

INSPECTION REPORT

ROSE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Marple, Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106076

Headteacher: Mrs L Bragg

Lead inspector: Mrs C A Field

Dates of inspection: 28th February - 1st March 2005

Inspection number: 267585

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 -11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 329

School address: Rose Hill
Marple
Stockport
Postcode: SK6 6DW

Telephone number: (0161) 427 1432
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
Name of chair of Mrs R Barclay
governors:

Date of previous July 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Rose Hill Primary School is bigger than most schools and is located in the North Marple ward of Stockport. The school serves an immediate area of mainly private housing with around a third of pupils travelling some distance to receive their education. There are 329 pupils from the age of 4 to 11 on roll. The profile of children's attainment when they start in the Reception classes, known as the *Foundation Stage*, is average. Almost all pupils are of white ethnic origin but a very small number are from Indian or Chinese heritage. There are no pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English. A below average proportion of pupils have special educational needs that cover a range of learning difficulties; five pupils have a statement. Fewer pupils than found in most primary schools are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who leave or join the school at non-standard times is very low.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
9479	C Field	Lead inspector	Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship
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4099	R Braithwaite	Team Inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography Physical education
15414	D Carrington	Team inspector	Information and communication technology History Modern foreign language Music Religious education
20326	P Clark	Team inspector	Science Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs
1189	S Brown	Team inspector	English Art and design

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 9
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9 - 14
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14 - 16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17 - 31
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides an **effective** education for its pupils within a caring family atmosphere. Boys and girls achieve equally well over their time in school because of good teaching and learning. Leadership is good, and there is successful implementation of the school's aims and values. The school gives **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides good direction to the school's daily life and development.
- Pupils' achievement is good overall but is inconsistent.
- Standards are above average in English, mathematics and history and well above average in art and design by the end of Year 6.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs is good.
- The levels of challenge in the work provided for higher attainers are not consistent across years and subjects and this is limiting better achievement.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, with particular strengths in the Foundation Stage and Years 5 and 6 that accelerate pupils' progress.
- The school's assessment, tracking and target setting systems although satisfactory are not yet sharp enough to enable managers to pinpoint where the best rates of progress are being made.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and the school is successful in turning out responsible young people who are well prepared for the next stage of education.
- The care, welfare and guidance given to pupils are effective in creating a learning atmosphere in which everyone is valued. However, not all parents know enough about the school's current policy and practice in respect of behaviour and discipline and this is a shortcoming.
- Management systems are satisfactory but the strategic roles of key staff are not well defined and subject leadership and management roles are not sufficiently focused on a rigorous and critical whole-school view of standards and achievement.

The school has made good progress in tackling the weaknesses reported by the previous inspection. The school's improvement plan identifies current priorities that are wholly appropriate to sustain continuous improvement, though it would benefit from more explicit success criteria being identified.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement is **good** overall. In 2004, pupils in Year 6 attained well above average standards in English and average standards in mathematics and science. Standards in English were well above average, above average in mathematics and average in science when compared to those found in similar schools.

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.

NB. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Standards overall have been sustained at similar levels to those reported by the previous inspection in 1999. The school's rate of improvement in raising standards by the end of Year 2, as shown in national data, has been better than seen in most primary schools. This is true of English at the end of Year 6 too but not in mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in has been greater in English than in mathematics and science and this is still the case today. Current standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and history and average in science. Standards are average in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and well above average in art and design and average in all other subjects sampled by inspectors. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve the goals set for them by the time they are ready to transfer to Year 1, many exceed these in their personal and social and creative development.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are **good**. The positive set of values and principles promoted support pupils' respectful relationships and growth as good future citizens. Attendance levels are above average and punctuality is satisfactory. The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. The atmosphere in all classes is positive with most pupils working purposefully and productively. Support staff add good value to both teaching and learning. Assessment is satisfactory but the school's systems for tracking how well pupils are making gains in their learning are not sharp enough to pinpoint peaks and troughs. The curriculum is broad and balanced with very good enrichment and is fully inclusive. Accommodation is of good quality and resources are soundly used. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. The provision made for those with gifts and talents, and those who are high attaining, is satisfactory overall but inconsistent. Good pastoral support and guidance is given to pupils of all ages. The school has good links with its community that benefit the pupils' education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher provides clear educational direction based on agreed principles with staff and governors. There is a fruitful partnership between the headteacher and chair of governors that is helping the school move forward. Senior managers play a useful role in leading their teams, however, their role in monitoring and evaluation the school's effectiveness is limited. Subject leadership and management is satisfactory on the whole. However, the system of shared subject responsibilities results in overlap and duplication with some post-holders having only partial views of quality and standards. Governors give a high level of commitment to the school and do a good job in ensuring legal compliance.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents have positive views about the good quality of education and have chosen Rose Hill for its warm and caring ethos. However, a significant number of parents told inspectors that they have concerns about how incidents of unacceptable behaviour, including bullying, are dealt with. Additionally, some parents say they feel unable to share their concerns with school managers. Pupils' views are very positive about their school. Overwhelmingly they like school, especially their teachers and friends. Some say they would like more equipment at playtime and lunchtime and for others to behave better.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Targeting the achievement of potentially higher attaining pupils and ensuring that there is a consistent level of challenge in the work they are set, particularly in science.
- Ensuring that parents have up-to-date information about the school's policy and practice in respect of behaviour and discipline and that channels of communication encourage everyone to feel confident to approach the school with any concerns they may have.

- Sharpening the systems for tracking and assessing how well pupils are making gains in their learning and involving them and parents in a timely review.
- Reviewing the strategic roles of key staff, rationalising the roles of subject leaders and providing training and development in order that they have a full picture of provision throughout the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Pupils' achievement is **good** overall but is inconsistent. The school adds positive value to most pupils' education, as shown by national test results.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- From an average base, boys and girls achieve equally well over their time in school.
- Standards are above average in English, mathematics and history and well above average in art and design by the end of Year 6.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs is good.
- The levels of challenge in the work provided for higher attainers are not consistent across years and subjects and this is limiting better achievement.
- The school's assessment, tracking and target setting systems although satisfactory are not yet sharp enough to enable managers to pinpoint where the best rates of progress are being made.

Commentary

1. Standards in core subjects have been sustained at similar levels to those reported by the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age in the 2004 national tests was very similar to that seen in the 1999 national tests in both Years 2 and 6. The school's rate of improvement in raising standards by the end of Year 2 has been better than seen nationally. This is true of English at the end of Year 6 too but is not the case in mathematics and science. The school has made good improvement to the curriculum, resources and accommodation for information and communication technology (ICT) since its previous inspection and the standards show improvement. Art and design is the subject strength of the school with high quality work on display in all years. The services of a specialist teacher is proving to add considerable value to pupils' experiences in art and design and is a resource that the teachers' use to very good impact.
2. Most children currently in the Foundation Stage started with average levels of skills and knowledge, though the range of ability is wide. Children's achievement is good with most on track to reach the goals expected for their age. Many are likely to exceed personal goals by the time they are ready to transfer to Year 1, in their personal, social and creative development. Children with special educational needs are doing particularly well in the Foundation Stage because of the very good assistance they receive from the dedicated support staff and teaching team.
3. Current standards in Year 2 are above average in English and science and well above average in art and design. Particularly good attention is paid to reading with parents giving very good support that helps the children build their skills well and gain pleasure in sharing books. The school has worked effectively to promote the investigative aspects of science that are resulting in better standards than seen previously. Standards are average in mathematics, ICT, religious education, design and technology and physical education. Pupils make good progress during the infants overall and most are achieving well from their various starting points. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties are very well responded to and the good provision being

made ensures that they achieve well against their personal targets. Those pupils at the other end of the ability spectrum are not as consistently well provided for. The work in their books and the findings from lessons shows that these pupils are not always challenged to the full in science and mathematics in particular. The school is rightly concerned about the problem solving aspect of mathematics and is working in active support of enabling pupils to have better opportunities to build their skills. In writing, however, pupils are provided with tasks that develop their skills progressively and facilitate independent and creative outcomes, though in some of their recorded work presentation could be neater.

