

INSPECTION REPORT

THE LINKS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Eaglescliffe

LEA area: Stockton-on-Tees

Unique reference number: 111564

Headteacher: Mrs A J Puddick

Lead inspector: Mrs M Fitzpatrick

Dates of inspection: 3 – 5 May 2005

Inspection number: 268073

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: 3 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 206

School address: Carnoustie Drive
Eaglescliffe
Stockton on Tees
Postcode: TS16 9ES

Telephone number: 01642 391817
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Pete Andrew

Date of previous inspection: 1 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves a wide area around the village of Eaglescliffe in the suburbs of Stockton-on-Tees. At the time of inspection, over 50 per cent of pupils came from outside the school's catchment. The school is about the same size as most primary schools, with 206 pupils aged four to 11 years on roll. Children join the Nursery in the year in which they are four. Overall, the attainment of children when they join the Nursery is typical for their age. Overall the school's socio-economic circumstances are favourable and the percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs is below the national average, most of these needs are for support with literacy. There are three pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need for speech, language and severe learning difficulties. The school's population is predominantly white British heritage, with fewer than ten per cent of pupils from other heritages, mainly Asian-Pakistani or Asian-Indian. At the time of inspection there were no pupils in the school with English as an additional language, who needed support to learn through English. The school has close links with local schools and the community. It has a pre-school Kindergarten on site, catering for children from the age of two, and also offers early morning, after school, and holiday care to pupils. The school also offers places for teacher training to one of the local universities. The school won a School Achievement Award in 2001 and the Investor in People Award in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
24326	M Fitzpatrick	Lead inspector	English Geography History Religious education
32678	K Dodds	Lay inspector	
12394	C May	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language
8263	M Forsman	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education Provision for pupils with special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very effective** school where pupils achieve well academically and very well in their personal development. The leadership of the headteacher is very good, providing clear direction for the development of the school. The very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures very good personal development for pupils. This is a school with many strengths which serves its pupils and the community well. Given all of these strong factors the school is judged to give very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- It achieves high standards in most subjects, and in mathematics and science standards are very high by Year 6.
- There is good teaching and learning, well supported by the work of learning support assistants.
- There is very good leadership by the headteacher, whose aims for the school are well supported by teachers, parents and governors.
- There is a very good curriculum, enriched by many out of school opportunities and the school's links with school's in other countries. The provision for science is outstanding; music plays an important role in the life of the school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school has very good inclusion practices.
- Some improvements are needed to the teaching of reading and mathematics in the Foundation Stage.
- The school has a very good ethos. There are very good relationships and pupils' very good attitudes to learning ensure that they learn well and make the most of their time in school. Younger pupils need more opportunities to mature through taking on responsibilities.
- There is good leadership and management from key staff and good support for the development of the school from governors.

The school is more effective than it was at the time of the last inspection, since when it has made very good improvement. Since then, the school has maintained its high performance in National Curriculum tests and has increased the percentage of Year 6 pupils who exceed the standards expected for their age. The quality of teaching and the curriculum have improved; the provision for information and communication technology is now very good and outdoor provision for children in the Reception class is now good. The school is well placed through its well-planned monitoring procedures to continue to improve.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievement is good overall. The Year 6 pupils' overall performance in the National Curriculum tests in 2004 was well above the national average for all schools and above the performance of similar schools. Pupils who sat these tests made good progress overall from their results in national tests four years earlier. However, higher attaining pupils did not all make the expected progress in English and this reduced the school's performance in this subject. Results in mathematics and science showed a much higher than average percentage of pupils reaching the higher level. The school's rate of improvement in test performance has kept pace with the national trend of improvement in the last four years. Pupils now in Year 6 reach similar standards to those described above in test subjects, except that a higher percentage of pupils exceed the expected standard in English. Pupils exceed the expectation for their age in design and technology, geography, history and music and meet the expectation in religious education and information and communication technology. Overall, the standards reached by pupils in Year 2 exceed those expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. In the other subjects, seen they reach the expected standard. Children in the Foundation Stage exceed the goals set for their learning in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In communication, language and literacy their achievement is satisfactory overall, because only the higher attaining pupils meet all of the goals set by the end of Reception. In mathematical development, the higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged to go beyond the goals set so that children's achievement is again satisfactory overall. Pupils' learning is enhanced because they bring very good attitudes and enthusiasm to their learning. Pupils' behaviour in and out of class is very good and this too enhances their learning. **The pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.** Attendance rates are very good and pupils arrive at school on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. **Teaching is good overall**, with a high percentage of very good, and some excellent teaching seen in Year 5. Strengths of teaching include good explanations based on good subject knowledge, good involvement of pupils in discussion to promote their understanding and help their recall of learning, and practical activities and investigations which make learning fun. Improvements are needed in the teaching of reading skills and some aspects of mathematics in the Foundation Stage. Assessment of pupils' learning is good and is used well to plan appropriately for the learning needs of different groups; in the Foundation Stage assessment is satisfactory. The curriculum is very well planned and enriched through very good links with other schools to extend learning beyond the classroom and takes good account of pupils' interests and strengths. Provision for out-of-school clubs is very good. The school provides good care for its pupils and the support they receive for their learning and personal guidance is very good. Accommodation and resources are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **good**. The work of the school is monitored effectively by the headteacher and key staff who respond promptly to any perceived weaknesses. Governance of the school is good and governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents value the school and what it does for their children, though not all are convinced of the benefits of supporting their children's learning at home. They believe that their children

are well taught and cared for and that they are expected to work hard. A very few had concerns that higher attaining pupils were not fully challenged, but overall, pupils receive a good level of challenge in the tasks that are set and the school makes good provision for gifted and talented pupils. Pupils are very pleased with their school and the role they are developing to help it to improve.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in reading and number by the end of Reception.
- Develop more opportunities for younger pupils to exercise responsibility within the school community.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are **above** average for Year 6 and Year 2 pupils. Pupils' achievement is **good** overall; in Years 5 and 6 it is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 exceed the standard expected for their age in design and technology, history, geography and music. Standards are well above average in mathematics and science by Year 6.
- At the end of the Foundation Stage a number of children have not achieved the early learning goals in some aspects of their reading and mathematical development.
- Pupils who have special educational needs are very well supported to make good progress and achieve well.

Commentary

1. Children join the Foundation Stage with attainment that is typical for their age. They achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and by the time they join Year 1 most exceed the expectations of the early learning goals in these areas. No judgement was made about standards in creative development. In communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development children's achievement is satisfactory. Less time is spent teaching letter sounds and reading, than is usually seen, with the result that only higher attaining children reach all of the goals set for this area of learning by the end of Reception. Some average and lower attaining children are not fully ready for the demands of the National Curriculum in reading as a result. In mathematics the level of challenge is not as high as it should be, so that children's achievement is satisfactory rather than good, and higher attaining pupils do not exceed the expectations for their learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.6 (16.0)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	16.1 (16.2)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.8 (17.4)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Results in the National Curriculum tests in 2004 for pupils in Year 2 were above the national average in reading, and in line with those of similar schools. In writing, results were well above the national average and above the results of similar schools; while in mathematics results in the test were in line with the national average but below the results of similar schools. The school's improvement in overall performance in these tests has fallen behind the national trend of improvement, because standards in mathematics have declined in the last four years. This is mainly because of the attainment of children in some areas of mathematics when they leave the Foundation

Stage which the school has recognised and has put in place effective measures to improve standards.

