

INSPECTION REPORT

HEATH MOUNT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103333

Headteacher: Mrs N Chaudhary

Lead inspector: Mr M Phillips

Dates of inspection: 20 – 23 June 2005

Inspection number: 266981

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 354

School address: Mary Street
Balsall Heath
Birmingham
West Midlands
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Telephone number: 0121 464 1691
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr R Evans

Date of previous inspection: 18 June 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Heath Mount Primary School is situated in Balsall Heath in Birmingham, a socially deprived area with high unemployment. There are 354 pupils on roll, of whom over 53 per cent are entitled to free school meals; this is well above the national average. About 42 per cent are identified as having special educational needs, which is also well above the national average. A high percentage of pupils leave and join the school throughout the year. The 1.7 per cent of pupils in receipt of a statement is broadly in line with the national average. Most pupils with special educational needs receive additional support to improve their numeracy and literacy skills. Almost all the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with a significant proportion from a Pakistani heritage. The home languages pupils speak are varied, with the most common being Punjabi, Urdu and Arabic. Many of these pupils are at various stages of learning in English as an additional language and almost all pupils from Reception to Year 2 are in the early stages of learning in English.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
7704	Mr M Phillips	Lead inspector	English Geography Religious education English as an additional language
9457	Mrs G Bindoff	Lay inspector	
22831	Mr C Lewis	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education
17877	Mrs C Ingham	Team inspector	Information and communication technology History Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage
32606	Mrs V Derwas	Team inspector	Science Art and design Music Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and very effective senior teachers are raising standards. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- outstanding support for vulnerable pupils;
- excellent leadership of the Reception Year;
- very good teaching and learning;
- by Year 6 standards in English are well above the national average and above in mathematics;
- the very good achievement of pupils in the early stages of learning in English;
- the very good use of assessment to plan English and mathematics lessons;
- pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour;
- leadership of some subjects and of special educational needs is weak;
- in some lessons work is not tailored to pupils' needs;
- in Year 6, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below national expectations.

Since the last inspection in June 2003, there are good improvements in standards by Year 6 and in teaching and learning. There is a very good improvement in pupils' use of English and their achievement is now very good. Although there are satisfactory improvements in the leadership of foundation subjects and of special educational needs, there is room for more improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is very good. In relation to similar schools in 2004, achievement was excellent and the school was the most improved in the country. Children enter Reception in the early stages of learning in English with standards well below those expected. Their achievement by the end of Reception is very good but their standards are below those expected in the Early Learning Goals inspected because they have so much to learn. Year 2 pupils' achievement is very good in reading and writing and good in science for standards to match national averages. Very good achievement in mathematics and English results in standards that are above average in mathematics and in line for English. By Year 6, achievement is good in science and standards match national averages. It is very good in English and standards are well above. Very good achievement in mathematics results in standards above national averages. Achievement in ICT is unsatisfactory and standards are below those expected. Throughout the school, standards in religious education match those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Too few lessons were seen in other subjects to make judgements about standards and achievement. The achievement of gifted and talented pupils is good and pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. There are no differences in learning between boys and girls or between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

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

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

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance is improving and is just below the national average. Punctuality is satisfactory. The school's very caring ethos is seen in the very trusting relationships between pupils and teaching staff. Adults provide very good role models so that pupils are polite to visitors, behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning. They enthusiastically support activities after lessons and eagerly seize opportunities to be responsible. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Teaching is very good. The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Teaching and learning are very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and occasionally it is excellent. Expectations are high and behaviour is managed with deceptive ease. The best teaching and learning is in English. Less successful teaching does not ensure work consistently matches pupils' learning needs and in science there are too few practical activities to improve learning. A well-planned curriculum very effectively enriches learning through educational visits and visitors to the school. A very effective assessment system contributes to very good support to help pupils improve their learning in English. It also contributes to outstanding support for vulnerable pupils whose achievements are often excellent. Parental partnership is good and there are very effective links with the community. Progress is good for pupils with special educational need and for gifted and talented pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher has contributed to this being one of the most improved schools in the country in 2004. She is very well supported by senior staff. English and mathematics are led and managed very well. Although the leadership and management of most other subjects are satisfactory, improvement is needed to make sure this school's improvement is sustained. Leadership of special educational needs is weak. Very effective governors ensure statutory requirements are met and they are excellent at holding the headteacher to account for the quality of education provided. The school is very good at evaluating its effectiveness.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the school. Pupils like the school very much. Parents said that leadership, teaching, their children's progress and school improvement are significant strengths. Some were concerned about behaviour and some would like more information about what their children will learn and how they are getting on. Inspectors agree with most

of these views and noted very recent improvements in behaviour at lunchtime, very good behaviour in lessons and the very good systems in place to deal with bullying should it occur.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- to improve the leadership of creative, aesthetic, practical and humanities subjects;*
- to improve the leadership of special educational needs;
- to ensure that the work pupils are given is consistently tailored to their needs;*
- to raise standards in ICT.*

*These key issues are already in the school improvement plan

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, pupils' achievement is very good. Children with special educational needs in Reception make very good progress, and throughout the rest of the school these pupils' progress is also very good. In Years 2 and 6, standards in religious education match those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Most children enter the Reception Year of the Foundation Stage with little or no use of English and they achieve very well by Years 2 and 6. By Year 2, standards in ICT match national expectations, but by Year 6 they are below.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 6, English standards are well above national averages and in mathematics they are above.
- By Year 6, achievement in English is very good and it is good in mathematics and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Pupils in the early stages of learning in English achieve very well by Year 6, and for some their achievement is excellent.
- The achievement of gifted and talented pupils is very good.
- By Year 6, standards in ICT are below national expectations.

