

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC (VOLUNTARY
AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Beeston

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 108025

Headteacher: Mrs Patricia Holmes

Lead inspector: Dr Richard Perkin

Dates of inspection: 7th - 9th March 2005

Inspection number: 271728

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	187
School address:	Lady Pit Lane Beeston Leeds
Postcode:	LS11 6RX
Telephone number:	0113 270 0978
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Monsignor Francis Robinson
Date of previous inspection:	February 2000

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

There are 187 pupils on roll, including 26 part-time in the nursery, with roughly equal numbers of boys and girls. A wide variety of ethnic backgrounds are represented, with about 40 per cent of pupils being from ethnic minorities; this has almost doubled since the last inspection. A hundred pupils are of white, British background and there are varying numbers of other ethnic group children. Twenty-one languages are spoken in school, with some African pupils speaking three languages. Three pupils are from refugee and asylum seeker families and eight are from Traveller families. Two pupils are in public care. Almost a third of pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition, which is high. The main languages are Urdu, Shona and Bengali. Over 40 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is well above average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is broadly average. The range of special needs includes moderate learning difficulties, a significant number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and speech and communication difficulties.

The school's catchment area is one of considerable deprivation. The proportion of children qualifying for free school meals is well above the national average. Many families suffer from low income and unemployment. There is a high incidence of fragmented families. The prevalence of substandard housing stock, often with absentee private landlords, leads to frequent family moves. There are many health and dietary problems, with dental health in the area being among the worst in the country. There is a high incidence of crime and drug and alcohol abuse. Pupil mobility is high. Of the present Year 6, for example, only 36 per cent have been at this school since Year 1 and only three of the pupils began their school career at the school. Children's attainment on entry to school is very low, particularly in communication, language and literacy. A significant number of children arrive with personal, social or emotional difficulties. Many arrivals further up the school come with low levels of English and, in some cases, none at all.

The school is involved in 'Excellence in Cities' and gained the 'Healthy Schools' award in 2004, the Leeds 'United Anti-Racism' award in 2003, 'Investors in People' in 2002 and a 'Schools Achievement' award in 2002. It is working towards the 'Charter Mark' in inclusion.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
14591	Richard Perkin	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language English
19807	Keith Osborne	Lay inspector	
15551	Pat Mitchell	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Art and design History Geography
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school. Pupils of all abilities and needs achieve very well because of the excellent ways in which the school meets their very varied requirements. By the time pupils leave the school, standards overall are as expected for their age and, in English, are above average. Pupils' personal development is very good. Teaching is of high quality. Leadership, management and governance are very strong. Parents and pupils think highly of the school. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is outstanding in meeting the needs of its very varied pupils;
- Leadership, management and governance are all of high quality;
- Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve very well because of very good teaching;
- Children get off to a very good start in the Foundation Stage;
- Very good personal development results from high quality provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although at times pupils are not given enough independence and responsibility for their own learning;
- The provision of computers is not sufficient for the full curriculum for information and communication technology (ICT) to be taught effectively.

Improvement has been good since the last inspection. Standards in English, particularly speaking and listening, are better. The proportion of very good and excellent teaching has increased and provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language has significantly improved. The quality of leadership, governance and management, notably financial management, has been enhanced.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; A - in the top 5 per cent.*

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals. Caution is needed in interpreting data where numbers are small.

Pupils' achievement is very good in all parts of the school. Results in national tests in English in 2004 were particularly strong, being well above the national average and in the top 5 per cent when compared to similar schools. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make very good progress, as do pupils from the many ethnic groups represented. Those Traveller children who attend regularly achieve very well. The significant numbers of pupils who join the school late are also enabled to achieve at least well. Children settle very quickly in nursery and reception. Their achievement is very good. Most are still not on track to meet the goals normally expected by the time they leave reception, particularly in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development because they come from a very low starting point. Pupils continue to achieve very well in Years 1 and 2, though most have still not reached the expected level for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, pupils of all levels of need achieve very well in English and are on

track to reach standards that are above the national average by the end of Year 6. Despite good progress being made, standards in mathematics, science and ICT are likely to be below average by the end of Year 6.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Most pupils have very positive attitudes and behave very well and there are excellent levels of racial harmony. Levels of attendance are around the expected levels because of the school's efforts.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching throughout the school is of high quality. Teachers know their subjects and their children and cater for the full range of need, though some teaching does not promote pupils' independent learning sufficiently. They make very good use of high quality support staff, particularly to help pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in English and mathematics is particularly strong. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage, English and mathematics are very good and assessment is good overall.