4. The table below shows that Year 2 pupils reached well above average standards in writing and mathematics and above average standards in reading. The standards were better than in 2003 in writing and mathematics but not in reading. The results were average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing when compared to those in similar schools. Teachers' assessment of science shows that standards were below average. The school's trend in improvement at the end of Year 2 is above that seen nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.8 (17.3)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	16.1 (15.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.3 (16.5)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. Current standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and history and average in science. Standards are average in ICT, religious education and well above average in art and design and average in all other subjects sampled by inspectors. Pupils make good progress during the juniors overall with some accelerated progress in the last two years of school due to particularly effective teaching. The work in pupils' books shows that in lower juniors the pace of learning is satisfactory rather than good. Following a thorough analysis of 2004 national test results, the school has worked well to ensure that more pupils reach the levels they are capable of in mathematics and this is reflected in the above average standards seen in Year 6. The work in science, from Year 3 to Year 5, is rather lacklustre with very little difference in the work set for pupils of different levels of attainment. The use of targets to support better writing is making a positive difference to standards and there is potential for these to be used to support pupils' next steps in learning in other subjects, for example, in science.
6. The table that follows shows that Year 6 pupils reached well above average standards in English and average standards in mathematics and science. Results were above those in 2003 in English but not in mathematics or science. When compared to the standards in similar schools, they were average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. Nevertheless, from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 the data shows that these pupils made good progress overall. There was no significant variation between the performance of boys and girls. The overall trend in improvement is below that seen nationally in mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (27.3)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.4 (28.1)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.7 (28.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

7. Standards in English have been sustained at high levels for some years, whereas in mathematics and science the picture is not as consistent or positive. Teacher's use of assessment is not being used consistently to inform the planning of work that would enable those who are capable of reaching higher levels to do so. Target-setting systems work effectively to support pupils' achievement in English but are less well developed in other subjects and this is a missed opportunity to help build for improvement and to ensure that trends in performance are at least as good as in similar schools at the end of both key stages of the pupils' education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school are **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Pupils' attendance is **good** and punctuality is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are happy to come to school and their attendance is above the national average.
- Boys and girls are equally keen to learn and try hard in lessons.
- Pupils are very sensible and trustworthy in the many roles of responsibility given to them and they respond well to the teachers' very high expectations for their conduct.
- Pupils have good relationships with one another and behave well on the whole, though a few boys in lower juniors have the tendency to show fussy behaviour at times.
- Some pupils and parents still have concerns about the behaviour of others.

Commentary

8. Pupils say they like coming to school and particularly value their friends and the kindness of teachers. They enjoy challenge in lessons, and having listened very well, they try hard to succeed in their given tasks.
9. Attendance is good, and has been consistently above average for several years. Unauthorised absence is the same as that for most primary schools, and pupils' punctuality is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.4
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.

10. Some parents, and indeed some pupils have expressed concerns about the anti-social behaviour of a few pupils both at play and in lessons. However, the pupils also said they have confidence that should any problems occur, the teachers will deal with them successfully. The inspection team looked at this closely and found that pupils' behaviour is generally good both in lessons and at play-times, and that there are many instances of very good, trustworthy and considerate behaviour. Occasionally, some pupils and typically boys in Year 4, become restless and lose interest but the teacher's intervention was always observed to be successful with no learning time lost. Inspectors looked very carefully at the work that all Year 4 pupils have completed in their books since September and there is no significant variation between what they are learning at different times or across subjects.
11. Pupils respond well to the system of rewards, like the *Oscars* which reinforce the message '*Our school cares and respects*'. They also fully respect and understand the need for sanctions, like loss of the *Golden Time*, the free-choice slot awarded for good efforts on Fridays. The school will use the sanction of exclusion in very rare circumstances when it is necessary to emphasise its refusal to tolerate aggression. However, the zero rate is testament to its good record on inclusion. The good quality of the few pupils' individual behaviour plans, are helping them to come to terms with managing their own feelings and behaviour positively.
12. Relationships between pupils are good, and there is no evidence of any racial tension or disharmony. Pupils work and play well together, and there is good rapport between the age groups. This is well demonstrated by the success of the *Playleaders* scheme in which older pupils become playground friends to help with playground games and ethos. The school council also demonstrates the positive teamwork which includes all ages and serves as a good role model for classes where such harmony is still developing.
13. A strength of the school is the way pupils are encouraged to take on small duties within the school day which help develop a sense of responsibility and an understanding of the needs of a community. This approach to early citizenship pays off well as the pupils demonstrate commitment and enthusiasm for their tasks. From the register monitors in the Foundation Stage to the Year 6 pupils who staff the office at lunchtime, and especially the representatives on the school council, such pupils show a reliable, trustworthy approach to their jobs. In support of charities and school fund-raising events, pupils and their families are generous and keenly aware of the needs of others.
14. The personal development of pupils is good overall, and very good in areas of social and moral understanding. There has been an improvement in the areas of spiritual and cultural development, which are now good. Assemblies are used well to develop themes like caring for others, and diversity, and these are then developed in class sessions. Circle times make a particularly good contribution to the development of emotional health, by giving pupils a chance to empathise, to express their own feelings, and to learn how to respect views different from their own. Through the celebration of cultural festivals like Chinese New Year, pupils learn about other ways of life which are woven into the fabric of British society, and as they grow older the multi-cultural enrichment of their learning experiences prepares them well for their future as the citizens of tomorrow.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **good**. The curriculum offers worthwhile experiences for the pupils with some very good enrichment. Pupils receive good care and support. The school has forged strong links with other schools and its community for the benefit of pupils and secures a satisfactory partnership with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables boys and girls of different social and ethnic backgrounds to learn successfully but more pace and challenge are required, especially in the work set for higher attainers.
- The most consistent teaching to help pupils build their knowledge, understanding and skills at a rapid pace was seen in the Foundation Stage and Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well with some very good support from teaching assistants that helps them learn successfully and with confidence.
- The quality of teachers' assessment, though satisfactory in core subjects, is not sufficiently focused on helping pupils to improve their work, with marking a weakness in this respect.

Commentary

15. The majority of parents are happy with the quality of education provided for their children and identify the rounded education they receive as a real strength. A few parents raised serious concerns about the quality of learning in lower juniors but the inspection team could find no justification for this in either the lessons observed or in the work recorded in pupils' books since September. Pupils' learning and achievement is satisfactory here.
16. The teaching team's high expectations in the Foundation Stage together with their good system for assessing and recording individual progress result in all of the children building skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. The very good focus on meeting individual needs, and personalising learning opportunities, enables children with learning difficulties to achieve well, as well as those who are high attaining. The Foundation Stage classrooms are vibrant and exciting and the children are given plenty of opportunities to plan and manage appropriate aspects of their learning. They are encouraged to make personal choices and to justify them. This flexible approach is very successful in helping the children to show initiative and to take responsibility for their own actions. Fundamentally, the approach is very effective in supporting the very good personal and creative development of the children.
17. Teaching was never less than satisfactory in the infants and junior lessons observed with around two-thirds being of good or better quality. The good quality teaching matches the school's own evaluation. The atmosphere in all classes is positive with most pupils working purposefully and productively. Strengths were evident throughout the school. They included secure subject knowledge, warm relationships, good

behaviour management, good use of support staff and lots of encouragement for the pupils to try their best. Occasionally, some restless behaviour was observed in lower junior classes but this was always dealt with firmly and fairly. In otherwise satisfactory lessons there is tendency for some teachers to focus too much on providing information with pupils expected to listen for prolonged periods and this is when interest wanes. In the best lessons, typically in Year 6 and the Foundation Stage, the pupils were engaged in active learning from the outset with clear expectations set for their timely involvement in planning and managing appropriate aspects of their learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	4 (7%)	32 (58%)	19 (35%)	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.

18. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve successfully because of the good provision made for them. Needs are assessed early and there are useful individual education plans in place to support their on-going academic and social development. Support staff make a good contribution to both teaching and learning and are a valuable asset. The needs of potentially high attaining are not as well met. Approaches are left to individual teachers to ensure that these pupils receive sufficient challenge in their studies. The school has devised a register of such pupils and those with gifts and talents but there is no actual system in place to monitor that these pupils make the gains of which they are capable and reach higher standards in their work.
19. The school's assessment system is satisfactory overall but used more effectively in English than in other subjects. The use of targets to support better writing is making a positive difference. Lessons in English and mathematics were better than in other subjects. References to the pupils' individual targets for literacy and numeracy ranged from good to insufficient. Additionally, the use of round up sessions to help pupils' focus on the next step in learning was often imprecise. Teachers' marking is also very variable in this respect with few making good use of targets to show pupils how to improve and this limits the pupils' self knowledge. The senior manager's monitoring and evaluation about how well pupils are making gains in their learning is not sharp enough to pinpoint such inconsistencies and recording does not present a clear enough picture of strengths and weaknesses. There is no agreed learning and teaching policy that could help when monitoring by setting a clear expectation for the quality expected and this is a missed opportunity.

The curriculum

The **good** curriculum provides a range of worthwhile experiences across subjects and meets statutory requirements. Extra curricular provision is very good and the quality and quantity of accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good display shows the breadth and quality of the curriculum, especially in art and design.

- The very good range of visits and visitors adds very positive enrichment to pupils' curricular experiences.
- The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is well planned and delivered.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- The accommodation is of good quality and this benefits the pupils' education.

Commentary

20. Since the previous inspection, good improvement has been made to the curriculum, which now provides a range of worthwhile experiences across subjects and fully meets statutory requirements. The curriculum for religious education has been adjusted appropriately to meet the requirements of the recently introduced locally agreed syllabus. A two-year rolling programme has been developed that caters for different aged pupils in the same class. The consistently good provision made for English is central to pupils' good achievement during their time at school and the school's positive performance in national tests reflects this. The school has worked hard to raise the profile of mathematics in the school following disappointing test results last year and its strategies are proving successful with still more professional development work planned to continue this year. There is still a need to inject creativity and challenge into the work in science.
21. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is well planned and delivered. The cross-curricular links between the areas they experiences are very well made and give a meaningful context that draws well on the children's own experiences. For example the theme of *animals* is currently the focus for all of the areas the children experience with the recent flurry of snow adding extra value to nursery children's pretend trip to the *North pole to see the polar bears!* When playing with the small toy animals set out in their lovely enclosures made by the staff, the Reception children are keen to replicate their visit to Chester zoo in their role-play.
22. The school is successful in promoting its curricular aims. Good focus is given to supporting pupils; basic skills development, including ICT which is being supported by an improving curriculum that is well supported by good resources. Pupils have a range of experiences in the creative and aesthetic and physical aspects of the curriculum. Strong emphasis is given to pupils' self-esteem and to enabling all to achieve well in a happy, family atmosphere. Very good provision is made for art and design. The work on display that includes a range of media is of high quality and pupils were very proud to tell inspectors about their original creations. The school is forging ahead with making provision for pupils to learn a modern foreign language. Spanish was only sampled during the inspection, as there were no opportunities to observe lessons and little work from past lessons available for scrutiny. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their Spanish lessons and they grow in confidence as they practice their response to questions about their names, ages and class. There is emergent recognition of simple written text through the effective use made of simple labels on display boards for example. Studies in Spanish are making a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and to the richness of the curriculum in general. The links with the high school, that provides the specialist teaching, work to the pupils' clear advantage.
23. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils make good progress against their specific targets because of good assessment, timely review and effective leadership and management. Record keeping is in good order

and pupils receive the right amount of nurturing and development to help them achieve well. There is no specific provision made for pupils with gifts or talents, or criteria used for identification, although teachers do keep a log of those who merit flagging up. The school is currently attending training on supporting development in this area organised by its local education authority.

24. There is very good enrichment from a well-focused programme of visits and visitors and a good range of out of school activities that extend pupils' experiences. Visits take place in all years and range from the youngest children's visit to Knowsley Safari Park and to Chester Zoo, Years 1/2 pupils visit to the Chestnut Centre to view otters and owls, Year 3/4 pupils visit to Chester as part of the Roman topic and Year 5/6 pupils experience of life as a child in Victorian times at Styal. A long list of sporting extra curricular activities include football, tag rugby, cross country, netball, gym, badminton, table tennis, skipping and swimming. Year 6 pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities at the Robinwood Outdoor Adventure centre as part of their residential experience. Coaching takes place with specialist input in football and hockey, lacrosse, tennis and cricket. Good use is made of the local area for history and geography studies and this also helps promote the sense of community. Pupils sing carols to the residents of a local nursing home and join in the local village celebrations. The lower junior-age pupils make good use of the local swimming pool and virtually all achieve the required 25 metres distance award two years early. The school joins with other schools in the cluster to share in sporting, music and drama events and this is a positive feature.
25. The accommodation is of good quality; it is bright, stimulating and well maintained by a hardworking caretaker and his team. Resources are well chosen and of sound quality, and are enhanced by library loans and the strong links with local high schools. School managers have highlighted the environment as in need of development and have set out a very clear 5 year plan that involves pupils in re-designing play spaces for different types of play, tree and bulb planting, and thinking about how to attract more wildlife.

Care, guidance and support

The level of care shown for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is **good**. Pupils receive **good** support and guidance for their personal and academic development. There is **very good** involvement of pupils in the daily life of the school, through seeking and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy very good, trusting relationships with the adults who teach and support them.
- All staff are vigilant in their considerations of matters of health and safety.
- There are very good procedures in place to promote and support good behaviour.
- Guidance on how to improve pupils' work is good but the provision made for those with gifts and talents, and those who are high attaining, is inconsistent.
- Pupils know that their thoughts and views are considered and often acted upon in the course of daily school life.

Commentary

26. Rose Hill primary is a caring school where all pupils are well known by the staff responsible for them and their needs are well catered for. The welfare and happiness of pupils is central to the school's work and provides the foundation for the good learning which takes place. Pupils' views are taken into account very well and through the self-governing school council they are given many opportunities to make a positive difference to school life.
27. Health and safety procedures are good, with clear evidence that all staff monitor vigilantly and ensure that safe practice is taught. Child protection procedures are fully in place and follow local area guidelines. Pupils are given instruction in making safe and appropriate choices.
28. The *Golden rules* form a well-presented and clear set of guidance for pupils which are prominently displayed around the school. These are at the heart of the consistently high expectations held by staff for pupils' good personal conduct. They are supported by a range of rewards and sanctions. The success of this approach owes much to the very good relationships between adults and the children in their care. Where behaviour problems occur the school benefits from specialist expertise, for example from the behaviour support teacher who led a circle time in Year 5, exploring the concept of working together.
29. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, have access to well-informed guidance from their teachers. The systems in place to record pupils' achievements in English and mathematics enable the pupils to have a clear idea of their personal targets for improvement. However there is some inconsistency in making clear to pupils what they need to do next to improve and this is particularly so for those who are high achievers. The lack of focus on targeting advancement in science is limiting better achievement in the subject.
30. The induction arrangements into the Foundation Stage are good, and parents receive a useful set of information to assist in a smooth settling-in period. Pupils who have transferred from other schools say they found Rose Hill a welcoming and happy place. Older pupils have some opportunities to sample the facilities at the high school and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **satisfactory** partnership with parents. Links with the community are **good**. Liaison with other schools and colleges is also **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents give good support to the school through facilitating homework, through volunteering to help in class, and through Parent Teacher Association (PTA) fundraising.
- Too many parents still feel they have unresolved concerns regarding behaviour and information.
- The school provides parents with good regular news updates, but the quality of some of the required statutory information is in need of a revamp to improve how user-friendly it is.
- Pupils benefit from a very rich learning experience thanks to good use of the community as a resource.
- There are good links with local high schools, sports colleges and teacher training institutions.