Commentary

1. Children enter Reception with standards well below those expected. From this low base they achieve very well but most of them have so much to learn, particularly to improve their use of English, that their standards are below those expected by the end of Reception in those Early Learning Goals inspected. Inspectors had too little evidence to make judgements about standards in children's physical and creative areas of learning. The few children with learning difficulties make very good progress. Children's achievement is very good in communication, language and literacy, in mathematical development, in knowledge and understanding of the world and in their personal, social and emotional development.
2. Pupils' learning needs are assessed very well each half term to identify gaps in learning, particularly in their use of English, to take swift and very effective action. Although pupils with special educational needs currently make very good progress, there is no assessment tailored to their particular needs to ensure that this continues to be so. The achievement of more able and gifted and talented pupils, who are the most able, is good and their standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above those expected. A great strength of this school is in provision for the very high proportion of pupils in the early stages of learning in English. Their achievement is generally very good and, for the high proportion of pupils who join the school from Year 3, their achievement is often excellent because they reach standards in English and mathematics that are above or well above national averages. There are no differences in learning between boys and girls or between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.0 (13.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.8 (12.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.1 (14.4)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Standards in Year 2 in reading and writing match national averages, with reading standards a little higher than those for writing. Standards in mathematics are above national averages and standards in science are average. From a low base, pupils' achievement is very good in reading, writing and mathematics and standards are rising. In ICT, pupils build upon their very good learning in Reception so that by Year 2 they achieve well to reach standards expected. However, this good progress is not sustained from Year 2 and as a result standards by Year 6 in ICT are below average. By Year 6, pupils achieve well mathematics to reach standards above national averages. By Year 6 in English, pupils' achievement is very good and standards are well above national averages. Although pupils' progress in science by Year 6 is not as consistently good as it is mathematics and science, standards do match those expected nationally.
4. Standards in Years 2 and 6 do not fully reflect the national test results for 2004 because standards have risen in reading and mathematics. Mathematics standards are now above national averages in Years 2 and 6. In comparison with similar schools, the 2004 national test results for Year 6 in English and mathematics were in the top five per cent nationally, and science standards were well above the average. These results were recognised by the Department for Education and Skills as signifying exceptional school improvement. In 2003, the school was the most improved in the West Midlands and the eighth most improved school in the country and in 2004 it was the most improved in the country.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (26.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.2 (27.7)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.1 (28.9)	28.6 (28.6)

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

5. The focus of the inspection was on the Reception Year and on the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education. Although a cross section of other subjects was inspected, too little evidence was gathered to reach secure judgements about standards achieved. In teaching seen and pupils' work analysed, indications are that standards are at the expected national levels in these subjects.
6. One of the main reasons why pupils achieve so well is the rigorous and consistent emphasis in most subjects on improving their use of English. At the time of inspection, this emphasis was evident in pupils' recent use of computers to help them learn in subjects across the curriculum. The school has recently increased its number of computers from about 30 to 65 and begun to improve teachers' ICT skills. Whilst the use of new machines is improving learning, they have not been in place long enough for the full benefit of all this new provision to be seen in higher standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good** and contribute to their very good achievement. Their personal development is **very good**. Provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is **good**. Pupils' attendance remains **unsatisfactory** but is steadily improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' take a great interest in their learning and are enthusiastic about the activities the school provides.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to understand how to be a good citizen.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to learn about cultures different from their own.
- Attendance is still below 95 per cent and there are too many unauthorised absences.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to take responsibilities within the school.

Commentary

7. The school has very good strategies for improving attendance. There is prompt contact with parents about unexplained absences and attendance data is analysed weekly to identify pupils with recurring patterns of absence and lateness. As a result, attendance is improving year on year and has risen from 91 per cent in 2003 to 94.5 per cent in 2005. Unauthorised absences are proving more stubborn to improve but the school works hard to encourage parents to bring their children to school on time every day. A significant percentage of pupil absences arise from extended visits overseas and the school works closely and often effectively with parents to ensure that pupils' education is disrupted as little as possible.
8. Pupils enjoy school and flourish in its calm and purposeful environment. They have an enthusiasm for learning and are inspired and excited by the best teaching. About 76 per cent of pupils say that their lessons are mostly interesting and fun, while 23 per cent say this is only happens sometimes. Even in lessons that pupils do not find interesting, they sustain their attention well. Relationships between the pupils and with the adults in the school are good. There is a friendly atmosphere and pupils support each other very well.
9. Behaviour is very good because the leadership of the school has high expectations, sustains a consistent approach and ensures that all pupils know what is expected of them. Some parents have concerns about the school's response to bullying and 38 per cent of pupils think that other children only behave well sometimes. Inspectors found that the school responds rapidly to incidents of bullying and other oppressive behaviour and is effective in resolving problems with parents or carers. Only one pupil has been excluded for a fixed term period in the last two years. Action has been taken to improve behaviour in the playground and this is creating a very positive environment at playtimes. The school's commitment to the inclusion of all pupils is reflected in the excellent support for pupils with behaviour difficulties and the very rare use of exclusion.
10. Children in the Reception Year make very good progress towards their Early Learning Goals in personal and social development but they have so much to learn most do not reach standards expected in this area of their learning. However, by the time they enter Year 1 they have learnt to co-operate, share and listen to each and are eager to learn.
11. The school's provision for pupils' personal development has improved well since the previous inspection and is now good overall. Lessons in personal, social and health education contribute effectively to their development and their understanding of social and moral issues is good. Older pupils learn about citizenship and social responsibility

and develop these skills as members of the school council but they have few other opportunities to contribute to the life of the school or to use their own initiative. They have some good opportunities to consider spiritual aspects of their lives, especially through work in art, visiting artists and theatre groups and through a variety of educational visits out of school. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory but teaching does not make full enough use of the school's own rich and diverse cultures and those within nearby communities to increase pupils' understanding of their own

cultures and those different from their own. Parents would like to see the school more actively engaged in the cultural life of the community in order to bring the communities represented within the school more closely together to promote mutual respect and understanding.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	1.3
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.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
2	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
5	0	0
8	0	0
203	0	0
21	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
25	0	0
1	0	0
77	0	0
2	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**.

Teaching and learning are very good and the curriculum is good. Pupils are looked after well, assessment is used very well to respond to their individual needs and they receive very good guidance and support to help them learn. Partnership with parents is good, links with the community are very good and there are satisfactory arrangements with other schools to which pupils transfer when they are 11. The curriculum is enriched very well through educational visits and visitors to the school.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning throughout the school are **very good**. There is very good use of assessment to plan lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and learning ensure pupils achieve very well.
- There is some excellent practice in Year 3 that links marking of pupils' work to their learning targets.
- The teaching of English in Year 6 is sometimes excellent.
- Pupils respond very well to teachers' very high expectations for behaviour.
- Teaching assistants are very well deployed and sometimes their contribution to learning is excellent.
- Assessment in science is not as good as it is in English and mathematics and there is no assessment of learning in ICT.
- Work is not always tailored to the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (7%)	13 (30%)	14 (33%)	13 (30%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. Very effective teaching and learning are the main reasons why this school has improved so much over the last five terms. In Reception, there is excellent use of assessment to plan lessons and expectations for behaviour are very high. These strengths contribute greatly to children settling down quickly to learn so that they achieve very well by the end of the Reception Year. Throughout the school, a priority to improve pupils' use of English is very successfully met. The most effective teaching is in English, for example in Year 6 where it is occasionally excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching.
13. Over the last five terms the sharp and persistent focus through the school to improve pupils' use of English in all subjects has dramatically raised standards. Improvement in pupils' use of English is assessed very carefully each half term to identify where additional learning support is needed and to plan for the next half term. This is generally achieved very well, although there is no assessment of learning in ICT. The most successful strategies are seen in English lessons. Very effective strategies are evident in other lessons, for example in mathematics, where high expectations, planning that is very effectively informed by assessment, the very good management of behaviour and the very good deployment of teaching assistants all combine to drive up standards. A teaching assistant for Years 5 and 6 provides excellent support to help pupils with special educational needs, and others pupils in the early stages of learning in English, make huge gains in their learning. Pupils grow in confidence as they grow older, becoming better independent learners all the time as they increase

their understanding of how to improve through the very good guidance and support they receive.