The high quality curriculum is enriched by a range of visits, visitors, extra-curricular activities and special events. Learning in ICT is limited by the number of computers available. The school is outstanding at ensuring that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit. It is a very caring school and provides very good support for the pupils. There are very strong partnerships with parents and with the community, particularly with the church. Constructive links with other schools also benefit pupils' achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The headteacher provides a very strong and clear direction and is very well supported by a high quality team of staff in overcoming the many potential barriers to learning that the school faces. The school runs efficiently, with high standards of financial management, and gives very good value for money. The very effectively led governing body supports and challenges the school very well and ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Both parents and pupils think highly of the school. Parents are pleased that their children like school and make good progress. They feel that the teaching is good. There are high expectations of hard work and children are encouraged to become mature and responsible. Younger pupils in particular enjoy their lessons. All pupils feel there is at least one adult that they can trust and confide in.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve provision for the teaching of ICT skills throughout the school;
- Provide pupils with more opportunities in Years 1 to 6 to become independent and collaborative learners.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve very well throughout the school. From a very low start, by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, their standards overall have risen to be close to those expected for their age. In English, standards are above the national average. Pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve very well. There is no significant difference in the achievement of any particular ethnic group. Refugees, asylum seekers, children in care and boys and girls achieve equally well. Traveller children whose attendance is regular also achieve very well. The school has very strong arrangements to ensure that pupils arriving at school after a term has started settle quickly, have their needs identified and achieve at least well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is high achievement for all groups of pupils;
- Standards in English are above average by the end of school;
- Pupils' standards in ICT are held back by the limited provision of computer hardware;
- Children in the nursery and reception classes get off to a very good start.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.8 (15.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.8 (13.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.7 (15.2)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.2 (24.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.7 (25.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.2 (27.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. The results in national tests vary considerably year-on-year. They are affected by the varying proportions of pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language in the relevant classes, and significantly by the high rates of pupil mobility. The results at the end of Year 2 are also strongly influenced by the very low rates of attainment with which many children start school, because pupils have simply not had enough catch up time. The results for 7-year-olds in 2004 were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, with boys doing particularly poorly. However, in comparison with schools with similar

proportions of pupils qualifying for free school meals, the results were slightly better, being below average in reading and writing and in line with the average in mathematics. By any measure, the results that pupils in Year 6 achieved in English in 2004 were highly commendable. Not only was their performance well above the national average, it was in the top 5 per cent for similar schools. This was in spite of high levels of mobility, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The school's success was due to a number of factors, not least the high quality of English teaching, the school's emphasis on speaking and listening and the systematic way in which writing is taught. It was also a result of the school's high quality support for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, and the way in which newcomers to the school are speedily absorbed into school routines and their language and literacy needs identified and met. Results in mathematics were below the national average but above average for similar schools. In science, performance was above the national average and well above that of similar schools. Improvement trends over time are below the national average but there have been significant improvements in recent years. The results last year showed that overall the school is adding very good value to the pupils' performance.

2. Children in the Foundation Stage are quickly encouraged to settle into the routines and patterns of school life and their personal, social and emotional development benefits greatly as a consequence. The very strong role models provided by the adults in the nursery and reception classes ensure that the values of the school have a positive impact and, as a result, children learn effectively and thoroughly enjoy the experience. Stimulating classrooms and exciting activities help the children to develop their language and mathematical skills very well, as they extend their experience and understanding of the world about them. Because of the very low levels which many children bring with them at the beginning, while they make very good progress throughout the Foundation Stage, most still do not reach the expected targets, known as the Early Learning Goals, in any of the areas of learning by the end of reception, particularly in communication and language and the aspects of mathematical development that depend on the children's language skills. However, most are approaching the goals in personal, social and emotional development and physical and creative development.
3. The very good teaching in Years 1 and 2 continues to ensure that pupils progress at least well, particularly in English. Pupils' skills in English benefit greatly from the rich and frequent opportunities provided for them to speak and listen in many different contexts, in all subjects throughout the school. The impact of the school's very good support for pupils with special needs and for those with little experience of the English language is felt from the start but for many pupils there is a long way to go to reach the standards expected for their age in English. Consequently, standards by the end of Year 2 at present are unlikely to reach the national average. They are also likely to be below average in mathematics and science, although pupils continue to make good progress in those subjects. Standards are below average in ICT, largely because the school does not have enough computers to ensure that pupils can practise their skills frequently.
4. In Years 3 to 6, the initiatives put in place by the school have more time to positively influence standards, particularly in English. The use of booster groups and other small group lessons, often taught by well trained support staff, is also having an effect on the achievements of lower attainers, as well as those who are working towards the higher test levels. The systematic and highly effective teaching of

