachers have too little to do with these and too little is done to evaluate their success. An assumption is made that they are just what pupils need, that they are well taught and that pupils improve as a result of these. However, management has done too little to ascertain if this is the case. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils whose special educational needs are learning based. Individual plans set out suitable targets and in group work in particular, additional help is successful in helping pupils achieve these.

25 Pupils are very well cared for on a day-to-day basis. This view is shared by the vast majority of parents. All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, take a genuine interest in pupils and work hard to make sure pupils are valued and supported. As a result of these very strong relationships between adults and pupils, pupils are confident that if they have a

problem they want to discuss they will be listened to and advised. However, procedures that underpin this attitude are somewhat piecemeal. Although governors have made some health and safety visits there is a lack of formality in recording actions taken. While there are adequate risk assessments carried out when pupils go on trips the formal procedures for conducting risk assessments around the school site are not applied rigorously enough to ensure all potential risks are evaluated. Although the newly appointed caretaker is vigilant there have been no systematic procedures to ensure that she is fully versed in all the health and safety routines of the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, other schools and the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are not given sufficient information about how well their children are doing and what they need to learn next.
- Too little has been done to help parents understand how pupils are learning so that they can help at home.
- The school has made recent attempts to find out and act on parents' views but doesn't determine how well these have been implemented.
- The school works closely with the local church and has made good efforts to establish closer links with the community.
- Links with other schools over the promotion of thinking skills has had a positive impact on teaching and learning.

Commentary

26 Parents at the meeting, and through the questionnaire, raised questions about how well the school works with and communicates with them. Provision is not as strong as that noted in the last inspection. Many parents recognise that the situation has improved of late as a result of consultation carried out by governors. The school has responded positively to this consultation and has set about making wide ranging changes. For example, newsletters about the curriculum were introduced and the pattern of parents' evenings revised. However, parents remain concerned because too little has been done by the school to check that the planned changes have been made or whether the partnership has improved as a result. For example, while the five minute interviews allocated at a newly introduced initial meeting with parents held at the beginning of the year allows time for parents to see how well children have settled, it is not sufficient for a review of learning to take place or, at this important juncture, to set some key learning goals. Curriculum newsletters are of inconsistent quality. Some subjects are not covered and little information is given about how parents can help at home. Good intentions therefore are not always carried out to good effect and parents are not as able as they might be to help pupils at home.

27 In similar ways reports that parents receive on their children's progress are characterised by descriptions of what their children can do. These are extensive in that they cover all relevant areas of learning but do not give parents a complete picture of how well their children are doing. Little reference is made to the progress they have made or to how their performance compares with that typically found. Crucially no information is included about what children need to do to improve their performance, which once again makes it difficult for parents to support their children at home. Written information about general aspects of the school are satisfactory but the annual report to parents by governors has some omissions which means it is not as useful as it might be.

28 On a wider scale the school has made a few recent efforts to help parents understand broader aspects of school life. Reading workshops were held but these were aimed at enlisting parents as helpers in school rather than helping parents become more effective at home. Events are held to help parents see what pupils have produced in some of the theme days but there are few events or meetings that add to parents' knowledge of education and the practices the school feels

are important. For example, the school has looked to broaden the strategies teachers use to engage pupils, yet little has been done to help parents understand this. This undermines the capacity of parents to support the school in key areas, largely limiting this to an active 'friends' association, which raises significant sums of money for the school. Parents of pupils who have particular needs are better informed. The school works closely with parents of pupils who have acute emotional and social needs with the aim to establish consistent approaches to managing behaviour at home and at school. Parents of other pupils who have special educational needs are invited to the regular reviews and are kept up to speed with children's latest learning targets and the progress they have made against previous targets.

29 The school works closely with the local church and joins with the wider church community in celebrating key times in the church's year. The vicar is a regular visitor to school and this helps strengthen the pastoral support the school can offer pupils. Links with other agencies also add to pupils' personal development with, for example, the local police contributing to the school's drugs education programme. The school has been proactive in looking to widen community links beyond the church such as establishing a community garden, but this is mainly used by the school and parents.

30 The school has joined well with a local school that, having previously looked at improving learning by developing pupils' thinking skills, has developed expertise in this area. Joint work in this area has helped teachers at Brockholes benefit from the experience their colleagues have to offer. The effect of this can be seen in the increasing use of these strategies in lessons to promote thinking and the positive effect these are having on pupils' achievement in speaking and listening.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Good leadership by the headteacher, aided well by the deputy headteacher, has helped build a very positive ethos in the school. Management systems to bring about improvement are weaker, so that management by the headteacher and other staff is satisfactory overall. The quality of governance is satisfactory. The school has been partially successful in overcoming the barrier to learning caused by the recent period of high staff absence and turnover.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership that shows great concern for pupils' personal development has put in place strategies that have succeeded in creating a school in which relationships are characterised by mutual respect.
- A strong feeling of team helps draw staff and governors into a sense of common purpose.
- Too little has been done by management at all levels to evaluate the impact of systems and strategies designed to promote improvement. This undermines their effect.
- Governors are supportive of the school but have not been proactive enough in determining how well changes are working.