14. Most lessons are conducted at a lively pace with the best teaching maintaining pupils' interest through a variety of activities and techniques. Teaching ensures pupils are fully included in learning. Bi-lingual teachers and assistants carefully select the best times to explain in the pupils' first language what to learn or to help them explain their learning before they reply in

English. This very good practice assesses pupils' progress in learning in English and informs teaching so that pupils get a lot of help to improve. As a result, they are unafraid to persevere when challenged. Where teaching is less effective, but nevertheless satisfactory, the work pupils with different needs receive is too similar and so occasionally it is either too easy or too difficult and so pupils are not consistently challenged. This was the case at the last inspection and so in some classes in this area of teaching and learning there is unsatisfactory progress. Marking of work is encouraging and informs pupils how to improve. Very good practice was seen in Year 6 where pupils knew what to do to raise their standards to the next level of attainment. Excellent practice was seen in Year 3 where the marking of pupils' work is closely related to learning targets that are in front of them while they work.

15. At the start of lessons teachers review previous learning very well to share the lesson's learning objectives with the class, and they are often referred to as the lesson progresses to keep pupils on track. As a result, pupils understand the purpose of lessons very well. During whole class teaching probing questions are scattered around the class to keep pupils 'on their toes'. They often strain their arms in the air in their eagerness to reply to questions and they cheerfully respond to teachers' insistence on very high standards of behaviour. All this very good practice was evident in a lively Year 2 literacy lesson where children bubbled with enthusiasm, in a Year 4 numeracy lesson that became full of the stillness of deep concentration and in an excellent Year 6 literacy lesson that was full of the gentle sound of busy people. A very good learning atmosphere pervades the school and pupils move with great sensitivity around the building so as not to disturb the learning of others.
16. Most pupils with special educational needs require additional support to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Whilst teaching currently meets these needs very well, there is no school system in place to identify more complex needs should they arise or to ensure that teachers receive the most appropriate advice and support so that work matches these pupils' needs. This is unsatisfactory.
17. Homework is set each week and satisfactorily prepares pupils for their next lessons. Inspectors agree with those parents who say that they would like more information about when homework is set and how to help their children learn at home.
18. Where pupils use computers to help them learn they make very good progress, as seen in the computer suite, where pupils in the early stages of learning English greatly improved their language and mathematical skills with the help of the Learning Mentor. Very good progress was also evident when Year 5 pupils undertook supervised historical research on the Internet. The school has recently increased greatly the number of computers but teachers have yet to make the best use of this resource to help pupils learn.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good** and meets the needs of pupils well. The curriculum is enriched by **very good** provision for clubs and community links. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good variety of activities enriches learning.

- Excellent support for vulnerable pupils by the Learning Mentor helps them to overcome learning obstacles.
- There is very good planning to improve pupils' English language skills.
- Planning to make the best use of new ICT resources is not yet completed.
- There is an over-reliance in some subjects on commercially published schemes of work.

Commentary

19. The school meets statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and for the teaching of religious education. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education, and for sex and relationships and drugs education. There is good provision for the development of citizenship skills. Although curriculum provision for English and mathematics has improved very much since the last inspection and provision for science has improved well, overall provision has improved satisfactorily. This is because the school is understandably still in the early stages of improving provision for foundation subjects because the main priority has been to raise standards in the core subjects, particularly in English. Investment begun five terms ago to improve ICT provision is almost complete, with a considerable increase in the number of computers and the computer suite is now fully operational. The next phase is underway; to install interactive white boards in all classrooms. Consequently, curriculum provision for ICT is not fully in place, apart from in the Reception Year where children make very good progress. A great strength of the curriculum is planning to include pupils in all learning, with a strong emphasis on improving their English to help them learn. This has been very successfully achieved since the last inspection. Whilst currently the needs of pupils with special educational needs are met very well, there is no system in place to ensure that this continues so that the school sustains its improvement. The effectiveness of the curriculum for these pupils is not subjected to the same rigorous evaluation as other aspects of provision. Most pupils with special educational needs receive additional support to improve their numeracy and literacy skills, and at times this provision is outstanding. Should there be pupils in the future with more complicated and challenging special educational needs, there is no system to ensure teachers receive sufficient advice and support to provide an appropriate curriculum for them.
20. Well established National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used effectively to help pupils learn. Literacy skills are used well across the curriculum to improve learning. The rigorous and very effective focus on teaching subject specific vocabulary and other words and phrases unfamiliar to pupils was seen when Year 6 pupils made very good progress to explain the meanings of words connected to their study of rivers in geography. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection. However, in some lessons, particularly in some foundation subjects and in science, there is an over-reliance on commercially produced schemes of work that limits opportunities to adapt the curriculum so that it meets the different needs of pupils. It is often through the very good deployment of teaching assistants, whose support for pupils is sometimes outstanding, that the curriculum matches the diverse needs of pupils.
21. The curriculum is very effectively enriched through educational visits and visitors to the school, such as artists and theatre groups. There are educational visits to theatres and museums. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There are weaknesses in provision for religious education and through foundation subjects to increase pupils' knowledge of a variety of cultures different from their own, and this limits their cultural development. However, there are recent improvements, with more planned. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced through visits to hear the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and to see the Royal Ballet. Pupils sing with enthusiasm in school assemblies. A series of visits to different places of worship have improved pupils' understanding of faiths and traditions different from their own.

22. There are very good opportunities for the enrichment of learning through very well supported clubs run outside of the school day and at lunch times. A good range of sports clubs are organised through the local schools partnership, with visiting coaches providing good skills training. The Learning Mentor provides excellent support for pupils through a range of activities, including computer and library clubs, as well as providing parents' workshops to help parents become more involved and supportive of their children's learning. She provides invaluable support and advice to pupils and their families, with very good links to outside agencies to help overcome obstacles to learning.