writing skills for different purposes and audiences, builds on the development of pupils' basic literacy skills to raise their standards to above those expected for their age by the end of Year 6. The school's recent focus on mathematical and scientific language is beginning to have a positive effect on standards in those subjects from Years 1 to 6. These have not had long to make a strong impact, however, and again in spite of the very good teaching seen in Years 1 and 2, standards are on target to be below average in mathematics and science. The other recent focus on more investigation in science is also only beginning to have an impact and pupils do not generally have enough opportunities to work independently on their investigations. The amount of ICT equipment available limits the progress that pupils make in ICT and, consequently, standards are below average.

5. Pupils who are at the early stage of learning English make very good progress. Their needs are identified as soon as they start school and very good induction arrangements ensure that they begin to learn and improve their English very quickly. Within the classrooms, they work for the most part with support staff who have had training and are well aware of their particular needs. The teachers assess their progress rigorously and plan work for them in consultation with both the school's and the visiting English as an additional language teachers, both of whom teach these pupils in small groups during the week. Pupils are highly motivated and make speedy progress because the teachers and other adults are very skilled at making the work both interesting and challenging.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Teachers plan work in lessons that is carefully adapted to pupils' needs. Additional support is carefully planned and targeted where it is most needed. Teaching assistants are well trained, experienced and very effective. When pupils are withdrawn from lessons for extra help, the work is carefully structured and taught in small steps with much individual help. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored and appropriate targets are set for them. This enables them to achieve very well and they often reach national expectations by the age of eleven. There are behavioural programmes for pupils with emotional and behavioural problems. These are very successful and most pupils learn to control their behaviour, to concentrate and to join in lessons successfully.
7. Pupils in the various ethnic groups in school are all enabled to achieve very well. Teachers and other staff are aware of the cultural differences that might apply and are also very sympathetic to emotional upheavals that some of the pupils, such as refugees and asylum seekers, might have experienced. While some of the children from the Traveller community attend irregularly and their achievement is consequently less than it might be, those who do attend regularly achieve very well. The school's arrangements through, for example, the learning mentor ensure that children in care achieve to their full capacity. More able pupils are fully challenged and those identified as gifted and talented work with older pupils or are encouraged to join clubs or take part in activities that will develop their particular talents.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good, though some pupils in Year 6 display challenging behaviour at times. The spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils is very good. The school is outstanding in the way it develops personal relationships, especially racial harmony. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils from a very wide range of social and cultural backgrounds across the world work and play happily together;
- The school's very good programme of personal and social development is set firmly into a Christian philosophy of inclusion and valuing all pupils and their families;
- There is an excellent approach to ensuring that minority cultural groups, asylum seekers and refugees feel welcomed as part of the school and parish community;
- Pupils do not yet have a formal way of influencing the school's policies.

Commentary

8. Attendance rates fluctuate but are improving overall. Extended absence by a few Traveller children can have a disproportionate effect on the figures. The work of the learning mentor in monitoring and following up lateness and absences, alongside her support for particular children, reinforces the importance of regular attendance. There have been no exclusions recently. Although some children are recognised as having challenging behaviour, no unsatisfactory behaviour was seen during the inspection. Sometimes older children do not concentrate as well as they could. Relationships in the playground are good and have been helped by the zoning arrangements, so that different kinds of activity can happen at the same time without conflict. Older children are encouraged to help play with younger children in the Foundation Stage playground. The school's system of ethos statements, circle time and class meetings provides many opportunities to develop pupils' confidence. However, the school recognises that there is as yet no formal way, for example a school council, for pupils' views to influence the school. The school has a relatively high number of adults to each pupil, with additional support from parish clergy, all providing good role models and reinforcing the school's ethos in a positive and calm way. Visits and enrichment weeks, such as the Africa week and the visit to the Traveller Exhibition, enable all pupils to understand and relate to many cultures, thus making a major contribution to racial harmony. Children whose first language is not English are fully integrated, and other children understand the need to help them to express their ideas.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	School data	0.3
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good and the curriculum is of a high quality. There are high standards of care and support and very constructive links with parents and the community. Partnerships with other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The assessment of pupils' work is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good in the nursery and reception classes;
- Teaching and learning of the core skills of literacy, numeracy and speaking and listening are very good;
- Very effective teaching assistants contribute to the very good achievement of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and English as an additional language;
- Teachers ensure that the individual needs of all pupils are very well catered for;
- The very good relationships between pupils and adults give pupils confidence to learn;
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to become independent and collaborative learners or to be involved enough in assessing their own work.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (6)	15 (44)	12 (35)	5 (15)	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.