Commentary

31. The school has good links with its community that benefit the pupils' education. Since being flagged as weaknesses, the governors have given good attention to ensuring that the prospectus and the annual report to parents meet legal requirements. The majority of parents have positive views about the good quality of education and have chosen Rose Hill for its warm and caring ethos. They are very supportive of the homework policy, and several provide voluntary help in school. However, a significant number of parents told inspectors that they have concerns about how incidents of unacceptable behaviour (including harassment and bullying), are dealt with. Additionally, some parents said they feel unable to share their concerns with school managers.
32. The headteacher has worked hard to make parents feel welcome in school, and to canvass their views through a questionnaire, subsequently sharing the findings and suggesting a working forum. This approach has not yet had the desired effect of ensuring that all parents have confidence in the school's policy and practice in respect of behaviour and discipline.
33. The school prospectus, while factual, does not present the most encouraging school to home partnership in its presentation. However, other school letters and information are very *readable* and friendly in tone. Parents told inspectors how much they value the *Rose Hill News*, but some would appreciate more advance notice of events such as assemblies. The school has erected two new notice boards to aid communication and the school's web site is up and running but there is still work in progress. Pupils' annual progress reports are satisfactory but do not have a consistent approach in engaging parents by sharing targets for improvement. The PTA promotes itself well and is a valuable source of extra revenue to improve the pupils' environment, for example in the current goal of providing exciting new outdoor play equipment. The PTA organises a wide range of social and fundraising events aimed at involving as many parents as possible in the life and development of the school. A good number of parents work in support of the school, the parents who support reading on a very regular basis were observed to be doing a very good job in supporting development of this key skill.
34. Good community links include a long list of visitors who bring colour and real-world experiences into the curriculum. These include speakers in assembly, health specialists, and participation in the annual Marple carnival. Links with other schools provide good opportunities for pupils to take part in sports matches and a country dance festival as well as a science challenge at the local high school. There are also worthwhile links with Manchester University with whom the school supports teacher training.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **good**. Leadership is good, and there is successful implementation of the school's aims and values. Management systems are satisfactory but are not sufficiently focused on a rigorous whole-school view of standards and achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is well led by the headteacher who has worked successfully to focus the school's work and to increase the involvement of governors and staff in the running of the school.
- Key staff are committed to the school improvement and work hard though their strategic roles are not well defined and they are insufficiently involved in school monitoring and evaluation.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic and dedicated to their work. However, their role in monitoring and evaluation the school's effectiveness is limited.
- Governors are well led by the very well informed chair and they contribute effectively to the management of the school.

- The school's assessment, target setting and tracking procedures are not yet focused enough to enable key staff and subject leaders to identify whether all pupils are maximising their achievement.
- Financial management and control is good and the school gives good value for money.

Commentary

35. The headteacher has good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and shows clear determination to make the necessary improvements in order to increase the overall effectiveness of the education it provides for the pupils. She places the achievement of pupils, both academically and in pastoral matters, at the head of her priorities and she demonstrates good expectations and ambitions. She has worked well in the 16 months since her appointment, to increase the involvement and accountability of staff and the governors and she enjoys positive working relationships with all the adults and pupils in the school. She has the confidence of the parent body who praise the efficiency with which the school is run. Despite the current concerns being flagged about behaviour and communication there is quiet confidence in leadership and management of the school.
36. There is a positive sense of collaboration and support amongst key managers. They fully subscribe to the headteacher's work for improvement and are committed and hard-working professionals. They each play a critical role in leading subjects or major aspects of the school's work but as the strategic team their role requires enhancement, starting with the definition of their role which currently lacks focus on their responsibility for pupils' learning and achievement across the whole school. Their involvement in monitoring and evaluation activities lack rigour. School managers each play a part in school improvement planning, however the construction of the plan should be sharpened by the identification of explicit success criteria by which the targets can be measured for impact.
37. The subject leaders, as the next tier of management, can point to considerable success in the resourcing, planning and meeting staff training needs in their subjects through the shared approach they have, that typically involves two or three staff. However, their roles do not explicitly include responsibility for standards and achievement across the school and the monitoring and evaluation programme has yet to get into stride. The monitoring and evaluation of lessons, planning and pupils' work that has already taken place is a positive start, but recording is not sufficiently focused on outcomes. It is evident that all staff need to ensure that this programme of self-evaluation is rigorous in its identification of strengths and areas for improvement against agreed criteria that centre on pupils' learning and achievement, rather than on teaching activities. Staff training in such matters has yet to take place. The long-standing system of sharing subject responsibilities is somewhat of an inhibitor to post-holders gaining a complete overview of provision to assist in this and is a costly item on the budget.
38. The special needs co-ordinator has ensured that overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. She is a good leader who manages provision in an organised manner. Reviews of provision are carried out on a regular basis so that any changes in pupils' needs can be acted upon and implemented. The school is aware of the need to review the criteria by which pupils are selected for additional support. At present the school has an Access Statement in draft form. There is a need to formulate detailed plans, for

example for the admission of a pupil in a wheelchair or access to a disabled toilet, at a more cutting edge level.

39. Governors play an increasing role in the monitoring and evaluation process and they are gaining in confidence to ask critical questions to ensure the school provides best value in its purchases and the quality of education and pupils' achievement. The quality of governors' work is good. The chair, who is building a very fruitful partnership with the headteacher, leads them very effectively. Governors have good input into financial planning, control and management. This is of good quality, which is also due to the good support and procedures provided by the efficient school administration staff.
40. One of the key issues for this inspection focuses on the improvement of systems for tracking and assessing how well pupils are achieving. This is because these systems are incomplete. In some subjects, especially English, assessment is developing well, but in others, such as religious education, assessment is ad-hoc and left to the individual teacher. The target setting and tracking process has yet to focus clearly enough on the expectation of what individual pupils ought to achieve, and to log how and whether these targets are met. This is especially necessary for the higher attaining pupils, who do not currently share the same quality target setting system that is provided for pupils with special educational needs. The inconsistencies in target setting, tracking and evaluation result in key managers and subject leaders only having a partial view of the effectiveness of the education provided. The school clearly provides good value for money, not least because it enables pupils to do well for a below average spend, but this is not demonstrated plainly enough in the school's own analysis of its effectiveness.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	781,520
Total expenditure	781,185
Expenditure per pupil	2,339

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	56,615
Balance carried forward to the next year	56,950

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring ethos and very good relationships underpin the children's good achievement.
- The quality and teaching and learning is good overall with key strengths in the personal, social and creative aspects of the good curriculum.
- Leadership and management are good with good capacity for sustained quality and effectiveness.
- Despite good liaison, the location of nursery and Reception at opposite ends of the school works against even better Foundation Stage provision. The need for doubling up on resources does not present the most efficient value for money and the quality of outdoor provision is better for some children than others.
- Staff build a good partnership with parents.

Commentary

41. The Foundation Stage, which comprises a nursery class at one end of the school and two Reception classes sharing a spacious joint area at the other, is well resourced with good internal accommodation that enables staff to successfully meet the needs of three to five year old children.
42. Children receive a positive start to their education in the nursery and all classes offer a broad, rich curriculum. Good, well-planned, detailed assessments reflect a positive improvement since the last inspection. These assessments enable all staff to pitch tasks for the majority of children's individual needs, including children requiring additional support and challenge, so that learning does not lose its pace. When children join the nursery their skills and understanding are broadly similar to those of children in other schools. Nevertheless, there is clearly a wide range of attainment evident with a high proportion of children displaying very limited oral communication skills. Well-focused teaching enables most children to achieve well, so by the time they move into the Reception classes their skills have improved significantly. The good achievement continues in the Reception classes, which ensures that most children's learning is built on successfully.
43. Very good attention is given to enabling children with special educational needs to be included in all activities. Their personal and academic growth is nurtured well by careful planning and sensitive approaches. This was very well demonstrated in the nursery on a day when it snowed during outdoor playtime. Children with a physical disability were given support to help them play and have fun making snow balls alongside everyone else, despite the ground conditions being too dangerous for walking frames to be in use.
44. Parents are fully involved in helping and supporting their children and communication between staff and parents is good. A noticeable feature in the nursery and Reception

classes is regular homework tasks in the form of reading books. This successfully enhances children's achievement and enjoyment.

45. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed by a hard-working, experienced leader and the prospect for continued improvement is good. Inspection findings reflect a similar picture to that observed at the time of the previous inspection in many areas of learning with added improvements in personal, social and emotional development, creative development and outside play provision for nursery children. The Foundation Stage staff have acknowledged that the next stage of its development is to bring the nursery and Reception classes closer together geographically to enable a more flexible approach in terms of linking children, adults and resources to create a more cohesive unit. The outdoor play provision for Reception children is barely satisfactory as the present area remains unfenced along the playing field perimeter. The Reception children do not have continuous access to a separate, secure outside area to support positive play. Resources for outside play are, at best, satisfactory with limited space for the storage of large equipment such as tricycles and mobile equipment. The Reception classes are unable to use the good outdoor facilities located by the nursery because they are so far away.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good, and this in turn successfully boosts children's self esteem.
- Children develop very good levels of independence because of the well-structured curriculum.
- Higher and lower attaining children have well focused support that enables them to achieve their goals.

Commentary

46. When children start school in the nursery their personal, social and emotional development is similar to that found in most schools. Clear boundaries and the consistent role models set by adults ensure that the children know what is expected of them so that they quickly get into good learning habits including the correct way to behave. The very good teamwork of the adults in the nursery and Reception classes gives the children good role models for co-operation within a calm but rigorous approach to work. Very good teaching helps the children grow in confidence and enables them to make choices and in so doing take responsibility for their own actions. Overall behaviour is very good and children regularly take turns when sharing practical equipment such as a toy, game or construction kit. Clearly evident from observations in the nursery is the expectation that children will clear away tidily one activity before moving to the next, and most rise well to the challenges set. Children are friendly and take pride in their work. The very supportive relationships ensure children feel secure and confident to seek help when needed. In Reception the children were observed to collaborate very well as they made a den for the daddy lion to sleep in out of cardboard and tape. By the time they leave the Reception classes they are well on course to achieve above the goals expected for their age.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and enables the children to achieve well and reach the goals expected.
- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop children's language skills.

Commentary

47. Teaching is good and all children learn successfully and achieve well. All staff take every opportunity during all activities to develop the children's vocabulary through the use of probing questioning and constant insistence that children listen to the contributions of other children. For example in the nursery when children were building bridges from construction kits to cross an imaginary pond, the supporting adult continually chatted to the children asking them questions so that they had to think and choose the right words to describe what they were doing in terms of bridge structure, strength and durability. Very good relationships mean that children of all abilities are given well-planned opportunities to talk. As children described the attributes of their constructed bridge built to protect 'people from shark infested waters', adults were genuinely interested in what the children had to say. Children enjoy books and appear to listen very attentively when a story is read. There are many well planned opportunities when children can look at books by themselves, handling them with care and maturity and appreciating that text is read from left to right. Attractive, well laid out writing areas also capture children's interest as they progress from mark making to the writing of simple sentences – for example about a recent visit to the zoo. By the end of Reception most children use recognisable letters when retelling their news and stories. Children are positively encouraged to hold their pencils correctly and use simple word banks to find words to assist early spellings. By the end of the Reception year, most children will reach the goals expected for their age in this area of learning with a significant group of children on track to exceed the expected goals in reading.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good.
- Learning is well planned to encourage children to count, add and subtract in a range of real life situations.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning are good, resulting in good achievement. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. Children in the nursery are given good well-planned opportunities to recognise well known shapes in the classroom and to learn their correct mathematical names. The very strong links

with art and design suitably enhances the subject's profile as children's displays illustrate a range of simple shapes painted with very good control and precision. The majority of children in the Reception classes confidently count to five and well beyond. Adults use a variety of number rhymes and songs to help children count. During one well-planned activity where teaching was good, children took turns to pretend to buy animal toy souvenirs with real money just like they did during a recent zoo visit. Children were challenged to recognise simple decimal coinage, indicating which coins when added together would buy a particular toy. Higher attaining children were suitably challenged to give the correct change from 10 pence. They also enhanced their personal and social skills as they took turns to respond to questioning. Good systems are in place to check that children's understanding, knowledge and skills are moving forward and this information is used at regular intervals to plan the next stage of learning very effectively. Most children are working at levels expected for their age with a few on track to exceed the goals set for them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of well-planned, interesting activities successfully promotes good achievement for most children.
- Children use computers very confidently and are developing a useful range of ICT skills because of the good experiences provided.
- Staff use questioning effectively to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Commentary

49. This area is well planned and is supported by a rich range of interesting activities that successfully capture children's appetite for learning. Their growing understanding of the world around them is successfully extended by well planned educational visits for example, the local veterinary practice. Teaching is good in both the nursery and Reception classes and children achieve well and the majority are on course to attain the expected goals in this area of learning. In one session children were encouraged to make observations and note differences and similarities between a range of exotic fruit. They were challenged to name the kinds of fruits they would take to the jungle giving reasons why – this successfully linked to the reading of *Manda's Surprise*. In their 'jungle tent' children were fully involved in discussing the requirements of a jungle expedition in terms of fruit and mosquito nets. In the Reception class children confidently displayed a range of computer skills linked to selecting appropriate colours prior to drawing an animal of their choice. Clearly skills in this area of learning are above those expected for their age. Very good relationships and management of the children by the teacher ensured there was a purposeful working atmosphere. Planning clearly illustrates the celebration of religious festivals from around the world in terms of reading stories, handling appropriate artefacts or cooking national dishes, for example photographic displays reflecting children's celebration of the Chinese New Year. Most children are on track to reach the goals expected for their age by the time they are ready to transfer to Year 1.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is no continuous access to a secure play area in the Reception classes so opportunities for development are limited.
- When outside sessions take place in the Reception classes there is a lack of focus and rigour in terms of planning for these sessions.
- A good range of well planned activities for cutting out and early painting promotes children's learning well and children achieve well in these activities.

Commentary

50. The many exciting opportunities planned for children mean that they learn how to use pencils, crayons, scissors and paintbrushes successfully. Their dexterity is promoted through well-chosen activities. Children handle large constructional toys and equipment in terms of wooden blocks well, for example the building of a pretend 'zoo' with its buildings, car park and open spaces. This all promotes good gains in their physical development. In a pretend visit to the North Pole, under the guidance of adults who promoted individual skills well, children in the nursery were encouraged to make snowballs and use three-wheeled vehicles with good control. Appropriate adult intervention made the experience extremely worthwhile, reflecting a good improvement since the last inspection. By direct contrast, children in the Reception classes have limited opportunities for outdoor play as they do not have continuous access to a secure outside area. Resources are limited for outside play. Staff have rightly earmarked this area of provision as being in need of review in order to enhance the existing good range of practical activities that take place. Overall teaching is good and most children are on course to achieve the goals expected by the end of the Reception year.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of children achieve very well because of the very good provision made.
- Well-planned experiences enable children to make rapid strides in their creative development.

Commentary

51. Children's creative work is very well displayed in the nursery and Reception area and this in turn lets children know that their work is valued and respected by adults.

Children work with a very good range of media, therefore enabling most to achieve goals well above those expected for their age. Corridor displays contain a range of colourful paintings in the style of *Kandinsky* depicting different shapes, mainly concentric circles. Work in the style of *Paul Klee* indicates a mature choice of colours by children that give a very strong impact in terms of lines and patterns.

52. Teaching is very good and this in turn enables very good achievement to be made. The focus on role play extends children's imagination very well as they act out camping in the jungle and plan expeditions. Children in the Reception classes planned and designed a model zoo and acted as 'guides' during the final part of the lesson, confidently describing a tour around their imaginary zoo to their peers. Music is enjoyed by all children and most sing tunefully with control and express great pleasure when singing number rhymes. As observed during snack time, children quickly and confidently learn new words. A real strength of the nursery and Reception classes is the ability of children to work independently with the minimum of adult supervision. Creative areas are very well resourced and offer exciting places to enjoy new learning. Most children are on course to achieve the goals expected by the end of the Reception year and a significant number are on track to exceed them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and 6.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve as well as others as a result.
- Pupils use their literacy skills well in support of other subjects.
- Opportunities for extended writing are inconsistent with handwriting and presentation skills requiring enhancement.
- Marking is not linked effectively to target setting and pupils are insufficiently involved in reviewing the progress they make in writing.