Commentary

31 Leadership by the headteacher and, in recent times by the deputy headteacher, who has acted as headteacher, has helped instil in all staff a sense of concern for the individual. All in positions of leadership set the right tone for the school. Staff treat pupils very well and set a very good example to which pupils respond positively. The headteacher, who is also the special educational needs co-ordinator, has ensured that the school goes beyond an attitude of care and has led the school well in putting in place very clear strategies for managing and rewarding behaviour. A close eye is kept on how well these are applied therefore they are consistently used. Parents appreciate the school's efforts and are pleased with the how the school treats their children and how it rewards good behaviour. The upshot of this is that a very positive spirit pervades the school and staff and pupils feel esteemed and motivated.

32 The school's operational systems and structures have been tested of late through a period of staff change and absence. Parents feel that the school had done well to maintain the very good behaviour evident in the school. This reflects the success of management, which has ensured, that through change, the school has continued to operate smoothly. Staff newly appointed to the school have received good support from their mentors in getting to grips with the school's policies. Adults in the school act in concert and a sense of team is evident in how leaders go about their work. This is evident in the differing strengths the headteacher and deputy bring to the school. The experience of the headteacher can be seen in the drawing together of the work of co-ordinators into setting a clear agenda for the school. The deputy headteacher brings a sense of drive and energy to the school initiatives and provides a very good role model in her teaching. The school's plan for improvement has identified pertinent areas for development, centred on standards and reflecting a recent improvement in the analysis of performance data, which has investigated a recent downturn in results. This helps illuminate key strengths and weaknesses in performance so that the school has a good idea of the aspects of provision it needs to improve. Key priorities are underpinned by training, which includes the appropriate use of performance management procedures, which are sufficiently tied to key priorities. All staff and governors are well aware of what the school is hoping to do and so a strong sense of common purpose is achieved.

33 However, the school has been less successful in making the most of the common agenda it has set because of weaknesses in key aspects of management. As a result the momentum and upward trend of results has not been maintained through the recent testing times and so although achievement over time has been good it has, of late, been less strong. This can be seen in the largely satisfactory nature of teaching and a slowing down in the progress pupils have made. There are a number of reasons for this, but all have a similar theme of managers not assessing closely enough the execution of actions taken to promote achievement. As a result inconsistencies in how teachers implement these actions have gone unnoticed.

- ***The school has been slow to respond to a downturn in results.*** This is because it is only recently that the school has started to look at the performance of pupils over the short term. Previous analysis tended to look back once pupils had reached the end of Year 6, to shed light on the progress made. Improved procedures now enable the school to spot underachievement earlier. Teachers are therefore made aware of pupils whose achievement is of concern. However, senior management and co-ordinators are not checking closely enough that actions taken to improve learning are working. Too little has been done, for example, to assess how well the setting of short term targets is going. As a result the inconsistent use of these targets remains unchecked and underachievement in the short term performance of pupils can slip through the net. The potential still exists, therefore, for pupils to reach the end of the year before the school discovers that their achievement is still not good enough.
- ***Co-ordinators do not carry out a wide enough breadth of quality assurance work.*** Many co-ordinators are new to their subject. Almost all co-ordinators took up post at the beginning of the school year. Work to date has concentrated on checking policies, updating resources and collecting assessment data. While this has helped co-ordinators ensure that schemes of work are being adhered to, it does not inform them about quality. Too little is being done to assess first hand, the quality of teaching and learning, therefore co-ordinators do not have a full picture of provision in their subjects. This is particularly relevant to actions related to the school improvement plan. For example, although the literacy co-ordinator has been effective in improving provision in reading the same cannot be said for writing because not enough is seen of teaching, learning and the outcomes of pupils' work in this area.
- ***Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain unchecked.*** The monitoring of teaching is not well thought out. It has been largely limited to performance management procedures carried out by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Although they are of a reasonable quality and identify some areas for improvement in the performance of teachers, not enough is being done to follow up on these and some weakness pertinent to individuals remain over time. Observations are more effective in helping senior managers to identify whole school issues. It is this general sampling of teaching that revealed a lack of participation by some pupils in classes. Although the school initially responded to this well, by searching for strategies to improve

participation, too little has been done to assess how these have been imbedded into day to day practice. All staff have received training but it is clear that some teachers are much better at using the devised strategies than others. Staff who are expert, such as the deputy headteacher, are underused in working alongside less confident colleagues. As a result the impact of new approaches to learning are undermined and staff, although still new to the strategies, are in some instances not using them consistently enough raise achievement beyond satisfactory levels. On the whole therefore, management has not been proactive enough in assessing if the early signs are good and that they are having the desired effect on learning.