23. Very good induction arrangements ensure that children settle quickly into reception classes and later successfully transfer to Year 1. Similarly, pupils are well prepared for transfer to senior schools. Accommodation and resources are good and teachers match the demands of the curriculum well. The match of teaching assistants to the demands of the curriculum and the diverse needs of pupils is very good.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is **good**. Support and guidance for pupils is **very good** and contributes to their very good achievement. Pupils have **satisfactory** opportunities to express their views about the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Support for vulnerable pupils by the Learning Mentor is excellent.
- The school provides a very good environment for learning.
- Pupils have very good guidance about how to improve their standards in English.
- There is no systematic recording and monitoring of pupils' personal development from Year 1 to Year 6.

Commentary

24. The school provides a caring and supportive environment for pupils. There are very trusting relationships between the adults and children in the school and 92 per cent of pupils say that there is an adult they would go to if they were worried. Parents are confident that their children are happy at school and are well cared for. Pupils have very good opportunities to gain confidence and some very effective strategies to help pupils develop their self-esteem. The contribution by the Learning Mentor is outstanding and enables individual pupils to remain in school and to cope with the pressures of school life. The Learning Mentor makes a very strong contribution to the induction of pupils new to the school. There are very effective systems to make sure pupils new to the school settle swiftly and happily into the school. The very good and sensitive support these pupils receive from other pupils contributes greatly to new pupils settling in so well.
25. Outside agencies are used very well to contribute to pupils' health education and there are good programmes to help pupils recognise when they are at risk and what they need to do to keep safe. Governors are completing an evaluation of the effectiveness of risk assessments to cover all aspects of the school's working life. Leadership by the headteacher on child protection matters is very good. Staff are well trained to identify the signs and systems of abuse and they know what to do should they have cause for concern.
26. Pupils have very good guidance about how to improve their English language skills because teachers track their progress very effectively. There is some very good practice in the school for marking pupils' work, which ensures that pupils know what their learning targets are and what they need to do to achieve them, with the best practice seen in English in Years 3 and 6. The school is now in a position to extend this very good guidance to enable pupils to achieve as well in other areas of learning, particularly in the foundation subjects.

27. Many of the pupils who join the school during the year have no previous experience of English, some have no experience of schooling and many are at a very early stage of learning in English. The school supports these pupils very well and most parents are very pleased with the rapid progress their children make. As a result, the achievement of pupils who learn in English as an additional language is very good and sometimes excellent. This reflects the strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils by the leadership of the school.

28. There are inconsistent arrangements in the school to monitor pupils' personal development and this leads to some imbalance in the school's provision. Tracking of pupils' cultural development, for example, would show that they do not have enough opportunities to learn about a variety of cultures. However, there is good practice in Reception in monitoring the personal and social development of children and in recording and monitoring the personal development of pupils who work with the Learning Mentor. These systematic procedures help pupils to gain in maturity.
29. The school council is effective in giving pupils an opportunity to discuss issues about the school but it is not fully developed for pupils to initiate ideas. However, pupils feel that they are listened to and that their ideas are respected and they have some good opportunities to raise and discuss issues within their classes.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parental partnership is **good** overall and helps parents to support their children's learning. The involvement of the community in the work of the school is **very good** and enriches pupils' experience. Links with other schools are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good links with parents of children in the Reception Year.
- There are very good and extensive links with the community.
- There is good support to help parents become more involved in their child's learning.
- The school does not provide enough information for parents about what children will learn.
- Parents are not actively involved in the day-to-day life of the school.

Commentary

30. The school has secure plans in place to build on the good relationships with parents that are established in the Reception Year and to extend them through the school. Parents of the youngest children have very good informal opportunities to see class teachers at the beginning and end of the day and there is close contact between home and school. Parents know what their children are learning and have ongoing advice about how to help at home. The active involvement of parents in their child's learning helps their children make a very good start at school and to achieve very well.
31. Links between class teachers and parents are not so close in other years and contact between home and school is usually initiated by the school. However, the school is welcoming to parents and encourages them to arrange to see class teachers if they want information or have concerns. Bi-lingual interpreters are provided to facilitate meetings if needed. The school deals very well, promptly and sensitively with parental concerns, as seen in its response to parental worries about playground behaviour. The school seeks parents' views about the school and uses the information gathered when reviewing the school improvement plan. Pupils' views are also sought and acted upon. The school works hard to encourage parents to support their child's learning at home and provides excellent support through the Community Education Team, Parent Partnership Worker and the Learning Mentor. A wide range of courses are offered for parents in the school's Parents' Room to help them improve their use of English and computer skills to help their children learn. The effectiveness of these courses is seen in the improvement in pupils' learning.

32. Parents have positive views of the school but some think that the communication between home and school could be improved. Inspectors agree that parents should have more information about what children will learn and what their learning targets are and more

information about the work pupils are expected to do at home in order to help their children learn more effectively. Parents have some good opportunities to find out how their children are getting on but they do not have enough information about the standards their children reach in relation to national expectations.

33. Some parents say that they would like to be more actively involved in the life of the school but there is not yet an established pattern for this, although the wider community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. There is a very good range of visitors to the school, including drama groups, artists, sports coaches, members of the Fire Service and the school nurse. School leadership very quickly identifies new links with the community as they arise. Pupils study extensively in the local area and contribute to their community through a number of environmental projects.
34. Links with a local Nursery help children settle into the school well when they transfer into the Reception Year. Pupils have contact with pupils in other schools through sport, which helps their social development. Sports coaches say that pupils have good sporting attitudes. Links with secondary schools enable pupils to transfer smoothly into the next phase of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **excellent** and two senior teachers support her very well. Governance and school management are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are outstanding in the challenge and support they provide for the school.
- The leadership of provision for vulnerable pupils by the Learning Mentor is outstanding.
- Leadership of foundation subjects is not as good as it is for core subjects.
- Leadership of special educational needs is unsatisfactory.
- Improvement is needed in the information parents receive.