3. The school's interventions in mathematics have resulted in better standards in the current Year 2 than the previous year's test results indicate, because of improved teaching and an increased level of challenge being set for all groups. Standards in reading, writing and science in Year 2 are also above the expectations for seven year olds, again because of good teaching which makes effective use of what pupils already know and helps them to achieve well and because of the well planned interventions for pupils whose reading was below the expected level at the start of the year.
4. In the other subjects inspected pupils reach the level expected in information and communication technology, where they have regular opportunities to use computers; in religious education where they learn from visits and visitors as well as religious artefacts and stories the reach the level expected of the locally agreed syllabus. They also reach the expected level in design and technology, music, geography and history because teaching is well planned. In all of these subjects the achievement of pupils is satisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (28.8)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	30.0 (30.4)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.6 (30.7)	28.6 (28.6)

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

5. Standards for pupils who are now in Year 6 exceed the expectation for 11 year olds in English, mainly because of the extra provision for pupils who have special educational needs in literacy which ensures they reach the standard expected for their age. Overall pupils' achievement in the subject is good. In mathematics and science pupils reach standards that are well above the expectation, with a very high percentage of pupils working at the higher level 5. Pupils achievement is usually good and sometimes very good in these subjects, because of consistently very good teaching, pupils' enthusiasm for the subjects and the challenging investigations that they undertake.
6. In the other subjects inspected, pupils in Year 6 reach the expected level in information and communication technology and their achievement is satisfactory. In religious education pupils met the standard expected by the locally agreed syllabus and their achievement is satisfactory. In design and technology they exceed the expectation for their age and achieve well because the work set makes use of their mathematical skills and allows them to work independently. In history and geography pupils exceed the expected level because of the opportunities for independent study and fieldwork which they seize with enthusiasm. In music good teaching combined with pupils good attitudes leads to good achievement and standards that are above the expectation.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and in many lessons observed during the inspection pupils' progress was good. Teaching staff plan carefully to meet the needs of all groups. The good achievement is a result of teachers' careful

planning, the quantity of support and the expertise of the special needs staff. Pupils have positive attitudes and persevere with their tasks. All teaching staff are supportive and alert to the difficulties and successes of pupils with special educational needs.

8. The school sets and meets challenging targets for its pupils in national tests, that are based on good assessment of their learning. These targets were met in English and exceeded in mathematics and science. Where it falls short of these targets the school responds by analysing results and taking action to improve provision and standards for the relevant groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved since the last inspection and are now **very good**. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance is **very good**, and most pupils are punctual to school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life; they are very interested in their work and keen to do well.
- Pupils are polite, considerate and behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- Relationships are excellent at all levels and pupils from different backgrounds get on very well together.
- Pupils are very willing take on responsibilities and the older pupils are encouraged to do this but there two few opportunities for the younger pupils.

Commentary

9. Pupils respond very positively to an ethos that places great value on the individual, and encourages all abilities to achieve their potential. Pupils like school very much and are excited about learning, relishing any new challenges. The older pupils are encouraged to care for the younger ones and to take on responsibilities, for example, as class and school councillors and 'buddies'. As they move up through the school, they become more confident and take advantage of the many opportunities on offer. As a result, pupils in Years 5 and 6 show impressive maturity and responsibility. Pupils from Year 3 onwards are involved in the school council. Class representatives are elected and they take their roles very seriously. However, younger pupils have no representatives and, whilst in theory they are consulted and kept informed, discussions with the school council show that this does not happen very often or very effectively. In the questionnaires given out prior to the inspection, pupils confirm their high level of enjoyment and involvement in school life, a view supported by their parents. Discussions with most children endorse this view. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development because teachers and adults have high expectations of them. Teachers and adults ensure there is structured, caring support to allow children to develop independence and confidence.
10. All the staff have very high expectations for conduct, and as a result pupils behave very well in the classroom and around the school. Pupils play an important part in the formation of school rules, discussing and agreeing them. In lessons, pupils work hard, particularly when teachers tell them exactly what is to be done. Pupils are extremely co-operative when it comes to tidying up at the end of lessons; their very good behaviour is a key factor in the happy atmosphere at work and play and in the high

standards achieved. Bullying is most unusual, but dealt with firmly if it occurs. There have been no exclusions in the last school year. Relationships throughout the school are very good, and contribute significantly to the positive attitudes among pupils and the progress they make in lessons. The good attitudes and behaviour, reported at the last inspection, have improved and are now very good.

11. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and it is embedded in nearly all aspects of school life. The pupils' very good spiritual development is promoted through subjects such as religious education and through personal and social education. In assemblies pupils are given opportunities to reflect and explore their feelings. As a result pupils develop a very good moral awareness and are able to clearly distinguish right from wrong. Pupils regularly raise money for charity with the oldest pupils planning and organising many of these events themselves. The school does much to develop the pupils' confidence and self-esteem and to allow pupils to value themselves and others as individuals through activities such as the award giving assemblies. The very good range of extra-curricular activities are very well attended and the very effective provision for visits to places of interest and visitors to the school contribute significantly to the pupils' very good social and cultural development. The pupils' cultural development, including their multi-cultural awareness, is enriched by the school's links with other countries such as Spain and Finland. Their work in such subjects as art and design, English, history, religious education, geography and music enhance pupils' cultural development. Music is particularly strong.

12. Attendance is very good, and most pupils arrive punctually. The school has very good procedures to monitor attendance, and strongly discourages parents from taking holidays during term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 96%

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **very good** quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are **good** overall; the curriculum is **very good** and there is **very good** provision for extra-curricular activities, including out of school clubs, visits and visitors. There is a **good** level of care, support and guidance for pupils and links with parents are **good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall. There is some very good teaching throughout the school and in Year 5 there is some excellent teaching. Procedures for assessment are **good** and teachers make good use of these assessments when planning the next steps in learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of investigations and new technologies to make learning fun.

- Teachers make good use of assessment of pupils' learning to plan lessons that have good pace and challenge. In the Foundation stage the use of assessment is satisfactory.
- Very good relationships encourage pupils to work hard to please their teachers.
- Learning support assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Teachers make good use of talk to develop pupils' thinking and encourage them to learn from each other.
- The teaching of reading and mathematics are not as good as other aspects.