34 Many governors are new to the school and have taken part in training which has given them a working knowledge of how to go about their business. They offer the school good support and join with the school in shaping future developments. They do not, however, follow up improvements closely enough. For example, they were proactive in responding to parents' concerns about communication. Their initial response was to find out the exact nature of parents' concerns and list the changes it they intended to make. However, not enough has been done to assess how well these changes are being implemented and to find out if parents are any happier with the situation. Communication, therefore, continues to remain an issue for a significant number of parents. Governors are involved in the school improvement plan although the electronic format of the plan makes it difficult for them to use it as a working document through committee meetings. Finance is well planned and has led to improvements in accommodation, most notably of late in ICT. Governors are not however, following through on spending decisions to assess their impact on pupils' achievement. Although governors meet most of their statutory duties there are some omissions in their annual report to parents. There is scope to strengthen procedures, especially in relation to health and safety duties.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	450,298	Balance from previous year	34,190
Total expenditure	463,667	Balance carried forward to the next	20,821
Expenditure per pupil	2295		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35 Provision is satisfactory overall. It is good in personal, social and emotional development because staff are skilled at promoting this in everything children do. Good provision is also made for developing children's speaking and listening skills. This is because there are many opportunities for children to extend their skills in this aspect of learning across all of their activities. Overall teaching is satisfactory with some good teaching observed in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy. Planning is good because care is taken to plan a wide range of stimulating activities across the six areas of learning. Assessment procedures used during teacher led group activities are also good and effectively help to build up an accurate and informative profile of each child's achievements. An aspect of assessment still to be addressed is the tracking and assessing of children's achievements during the on-going provision. Although only having joined the Foundation Stage in September, the co-ordinator works closely with classroom assistants to ensure an effective team where roles are interchangeable without any disruption to the provision.

36 Although there is some variation in children's skills when they enter Reception, overall they are generally as expected for their age with a fairly even spread of children representing the full ability range. Strong links are made with parents during the induction visits both at home and in school. This means that not only do most children settle quickly into Reception but also that their individual needs are assessed and prepared for before they start school. Parents appreciate the daily opportunities they have to see staff as they bring their children into school. Opportunities for additional links with parents are missed however, because of the lack of a home/school diary. Indoor accommodation is spacious and organised to good effect to provide an exciting environment for young children. The outdoor area is used well to support all areas of learning. The newly appointed co-ordinators has had too little time to impact fully on the quality of provision. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory although her hard work and application have already given her a comprehensive view of provision and her action plan shows she is fully committed to improving the provision for Reception children.

37 It was only possible to sample learning in physical and creative development and so no overall judgement about provision can be made.

38 Planning for **physical development** denotes opportunities for children to develop their skills so that they learn to move with increasing confidence, balance and control. Their skills in manipulating small tools, scissors and pencils develops well because of the frequent opportunities they have to practise and apply them. The outdoor area, although fairly small, is attractive and well resourced.

39 Planning shows that children take part in a range of activities aimed at their **creative development** where they can explore colour, texture, shape and music that are often linked to ongoing themes. Children's imagination is evident in role-play, with timely interventions by adults help to take the learning further and children particularly enjoy working at the 'Brockholes Hospital', either administering to the patient or taking on the role of patient. The role-play is enhanced very effectively by the quality of the resources.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High expectations set by all staff ensure that children achieve well.
- Very strong relationships between staff and children promote children's self-esteem and encourage them to do their best.
- Children have good opportunities to initiate their own activities but the assessment of these activities lacks rigour.

Commentary

40 All staff foster the development of personal skills in a variety of ways. Children are constantly encouraged to take turns and to share. There are regular opportunities to take on small responsibilities such as ticking their name when they have had a snack or taking the register to the office. They are expected to tidy up their own activity and to put on their coats for outdoor activities and hang up them up again afterwards. Staff provide very good role models for children to follow. They are calm and organised and always treat children with respect and courtesy. This in turn leads to amiable and trusting relationships and helps children to be kind and considerate to each other. One child, carrying the register, struggled to open the door and was quickly helped by another who said 'let me do that for you'. The very caring ethos of the Reception class is conducive to the needs of children who have special educational needs. The extra attention they receive from all staff ensures that they achieve at the same rate as other children in the class. Children's independence grows as they initiate their own ideas and make decisions when they take part in the variety of stimulating activities provided for them. The essence of the good teaching here is the timing of the interventions of adults, allowing children to manage tasks for themselves. However, gaps in the assessment procedures mean that children are not always tracked during these activities and so staff do not form a complete picture of children's ability to work independently. This overall good start to their personal and social development means that most of them are on course to reach standards beyond those normally expected of children by the end of Reception.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links with other areas of learning that help the development of language skills.
- Interest and skills in reading are developed well.
- Some opportunities to develop writing skills are missed.