9. Children develop very well throughout the Foundation Stage in all the areas of learning because the teaching and learning in the nursery and reception classes are consistently very good. Most start school with very low levels of personal and social development and the language and communication skills of many are very poor. The security provided by the consistent practice in both classes helps the children to settle quickly and to learn what the school expects of them. The classrooms and outside area are lively and exciting and the activities children are involved in are often fun. The adults in these classes work together as a very effective team, sharing their wide experience very effectively to ensure that the work is appropriate for the age groups of the children. Very thorough planning is based on rigorous assessments of the children, so that tasks are very well matched to the needs of individuals.
10. Teaching and learning in literacy, numeracy and speaking and listening are very good and pupils achieve very well. Teachers plan their work thoroughly. Lessons have clear objectives which are shared with pupils, so that they know what they are learning in that session. Learning in the lessons is evaluated and this information is used to plan future lessons. This means that core skills such as reading, writing and numeracy are systematically built up. Assessment information is used well to ensure that tasks set are well matched to the needs of individual pupils. This can involve teachers planning for pupils who are newly arrived in school, Travellers who are returning to school after a long absence, pupils with special educational needs, pupils who have English as an additional language and pupils who are higher attainers. Pupils in all of these groups achieve very well.
11. Teachers provide rich opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills in all subjects. Specialist vocabulary is planned for and taught in mathematics and science, for example, so that pupils in a lesson in Years 3 and 4 learned to use the words transparent, translucent and opaque accurately and naturally. Teachers use questioning very well to encourage pupils to discuss their work, with open ended questions being used effectively to challenge higher attainers. For example, in a Year 2 art lesson pupils looked at and discussed the work of the artist, Mondrian. They recognised that he used two-dimensional shapes and used terms such as squares and rectangles, horizontal and vertical. They then considered whether they liked the paintings or not and why. In mathematics lessons, pupils are asked to describe how they work problems out and so they become adept at mental manipulation of numbers and confident in explaining their workings. Teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to talk in pairs with their 'talking partner', to express their opinions, say what they think a word means or discuss an answer to a question.

12. Expert teaching assistants are very effectively used to support the learning of pupils. They work sensitively with groups of pupils or with individuals, helping them to take a full part in the lessons. During whole class sessions, they sit with pupils who need extra help, providing help in understanding language, encouraging reluctant learners or providing practical help for pupils with special educational needs. They work well with groups, both within and outside the classroom, to provide the additional help and support pupils need to succeed.
13. Teachers ensure that the individual needs of all the pupils are very well catered for. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught and achieve very well. In lessons, work is planned to meet their needs and they receive the support they need to complete it accurately. Some pupils are withdrawn for small group work. Here they receive very good teaching that is based on targets in individual programmes or on aspects of literacy, numeracy or science that have been identified in discussion with the class teacher. For example, a group of six reception children worked on recognising initial sounds and matching these to the written letter, a target in their individual programmes. The pace of the lesson was brisk and a variety of activities motivated and interested the children. They focused on the letter 'h' and all learned to recognise it, sound it out, suggest words which start with 'h' and write it.
14. The teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. These pupils are speedily and sensitively inducted into school and their needs assessed. Support is provided for them in the classroom, usually in a small group. Very effective support in small groups or individually is also given by the school's English as an additional language teacher and, for selected pupils, by the visiting English as an additional language teacher. Both these teachers work closely with the class teachers to ensure that the work they do with the pupils will have maximum effect on their learning.
15. The very good relationships between all adults and pupils help pupils to feel confident, work hard and behave well. All pupils are treated with respect and their contributions are encouraged and valued. The work of the learning mentor is very effective in helping pupils who are experiencing difficulties to express themselves openly and to learn to control their behaviour. Teaching assistants provide a good balance of help and challenge, so pupils do not become over dependent but are encouraged to 'do it themselves'. However, sometimes teaching is over-prescriptive and there are too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. This is particularly true for the older pupils. For example, pupils in Year 6 do not get enough chances to experiment and investigate independently in science, to use the library independently for research or to collaborate in groups, to investigate and solve problems in mathematics.
16. The assessment of work in literacy and numeracy is very good. Work is assessed regularly and thoroughly. The information is used to provide work that meets individual needs very well and to organise additional classes and support as necessary. The progress of pupils is tracked and this information is used to set targets for individuals to reach. Marking is good and helps pupils to understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. However, pupils are not yet involved in the assessment of their own work and do not always have or know their individual targets. Assessment in science and ICT is evolving presently as the school discusses the best system to meet pupils' needs in those subjects.