Commentary

13. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory overall. There is now a much higher percentage of very good teaching and with some excellent teaching in Year 5. The reasons for the improvements in the quality of teaching are linked to the school's performance management and evaluation procedures. These have allowed senior managers to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and to take action to both share good practice and provide in-service training to make improvements. This has had a significant impact on the teaching of writing throughout the school.
14. In the Foundation Stage, children's personal, social and emotional development is taught well through clear expectations and is successful because of the caring relationships. Because of this good teaching, children learn to be independent, to co-operate and to be confident in their learning. Children's learning is good in knowledge and understanding of the world, where they enjoy learning from many well-planned activities. Good teaching and planning for physical development ensures that children learn well and enjoy the activities. Overall, teachers make satisfactory assessment of children's learning but do not make enough use of this to provide the right level of challenge for all children. In communication, language and literacy, teachers provide good opportunities for children to develop their speaking and thinking skills; however, letter sounds and the skills of reading are not well taught, nor is enough use made of assessment information in planning for children's mathematical development so activities are not well matched to children's needs. The result is that children do not achieve as well in these areas of learning as they do in others.
15. In Years 1 to 6, teachers usually make effective use of assessment findings to plan challenging work for their pupils. In most lessons seen the work set for different groups was well matched to the needs of pupils, who made good progress in their learning as a result. In English, mathematics and science lessons, pupils have targets which help them track their own progress so that they have an idea of how well they are doing. Where marking is thorough, teachers give good feedback to pupils on how well they are progressing towards their targets and suggest ways of making further improvements. In the infant classes this is done most effectively when teachers talk to pupils about their work and explain how they can improve. Occasionally, teachers do not take enough account of pupils' knowledge and skills when planning tasks and do not make enough demands on them. When this happens, learning for pupils in some groups is reduced from good to satisfactory. Teachers make very effective use of assessment during lessons and adapt the level of challenge to match pupils' emerging needs. This was seen in a Year 5 science lesson where teaching and learning were excellent, because the teacher constantly challenged pupils to the next step of thinking through targeted questions as soon as she realised they had grasped the idea.

16. In most mathematics lessons teachers ask pupils to explain their answer and how they arrived at it. In this way pupils learn not only from developing their own thinking but from that of others too. In Year 1, the teacher's very skilful management of word order to create sentences gave pupils very good opportunities to think and explain why some things were wrong and how to put them right. By talking through the activity, pupils were very well prepared to work individually on writing tasks and all succeeded with the demanding work set. In science lessons, where pupils frequently work in groups to carry out investigations, they are encouraged to discuss their ideas and share their thinking as they work together. This accelerates their learning and deepens their understanding as well as making the learning lively and memorable.
17. Pupils say that they enjoy learning because it is fun. One reason for this is that teachers have mastered new technologies, such as interactive whiteboards, which allow them to present new knowledge in a variety of ways that appeal to the different learning styles of pupils. Pupils are directly involved in their learning by adding to or adapting information on screen. This happens at a rapid pace and maintains pupils' interest because their learning is moving forward quickly. Teachers plan so many practical and investigative activities, especially in science where pupils relish the opportunities to find out for themselves and show how well they can work together to solve problems.
18. The very good relationships that teachers foster create a very good climate for learning. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very strong because they feel secure, valued and happy in the classroom. They work hard to please their teachers and time is well used because they listen closely, understand fully what is expected and always begin tasks promptly. As they mature, pupils' learning accelerates because they have developed very good levels of confidence in their abilities to think for themselves. By Year 5 and 6, pupils are able to work independently, without supervision, especially when they make use of computers for research or undertake individual research projects.
19. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is carefully planned to ensure that they succeed with tasks and develop confidence through regular success. The quality of teaching and learning is good and in some instances very good. Teachers include additional individual education planning for literacy and numeracy to ensure that appropriate targets are set. Teachers are flexible in their approach and ensure that there is a good match of task to need for SEN pupils. They are also aware of high attaining pupils and provide appropriate challenge. The quality of support in withdrawn groups is good and especially sensitive to the needs and self-esteem of pupils.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (6.5%)	10 (32.3%)	12 (38.7%)	7 (22.6%)	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school provides a **very good curriculum** that is broad, balanced and enhanced by a **very good** range of learning opportunities which enrich pupils' educational experiences. Accommodation and resources for learning are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Support for learning outside the school day is very good.
- The curriculum is well designed and integrated.
- Inclusion practices are very good.

Commentary

20. The school has monitored and reviewed the curriculum since the last inspection. The overall provision is for an integrated curriculum where valid and productive links are made between subjects. Good cross-curricular links are made, for example between science and design and technology. Opportunities are also provided for literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to be developed in other subjects. The school has also introduced themed weeks, sometimes with challenging topics, such as prejudice which involve the whole school. In the Foundation Stage, children in Reception follow a curriculum which covers all the areas of learning and includes religious education. Good progress has been made in enriching and updating the curriculum since the last inspection.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good throughout the school. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is particularly effective and closely matched to individual needs. The school has identified its gifted and talented children and higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged. Increasingly, new opportunities are being made available for them through links with the secondary school. For example some pupils visit the local secondary school for mathematics lessons at a higher level. The school has successfully completed a self-review of its special needs provision in conjunction with the local education authority and has established clearer criteria for pupils being placed on the register of special educational needs. The school expects its provision to be effective so that by Year 6 most pupils will no longer have special education needs.
22. The school has put in place a satisfactory programme for personal, social and health education is good. There is a combination of specific lessons and cross-curricular opportunities which cover all aspects of the PHSCE curriculum, including sex and drugs education.
23. Support for learning outside the school day is very good the school has extended its innovative wrap around care, with breakfast, after school and holiday provision. Additional booster classes are provided for the older pupils and there is a very effective Catch Up Club before school. The school is committed to a range of sporting activities and has benefited from involvement with the School Sports Co-ordinator programme. The curriculum has an international aspect because the school is a member of the Comenius project, which links schools across Europe to share expertise and cultural exchanges. This year the school is the co-ordinator in a partnership with schools in Finland, Italy and Spain.
24. Staff are well equipped to teach the curriculum and bring significant areas of expertise to it. The quality of the support staff is very good. They are well deployed and form strong teams with the teachers. They are very knowledgeable and committed to their roles and make an important contribution to the education offered by the school. The

school has been forward-thinking in its strategies for the development of release time for staff.

25. The accommodation is good overall. The school has improved the working environment, for example, in the extension and refurbishment of the staff room. The interior decoration particularly in library is attractive and draws on pupils' own ideas. The new computer suite is of a high quality. Resources are good and the problem of storage is well managed. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **good** provision to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Support and guidance, based on the monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development, are **very good**. The school has **satisfactory** procedures to involve pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel very safe and secure at school because of the very good relationships they have with adults.
- Support staff make a very important contribution to pupils' personal development and to their achievement.
- The ways in which pupils' views are sought are not yet fully embedded across school.