Commentary

41 A good feature of the provision is that all staff pay particular attention to developing children's communication skills. Children are encouraged to talk about themselves and to explain what they have done. During adult-led groups, such as 'story bags' children have regular good opportunities to speak to an audience. To encourage an interest in reading, staff fill boxes full of colourful books. Sitting on the carpet with rapt attention, children turn pages, lift up flaps, look at pictures and experiment with words. There is a strong emphasis on learning to recognise the sounds of letters, beginning with the initial letters of their names. There is a reading scheme to run alongside 'real' books to give the structure needed by children at the very early stages of reading. The school has been slow, however, to build up a partnership with parents to enable them to help their children to

master the skills of reading. There are plans to introduce a home/school diary but some time has been lost here. Writing skills are taught systematically so that children form letters correctly. However, some opportunities are missed to reinforce these skills during other activities. Children have the opportunity to practise their writing skills informally, for example, writing a prescription for a 'patient' at the 'Brockholes Hospital'. However, staff are not proactive enough in analysing children's capability during these times, which reduces the impact they have. The sound grounding in the basic skills of reading and writing during the Reception year ensures that most children will achieve the standards expected and a minority are likely to be working within the national curriculum by the time they begin Year 1.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching provides children with good opportunities for practical work.
- Staff are proficient at teaching basic number skills through talk and the use of resources.
- Activities are not always matched to children's abilities.

Commentary

42 The strong emphasis on practical activities ensures that children understand the value of numbers rather than just counting by rote. Staff make learning fun, for example, when children reinforce their counting skills as they 'deliver' milk orders using plastic bottles and wheeled toys in the outdoor area. They count and recall the sequence of numbers when they sing a range of counting songs. As they sing 'Ten Milk Bottles' they develop an understanding of 'one less' as their teacher removes another bottle from the collection. When counting activities are the same for a group of children with varying abilities, this slows the pace for more able children who can work out the answer in their heads. Overall achievement is satisfactory and most children are on course to achieve the expected goals for the end of Reception. A minority of more able children are likely to exceed them.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning in this area.
- There is a strong emphasis on healthy eating.
- The systems to track and assess children's activities in this area of learning lack precision.

Commentary

43 The teacher's expertise comes to the forefront here as stimulating activities are planned not only to help children to acquire an early understanding of the world but to link other areas of learning in a natural way. As children made gingerbread men, they used their number skills well to count the number of spoonfuls of each ingredient they added to the mixture. During the 'Welly Walk' in the school grounds they heightened their senses effectively as they listened and looked around. As they enjoy their snack of fruit or

vegetables they gain a sound understanding of healthy eating. Computer skills are reinforced and extended well when children use, for example, a paint programme to draw a vehicle. There are times, however, when not enough use is made of the daily access to the computer suite for Reception children. Many of the activities during the on-going provision time relate directly to this area of learning but assessment lacks the necessary rigour to ascertain what children are achieving. Overall, most children are likely to reach the standards expected by the end of Reception because of their satisfactory achievement and a minority are likely to exceed them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improved analysis of performance by the co-ordinator has helped identify areas for improvement but too little is done to evaluate the impact of any actions taken.
- Relaxed relationships and the increasing use of discussion to promote learning are having a beneficial effect on achievement in speaking and listening.
- The school achieves a good balance between hearing individuals read and teaching reading to groups of pupils.
- Inconsistencies in the teaching of writing result in some pupils not achieving as well as they might.

Commentary

44 While there are variations in the achievement of pupils in the differing aspects of literacy, taken overall achievement is good. This is because of the rapid rate of progress pupils made in the recent past. Lessons seen on inspection point to teaching overall being satisfactory and to a levelling off of the progress made. Current standards are similar to those found during the last inspection and are above average in reading, average in writing and above expected levels in speaking and listening. Satisfactory subject leadership has met with mixed success in reacting to a levelling of progress. Improved tracking has enabled the co-ordinator to keep an eye on the progress of pupils. As a result she is aware of pupils in need of a boost and aspects of the provision that need improving. Pertinent actions have been taken but too little has been done to assess the implementation of these or to use the excellent quality of some of the literacy co-ordinators teaching for the benefit of others. As a result her actions have met with mixed success.

45 The quality of relationships is having a beneficial effect on pupils' achievement in speaking and listening. Pupils feel that their views matter and because of this many join in with class discussions. There are a few reluctant speakers in each class and in order to help boost their participation, and to better prepare pupils for follow up work, the co-ordinator has helped staff develop techniques to achieve this. When techniques such as think, share and discuss are used all pupils have something to offer. Not only does this improve speaking and listening but it also allows the teacher to check that all pupils are thoroughly prepared for the next stages of the lesson. While there are signs that teachers are increasingly using these strategies, there is still a tendency to fall back on less sophisticated techniques, which do not draw all pupils into the lessons. Nevertheless teaching approaches are sufficiently widespread for pupils to achieve well in speaking and listening, so that from an average starting point pupils in Year 6 reach standards that are above expected levels.