Commentary

35. The excellent leadership of the headteacher and the very effective support she receives from senior teachers contribute hugely to this school's dramatic improvement in pupils' achievement since the last inspection. Staff and governors share the headteacher's firm commitment to high standards, care and teamwork. Leadership ensures that the senior management team evaluates school effectiveness rigorously to put in place improvement strategies. The school improvement plan is a highly effective, strategic tool for this school's continuous improvement. It demonstrates that this school knows itself extremely well. The plan contains highly appropriate and financially supported improvement priorities with a person identified to lead on improvement, times to review progress and criteria to measure success. Priorities are closely related to issues in the last inspection report, with some already dealt with. There was so much to improve five terms ago that it is understandable that not all improvements are complete in such a short time, such as the leadership of foundation subjects. The choice of improvement priorities, particularly to improve pupils' English language skills through highly effective improvement strategies, explains why this

school was the eighth most improved school nationally in 2003 and the most improved in the country in 2004.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,161,281
Total expenditure	1,030,324
Expenditure per pupil	2,982.82

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	9,755
Balance carried forward to the next	68,784

36. Very effective strategic planning reflects the school's ambitions for high standards, with a top priority to drive up English standards. To achieve this, assessment identifies learning needs very well so that highly effective action is constantly employed to improve teaching and learning. The school tracks the academic progress of every pupil, measuring their attainment every half term to identify gaps in learning and to take effective action. This process is meticulously managed by the assistant headteacher and this goes a long way to ensure the inclusion of pupils in all the school offers. The Learning Mentor contributes superbly to the inclusion of vulnerable pupils through the support she provides for them in partnership with parents. Achievement for most of these is excellent. However, further improvements are needed in the identification of and provision for pupils with special educational needs so that teachers distinguish more accurately between obstacles to learning that are due to lack of English language skills and those that are due to a learning difficulty. Whilst pupils with special educational needs currently achieve very well, leadership of provision for them is unsatisfactory. Leadership does not evaluate well the effectiveness of provision for these pupils to ensure that teaching is well informed by assessing progress against targets in these pupils' individual education plans, and that work is tailored to their needs. Should pupils in the future have more complex needs than they do now, there is no secure system in place to make sure that they will be swiftly and effectively provided for.
37. The headteacher leads on evaluating the effectiveness of teaching, learning, the curriculum and the leadership and management of other staff. All this is accomplished very well in partnership with senior managers, assisted by leaders of core subjects. Very good delegation of tasks to these key staff by the headteacher, with support and training, has led to a very good improvement in teaching and learning and to the English and mathematics curriculum since the last inspection. The school is now on track to meet its next set of priorities: to improve further the leadership of foundation subjects to ensure that school improvement is sustained.
38. Governors are excellent at holding the headteacher to account for the quality of education provided. They use their skills and experience to work very effectively in partnership with the school to shape its future. They have a very good understanding of the community because they represent it so well. They evaluate the effectiveness of strategies in the school improvement plan very effectively and they very successfully oversee the financial management of the school. They undertook an enormous amount of research in partnership with the school to ensure that the huge investment over the last year in ICT adhered strictly to the principles of best practice. Governors have finance set aside to improve the outside provision for Reception and to continue the required remodeling of the workforce. Governors conscientiously evaluate school policies and very responsibly oversee the quality of subject provision. They make sure statutory requirements are met and take seriously their statutory responsibilities to ensure that the headteacher exercises a healthy work and life

balance and that teachers receive sufficient administrative and teaching assistance for them to improve pupils' learning. They are about to complete improvements in risk assessments. Whilst annual reports to parents are about how well their children are getting and on comply with requirements, inspectors agree with those parents who said that that more advice about how

to improve learning would improve these reports. In addition, although governors ensure that parents receive appropriate information about the school, inspectors agree with those parents who say that more information about what their children will learn each term will help them work in an even closer partnership with the school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

39. Most children join the Reception Year of the Foundation Stage with some pre-school experience and all of them are in the early stages of learning in English. Standards on entry are well below those expected in most areas of learning and their knowledge of the world around them is poor. Standards are highest in physical development, although below those expected. From this generally low base, pupils achieve very well by the end of Reception but they have so much to learn that they do not reach standards expected in their Early Learning Goals. Too little evidence was collected to make judgements about provision in physical and creative development by the end of Reception but school assessment suggests that children will reach standards expected in these Early Learning Goals. Children with special educational needs make very good progress in all areas of learning. Accommodation is satisfactory and used very well to create a stimulating place for children to learn.
40. Teaching and learning are very good overall and they are sometimes excellent. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection. Some of the reasons why children settle so quickly into Reception and achieve so well are the very good partnership with parents, high expectations, a firm, encouraging and consistent emphasis on English language skills and excellent use of assessment that identifies emergent learning needs swiftly and informs planning. Talented and very effective teaching assistants work as important members of a high quality, enthusiastic teaching team. No time is wasted, activities run smoothly and children are constantly motivated.
41. Leadership is excellent and day-to-day management of resources is very good. Provision is evaluated very well and contributes to an excellent sense of direction to ensure continuous improvement and a very positive learning ethos.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are very good.
- The children's behaviour and relationships are outstanding.

Commentary

42. Teaching and learning are very good. Although most children do not reach standards expected in these Early Learning Goals their achievement is very good by the end of Reception. They swiftly learn to play well together and to share resources. Learning is very good because very good teaching tailors work to children's needs. Very effective relationships give children the confidence to ask for help when they need it. Staff expertly encourage children to be independent so that they take increasing responsibility for their own learning as they grow older through well-established

routines. They responsibly fetch learning materials and put them away when at the end of an activity. Behaviour is excellent, mainly because often inspirational teaching and high expectations enthuse children so much that they never want to misbehave. This was seen in an outstanding lesson at the end of a very hot day about knowledge and understanding when children came in from play with the same enthusiasm that they began the day with. The classroom was alive with the buzz of activity and the children beamed with pride when their parents collected them at the end of the day.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of English language skills is very good.
- Assessment informs lesson planning very well.
- Children learn through story and drama very well.

Commentary

43. Children achieve very well by the end of Reception, although they do not reach standards expected in this Early Learning Goals. Very good teaching enthuses children and prepares them well for the National Literacy Strategies when they enter Year 1. Teachers very effectively use their very good knowledge to help children learn in English. New words and phrases are carefully introduced and used in a variety of activities so that the children soon use them in their play, as seen when they used different types of paper and card to learn the names of different types of material. Planning provides many opportunities for children to listen and to talk so that there is a constant focus on improving their use of English through the very skilled use of visual resources and conversation. The very effective use of story and drama captures children's imagination and provides enormous opportunities for teaching to improve children's spoken English and for them to recognise words and letter sounds. A visiting theatre company provided an excellent opportunity for children to improve their use of English as they acted alongside the visitors.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn very well through lively, practical activities.
- Tasks are carefully matched to children's needs.

Commentary

44. Children achieve very well by the end of Reception and teaching is very good. They do not reach standards expected in this Early Learning Goals but they are well prepared for the National Numeracy Strategies when they enter Year 1. Teaching uses a very good variety of resources and teaching methods that enthuse children through practical activities so that their learning is very good. Expectations are high and very good teaching ensures pupils expand their mathematical vocabulary and use it correctly. This is often achieved through the good use of stories, drama and games. Displays of children's work reinforce learning very well. Children eagerly join in counting songs and games and this improves their use of English. The most able children make very good progress when adding and subtracting numbers. Computers are used very well to help pupils learn.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children reach standards above those expected in ICT.
- Very good teaching enthuses children.