Commentary

26. One of the strongest features of the school, that helps to create its very positive ethos and caring environment, is the very good relationship between pupils, their teachers and other support staff. Parents of children in Nursery and Reception classes are very reassured by the fact that friendly and supportive adults help their children to settle very quickly into school life and routines. Very close links with the on-site kindergarten also make an important contribution to this process, by ensuring that staff have an early opportunity to get to know the children and their parents.
27. Support staff know pupils very well because of the various roles they perform in the school. Pupils say that, if they have any worries they have someone they can go to for support. As a result, pupils are happy and feel safe and secure in school. Pupils who need help with reading attend a 'before school catch up club', at which well trained support staff ensure that pupils enjoy their work and take a pride in their achievements. Parents particularly appreciate this provision, and report that results are quick and effective. Pupils' social and academic needs are well monitored by teachers who use their findings to plan effectively for these. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils understand how well they are doing and how they can improve. They keep good records of pupils' progress and pupils are very well supported and guided in their personal development. Teachers take time to make clear their high expectations of relationships and support for each other and give pupils opportunities in circle time to discuss issues which concern them.
28. Overall, opportunities for pupils to contribute to the work and development of the school are satisfactory. Most pupils believe that teachers listen to their ideas and value their views. Pupils' views are sought formally through the school council. Pupils consider, for example, how playtimes and safety around school could be improved. Membership is open to pupils from Year 3 onwards, with most current members being recently appointed. Committee structures and procedures are, therefore, still developing, and sometimes rely on teachers' guidance. The school seeks the views

and opinions of younger pupils only informally, mainly through playground discussions with the council members. This represents a missed opportunity for pupils to begin to learn how they can contribute to the school community and take a more active and responsible part in its development.

29. Procedures for ensuring that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are good. Governors fulfil their duty to complete regular risk assessments of the premises. Documentation shows that meetings are regular, actions are identified, well prioritised, and progress is checked. Staff endeavour to ensure that pupils work in a safe environment. This is reflected in the comprehensive range of policies and in day-to-day practice, for example, in administering first aid and medicines. The headteacher is the named person with responsibility for child protection. Although practices are well thought out and organised, and staff know who is responsible for key aspects of child welfare, some staff require updated training in some aspects.

Partnerships with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are **good**. Links with other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with other schools in the area and further afield make a strong contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The school regularly seeks and values the views of parents on its work and development.
- Despite good efforts, a few parents do not take advantage of the opportunities offered for them to be fully involved in their children's learning and in the life of the school.
- Pupils' annual progress reports for parents do not always inform parents well enough about what their children need to learn next.

Commentary

30. Parents are happy with most aspects of the education that the school provides for their children. The school communicates with parents in a number of ways, including good quality written information. This keeps them well informed of school events and of what their children are going to be learning, particularly in the nursery class. A small number of parents, however, say that they do not feel well informed about how well their children are doing at school. Inspectors judge that information to parents is good overall. However, while arrangements for consultation with parents over the year are good and well attended, the reports they receive on their children's progress do not always clearly explain the standards their children have reached in relation to national expectation for their ages. Targets for future learning are sometimes too vague to help parents to know how their children need to improve and how they can help at home. Induction procedures for the Foundation Stage are good and the close links with the secondary school ensures that transition at age 11 is very good.
31. The school works very hard to encourage and maintain parental involvement in the work of the school and with their children's learning at home. Written communication includes regular requests for helpers, interesting themed events involving pupils and parents are organised, and increasingly, the school consults with parents on a number of aspects of its work. The knowledge and skills of willing helpers are valued highly and used to good effect in order to enrich the curriculum. An extra-curricular science club, for example, is organised by three parents. Despite the school's efforts, the number of parents who regularly take an active role, for example, by reading with

pupils, has declined since the previous inspection. Furthermore, much of the burden of organising fundraising and other events in recent times has fallen on the same group of parents. The continued determination of school to encourage and welcome new parents, however, has now resulted in the recent reforming of a Friends of the School group, resulting in a renewed enthusiasm to become more involved. There are now more regular opportunities for parents to express their views about possible improvements or changes to school procedures. The fact that school leaders listen to and value the views of parents encourages a better partnership between home and school.

32. Parents of children with special educational needs are involved in decisions about their children's learning and are consulted in the review of their individual education plans. The school intends to improve the level of consultation and to introduce child-friendly individual education plans.
33. The school has shown a strong commitment to developing very good links with other schools, both in the locality and further afield. Within the locality, pupils have regular opportunities to mix with pupils from nearby schools, in both the public and private sector, through participation in a number of sporting and musical events and competitions. A partnership with a local high school enables many pupils to compete in chess tournaments.
34. Overall, links with the community are good. Pupils benefit from a good range of visitors from and visits into the locality, including trips to museums, theatres and churches. These increase pupils' understanding of the wider community and contribute well to their academic and personal development. Local community groups, for example Brownies, football and adult education classes in ICT, make good use of the building and generate a useful income for the school. Parents particularly appreciate the wrap around care provided by the on-site Kindergarten, and the before and after school clubs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management in the school are **good** overall. Leadership is **good**, management is **good** and the governance of the school is **good**. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership for the development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The vision and sense of purpose of the headteacher ensures that the school is continually looking for ways to improve.
- The leadership of key staff is good. Members of the senior leadership team give good support to the development of the school.
- Subject leaders provide good leadership and management for their subjects; there is very good leadership of ICT and special educational needs.
- The governors have a good knowledge of the school and offer a range of expertise for the benefit of the school.
- Financial planning and management are very good, ensuring that funds are well used to promote high standards.

Commentary

35. The headteacher provides very good leadership for the development of the school. She has a very strong commitment to achieving the best for all children regardless of their ability and has a clear focus on high standards in all areas of the school's work. As a result the school has developed very good inclusion practices which ensure that all pupils are supported to achieve well. She has ensured that the curriculum is enriched and well developed to provide a wide variety of experiences to meet the different interests and enthusiasms of pupils. Pupils' social and academic needs are well monitored by teachers who use their findings to plan effectively for these. The headteacher has been very successful in welding a strong team of teaching and non-teaching staff, despite some turn over in staffing in recent years. All staff in the school are fully supportive of the headteacher's vision of a school where every child has the opportunity to do well and develop their talents.
36. The headteacher has managed change very effectively since the last inspection. Despite a steady turn over in staff, due to promotions and teachers moving out of the area, the headteacher has succeeded in maintaining a high quality teaching staff, who have sustained the high standards to which the school aspires. The headteacher has delegated responsibility for subject leadership effectively, though currently carries too many of these herself, due to recent short term changes. However, this is set to change in the new school year when recently qualified staff are able to assume responsibility for subject provision. Staff responsibilities are well defined to ensure that subject leaders are directly involved in monitoring standards and provision in their subjects. This gives them good insights into how the school is improving and what needs to be done to make further improvements. Because of the good quality teamwork, areas that are identified for improvement are quickly acted upon with all staff supporting changes to improve provision for pupils. A good example of this in the current school year has been the improvement made to reading provision for pupils who are not reaching the level expected for their age. Interventions suggested by the English co-ordinator and implemented by teachers and support staff have been successful in raising standards for these pupils. The deputy headteacher has given good support to the work of the school in assuming responsibility for subject leadership during periods of staff turn over and in developing effective assessment procedures to track pupils' learning.
37. The management of special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator knows the pupils well, monitors their progress and liaises well with specialist agencies. The governor with an oversight of the provision for special educational needs meets regularly with the co-ordinator and the head teacher to discuss provision for pupils and their progress. Procedures and organisation are strong. The co-ordinator is active in seeking out ways of improving provision and has high expectations for the progress of pupils.
38. The school has very effective performance management procedures which involve all staff and are focused on setting targets to help staff raise standards. They are well linked to professional development, through the identification of training needs and the provision of in-service training to meet these needs. All staff in the school are aware of the headteacher's high expectations and work hard to maintain high standards and sustain improvement. Staff new to the school are well supported by established staff acting as mentors so they have settled into new routines and have adopted the school's culture of high expectations.
39. The governors have a good knowledge of the school. They bring a range of experience and expertise to the school which has succeeded in developing some of