Commentary

53. Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. National test results for Year 6 pupils are better than at the last inspection, as are writing standards in Year 2. Test results, the school's tracking of individual performance and inspection findings confirm that pupils achieve well in English and that boys and girls of different abilities achieve equally well across the school.
54. Standards in speaking and listening are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. In Years 1 and 2 a sound range of opportunities are provided to develop those skills such as puppets, listening to story tapes and responding to questions. In Years 3 to 6 teachers build steadily on these skills so that by the end of Year 6 pupils engage in discussion, considering the contribution of others and taking account of their views. Pupils have a satisfactory command of English overall. However, speaking and listening has been identified as a focus for attention. There are missed opportunities in

plenary sessions to extend speaking and listening skills. More planned opportunities are needed that involve pupils in role-play, hot-seating discussions and debates, for example, in order to create extended conversations, enable pupils to ask questions, to develop ideas and to encourage the use of a wide range of vocabulary.

55. Reading standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Average and higher attainers in Year 2 read silently with good comprehension of their reading. When reading aloud many pupils read with fluency and good expression. They are familiar with both fiction and non-fiction texts. Pupils have a good range of strategies to help establish the meaning of unknown words. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs read more hesitantly, using their knowledge of letters and letter sounds to help establish meaning when reading aloud. Basic skills in reading are carefully taught. By the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils read with good levels of fluency and expression. Reading is accurate. Pupils are familiar with a wide range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction and express preferences for authors and styles.
56. The school's continued focus on the development of writing has paid dividends. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6. In Years 1 and 2 pupils write for a good range of purpose. Writing is organised, imaginative and clear and punctuation to mark sentences is consistent and accurate. Pupils show increasing use of descriptive language, for example, one pupil wrote about the Summer Fair, *"I can smell sticky toffee apples with gorgeous, sugarey candy floss..."* Pupils are increasingly aware of the audience for writing such as in the following example, *"I like butterflies. They have beautiful patterns, haven't they? They have wings to help them fly, otherwise they will fall, of course..."*.
57. The writing of all pupils communicates meaning effectively in both narrative and non-narrative forms. Most pupils form letters accurately but presentation of work is untidy for a significant minority.
58. Pupils' skills are built on effectively in most classes in the junior years although achievement is more satisfactory than good and standards are average in the Year 3/4 and Year 4 classes. From a thorough scrutiny of pupils' writing in books started in September, inspectors found that there is no difference in the progress and achievement of pupils between these two classes. However, approaches to the marking of pupils' work and the use of targets to support this, does vary. Writing of the average and higher attaining pupils in Year 6, captures the reader's attention through its style and use of imaginative vocabulary. For example, one Year 6 pupil working on a Kenning poem about Stonehenge wrote very well:

*"High master,
Ominous shadows,
Bracken stones,
Shaking boulders,
Mossy ground,
Sunlight streaming on the ground,
Sense of magic all around."*

59. Pupils study different author's writing in a wide range of styles with good examples of play scripts, poetry, report writing and letters, however, opportunities for more extended writing are inconsistent between year groups, although some good

examples are evident of writing in other subjects of the curriculum such as history. A wide range of punctuation is used accurately. Handwriting is not as good as it should be by the end of Year 6. Although most higher attainers use a neat, cursive style, many pupils in all year groups lack pride in the presentation of their work and a significant number lack the necessary skills for good cursive handwriting by the time they leave the school. Too many pupils still choose to write in pencil instead of pen and their untidy writing detracts from otherwise high quality work.

60. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons are well planned to meet the different learning needs of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and fully included, enabling them to achieve as well as their peers. Pupils are well managed. They are clear about the lesson purpose and well motivated by the interesting tasks set. Marking is not sufficiently developmental with little reference to targets set. There are too few opportunities for pupils to be involved in self-assessment. The subject is well led and soundly managed. However, the monitoring aspect of the subject is not fully developed to enable each of the three subject leaders to have a clear overview of standards, teaching and learning in all classes and year groups throughout the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. Overall, pupils use their literacy skills well to support work in other subjects. Skills in speaking and listening are used satisfactorily in a variety of contexts. Pupils engage well in discussions in class when given the opportunity. They interact well in groups. Pupils use their reading skills to retrieve and collate information from a range of sources, for example, in history, geography, science and art and design. Writing skills are used effectively in many subjects, for example, to support history work on the Tudors in Year 3/4 and letters from World War 2 evacuees in Year 6, the use of glossaries in science and researching famous artists in art and design. However, more use could be made of these skills in some year groups to write at greater length.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs, and of pupils in Year 6 is consistently good.
- Higher attaining pupils in other year groups are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the infant stage and good in the junior stage; there are very good features in years 5 and 6 that lead to accelerated progress being made.
- Pupils' attitudes to mathematics and their behaviour are very good.
- The quality of leadership and management shared by three staff, is satisfactory but no one has a clear overview of standards throughout the school and there is some variation in approaches that inhibit a stronger leadership drive.

Commentary

62. Standards in mathematics are currently average by the end of Year 2, and in Year 6 are above average. In the last four years standards in national tests have varied in both year groups from well above average, as in Year 2 in 2004, and in Year 6 in 2001, to average in other years. At the time of the last inspection standards were reported as being above average in Year 2, and well above average in Year 6. The school has correctly identified these fluctuations and inconsistencies as a matter of concern and have taken steps in the last year to remedy the situation, with some success especially in Years 5 and 6. The main reasons for the lack of consistency over time are the variations in the number of pupils attaining higher than average levels, differences in the attainment of different year groups, and a lack of focus and rigour in the management of the subject across the school. Higher attainers, for example are not sufficiently challenged in all classes, and the scrutiny of pupils' work over time shows them frequently attempting the same work as other pupils, regardless of their prior attainment. Consequently, the achievement of most pupils is satisfactory, although a small number of pupils with special educational needs and some slower learners achieve well. This is because they have targets suited to their abilities and that show the next step forward, and are well supported by teachers and support assistants. There is positive evidence from the work in books and inspectors' observations in lessons, that pupils in both classes in Year 6 are achieving well. The above average standards reflect this.
63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in most of the school and good in the two upper junior classes. In almost all lessons observed in mathematics in the inspection, teaching and learning were good because teachers had clear objectives, good subject knowledge, used competent classroom assistants well and set work suitable for the differing abilities of the pupils. A close study of pupils' books, though, showed that learning over time is not so effective. The higher attainers are not extended sufficiently in work set in Year 2. There is inequality between levels of challenge in work set in this year. In a small number of lessons observed, higher attaining pupils could easily have been involved in more challenging activities. In contrast, in both the Year 5/6 class and Year 6 class, higher attaining pupils are set to work much earlier with tasks which really stretch them. This inconsistency in approach to teaching and learning across the school is inhibiting better achievement. Although pupils' work is marked conscientiously by all teachers there is a wide difference in the comments teachers give to pupils about their work. It varies from just ticks to an exchange of written views on the work between pupil and teacher. Pupils have learning targets in their books and displayed in classrooms although a significant number cannot recall them when asked. Pupils generally enjoy mathematics, especially in the mental mathematics part of sessions, and when their work is challenging. The school has worked successfully to develop these aspects of the subject. Pupils' behaviour and cooperation with each other is very good, they listen patiently and many are eager to explain their thinking, using accurate mathematical terminology.
64. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The school has established a management group of three teachers, who have responsibilities for the Foundation Stage, the two infant years, and the junior years. Each teacher has a good knowledge of their areas of influence but their overview of the whole school and the management of mathematics is still in a very early stages of development. They each have good quality assessment data which gives an accurate picture of pupil progress and the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. There is also some more limited evidence of the monitoring of teaching and learning. This is more obvious in planning and the examination of pupils' work, but less visible in classroom observation. The subject

leaders are now attempting to pool their information in order to get a clear picture of the progress, learning and achievement of all pupils and decide on the best strategies to take the school forward to consistency and improvement but there is a difference in views still to be ironed out.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. The basic skills of numeracy are suitably developed in subjects such as science and art and design and design and technology. For example, in Year 3 pupils have used mathematics in their abstract paintings. However insufficient opportunities are planned into lessons for other subjects in order to promote numeracy more than satisfactorily across the whole curriculum. There is effective use of ICT to support pupils' numeracy skills development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are consistently good in Years 1 and Year 2 and satisfactory in all other years.
- More rigorous assessment, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and standards are required in the junior classes as the school strives to raise achievement.
- Work is insufficiently planned to consistently challenge higher attaining pupils, in the junior years, so that they undertake their own recordings of investigations.
- The absence of targets in teachers' marking and the lack of involvement of pupils and parents in a regular review of pupils' progress is a weakness in provision.
- The new management and leadership of science in the infants is having good impact and the time is now ripe for the same level of effectiveness to be extended to the juniors.