Commentary

45. The children enter the Reception Year with very limited experiences outside their community. It is to the credit of the staff that by the end of the year the children's achievement is very good, although they do not reach standards expected in this Early Learning Goals. A strong feature of the very good teaching is in the planning of activities that fire the children's interest and prompt them to use new words and phrases, for example as they explore different types of boxes. Children make exceptional progress in ICT skills because computers are used constantly by children and staff to improve learning. Very well chosen programs and very effective teaching reinforces basic numeracy and literacy skills and this contributes greatly to improvements in children's use of English. Teaching is very good at using children's ideas within practical activities so that learning is firmly based on experiences that are relevant to their daily lives. All children develop early investigative skills very well as they explore the outside environment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

46. Teaching was not observed in this area of learning so it is not possible to make a judgment about provision. School evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching, learning and this part of the curriculum strongly suggests that children will meet this Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. The curriculum is well planned for pupils to learn inside and outside the school. They are very adept at using small tools and implements. Dexterity is at a high level because children are taught to use different tools safely very well when painting, cutting, measuring and weighing.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

47. A judgment about provision of this area of learning is not possible as only some of the elements of teaching of this part of the curriculum were observed. School evidence shows that children achieve very well because of very effective teaching, although they may not reach standards expected in this Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. Children's art work on display showed that they learn very well and acquire new skills through the use of various materials. Play areas are used very well to stimulate children's imagination through the use of drama. Music, including singing and making music, is a regularly taught and the children have access to a suitable range of instruments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by Year 6 are very good.
- Teaching is very good and occasionally excellent.
- Pupils' achievement is very good and sometimes excellent.
- Pupils are eager to learn and behave very well.
- The subject is very well led.

Commentary

48. In Year 2, standards are in line with national averages and in Year 6 they are well above. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are very well prepared for the demands of the English National Curriculum in the Reception Year, particularly in their use of spoken English. This preparation helps them make very rapid

progress by Year 2 to reach standards that now match national averages in reading and writing and that are higher than they were last year. In Year 2, speaking and listening skills are generally below those expected. By Year 6, overall achievement is very good. For most pupils who join the school from Year 2 in the early stages of learning in English, their achievement is excellent. Pupils with special educational needs and those in the early stages of learning in English make very good progress. The most able pupils reach high standards and their achievement is very good. There are no differences in learning between boys and girls and between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

49. Teaching and learning are very good. Through the school, expectations are high and there is a very strong and persistent emphasis on improving pupils' use of spoken English that contributes powerfully to most pupils' very good achievement. Behaviour is managed with deceptive ease. Pupils understand the boundaries set and their often excellent behaviour is managed through praise and encouragement, enabling teachers to concentrate on helping them learn and ensuring that they are fully included in lessons. Gaps in learning are identified each half term through the very good use of assessment that leads to very effective action to improve pupils' learning. Very well deployed teaching assistants work in partnership with class teachers to improve learning. There is excellent support for Year 5 and 6 pupils by a teaching assistant. Assistants provide additional support at lunchtimes, where pupils' eagerness to learn is abundantly clear. Pupils receive very good advice on how to improve and teachers review previous learning very well in order to share the lessons' learning targets. Some excellent practice in Year 3 made sure every pupil knew what to do to improve because all of them have had their targets in front of them all the time. Whole class teaching makes very good use of probing questions that are scattered around the class to keep the pupils 'on their toes'. Very well managed discussions insist pupils explain their learning in sentences and in English, with carefully chosen times for those in the early stages of learning in English to prepare their responses in their first language before replying in English. Excellent teaching in Year 6 provides numerous opportunities for pupils to discuss and explain their learning. Here, pupils cheerfully respond to consistently very high expectations, take great pride in their achievements, and the classroom is often full of the gentle sound busy people.
50. Standards in reading in Year 2 match national averages and by Year 6 they are well above. By Year 2, skills are improving rapidly and, generally, standards are a little higher than those for writing. A carefully managed reading scheme is enriched through the use of books for pupils to do research and other story books for them to enjoy. Time is set aside each day to improve reading. Pupils talk a lot about their reading and this expands their vocabulary and improves their spoken English. The school has instilled a love of reading from an early age and pupils spoke to inspectors about how much they enjoy reading to their family. Year 2 pupils have good skills to make sense of unfamiliar words or phrases. Year 6 pupils are very good at referring to text to explain character and plot, how language expresses mood and feelings and to express their opinions.
51. Writing is in line with national averages in Year 2 and well above in Year 6. Through the school, pupils take a great pride in their well-organised work. They are very keen to improve their handwriting so that by Year 6 they have their own distinctive and very neat styles of writing. In Year 2, pupils write stories and factual reports that are punctuated well and are grammatically accurate. Although their English vocabulary is expanding swiftly, most do not have the skills to develop ideas well. As they grow older, their increased vocabulary and writing skills enable them to write for many

different purposes, including letters, stories, poems and factual reports. Pupils draft work to improve it and they are beginning to use computers well to improve writing.

52. Speaking and listening are below national expectations in Year 2 but by Year 6, standards in these skills are above. The school's priority over the last five terms to improve these skills has been very successfully achieved, resulting in very good improvement since the last inspection.

53. Subject leadership and management are very good. Teachers receive very effective advice and support to raise standards. The effectiveness of teaching, learning, inclusion and the curriculum are evaluated very well in order to lead very on school improvements. This is seen in improvements since 2003 that have resulted in this being one of the most improved schools in the country. Although there is good improvement over five terms in ways teachers match work to the different needs of most pupils, the best practice has not yet spread throughout the school. The subject leader recognises that improvement is needed to ensure pupils with special educational needs continue to make very good progress. There is not a secure system in place to distinguish between learning needs that are due to a lack of English language skills and difficulties in learning due to other causes.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Literacy skills are used very well in other subjects to help pupils learn, as seen in pupils' writing about science in Year 6 that was well punctuated, grammatically accurate and well expressed, and writing about and discussing different faiths in religious education in Year 4. The school is in the early stages of using computers for pupils to write on to the screen to improve their skills and where this is done well pupils make very rapid progress.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good
- Subject leadership is very good.
- Teaching is very good.
- Work does not always match pupils' different learning needs.
- Mathematics is not used consistently well in subjects across the curriculum to improve learning.