the school's strengths. For instance, the vice-chair of governors has given very good support to the development of the school's links with European schools through the Comenius Project. Governors are well involved in the work of the school through their links with subject leaders and their visits to classrooms. They monitor the work of the school effectively and are enterprising in the way they look for solutions through their Think Tank forum. A number of successful initiatives have resulted from this group, such as the establishment of a Kindergarten to meet a perceived need for pre-school provision, which provides care for children from the age of two.

40. Governors are fully committed to the school's inclusion policies and plan carefully to provide staffing to support these. They are well aware of the school's performance in relation to similar schools and the role the headteacher plays in maintaining high standards. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that the school's policy for race equality is understood and properly implemented.
41. The school's finances are very well managed. Careful planning ensures that spending on large scale projects, such as redecoration, is managed over a longer timescale and that funds are set aside to protect staffing in order to secure good support for all pupils. The school office staff play an important role in the smooth running of the school and in providing a good welcome for parents. The governors make use of best value principles in a way which helps them achieve very good value for money in the provision they make for the school.
42. The school has a number of aids to learning which support the high standards that it achieves. First amongst these is the vision of the headteacher, who is well aware of the potential of the pupils in the school and has a determination that this will be realised. Because of this she is careful in her appointment of staff and rigorous in her expectations of them. Her supportive style ensures that staff are able to give their best and this provides another aid to pupils' learning by establishing very good relationships and a positive climate for learning. By developing very positive attitudes to learning in their pupils, teachers and support staff create a very good climate for learning and this enables pupils to thrive. Declining support from parents for their children's learning is a barrier that the school is working hard to overcome. The recently introduced additional support for reading is the result of a decline in the support for reading at home.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	522,351
Total expenditure	536,689
Expenditure per pupil	2,340

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	83,137
Balance carried forward to the next	68,799

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (the Nursery and Reception classes) has shown a good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Resources for outdoor activities have improved and standards attained have risen in some areas of learning; the quality of teaching has improved from sound to good. Pupils attend the Nursery class on a part-time basis. Attainment on entry varies but is above average in personal, social and emotional development and in speaking and listening and is average overall.

Leadership and management, and relationships with parents are good and links with the Kindergarten on site are very good. There is a well thought out curriculum based appropriately on national guidance. The teachers and their classroom assistants work together as a well-orchestrated team. However, insufficient use is made of the very able teaching assistants, especially in day-to-day assessment. As a result, planning for the next steps in children's learning is not always as effective as it could be. The classrooms are attractive and generally well resourced. Good use is made of all the space available, but the accommodation is cramped in the Nursery and the distance between the Nursery and Reception classes makes the cohesion of the Foundation Stage difficult. However, staff plan together very carefully to ensure that there is appropriate progression and coverage of all areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average because teaching is good.
- The children settle into school very quickly and know both class and school routines very well and quickly become independent.
- Relationships between the staff and children and between the children themselves are very good.

Commentary

43. Teaching in this area is good. Teachers provide an exciting and interesting range of activities that enhance the children's enjoyment of school and motivate them to become independent learners. The teachers and their assistants ensure that children quickly understand what is required of them and their very high expectations are met well because of the consistent approach and the very good role models set by adults. Relationships are very good. In both the Nursery and Reception classes children are constantly encouraged to take turns and share and to tidy up after themselves. Opportunities are routinely provided for them to reflect upon how well they have achieved in lessons. They are shown how to work together co-operatively on a task and given opportunities to work independently. Adults encourage the development of good social skills and promote good behaviour by use of praise and encouragement. These skills are systematically built upon from the time children start nursery enabling them to achieve well and reach well above average standards by the end of their reception year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in language for communication and thought are above average and children achieve well in this aspect. In reading and writing standards are average overall, and achievement is satisfactory.
- Parents hear their children read their reading scheme books at home but more could be done to encourage them to take part in a wider range of reading and language activities.
- Resources for reading are in need of improvement and the reading books provided are not always well enough matched to the abilities of the children.
- Initial letter sounds and letter formation is taught well, but the teaching of phonics, reading and early spelling skills is not good enough.

Commentary

44. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Children are provided with very good opportunities to contribute to question and answer sessions both when working as a whole class with the teacher and when being taught in small groups. This contributes to the high quality of speaking and listening. Most children achieve well in speaking and listening throughout their time in the Nursery and Reception classes so that, by the end of their Reception year, they attain above average standards.
45. When teaching reading, teachers do not use time effectively by working with groups of children of similar ability instead they listen to children read individually. The provision for reading in classrooms is unattractive and space is cramped. Some of the books in the classroom are in poor condition. The teachers send reading scheme books home daily and the home-school reading diaries are completed conscientiously by teachers and usually by parents. Every child also takes home a free choice book, but several children say that their parents do not read these to them. Initial letter sounds are generally taught well and children are taught to form their letters correctly and their writing is neat. However, the teaching of double letter sounds and strings of letters is in need of improvement. Spelling is taught as sounding out individual letters rather than as the physical movement of the hands this slows the rate of achievement in reading as well as writing. In reading and spelling standards are in line overall with expectations at the end of the Reception year and achievement is satisfactory. However a significant number of children are not fully prepared for the demands of the National Curriculum in reading, when they join Year 1.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in using mathematical language for communication and thought, and, in shape, space and measurement.
- Work is not always matched well enough to the needs of individual children.

Commentary

46. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In whole-class introductions to lessons, the teachers are good at getting children to count and recognise numbers, shapes and size. However, when working in small groups the work is not always matched well enough to the needs of individual children and too often they are provided with pencil and paper activities that limit the scope for children to show what they know or extend their learning through practical activities. For example, after a well structured lesson in two-dimensional shape, Nursery children were given a low level task of colouring all the squares on a work sheet. This was too easy for most children and teaching and learning opportunities were lost because children were not provided with mathematical apparatus from which to learn. In Reception, paper and pencil tasks are sometimes used when practical activities would be better used to develop children's understanding and consolidate their learning about calculations. These tasks are too similar and do not take account of the different abilities of the children, so that higher attaining children are not always as fully challenged as they could be, especially in number. The achievement of children in this area of learning is satisfactory.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in this area of learning is **good**.