46 The co-ordinator has improved reading resources of late and has organised the curriculum well so that a good balance is struck between hearing pupils read individually and teaching them to read in groups. The system of setting targets in reading is, on the whole, working well, although some targets are worded in ways, which pupils do not fully understand. Short group sessions focus well on key targets. Pupils who have special educational needs have appropriate targets on their individual plans and get sufficient one to one attention for them to achieve these. Improved tracking has enabled the school to pinpoint pupils whose attainment is just below expectations for their age and who have not

made sufficient progress. It's the achievement of these pupils that is of most concern. Additional catch up programmes are organised but too much is left to teaching assistants to organise and so the connection between the work pupils do in these sessions and targets they are currently working on is weak. As a result these sessions are not as effective as they might be. All of this presents a mixed picture but in the main pupils achieve well to reach standards that are above average in Year 6.

47 It is the teaching of writing where variations in the quality of teaching are particularly apparent and where the impetus created by previously rapid progress, as evidenced by test results, is not followed through. As a result standards at the end of Year 6 are average and achievement although satisfactory is not as strong as other areas of English. On occasions teaching can be excellent. A lesson of this quality in Year 5 contained all the ingredients of very successful teaching and learning.

Example of outstanding practice

This excellent lesson combined learning in speaking and listening and reading to writing outcomes. Thought provoking cross-curricular work fired pupils' imagination and gave them the necessary experiences and framework with which to structure their own writing.

In a highly imaginative opening, pupils pondered on the messages of a mysterious scroll. Wide-eyed pairs of pupils lent all their efforts to answering a key question. What could the cryptic phrases mean? Reading between, and beyond, the few lines, their views were gathered. After a collective weighing of views expedition to the community garden was decided upon. A chosen one bravely dug up a buried treasure box. What was inside? Should they open it? Back in the safety of the classroom the teacher's vivid retelling of Pandora's box suggested caution. What would happen if they, like Pandora, let cruelty escape into their lives? Pupils were given the night to arrive at and justify their decision. Future work led to note taking on hope, cruelty and other difficulties of the world today and set a very good foundation for the composition of pupils' own myths.

48 However, the teaching of writing elsewhere in the school does not approach this standard and is often no better than satisfactory. In particular the modelling of writing by teachers is too superficial. This was seen in a lesson in Year 6 on argumentative writing. Questioning which successfully collected pupils' views led to a comprehensive list of the attributes of this type of writing. However the writing of an opening paragraph by the teacher skipped over these and too little was done to help pupils to see, for example, how the use of complex sentences improved the writing. This did not prepare pupils well enough for their writing. Higher attaining pupils, with underlying ability, coped well with this lack of preparation. Pupils who had special educational needs succeeded because of the help of teaching assistants. As a result of their very good attitudes to learning pupils continued to work hard. However middle attaining pupils, who were largely working by themselves, produced work that lacked conviction. Such teaching is not uncommon. For example, in the modelling of a poem on the Great Fire of London that pupils in Year 2 were to write, teaching concentrated solely on helping pupils write lines with the correct number of syllables. Opportunities to enrich the imagery of the poem through well chosen phrases and words were lost and so when pupils were composing many concentrated on the beat of the poem rather than the 'picture' it painted.

49 Assessment for writing is not working well enough. Half termly writing tasks are not assessed with sufficient rigour. So although pupils have targets for writing these tend to stress secretarial aspects. Some of these, especially for older pupils are not challenging enough. A significant proportion of pupils in Year 6 for example, have been set targets about capital letters. Several pupils in Year 4 have been set similar targets. Teachers do not habitually refer to targets in lessons or in marking and so their impact is minimal. Marking tends to give pupils praise but does not make it clear to pupils what they need to do improve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50 The school makes satisfactory provision for the promotion of literacy skills in other subjects. There are good opportunities for speaking and listening and the use of the library helps give a purpose to reading for research. However other subjects do not make a strong enough contribution to writing. Opportunities are missed to help pupils write in interesting ways and, although there are occasions when teachers think hard about teaching a particular genre of writing through the study of another subject, weaknesses in the modelling of writing undermine this.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent improvements to teaching have made learning more interesting and challenging but practice is still inconsistent.
- Pupils are given lots of opportunities to talk about their work and are keen to participate.
- The use of marking and assessment to raise standards is underdeveloped.
- Although there has been some improvements in linking mathematics to other subjects more can still be done.