The curriculum

The school provides a very good curriculum. Arrangements for the inclusion of all its pupils are particularly good. The curriculum has been well matched to their needs, and has been supplemented by some good, exciting and effective enriching aspects. Accommodation and resources are sound and enhance pupils' achievements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many very strong arrangements for inclusion of all pupils and 'equal opportunities' is a hallmark of the school;
- Speaking and listening are used very well to promote language development and understanding in all areas of the curriculum;
- Visits, visitors and out of school clubs are used well to enliven the curriculum;
- The school is developing opportunities to bring excellence and enjoyment to the curriculum;
- Insufficient opportunities are provided to promote independent learning;
- Insufficient ICT resources limit pupils' access to ICT.

Commentary

17. Pupils achieve very well because the curriculum is so well matched to their needs. It is enhanced by some exciting opportunities and is organised in ways that allow pupils to have time and derive pleasure from work that integrates areas of study. Staff too enjoy working in this cross-curricular way. Pupils, whatever their needs, are very well supported to ensure that they can access all the opportunities offered.
18. At the apex of this successful organisation and approach are the measures that the school takes to ensure that all pupils have access and opportunities to engage in everything the school has to offer. For example, the provision for special educational needs and English language needs is a very significant strength of the school. Very good systems are in place to identify pupils' needs. Fully trained, experienced, support staff provide very effective teaching to individuals and small groups and very good assistance in classrooms. This very good provision gives equal opportunities for all pupils.
19. The nursery and reception children have a very rich, broad and relevant curriculum, taught by a very knowledgeable team of teachers and support staff, helped on occasion by the English as an additional language teacher. The curriculum follows the six areas of learning for the Foundation Stage and is very carefully planned to match the varying needs of the children.
20. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good and they are respected and valued members of the school. Pupils' needs are identified at an early age and carefully thought out strategies are put in place to help them to succeed. Individual programmes are written for them, which identify the next stages in their learning and how these are to be achieved. This is an improvement since the last inspection. These programmes are used very well to plan work at the appropriate level, both in class and when pupils are withdrawn for additional teaching. The special needs co-ordinator works effectively with teachers, teaching assistants and parents to review pupils' progress and set new targets. Pupils with emotional and behavioural problems have individual behaviour programmes that are successful in helping them to learn to control their behaviour. The learning mentor

works very successfully with these pupils, both as individuals and in groups, on life and social skills. Pupils discuss issues such as 'making difficult choices' and how they can behave well and help others. The excellent relationship between the learning mentor and the pupils helps them to feel confident and valued and free to express themselves openly.

21. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is very good and makes very good use of the school's and the Local Education Authority's expert support teachers. These work very closely with class teachers to ensure that the learning of pupils with English as an additional language progresses along with that of their classmates as far as possible.
22. High on the school's priorities are the efforts made to create an exciting and stimulating curriculum. 'Focus days' and 'Focus weeks' are used very effectively to provide integrated and exciting activities. For example, during 'Africa Week' held recently, the continent close to the heart of some of the pupils was brought richly to life through dance, music, costume, listening to African storytelling, tasting food, finding out about artefacts and traditions, creating environments through design and technology and looking at African art in art and design. Pupils from all classes were engaged in this wonderful project. The headteacher and staff used many contacts, including some of the parents, to make this happen so successfully. The weekly African drumming session, a collaborative effort between several local primary schools, is a high point for many pupils.
23. In this vein, the curriculum is further enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors, the very close and effective connections with the Parish Church, the use made of specialist organisations, such as the South Leeds Computer Learning Centre, to supplement the school's resources, and a good provision of out of school activities, encompassing music, a wide range of sports, dance and art. Links with the community are also used to good effect; some staff from Barclay's Bank visit the school each week to hear children read.
24. The curriculum for literacy, numeracy and science is organised and planned very carefully to help the pupils move forward rapidly. A particularly effective emphasis on speaking and listening skills is used across all subjects, to develop understanding and language acquisition. The provision for physical education has benefited from a school development initiative. Skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum are learned progressively through a range of directly taught and practical activities. However, the school does not yet provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their work. This is particularly true in science, where, for example, pupils are not encouraged to choose their own methods for investigating and reporting on aspects of the topic they are studying. The provision for ICT is limited because the school does not yet have enough hardware or systems in place to teach the skills of computing successfully or rapidly enough. The overall very good curriculum provision is underpinned by the good subject expertise of the teachers and support staff and well qualified support assistants. The school also brings in additional teaching expertise to support music. The cover to ensure continuity when teachers are absent is a real strength.
25. Personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) permeates the life of the school and is taught directly, largely through science and religious education, which emphasise personal and social aspects well. The recent work to achieve healthy school status has included emphasis on diet and self-esteem. Drugs

education features appropriately. Proposals to develop an allotment garden are at an advanced stage. The policy on sex and relationships education, especially preparing pupils for puberty, is not as clear as it might be.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare and health are very good. Formal health and safety procedures are good. Pupils are supported and guided very well throughout the school. Systems for consulting children formally about the running of the school are satisfactory, but the school has recognised that there is further scope for development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent improvements to the site and premises are making a good contribution to health and safety;
- There are excellent relationships at all levels;
- Very good induction procedures lead to rapid integration of new pupils, whatever their age or circumstances.

Commentary

26. The school places a very high emphasis on the security, happiness and well being of pupils. Recent improvements to the buildings, only just finished, now provide reception and office accommodation at the main entrance, rather than hidden away upstairs, thus providing more security and a more direct welcome to visitors. A small child development centre has also been created, where the learning mentor is based. Parents are reminded about safety before and after school and the school responded rapidly and effectively when a pupil went missing.

27. The school places a special emphasis on road safety training because of the poor road safety record in the area. Governors undertake regular surveys of the premises. The site is inspected each morning to remove any dangerous items, such as syringes, which have been discarded overnight. The playground has been turned into a 'Zoneparc' to reduce conflicting activities at lunch times. A wide range of equipment is provided to encourage sensible play and there are strict regulations about football. Appropriate records are kept of playground accidents and parents are notified about all minor bumps. An appropriate play area has been provided for Foundation Stage pupils.
28. Induction arrangements for the steady stream of pupils from other schools in the United Kingdom and abroad are very good, and other pupils make them welcome. Work is marked very well and teachers explain how pupils can improve. However, pupils are not yet as involved in the assessment of their own work as they might be. Pupils' progress, both academic and personal, is tracked very effectively in order to advise and support pupils very well. The Christian ethos of the school, enshrined in gospel values of the worth of every person, leads to excellent, caring relationships between children and adults. Appropriate risk assessments are in place for the many visits out of school. Children have been consulted about aspects of the healthy school programme, and the school is developing more regular and formal consultation procedures, working, for example, on the development of a school council.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good. Links with the community are very good. Links with other schools and colleges are good. Both parents and pupils are very satisfied with the school's provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good support given to families by both the school and the parish is much appreciated;
- There are regular opportunities to discuss pupils' progress;
- Involvement with the Sikh temple and other local events and organisations benefit the pupils;
- There are good links with other primary schools for staff training and curriculum development.

Commentary

29. The school's very good ethos of caring extends to pupils' families, some of whom live in very difficult circumstances. For example, the learning mentor runs drop-in sessions and helps families to make links with other support agencies where necessary. Between 25 and 30 children attend the breakfast club, which allows mothers to go out to work. The parish priest and sister visit the school regularly and make home visits to support, for example, bereaved families or parents in prison. This support extends to people from all faiths or of no religious affiliation. Regular parents' evenings are supplemented by very informative newsletters, and an open-door policy by the headteacher allows parents' worries to be discussed quickly. Translation services are available in the area when needed, often using other

residents from the same language group. The Sikh temple opposite the school welcomes links with both school and church. There are valuable links with other local primary schools, with joint celebrations of Muslim and Christian festivals, African drumming and other cultural events.