- Teachers build appropriately upon the wide range of experiences the children bring to school.
- Opportunities for assessing children's contributions are sometimes missed.
- A wide range of exciting activities are provided.

Commentary

47. Teaching is good, children exceed the expectation of the learning goals and their achievement is good. Many children come to school with a good knowledge of places both locally and the places they go on holiday. This coupled with the children's ability to articulate and relate their experiences give the staff a good starting point in geography and history on which to build. Teachers in both classes build appropriately on the good knowledge of the locality and far away places that many children bring to school. Knowledge of other cultures and respect for different beliefs is systematically included in the curriculum.
48. Appropriate play based activities are provided that help children to reinforce and extend previous experiences. These include role play areas such as the garden centre. The garden centre is designed to promote other areas of learning such as social development, taking turns and co-operating with one another. Speaking and listening and acting different roles such as customer and shopkeeper are promoted well. There are opportunities for writing out customers orders and recognising numbers in the prices on the 'stock'. However, some of the numbers used for prices were too large for children to add up if customers bought more than one item.
49. In both the Nursery and Reception class children's skills in using the classroom computers are above average. They are also very confident and competent when it comes to using small and large construction toys and in making models from old boxes. The standard of some of their creations is very high.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **good**.

- Standards are above average.
- Teaching is good.

Commentary

50. Standards are above average because teaching is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Both the Nursery and Reception classes are provided with good opportunities to develop their physical skills. Regular whole-class lessons take place for both classes in the school hall. This helps to compensate for the lack of space in the Nursery classroom.
51. Plenty of opportunities are provided to develop fine motor skills across the curriculum in both the nursery and the reception class as children routinely use scissors, paint, glue staplers and hole-punches during the wide variety of activities provided. As a result, children can cut out accurately and use a variety of small tools with skill. Opportunities are provided regularly for children to use the outside areas. These are well resourced and offer both free choice and taught activities. By the end of Reception, children exceed the standards expected and their achievement is good.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

52. The scope of this inspection did not include overall judgements of the provision or standards in this area of learning. However, planning and classroom displays show that all aspects are planned and organised in accordance with the Foundation stage curriculum. Displays show that the children experiment with a range of media and use of techniques and that standards achieved in this aspect of creative development by the end of the reception class are likely to be above average. Attractive role-play areas encourage drama and imagination well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall leading to good achievement for pupils. There is a good proportion of very good and some excellent teaching seen.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs in literacy is effective in helping most of them to reach the standard expected by Year 6.
- The subject is well led and managed; monitoring is effective in identifying what to do to bring about improvement in standards.
- Pupils work hard and make good use of their literacy skills in other subjects which helps improve the standards they reach in these subjects.
- Assessment procedures are good; they are generally well used to provide a good level of challenge for pupils.

Commentary

53. By Year 6, standards are above average and pupils achieve well overall. The percentage of higher attaining pupils is lower than is usually seen, with only about a quarter of the current group reaching above the expected level. However, this is balanced by a higher than usual number of pupils reaching the expected level. One reason for this is the good quality of additional provision that the school makes for pupils with special educational needs in literacy. Pupils in Year 2 reach standards that above average overall and pupils achieve well. This is because of the school's well planned response to a dip in reading standards in the national tests last year. By providing extra support for pupils who were assessed as below the expectation for their age at the start of the school year, the school has succeeded in raising standards quickly for these pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3.
54. Teaching and learning are good overall, with a high percentage of very good teaching seen. In Year 5 there is some excellent teaching. Generally, teachers make good use of assessment information to plan tasks for pupils that will enable them to make good progress in their learning. When this is not fully effective, it is usually the higher attaining pupils who are not fully challenged and their progress sometimes slows from good to satisfactory. The school is aware of this weakness and has developed target setting for all pupils which also allows them to have a role in their learning. Teachers make good use of talk to promote understanding in lessons and pupils benefit from hearing the ideas of others and extending their vocabulary. In Year 5, where teaching was excellent, pupils worked very fast to produce high quality presentations for the class that would persuade them to a certain viewpoint. Here, excellent relationships, the teacher's sharp knowledge of pupils' skills and very high expectations of what they could achieve, combined to create an exciting and rewarding learning experience. By the end, pupils were delighted with their efforts and were generous in their comments when evaluating the work of peers. While writing is well promoted throughout the school, pupils would benefit from more opportunities to share writing as a class activity. Sometimes, the absence of a model or demonstration of how a piece of writing should look or sound hampers pupils from making a prompt start with tasks or reduces the quality of their work by not making full use of their good literacy skills. When writing techniques are clearly demonstrated by the teacher, as in a very good Year 3 lesson, then pupils are fully prepared for activities and all achieve well in their writing. Pupils in all classes set to work promptly and concentrate well to complete tasks in the time allowed.
55. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in their learning by teaching assistants who have a good knowledge of their needs and are skilled at encouraging pupils' thinking and developing their independence. The impact of this very good provision is to raise standards for these pupils so that by Year 6 most achieve the level expected for their age. The confidence that they gain from their learning in English has a positive impact on their learning in other subjects where they are able to apply the skills they have mastered.
56. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator monitors the subject well and has a good idea of strengths and weaknesses in provision. She has a good knowledge of standards in classes from a wide range of rigorous assessments and has been able to use the findings from these to good effect this year by improving standards and provision in reading for the weakest pupils. Since the last inspection high standards have been maintained in the subject and improvement to provision has

been good. The curriculum has been enhanced with a School Book Project, when pupils wrote poems on a wide range of topics, as well as through visits by writers, poets and theatre workshops.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. All teachers follow the school's policy for using language and literacy across the curriculum. Overall, pupils' literacy skills are above average. Good use is made of pupils' reading skills to research topics in books and computers for history, geography and religious education. Teachers plan activities in other lessons to consolidate and extend what pupils have learned in literacy lessons. In history, geography and science, where older pupils have the opportunity to write in a range of styles they produce high quality work which demonstrates their good understanding of purpose and makes good use of an extensive vocabulary.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Higher attaining pupils at the end of Year 6 perform very well.
- There is regular reinforcement through information and communication technology (ICT) matched to pupils' needs.
- The school identifies and acts upon areas of weakness.
- Teachers encourage mathematical thinking and strategies.