Commentary

51 Standards have risen since the last inspection and in Year 6 are above average. Achievement, until of late, has been good with pupils progressing well over time. However, achievement in the lessons seen and in books over the last term is satisfactory. This is because not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to utilise key skills and teaching does build on the very good climate for learning and attitude of pupils. For example, the schools tracking data show that pupils in Year 6 progressed very well until the past two years but, although they have maintained above average standards, they have not pushed on. This is because although pupils achieve basic skills at a good rate their ability to develop an understanding of these through the solving of problems and work in other subjects is underdeveloped. As a result achievement seen during lessons was satisfactory and so the good rate of progress that is evident in results over time has stalled of late. The newly appointed co-ordinator, whose leadership is satisfactory, has looked into a recent downturn of results but plans to address this are at an early stage. These tend to focus on improvements in the use of assessment and in particular, the setting of short term targets for groups of pupils to help speed up learning. The limited use of monitoring in the classroom has revealed some recent improvements in teaching, in line with the school's general approach to make learning more participative and thought provoking. Some of the early signs of this are encouraging, leading to pockets of good teaching especially in the upper juniors and in Year 1. However teachers are not fully confident in new methods so that overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory.

52 Pupils' work is being marked regularly but any written comments tend to encourage pupils rather than tell them what they have done well or what they need to do to improve. Pupils are tested at the end of a unit of work to see what they have learnt and this information is recorded carefully but its effectiveness use in setting targets for groups and individual pupils is not clear. Too little has been done to ensure that teachers use targets productively and so most pupils are unsure what their mathematics targets are.

53 A consistent strength of teaching is found in the mental and oral parts of lessons resulting in pupils who are keen to participate and show confidence. Teachers use good questioning skills to get as many pupils as possible to take part, directing some of their questions to named individuals who might otherwise not volunteer an answer. Pupils are encouraged to use mathematical vocabulary correctly and are given lots of opportunities to discuss their work in pairs and explain how they reached a solution. This helps prepare them well for future work and contributes to the development of speaking and listening skills.

54 Although not a common feature of teaching, some teachers create imaginative scenarios for pupils to practice mathematics. For example, in Year 1 the teacher effectively linked work on addition and subtraction with pupils' own experiences of travelling on a bus. Skilled story telling helped paint a picture of the sights and sounds pupils might experience and interspersed these with questions requiring pupils to add and subtract within the created scene. Pupils' concentration was intense and the reality of the scene gave pupils a purpose for computation. It is the thought provoking nature of tasks that sets the most successful teaching apart. In Year 6, for example, the practice of multiplication was made more interesting by the study of methods found in Russia, Italy and Egypt. Examples of these were displayed and pupils were encouraged to try them out for themselves and seek to explain how they worked. Pupils rise to the challenge of work of this nature but at present although there are scatterings of it found in the school, too much of what pupils do is of a more mundane nature. While this helps pupils acquire key skills it does not deepen their understanding or ask them to use their skills in imaginative enough ways.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55 The last inspection reported that pupils' skills in numeracy were not being reinforced or extended enough in other subjects. There has been some improvement but opportunities are still limited. For example, in Year 4, science work includes measuring temperature including negative numbers, using charts and frequency tables and drawing line graphs. Year 6 took part in a combined design and technology and mathematics week, which required them to measure and draw angles very accurately to produce some intricate patterns. Work of this nature tests pupils' understanding and serves to boost achievement. ICT is however still underused in the promotion of mathematical skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall standards are above the national average although not enough pupils reach the higher level.
- A lack of monitoring has missed inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning.
- There is good emphasis on the use of specific technical language.

Commentary

56 Teaching is satisfactory overall because of its inconsistent nature. While there are examples of very good teaching in Year 1 and excellent teaching in Year 5, teaching elsewhere in the school is often more ordinary. This is because teachers are not using the information from their records of pupils' progress to identify what different pupils need to learn next. The starting point is too often the same for all pupils, with no added challenge for the more able. At times, as seen in pupils' books, investigations are too directed and this limits pupils in thinking for themselves, which, in turn, undermines achievement. Pupils say that science is often not interesting enough but that hands-on investigations are very exciting. Pupils in the Year 5 lesson, for example, were so engrossed in their skeleton jigsaw they were disappointed when they had to stop. As a result of this mixed picture pupils' achievements are satisfactory and although standards in Year 6 are above average, the achievement of the higher attaining pupils is not good enough.

57 The best teaching is based upon an experimental and investigative approach and pupils are taught to think in a scientific manner. Expectations are high, explanations are clear and pupils have opportunities to take part in practical activities. A strength of all teaching is the importance placed on pupils' understanding and use of the correct terminology. Pupils in Year 3 talk about magnets 'attracting' or 'repelling' while pupils in Year 6 use 'photosynthesis' as they describe the way plants make food. Another good feature of teaching is the way teachers successfully manage those pupils who have social and emotional difficulties and the potential to disrupt practical activities. This helps these pupils make the most of their time in class and helps maintain a productive environment for all. Although teachers make some use of pupils' mathematical skills in science lessons, particularly in Year 4, there is scope for improvement. Equally, there is little evidence of ICT skills being used alongside science skills.