Commentary

55. In Years 2 and 6, standards are above national averages. Pupils achieve very well by Year 2 and for most their achievement is good by Year 6, with those pupils who joined the school from Year 3 with little or no English achieving very well. Pupils with special educational needs and those in the early stages of learning in English achieve very well by Year 6. There are no differences in learning between boys and girls or between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
56. Teaching and learning are very good overall. Teaching ensures that pupils are fully included in lessons. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and manage behaviour very effectively so that classrooms have a well-ordered sense of purpose where learning often occurs at a challenging pace. The most effective teaching focuses consistently on improving pupils' use of English so that they always learn very well. In these lessons, pupils achieve very well in their understanding and use of mathematical language to solve problems and to explain their learning. Where teaching is less successful, although never unsatisfactory, pupils have good calculation skills that they demonstrate well on paper but some do not have sufficient

English language skills to explain their learning when solving problems. Very good teaching to improve pupils' English language skills was evident in a Year 6 lesson about volume. The teacher's very high expectations, use of praise and careful, step-by-step teaching ensured that pupils understood the mathematical language unfamiliar to them and, as a result, they achieved well. The most effective teaching matches work to the different learning needs of pupils. However, this good practice is not common through the school

because in some lessons pupils with different abilities and language needs receive work that is too similar. This was so at the last inspection, and so improvement here is unsatisfactory. A strong feature through the school is the good deployment of experienced teaching assistants who use their initiative well to help pupils learn and this, to a great extent, overcomes difficulties pupils experience in work that does not fully match their needs.

57. Subject leadership is very good, which is a good improvement since the last inspection. Very good assessment measures pupils' attainment each half term, alongside information from the tracking of their progress, to identify gaps in learning and to provide additional support. The school recognises that improvement is needed in the use of computers. There are secure plans in place to make good use of the many, additional new computers to help pupils learn. The leader also recognises that, whilst pupils with special educational needs currently make very good progress, there is no assessment tailored to the needs of these pupils to make sure that this continues.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Pupils' mathematical skills are not used well in all subjects across the curriculum. Where mathematics is used in other subjects to help pupils learn, they achieve very well. In history, they are taught a sense of time in order to place events in the past in the correct sequence, in geography, pupils interpret weather graphs, and in science they undertake calculations when experimenting. Recent good learning in the computer suite is improving pupils' mathematical skills. Planning to use mathematics to help pupils learn across the curriculum is not fully developed but improvements are planned.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching promotes pupils' positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils respond very well to high expectations for behaviour.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to improve their English skills.
- Assessment does not inform lessons planning and at times work does not match the needs of pupils.
- There is not enough practical work to help pupils learn.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to improve learning.

Commentary

59. Standards in Years 2 and 6 match national averages. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good. Special educational needs pupils make the same good progress as other pupils because of good support by teaching assistants. There is no difference in learning between boys and girls and between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
60. Pupils respond cheerfully to teachers' high expectations for behaviour and they listen well and are eager to learn. Year 6 pupils learn enthusiastically and, due to very good

teaching of English through science, they use and explain scientific language well when speaking and writing. The most able pupils achieve well. The best teaching generates enthusiasm through well-planned activities and clear explanations and demonstrations. For example, in a good Year 4 lesson, the very effective working relationship between the class teacher and the teaching assistant, both of whom understand the needs of pupils very well, led to pupils confidently planning their own investigation into friction and achieving well to understand what

makes a fair test. Good teaching and support ensured they understood and used scientific vocabulary that was new to them. It also helped them to decide their own learning objectives. In a minority of lessons where teaching is less effective, but nevertheless satisfactory, teachers over-direct pupils' work so that they do not think enough for themselves about predicting the results of investigations. They also do not do enough practical work to ensure learning is meaningful for them.

61. Although teachers' planning focuses on improving English language and literacy skills, a lot of work is not tailored to meet the different needs of pupils. Consequently, where teaching is less effective, work is sometimes too hard or too easy. There is no system common throughout the school to involve pupils in setting their own learning targets and in reviewing progress towards them. The best practice was seen in Years 4 and 6, where pupils have very good knowledge of their learning and what they need to do to move up to the next level in their learning, achieved through helpful marking and discussions between them and their teacher. Teachers' marking also doesn't always give pupils clear advice on how to improve. The use of computers to record, present and analyse data is not yet fully developed to challenge and enthuse pupils so further raise their standards.
62. Subject leadership is satisfactory and the management of resources is good. Resources are good and there is an effective scheme of work to help teachers plan. The subject leader monitors pupils' work with class teachers. Assessment does not inform lesson planning as well as it does in English and mathematics. Although lessons are observed and teachers receive advice and support, evaluations of the effectiveness of teaching, learning, inclusion and the curriculum are not fully in place to ensure improvements are made. There is no system to make sure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs are accurately identified, or to measure their progress against targets in their individual learning plans.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of the computer suite and the recent increase in computers are improving learning.
- Very good planning is helping to raising standards.
- Standards by the end of Year 6 are below average.
- Computers are not used well enough to help pupils learn in subjects across the curriculum.
- There is no assessment to inform lesson planning.

Commentary

63. Pupils achieve well by Year 2 to reach standards that are in line with those expected. Achievement by Year 6 is satisfactory but standards are below national expectations. Throughout the school, pupils use keyboards and icons, find, save and retrieve information and print their work. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils confidently built on learning begun in Reception and continued into Year 1 to log on and use icons to navigate satisfactorily through a program. In Year 6, pupils have insufficient experience of computers and ICT generally to reach standards expected. They have

unsatisfactory knowledge and understanding of the control and modeling aspects of ICT. However, since the recent installation of new computers that pupils frequently use, they now make good progress.

64. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils want to learn because they really enjoy ICT. In a good Year 6 lesson, pupils worked hard to find information as they learnt to navigate and then evaluate a web site. Teachers are well organised when working in the ICT suite and this ensures pupils

achieve well during lessons there. In the suite, pupils with special educational needs and those in the early stages of learning in English achieve very well. The school has secure and financially supported plans to improve the teaching of ICT because not all teachers have the confidence or skills to ensure that pupils achieve well. The school recognises the need to assess how well pupils learn in ICT in order to improve their achievement and to raise standards, including the achievement and standards of pupils with special educational needs and the most able. The use of assessment is in the very early stages of development with improvement plans in place to track the progress of pupils and to frequently measure their attainment.

65. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Improvement is needed in evaluating how well pupils are taught, how well they learn and how well computers are used in subjects across the curriculum to improve learning so that improvements can be made. The school has invested heavily in many new machines and is strongly committed to improving standards. Early signs are that investment in ICT is benefiting pupils' learning where the use of computers is now established.