Commentary

58. Currently standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are above average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The 2004 results from national tests showed that standards at the end of Year 2 were in line with the average nationally and below average in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of higher attaining pupils in the 2004 cohort was below the national average. There has been a downward trend in performance since 2000 but results have been consistently above the national averages. Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average and pupils' achievement is very good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the specific nature of their targets and the very good level of support.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and examples of very good teaching were seen in both the infants and juniors. Pupils achieve well when work is set at the correct level for their needs. Throughout the school, teachers plan appropriately for each ability group and manage lessons so that each group makes good progress. Skilful support assistants and teachers contribute very effectively to successful learning. Lessons are well-designed with a balance of activities, including frequent use of ICT. In some lessons seen during the inspection there was a genuine air of excitement about making mathematical discoveries and solving problems. At the end of Year 6, pupils' enthusiasm for the subject is high. They use their number skills to solve real-life problems efficiently and are confident in using mathematical vocabulary, for example, in geometry. Teachers in the juniors have high expectations of pupils' presentation and productivity which help pupils to reach very high standards.

60. The subject is well led and managed. The school's procedures for tracking individual pupil progress are accurate and comprehensive. Pupils' knowledge of basic number bonds when they join Year 1 was identified as an area of weakness by the school and has been a focus of teaching recently. Pupils' performance in Year 1 and 2 has improved, although the speed of their recall could be faster. Assessment procedures are well-established and effective. Mathematics as a subject is regularly monitored and evaluated so that the priorities for development are correctly identified. The school has improved the opportunities for higher attaining pupils with regular investigation tasks and links with the mathematics department of the secondary school. Resources for the subject are good. The interactive whiteboards and associated software are used regularly by both teachers and pupils.
61. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The standards in both key stages have improved significantly, the organisation of the curriculum has been reviewed and teachers' subject confidence has developed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. There is good use of mathematics across the curriculum. Pupils' mathematical skills are well above average and are applied in a range of subjects, most notably in science. Pupils apply their data-handling skills in organising information in tables and lists and in interpreting graphs. Numeracy skills are promoted effectively in ICT, for example, in the use of spreadsheets to plan and cost party menus. Pupils are required to use measurement in planning and making for design technology. Year 5 pupils developed a School grounds project which required detailed planning using numeracy and ICT.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **outstanding**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practical activities, cross-curricular links and other activities enrich learning and enthuse the pupils.
- Pupils are encouraged to show independence in their thinking and this extends their understanding.
- The subject is very well planned and taught very effectively.
- There is an exciting and challenging curriculum for pupils of all ages.
- Leadership and management are very good and promote and sustain improvement very successfully.

Commentary

63. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and by Year 6 they are well above average reflecting good improvement since the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils identified as gifted and talented, achieve very well.
64. Throughout the school, pupils use their literacy skills very well to support their learning in science. They write their findings in clear legible formats and comment reflectively

about their work. Many pupils are working at higher than expected levels for their age and are already making realistic predictions and describing why tests are fair. Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and work together co-operatively very well. They use their numeracy and ICT skills well. Throughout the school, work is neatly presented and skills taught in English lessons are applied very well. Work is marked conscientiously and teachers add helpful comments that help move pupils' learning forward.

65. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen was very good. The teachers' subject knowledge is very good and they use questioning very carefully and effectively to develop pupils' understanding. In a very good lesson in Year 1, where pupils were investigating the hypothesis - *the higher the ramp the further the car will travel*, the teacher made very good use of demonstration to ensure that the pupils fully understood the task. Team work and co-operation were excellent features of pupils' response in this lesson. Throughout the school, teachers are encouraging pupils to think carefully about their work and this aids their understanding. By Years 5 and 6, pupils work very effectively on their own, in pairs and as part of a team. They show very responsible and mature attitudes to the subject, which they clearly enjoy, and demonstrate thinking skills of as very high order. They work quickly and efficiently, covering a great deal in lessons. The teachers foster a workshop like atmosphere and by skilled use of on-going assessment are quick to spot errors and misconceptions and these are swiftly addressed.
66. The subject is led and managed very well. The school's involvement in activities such as National Science Week, the Einstein Challenge, The Science Road Show and the work done in conjunction with Teeside in the Science is Great Project further promote the pupils' interest and motivation and present many enriched learning opportunities. As a consequence, learning is interesting and stimulating and pupils respond with excellent attitudes and application that further strengthens their learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT is fully integrated into the curriculum.
- Teaching is enhanced by frequent use of ICT for demonstration and instruction.
- Some pupils lack fluency in keyboard skills.

Commentary

67. Standards in information and communication technology at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average and standards are rising across the school. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. A minority of pupils exceed expectations in aspects of the curriculum particularly in exchanging and sharing information and in developing ideas.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers plan the integration of ICT with other subjects so that pupils learn the necessary ICT skills and then apply them in relevant contexts; for example, creating stirring posters for World War 2 recruitment for their history topic. Teachers stress the questioning skills needed to interpret graphs and to check accuracy. This helps pupils see the purpose of

collecting and collating information and using a computer to investigate patterns and make deductions. Keyboard skills among younger pupils lag behind their mouse control and their use of menus, and teachers could place more emphasis on developing these skills.

69. Leadership and management of ICT are very good. There is a comprehensive action plan that correctly identifies areas for development for the subject. The plan is effective and updated to show progress. Good systems for the management and monitoring of the subject are in operation and there are effective procedures for assessment. The quality of subject co-ordination is well-established and is having a direct impact on provision.
70. Resources are very good. The school has all the resources needed to teach the information and communication technology curriculum in full and the ratio of computers to pupils is above average. The school now has interactive boards in most classrooms. Teachers make good use of these boards and have incorporated them into most lessons. There has been a very good improvement in resources, planning and the range of the curriculum since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Standards of ICT skills are average overall and pupils apply their skills well in other subjects because of the effectively integrated curriculum planning. In English, pupils use computers to write in different genre, redraft their writing and use digital images to enhance their work. Pupils use computers for learning in mathematics when they learn about symmetry. Frequent use is made of spelling and maths reinforcement programs which improve pupils speed of response and accuracy. In science, pupils create graphs and spreadsheets to record and analyse their investigations. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to present good visual images to assist pupils' understanding and give them opportunities to use this tool for their own learning.

HUMANITIES

72. No **geography** lessons were seen during the inspection so no overall judgement of provision is made. Samples of pupils' work and teacher's planning shows that there is good emphasis on pupils learning through fieldwork and that by Year 2 pupils reach the standards expected for their age and by Year 6 they exceed them. In Years 1 and 2, pupils draw maps of their route to school and show a good sense of place and key landmarks. They compare features of their environment with those on the Isle of Struay and draw good quality maps of the island showing the main features of the small settlement. By Year 6, pupils undertake a study of the local village of Yarm and investigate ways of improving the environment and controlling traffic congestion.
73. **History** was sampled during the inspection and no overall judgement is made about provision. Standards are in line with the expectation for seven year olds and they exceed the expectation for pupils by the end of Year 6. From Year 1 to Year 6 pupils learn about change over time and use a range of artefacts and sources to help them learn about the past. In the infants, pupils learn how household equipment and toys have changed over time and know that new technology plays a part in the changes. They learn about significant events such as the Great Fire of London and link this to their work in art and design. By Year 6 pupils have covered a number of different eras and they are able to see patterns in events such as the impact of invaders and settlers

on language and customs in Britain. In a lesson seen in Year 3, where teaching and learning were good, pupils investigated the impact of the Blitz on peoples' lives and higher attaining pupils wrote diary entries describing their feelings about being squashed in an air-raid shelter. In Year 6 pupils are given good opportunities for personal research and their positive attitudes, skills and confidence are put to very good use when, for example they undertake individual studies of life in Victorian England.