58 Satisfactory leadership still has some way to go. It has been effective in introducing tracking systems which help teachers follow pupils' progress but has not ensured that these are being used well enough because too little has been done to ascertain the quality of teaching in individual classes and to ensure the best teaching acts as a positive influence on the less successful teaching. Specific weaknesses for example, in the quality of marking which do not indicate how pupils could improve have been missed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvements to the scheme of work have helped raise standards.
- Key skills are well taught.
- Good use is made of the expertise of a teaching assistant to help make best use of the ICT suite.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to use computers outside of lessons.
- There is scope for pupils to use key skills more through the study of other subjects

Commentary

59 Pupils' attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with expected levels nationally, for older pupils this is an improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has seen to it that the revised scheme of work now meets statutory requirements. The lack of opportunities to monitor and control other devices that was identified at the last inspection has been tackled. However, to date pupils have not had the chance to share and exchange information using e-mail and this continues to be a gap in provision although there are plans for pupils experience this in the near future. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the post but has taken the opportunity to bring a new sense of vision and purpose to the subject. A good start has been made and some pertinent improvements identified.

60 Teaching and learning are satisfactory in both the infants and the juniors and achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is however effective in the demonstration of skills. This is made possible through good use of a digital projector and the recently installed Interactive Whiteboards. This helps to provide a clear focus on direct teaching and developing key skills as pupils move through the school.

61 The ICT suite is not ideal being in two adjacent rooms and sharing space with the library. The suite won't accommodate larger classes comfortably but the school is able to make best use of the facility by tapping into the particular skills and expertise of a teaching assistant. He works independently with groups of pupils, up to half of a class, giving good technical support, which enables them to successfully complete tasks that have been set by their class teacher. Provision is added to by good use of facilities outside of lessons. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are able to attend ICT clubs during lunchtimes. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 also have an after school club, where they have recently been helping to build the school's own website. However, teachers do not always maximise opportunities for pupils to have as much hands-on experience as possible. Computers in classrooms are not used often enough to complement and extend work in other subjects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62 To identify where ICT can support other curriculum areas is a priority in the ICT action plan but remains to be completed. There are examples of good practice. For example pupils in Year 2 created pictures the style of Piet Mondrain, while pupils in Year 6 prepared a multi media presentation about safety in the mountain areas. This linked to work in geography. However the full potential of computers is not being fully exploited because it is not systematically planned for.

HUMANITIES

63 No lessons were observed in **history** or **geography** so it is not possible to make a judgement about the overall quality of provision in these subjects. The planned teaching programmes for history and geography follow national guidance, an appropriate range of content is being covered and there is evidence of this in the work displayed in each class.

64 In history and geography first hand experiences within the immediate locality and further a field are used well to enrich pupils' learning. For example, Year 3 have been studying the weather, making observations and taking their own measurements. In the Year 5 classroom there was an interesting and informative display of work on the flooding of Holmfirth in 1944 and the class visit to Digley and Bilberry reservoirs.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with the church help pupils develop a good understanding of Christianity.
- Lessons are used well to help pupils consider feelings and emotions.
- Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills but is not used well enough to promote writing.

Commentary

65 The emphasis the school puts on celebrating the major Christian festivals is helped by visits to the church at key times in the church's calendar. These have a suitably high profile and ensure that pupils join well with the wider church community in celebrating these high points. Teachers use these times to explore the meaning of events and aspects of worship, with pupils in Year 6 for example, developing an understanding of why people pray. The satisfactory leadership of the recently appointed co-ordinator has helped review the scheme of work and ensures that the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus are met and that, as well as the study of Christianity, pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge of the key features of other faiths. However a lack of close monitoring has missed inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, which result in a mixed picture in the quality of provision. As a result teaching, which is satisfactory overall, leads to satisfactory achievement and standards that meet expectations in both Year 2 and Year 6. This was also the case in the last inspection.

66 Teachers use lessons well to help explore feelings and emotions and because of this religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development and wider aspects of their personal development. Perceptive questioning of pupils in Year 1, for example, used the parable of the lost sheep to help pupils reflect on how it feels to lose something and what it feels like to be lost. However, the link back to the purpose of parables was much weaker and so the potential of the story for pupils to explore how God feels when people are 'lost' from him and are subsequently 'found' were missed. Similarly a lesson on authority in Year 2 helped pupils consider the characteristics of authority figures, leading to such comments as 'bossy' and, more perceptively, as 'someone one who looks out for you.' However, the discussion remained very much at the level of discussing authority figures in pupils' lives, such as mum and dad, and made too little of God as an authority figure. Such teaching blurs the distinction between pupils' personal, social and health education and religious education and because of this the particular identity of the study of religion can be lost.