Information and communication across the curriculum

66. Computers are not used well in most subjects across the curriculum. Where they are used well, pupils make good or even better progress. Computers are used well in mathematics lessons when constructing graphs and interpreting information from them, and during research in history and geography. A teaching assistant supported pupils in the early stages of learning in English very well by using the Internet to make history relevant to Year 5 pupils. In some English lessons from Year 2, pupils draft work on to a screen to improve their writing.

HUMANITIES

67. Too few **history** and no **geography** lessons were seen to reach judgements about provision. Apart from lessons seen, inspectors examined pupils' work, teachers' planning, policies and curriculum provision. They held discussions with teachers and pupils. The curriculum for these subjects is appropriately planned. There is a good, sustained emphasis on improving pupils' English language and literacy skills as they grow older, with strategies matching those in the school improvement plan well. This strong focus on English, which includes the teaching of subject specific language, contributes greatly to this school's very swift improvement over five terms. In a satisfactory **history lesson**, pupils in Year 1 used photographs to compare features in modern buildings with those built a long time ago. Work in this lesson was well matched to the different learning needs of pupils and there were good opportunities provided for pupils to explain their learning in order to improve their use of English. In Year 5, a small group of pupils in the early stages of learning in English achieved very well when learning about the Tudors because the teaching assistant made learning relevant to their lives. Evaluations of the effectiveness of teaching, learning, inclusion and the curriculum are in the early stages of development and assessment is not used well to inform planning or to identify and provide for pupils with special educational needs. Whilst there is planning to use numeracy, literacy and ICT skills to help pupils learn, the school recognises there is more to do to ensure that these skills are used more effectively.
68. A school improvement priority is to improve subject leadership skills and to make sure work is tailored to the different needs of pupils. Subject leaders manage their subject well but their leadership skills are weak. They do not yet have enough skills to

evaluate how well pupils are taught, or how well they learn, in order to lead on improvements and so help to sustain the school's improvement.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do not fully understand the relevance of learning from different faiths.

Commentary

69. By Years 2 and 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and their standards match those required in the locally agreed syllabus. The achievement of pupils in the early stages of learning in English and those with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils are fully included in all learning and there are no differences in attainment between boys and girls or between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
70. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. By Year 6, pupils have satisfactory knowledge *about* different faiths, and have very good knowledge of their own, but are less successful at learning *from* religion. They identify the main features of places of worship, for example a church, a temple and a mosque. They know how celebrations are related to key figures, events and stories within faith traditions, such as the birth of Jesus, the birth of Guru Nanak at Baisakhi and the enlightenment and death of the Buddha at Wesak. From Year 3, pupils visit places of worship used by different faiths. They know about holy books, for example the Torah, and the importance of washing hands before reading the Qur'an. Not enough time is devoted to pupils using their knowledge to give considered responses to religious and moral issues, to reflect on what might be learned from personal beliefs, and by Year 6 to ask fundamental questions about human experience, for example those associated with joy and suffering.
71. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. Evaluations of the effectiveness of teaching, learning, inclusion and the curriculum identify a need to increase teachers' subject confidence and ways work matches the diverse needs of pupils. It also identifies a need to build upon established good practice in the use of different faiths in the school, and to draw further upon the good will in nearby communities to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. The subject leader recognises that the main challenge facing teachers is to make religious education relevant to the lives of pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. Too few **design and technology, art and design, physical education and music** lessons were seen to make judgements about provision. Inspectors examined teachers' planning, assessment, pupils' work and displays of their work and held discussions with teachers, subject leaders and pupils. School evidence strongly suggests that throughout the school standards match national expectations and pupils achieve well, including those in the early stages of learning in English and those with special educational needs. **Art and design** standards by Year 6 are possibly above. Curriculum planning shows a good focus on improving pupils' English language skills that has helped dramatically improve this school. In **design and technology** there is a very good emphasis on pupils' understanding and use of vocabulary special to the subject that improves their learning. This emphasis on improving pupils' use of English was evident in a satisfactory Year 2 **physical education** lesson, where well behaved

pupils were clear about the purpose of the lesson and satisfactorily reviewed their learning. School evidence shows that in swimming by Year 6, pupils reach the required standard. In **music**, pupils sing enthusiastically, as observed in school assemblies when accompanied by the deputy headteacher playing the guitar. Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons, look forward to making music and learn a lot about different instruments. They

benefit greatly from musicians who visit the school to work with them and they very much enjoyed visits to see the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Royal Ballet perform, all of which promote their cultural development well. Pupils' **art and design** work in folders, books and displays around the school is of a good standard. A strong feature in work seen are links to other subjects, such as history in Year 2 and plant life in science that bring learning alive. The work pupils do with local artists inspires them, as seen in portraits by Year 1 pupils, who also produced good computer-generated patterns. The good fractured collage work by Year 4 pupils in the style of David Hockney showed careful attention to detail. Year 6 work displayed revealed good standards in sketches depicting movement.

73. The school has begun to improve the leadership of these subjects as part of its next strategic improvement phase. It correctly judges that assessment does not inform planning well to ensure work consistently matches pupils' learning needs. There is no system to ensure that pupils with special educational needs maintain their very good progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

74. Few lessons were seen in this area of the school's work and so no overall judgement is made about provision. The school sees pupils' personal development as very important and this priority is evident in the school's improvement plan, subject and curriculum planning, links with outside agencies, parents and the community. It is also seen in the excellent work of the Learning Mentor with pupils and their families to help them overcome obstacles to learning. There is a strong and successful emphasis on the inclusion of pupils and support and guidance for them is very good. The school very successfully helps pupils new to the school who have little or no English to settle in quickly and happily so that they achieve very well. The very good achievement of pupils and the care they receive is highly regarded by parents. The recording and assessment of pupils' personal development as they grow older is not as good as it is for academic achievement in the core subjects of English and mathematics. The programme for personal, social and health education contains good work for pupils to learn about healthy eating and keeping safe. In Reception and in Years 1 and 2, pupils learn about healthy eating and are provided with fruit each day to encourage them to eat healthily. As pupils grow older, the school increases opportunities for them to use their initiative. The school is increasing the range of opportunities for pupils to learn to be responsible. This was seen in the very responsible ways pupils help teachers and assistants, in ways older pupils look after younger ones, the politeness of pupils and the warm welcome visitors receive. Pupils are very good at helping new pupils, who are often in the early stages of learning in English, settle happily into school. Pupils are proud of their school council, which is gaining in importance for them and their teachers, and are delighted that their views are respected and acted upon. The school makes good use of links with the community and outside agencies, such as the Fire Service. In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of what being a good citizen means.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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