74. Both history and geography are currently being managed by the headteacher who provides effective leadership and management of the subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Opportunities for pupils to extend their learning independently are limited and some higher ability pupils are not fully challenged by the tasks that are set.

Commentary

75. Standards are in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils knowledge about religion is stronger than their understanding of how religious belief affects peoples lives.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with very good teaching seen in Year 5. Teachers present knowledge about different faiths in ways which help pupils to gain a sound understanding of different aspects of religion. They make good use of artefacts in Years 5 and 6 to illustrate different aspects of Christianity. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to discuss different aspects of religion and by Year 6, know that people's religious beliefs affect how they live their lives. Pupils in the infants learn about baptism through a simulated activity and consolidate this learning when they visit the local church. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about the Hindu faith from a range of artefacts and stories which allow them to understand the different customs and traditions and why they are important to Hindus. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils have a broad knowledge of world faiths and how these impact on pupils lives.
77. Overall, the opportunities for pupils to extend their learning in the subject are limited and pupils of all abilities are set the same tasks. Visits to local religious centres tend to be restricted to those of Christian faiths, because of lack of other centres in the near vicinity. The school overcomes this by effective use of artefacts and pictures, as well as use of the internet for pupils' research.
78. The headteacher is providing good leadership and management for the subject in her caretaking role this year. She has worked with a consultant to review and improve curriculum provision and has provided a comprehensive guide to the curriculum with a portfolio of pupils' work as exemplar material for staff to use as a guide to activities in RE. Improvement in the subject since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

79. There is insufficient evidence of teaching and learning in **art and design** to make a judgement about provision. However, the quality of work on display, and in portfolios seen was of high quality. Work in pupils' sketch books indicates that standards are above average by Year 6 and that pupils achieve well as their skills develop over their time at school. The curriculum is well thought out and enhanced well by visitors to and visits out of school. The work pupils do is linked very appropriately to other subjects studied. For example in Years 1 and 2, the work in art was linked to their science topic about investigating materials. The subject is well led and managed by the subject co-ordinator who is keen to develop the subject further.
80. Too few lessons were seen in **design and technology** to make a judgement about provision. Discussions with the subject co-ordinator, analysis of schemes of work and of teachers' planning show that the subject is taught systematically throughout the school. The scheme of work provides a good range of experience for the pupils and ensures a structured development of skills. Samples of pupils work show average standards at Year 2 and above average standards at Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils draw neat, carefully-labelled diagrams of the product they intend to make. The imaginative designs illustrate clear expression of pupils' own ideas and the opportunity to choose from a wide range of materials for their models. They use a range of attractive materials and work carefully. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has put together a useful portfolio of moderated samples of pupils' work to illustrate different levels of attainment.
81. No judgement can be made for provision or standards in **physical education** as only one lesson was seen. Most pupils attain the required standards in swimming.
82. Teachers' planning shows that the subject is taught according to a scheme of work and that each unit is evaluated when completed. Because of the school's involvement in the sports' co-ordinator programme, pupils have had specialist teaching for example in hockey and tennis. Pupils have positive attitudes and play well as partners and teams. Staff have also engaged in additional training and have gained in confidence and skill.
83. The quality of subject leadership is at least satisfactory and improving because the co-ordinator is undertaking the School Sports' Co-ordinator training programme. This is providing staff training and additional resources as well as creating valuable networks between local schools. Pupils have regular sports training and compete against other schools for example winning the local Tag Rugby competition. The school is benefiting significantly from the programme and further improvement in the school's provision is expected. Improvement since the last inspection is good particularly in the breadth of the curriculum.

Music

Provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music has a high profile and is an important factor in the quality of school life.
- Pupils have opportunities to perform to large audiences.

Commentary

84. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with expectations. At the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards above the expectations for their age. Older pupils demonstrate good musical appreciation and technical skills. Younger pupils are developing familiarity with the key elements. Pupils' achievement is good overall.
85. Younger pupils are developing discrimination in distinguishing between the beat and the rhythm and can maintain their parts in clapping songs. Composition skills are built up along side recording skills beginning with simple symbols. Pupils in the infants, for example, create the sounds for the story "Peace at Last" and record them in sequence on grids. Older pupils have a secure understanding of music terminology and take pride in using words like timbre, pulse and duration. They appraise music such as "The Firebird Suite" selecting apt, descriptive words. Pupils use instruments skilfully to create sound pictures, such as animals in the jungle.
86. Teaching is good overall and some very good teaching was seen during the inspection. Pupils benefit from well-designed lessons and teachers' subject expertise. Very good relationships encourage pupils to take part fully in lessons and to perform. Teachers are confident in delivering the curriculum and are well supported by teaching assistants. Teaching includes a range of musical cultures. Information and communication technology is used to record performance and to reinforce composition skills. Music plays a major part in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
87. The extra-curricular activities offered to pupils are very good. The choir, orchestra and recorder group perform to a high standard. Their contributions in assembly are obviously appreciated by the whole school. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" played by the orchestra was a very popular choice. The curriculum is further enhanced by opportunities for pupils to perform, for example, with other local schools and in regular musical productions such as their "Stage and Screen" concert. The choir competed very successfully at the National Festival of Music for Youth in 2003. Pupils have the opportunity to learn to play instruments with specialist teachers.
88. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. The quality of subject management is good and impacts effectively on the standards of curriculum music. There is appropriate guidance for teachers' subject planning and the procedures for assessment ensure that progress is monitored properly. The action plan for the subject has appropriate areas for development such as improving the ways pupils differing needs are met. Resources are good and reflect a variety of cultures.
89. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because of the improvements to the breadth of the curriculum and to the quality of teaching.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

90. The school's planned curriculum covers aspects of personal development, lifestyles and relationships in a way which is relevant to pupils' understanding. Circle time is well used to allow pupils to raise issues which concern the pupils. There are also opportunities to discuss aspects of citizenship and responsibilities within the community. Representatives from the fire service and police, as well as local churches, bring a wider perspective to pupils' understanding about personal safety and community responsibility. Pupils who are members of the school council have

opportunities to negotiate and represent the views of others. Some positive outcomes of this negotiation include the Buddy system and pupils having a say in the décor in the school library and adjoining corridors. Pupils are taught about the possible harmful effects of some medicines or drugs. Issues surrounding growth and personal relationships are dealt with in science lessons or when specifically necessary and statutory requirements are met.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2

Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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