67 The recent introduction of strategies to promote class discussions are clearly evident in lessons and because of this religious education makes a strong contribution to pupils' achievement in speaking and listening because participation by pupils as speakers and listeners is high. However, the same cannot be said for writing. At present pupils do too little writing. Pupils in Year 4, for example, questioned both the teacher and a Muslim classmate about key features of Islam but did too little with the facts they had found out. This missed the potential of this lesson to link with the pupils' current literacy work on note taking. On occasions when there is a written outcome to pupils' work tasks often lacks imagination and are almost exclusively limited to short factual paragraphs or the retelling of religious stories and events rather than requiring pupils to write in thought provoking ways.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68 It was not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in **art and design**. Pupils' work was examined and a discussion held with the co-ordinator. The school places a high profile on art and design, as is evident from the work on display, the well attended art club and the prominence given to art and design activities in 'arts' weeks. In the main, work on display meets expected levels although there are examples of good quality work. The school introduces pupils to a suitably broad range of artists. This adds to pupils' cultural development and also introduces them to techniques they can try in their own work. It is the study of other artists that results in the better quality work. In Year 2, for example, good quality work was seen in the two and three dimensional work pupils produced in the style of Katie Morag.

69 It was only possible to see one lesson in **design and technology** and so no overall judgement could be made. Pupils' work was looked at, the scheme of work examined and a discussion held with the co-ordinator. Design and technology was a weakness noted in the last inspection. Indications are that the school has corrected these shortcomings. A scheme of work ensures that the requirements of the national curriculum are now taught. The flexible use of time, which allows pupils to work for longer periods on their models, is working well. Pupils say this helps them to make progress in the course of an afternoon and many report that along with art and design they enjoy the practical learning style these subjects present. In the one lesson seen good teaching struck a balance between planning and making. The use of small saws and glue guns was introduced well and pupils were given enough leeway, within the constraints of making a vehicle that would travel further than their peers, to be creative. Work met expectations with plans carefully drawn, although on occasion several were closer to drawings in art and design than diagrams to aid construction. There are examples of good work on display. The study of pneumatics led to some highly creative work in which pupils in Year 3 used the principle of this mechanism to make various parts of their highly individual models move.

70 No lessons were observed in **music** although Years 1 and 2 were heard singing during hymn practice and the whole school during assembly. On both occasions the singing was tuneful and marked by the enthusiasm of the pupils. Recorder clubs for both infants and juniors and brass club for Year 6 enhance the curriculum. They regularly perform in assemblies and at concerts, as do pupils who receive extra instrumental tuition in percussion, brass and string from specialist teachers.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils participate enthusiastically and have the opportunity to experience a wide range of extra-curricular sport.
- There are few opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and others' work.

Commentary

71 The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning but has introduced effective assessment procedures to help teachers to ensure full coverage of the curriculum as well as checking pupils' achievements. A review of the scheme of work and the wide range of other experiences pupils have access to have helped raise the profile of physical education. These are having a beneficial effect on achievement which in lessons seen was good. However standards still only meet expectations and achievement in relation to pupils' capabilities has been satisfactory. A pertinent action plan includes increasing the use of physical education to foster pupils' personal development with a particular emphasis on raising self-esteem.

72 Over the lessons observed, teaching ranged from satisfactory to good and was predominantly good. A new scheme of work, together with in-service training, has improved both teachers' competence and their confidence to teach the subject, particularly gymnastics using apparatus. In the best teaching, techniques are demonstrated and pupils are challenged to improve their performance with activities that build progressively on what they had learnt previously. Warm ups are often led by pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6 and this does much to raise their self-esteem. Personal development is fostered very well during lessons. Co-operation and teamwork are stressed and demonstrations by pupils are watched with appreciation and respect. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to improve their performance and that of others because they are not encouraged to give their opinion about what works well and what can be improved and it is this that is the main difference between the satisfactory and good teaching.

73 Physical education has a high profile in the school, and the school shows a very strong commitment to extra curricular sport. As well as a good number of after school clubs, for both infants and juniors, pupils have very good opportunities to participate in games, including football, hockey, basketball and cross country running, through the school teams. Local sporting clubs such as Holmfirth Harriers, Huddersfield Giants and the Yorkshire Cricket School share their expertise with pupils. Pupils have regular swimming lessons and the residential trip to Cliffe House provides opportunities for them to engage in outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils in Year 6, who are members of the Cave Club, experience pot holing and abseiling during a visit to the Yorkshire Dales.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

74 Insufficient teaching and learning was seen to arrive at an overall judgement on provision for pupils' **personal, social and health education and citizenship**. The school ensures that pupils have regular opportunities to discuss a range of sensitive issues and these connect closely with lessons in religious education and to the deliberate strategies that the school has put in place to address pupils' personal development. Activemark and Healthy Eating Initiatives reflect the school's concern for pupils' personal development through the promotion of regular exercise and healthy eating. The school has in place suitable procedures for sex and relationship education and for drugs education. Outside expertise is used to supplement the school's expertise.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	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).