Commentary

66. There has been satisfactory improvement in science since the previous inspection, with standards sustained at broadly average levels for some years. The 2004 national test results show that pupils in Year 6 reached average levels and achieved at a similar rate in relation to prior attainment, as their peers in similar schools. The introduction of a commercial scheme and assessment materials to aid progression in learning are positive new advancements. The impact of new and enthusiastic leadership in the infants is helping drive forward improvement in the first two years of school. Inspection findings clearly indicate that overall standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and broadly average at the end of Year 6. A smaller proportion than seen nationally is achieving the higher Level 5 by the end of Year 6. No discernible difference was noted by inspectors regarding the achievement of girls and boys.

Lower attaining pupils are generally well supported and make satisfactory progress in relation to their peers.

67. Achievement across the school is satisfactory overall but presents a very mixed picture. Achievement in lessons in the current Years 1 and Year 2 is consistently good. Pupils achieve well in their understanding of scientific knowledge, but opportunities for pupils to record their own scientific investigations remain a major weakness in most other year groups. School managers are aware that the practical 'hands on' approach to investigation and recording is currently reaping benefits in Years 1 and Year 2. This approach has yet to be shared universally so that achievement can rise. Lesson observations by key staff have gone some way towards identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. However, all do not focus with enough rigour on standards achieved, the rate of progress of pupils of differing abilities, especially higher attaining pupils, or the subject coverage and standards of general presentation between respective classes in the same year group.
68. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Relationships and attitudes to learning are good. Detailed analysis of pupils' work and class observations clearly indicate the quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory overall and consistently good in Years 1 and 2. Consequently, most pupils achieve well in these classes supported by good examples of science in real life situations, for example the selection of materials suitable for ensuring that an umbrella is waterproof. While examples of good teaching were observed in other classes, it remains very patchy and, as a result, work set is too often of a formal nature that fails to inspire higher attaining pupils to find out things for themselves and learn about science at first-hand. The quality of presentation in scientific recordings is not always of the best. In the most effective science lessons teachers' enthusiasm for the subject engages pupils' attention and the practical use of equipment in group work keeps pupils interested and on task. In other lessons activities lack imagination and challenge and learning depends on pupils listening to the teacher for far too long. The use of correct scientific language is not being well promoted in discussions. There are many missed opportunities to develop pupils' recording skills – all too often these are dictated by the teacher, leaving little personal input for the pupils to contribute their own ideas. Additionally, the use of ICT to support pupils' research or recording in science remains fairly low level. Assessment opportunities based on a commercial scheme are satisfactory overall, but the use of information is inconsistent in planning work that is well-matched to pupils' different levels of attainment varies. Inspectors' analysis of pupils' work shows that most pupils are being asked to complete very similar work. The exception is in Years 1 and 2 where pupils are being well challenged and teacher's marking encourages good progress. Work in pupils' books is regularly marked on completion of a specific topic, but often does not suggest to pupils how they can improve to reach higher levels of attainment.
69. Management of the subject is satisfactory with some strengths emerging as a new subject leader gets to grips with the role. However, the current system of shared subject responsibilities results in overlap and duplication with each subject leader having only partial views of provision and standards throughout the school. This dilutes the efficiency and effectiveness of the role in respect of the drive for raised standards and as such requires review. Time is now ripe for the emerging green shoots of well planned investigational work in Years 1 and 2 to percolate upwards throughout the school to raise provision and standards in a more uniform manner.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy their ICT work and they are productive learners.
- Boys and girls achieve equally soundly though higher attaining pupils could be set more demanding work.
- Assessment is appropriately focused on the development of skills, but is not yet used consistently across the school.
- The cross-curricular use of ICT is increasing well and there are some good examples of computer use in other subjects.
- ICT is led and managed with enthusiasm and commitment by the two subject leaders, though management processes are insufficiently focused on the evaluation of standards and achievement across the school.

Commentary

70. The school has made good improvement to the curriculum, resources and accommodation for ICT since its previous inspection. This is a firm indicator of the past effectiveness of leadership and management for ICT. The improvements made have enabled the school keep pace with the rapid development of the subject and to ensure pupils work from a well structured programme of work that covers all aspects of the subject.
71. Standards are average overall at the end of Years 2 and 6. The scrutiny of pupils' past work showed some effective building of skills takes place. Achievement overall is satisfactory, though there are instances of good achievement and school staff are working determinedly to make the quality of provision and, hence, pupils' achievement consistently good in all years. Currently, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, though some good lessons were observed, such as the Year 1/2 session where pupils were researching paper and its manufacture with enthusiasm. There was a real sense of achievement as they navigated around the multi-media software and answered, in writing, the teacher's well chosen questions. Standards were above average in this lesson.
72. Inspectors judge that boys and girls achieve equally well in their work. Whilst there are more boys than girls in many classes, the subject is equally appealing to both genders and pupils show good attitudes, behaviour and motivation in ICT lessons. Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough in their work, as the scrutiny of past work showed. There are times when the quality and depth of higher attaining pupils' work is exactly the same as that of pupils from other attainment groups.
73. Assessment, monitoring and evaluation are the next priorities for improvement in ICT. The subject leaders acknowledge this. Assessment is suitably focused on how effectively pupils build skills but the procedures are inconsistently used and the outcomes are not tracked rigorously enough from class to class. There has been little monitoring of ICT lessons so far. This is an area that the subject leaders are keen to pursue as they recognise the increase in their own understanding of subject performance that this will bring. The subject leaders are determined to make ICT

provision a strength of the school and the potential for this to emerge is positive as the action plan is fully implemented.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

74. The school has worked successfully to ensure that ICT is used across the curriculum to assist the effective development of pupils' skills and knowledge. There are particular strengths in the links to mathematics, science and history, as for example in Year 6 work on investigations into evaporation rates and their research into bombing raids in World War 2. Subject leaders in some cases identify the need to extend the use of ICT, as for religious education, for example. However, staff have good confidence in using ICT across the curriculum and the recent purchase of good quality wide-ranging software has enhanced these links considerably.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are satisfactory.
- The role of the subject leader is not well enough focused on assessment, standards and achievement across the school.

COMMENTARY

75. The curriculum for religious education has been adjusted appropriately to meet the requirements of the recently introduced locally agreed syllabus. There is suitable focus on Christianity in all years and the work on other faiths, such as Judaism and Islam in Years 3 to 6, meets requirements. Because the changes to the curriculum are so recent, its strengths and areas for development have not yet been reviewed fully. It is evident that at present, there is more focus on the transmission of knowledge than there is in the development of skills in religious education lessons. To some degree there is also a complementary emphasis on learning *about* religions, as opposed to that on learning *from* religion. The subject leader recognises these characteristics and is resolved to ensure that the curriculum balance is just right, in order to ensure pupils achieve consistently.
76. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and 6. Pupils show good knowledge of key stories, events, characters and celebrations from Christianity and appropriate knowledge of other faiths. Pupils enjoy religious education lessons; they are well behaved and have positive attitudes. This interest and response level drives the satisfactory achievement of the pupils. In some lessons, standards and achievement are a notch higher. This is evident from the study of pupils' past work in Year 1/2, for example. All evidence from lessons and pupils' past work point to similar achievement by boys and girls. However, the wealth of evidence also indicates that too often the higher attaining pupils are set tasks that are no different in their demand than those set for pupils in other attainment groups.

77. Religious education is taught soundly and learning is satisfactory. Some good teaching and learning was observed, as in the Year 2 class, when pupils were working to improve their knowledge of Lent and Easter. Good use of ICT in this lesson contributed well to pupils' good achievement. The subject leader is keen to ensure that teaching and learning are of consistently good quality through the school. She provides committed leadership, though management of religious education is satisfactory, due to the inconsistencies of assessment, which is left to individual teachers to arrange, and monitoring and evaluation, which is not yet focused on pupils' achievement across the school and is not rigorous enough.

History

78. This subject was sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. From the evidence seen from a scrutiny of pupils' past work and the few lessons observed, standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
79. History is well planned; the curriculum is good and there is some effective focus on the development of history skills. Research and investigation into historical topics is a strength. This was observed in a Year 6 lesson where pupils quizzed parents and grandparents about their experiences of the *nineteen-sixties*. The pupils had devised an effective list of questions to build a picture of first-hand evidence for fashions, taste in music and life in general. One pupil was earnest in trying to discover whether any of the adults present were fans of Bessie Smith, the jazz singer. This pupil's prior research had involved the use of the Internet and, as for many other pupils present, had clearly been very thorough. Pupils' past work demonstrates that there is inconsistent challenge in the tasks set for higher attainers, which restricts their achievement.
80. As in the case of some other subjects, the next priorities for history are to develop a consistent and rigorous system of assessment and to enhance the subject leader's monitoring and evaluation of the subject. The subject leader is keen to meet these challenges.

Geography

81. This subject was sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision.
82. Pupils experience worthwhile experiences in geography from a satisfactorily planned curriculum.
83. Opportunities are also given to pupils to expand their geographical knowledge and skills through trips to places of local interest.
84. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have walked around the local area and learned about how their school is laid out. They also talk happily about the adventures of *Barnaby Bear*, both locally and in foreign countries. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are learning about their local environment, and this has stimulated a useful discussion about improvement to the school grounds. Pupils in Year 5 have studied the Solar System which encouraged good links to ICT and numeracy in their analysis of data. The recorded written presentations were, however, of a standard well below that seen normally in their work in English. Some very good quality work is on display in Year 6 about the effects of

litter and pollution with pupils' writing and posters encouraging better treatment of the planet.

85. In pupils' geography work completed since September, there is significant use of work-sheets and the opportunities for extended pieces of writing are few. This is in direct contrast to work in history and is an aspect for review. Very little has been written about comparative localities with the work on Kenya, for example being limited. This is a missed opportunity for extending pupils' research skills as well their geographic knowledge and multicultural appreciation.
86. As in the case of some other subjects, the next priorities for geography are to develop a consistent and rigorous system of assessment and to extend monitoring and evaluation of the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in art and design is a strength of the school.
- Standards are well above average in years 2 and 6 and achievement is very good.
- Learning is very good as a result of very effective teaching.
- The very good curriculum provides a wide range of experiences and enrichment.
- Art and design makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural education and also to their personal development.
- Formal assessment systems for tracking pupils' achievement in art and design are not yet in place.

Commentary

87. It is evident from the rich canvas of work displayed throughout the school that standards are well above average in art and design and that pupils' achievement is very good. From the high quality work on *Kandinsky*, *Matisse* and *Klee* produced by the youngest children to the still life using pastels in the style of *Morandi* produced by older pupils, work is well in advance of pupils' age and reflects the very effective provision. Art and design has a high profile in the school and is a subject enjoyed by pupils and staff alike. Strong links are made through art and design to other subjects. For example, pastel illustrations linked to literacy work based on *The Whale's Song*, canal artwork linking to history and geography and the *Dream Catchers* and curved stitching in Year 6 that links to shape work in mathematics. Pupils encounter a wide range of experiences and media. The results of their work are greatly enhanced by the high quality resources and the high standard of presentation and display about the school. Pupils' success in art and design is well celebrated through a colourful gallery that reflects the influence and awareness of many famous artists.
88. Teaching and learning is generally of a very good quality, enhanced on a regular basis by specialist input from artists as well as art exhibitions and focus art weeks. The art and design curriculum is rich and exciting, providing both challenge and reward for pupils. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social

and especially their cultural development. Through art and design pupils gain very good insights into, and appreciation of other cultures. Examples, such as the batik and tie and dye work in year 6 which have involved pupils in researching information on India, Africa and the Far East, illustrate this well.

89. Art and design is well led and soundly managed. Areas for development include the need to develop more formal assessment procedures that identify skills and knowledge acquired as well as a more consistent approach to monitoring teaching and learning. It is clear that art and design is a subject that has continued to improve very well since the last inspection and there is every prospect that the high standards and very good provision will be maintained and strengthened.

Design and technology

90. This subject was sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. From the evidence seen from a scrutiny of pupils' past work, standards are average in design and technology at the end of Years 2 and 6.
91. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 have designed and made snow houses, houses for the three little pigs and finger puppets. In Years 3 and 4 pupils have designed, made and evaluated 'ships in bottles', which are attractively displayed in public areas. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have planned and made outdoor shelters and evaluated their effectiveness, and are at present involved in designing musical instruments for particular purposes such as background 'mood' music for a modern play. A notable feature of work in the subject is teachers' innovation in the use of cross curricular links with, for example, history, music, literacy and numeracy, although recording through writing could be of better quality. Pupils talk enthusiastically of their work in the subject and obviously enjoy the opportunities they are given to develop their skills.

Music

92. Whilst it is evident that music takes an important place in the school curriculum, it was only possible to gather a restricted range of evidence. This subject was sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. Some parents told inspectors that they would like to see more music in the curriculum. However, records show that the pupils are involved in performing in a choir and this is an improvement since the previous inspection when pupils did not have this opportunity. Additionally, at that time there were no music ensembles. Last December pupils were involved in an instrumental concert and singing to local senior citizens.
93. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to sing and perform in their regular music lessons. In the good quality Year 1/2 lesson observed, for example, the pupils carefully worked on the production of a pattern of long and short, and high and low notes played accurately on chime bars. They used simplified musical notation to follow and develop the pattern. Achievement was good in this lesson. A number of pupils benefit from peripatetic music tuition such as the flute and violin and this was observed to be of good quality. Other visitors include a specialist to support singing in Year 2 who then performed at Ridge Danyers College.

Physical education

94. This subject was sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision.
95. In physical education a good curriculum is provided, which ensures that all areas of the subject are taught regularly across the school. Standards in games and dance are average. Swimming is a particular strength in Years 3 and 4, and as a result very few pupils leave the school unable to swim at least the required 25 metres. Pupils take part in a wide variety of sporting activities, enabling them to experience a very rich curriculum. They are taught lacrosse by a coach from a local club, and take part in a number of school clubs such as cross-country, table tennis, judo and rugby. Pupils also have good opportunities to take part in competitive sports against local schools and have achieved notable successes in football, swimming and cross-country. They also benefit well from participation in annual residential visits that include outdoor pursuits. There are good community links with a local college, and several professional sporting clubs that involve pupils benefiting from specialist coaching. Pupils greatly enjoy their physical education, and extra sporting activities, which make a strong and effective contribution to their social and moral development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is **good** and strands of this pervade all areas of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff give a high priority to developing the whole child, such that pupils develop into young people who are a credit to the school.
- The programme is designed to prepare pupils well for their next steps in life.
- Teaching is cross-curricular, and through assemblies and circle times.
- The school council provides a worthwhile introduction to the idea of democracy.

Commentary

96. The promotion of PSHCE is good and the school is successful in turning out responsible young people who are well prepared for the next stage of education. Assembly themes are developed within class teaching so that pupils have a consistent, and reinforced opportunity to learn about and assimilate ideas about themselves, others and how they relate in society. Healthy eating is promoted and pupils also receive education in sex and relationships, and about the dangers of drug abuse. The travelling *Blue Bus* provides further enrichment to the PSHCE programme as an active resource for promoting healthy lifestyles. Pupils are given the chance to use their initiative and to organise themselves in the activities chosen through the school council, and opportunities to vote introduce them to government by democracy. Fire safety talks in Year 2 and road safety quizzes, and cycling proficiency tests in Year 6 enable the pupils to raise their awareness about keeping safe when out and about in the community. The oldest pupils also benefit from the work they do in assessing risks as part of the *Crucial Crew* experience.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
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	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
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	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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
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).