30. The community provides a wider perspective for pupils. They have visited a local centre for the disabled, taken part in Beeston in Bloom and Beeston Festival, the Flash Dance competition and Leeds United anti-racism projects. Links with a branch of a national bank have recently been implemented to support reading and aspects of school management. There are plans to increase training opportunities for parents and to develop a 'Friends of the school' organisation.
31. Parents' responses at the pre-inspection meeting, and to the questionnaire, show a high level of satisfaction with the school and an appreciation of its philosophy. Several parents said they chose St. Francis of Assisi over more local schools because of the quality of provision.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The leadership of key staff is also very strong. Management is of a high quality. Governance is highly effective. The governing body, which is very well led, ensures that all statutory requirements are met. This team has very effectively worked together to overcome the many barriers to learning that exist for the pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very clear educational direction leads to excellent levels of inclusion in all activities for pupils of all needs and backgrounds;
- Very strong leadership from the headteacher, staff team and governors has led to success in overcoming a daunting range of barriers to learning;
- Very effective financial management ensures that the school is able to meet its priorities.

Commentary

32. In the relatively short time the headteacher has been in post, she has built a very strong staff team that shares her own commitment to the education and personal development of all children, whatever their needs or circumstances. The school runs on the basis of high quality relationships, great respect for one another and high expectations of work and behaviour. The headteacher models these qualities very well. As well as helping pupils to achieve the best possible academic standards, she has ensured that the school pays equal attention to pupils' personal well being and their development as responsible and mature citizens, living in a culturally diverse society. The result is a happy and harmonious community where pupils of all kinds achieve very well.
33. Staff responsible for key areas of the curriculum and other aspects of school life perform their duties very well. They oversee developments when their subject is a school priority to very good effect. For example, the strong focus on writing and on speaking and listening, under the very strong leadership of the literacy co-ordinator, has resulted in the very good performance in the national tests last year and the present above average standards in English. Similar initiatives from the mathematics and science co-ordinators to develop pupils' use and understanding of

scientific and mathematical language are also beginning to have a positive effect. Leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is central to the success of the school's policy for inclusion for all and this too is of a high quality.

34. Governors are enthusiastic and very supportive of the school and carry out their statutory duties very effectively. They are totally committed to the school's principles of inclusion and raising achievement, and ensure that the school promotes equality of opportunity and racial harmony very effectively. Under the very good leadership of the chair, they challenge the school when necessary and, because of the direct involvement in the life of the school of many governors, have a good knowledge of its strengths and areas where it might improve. Finances are carefully monitored by the relevant committee with the help of the very effective school administrator, thus making a major contribution to the very good value for money provided by the school.

35. The school identifies an appropriate set of priorities in its very good school improvement plan and deploys its funds very carefully to meet those priorities. It clearly, and rightly, sees that investment in high quality staff is likely to be the most effective way of achieving its goals and has spent its money very cleverly. For example, the appointment of a learning mentor has made a great difference to the well being of the pupils, and the use of a full-time teacher with expertise in English as an additional language as cover for other staff is working well.
36. The school has tackled the barriers to learning that face it in very positive ways. The very strong support for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, the extra staff appointments, the staff's consistent approach to discipline and to teaching, and the very strong ethos of equality of opportunity have been major contributors to the school's success. Investment in a very strong Foundation Stage ensures that children develop good learning habits from the outset. In addition, the systems put in place to, for example, improve attendance and to deal with pupils joining the school at times other than the usual also help pupils to achieve. The development of a strong partnership with parents has ensured that the school is able to help them deal with their own problems when it can. The co-operation of the community, and particularly the church, also adds to the school's resources in dealing with the challenges it faces.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	452830
Total expenditure	440462
Expenditure per pupil	2575

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	31410
Balance carried forward to the next	43778

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The Foundation Stage consists of a nursery class that runs in the mornings and a full-time reception class. The accommodation and resources are of good quality and their imaginative use ensures that all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum are very well provided for. Classrooms are of a reasonable size and are stimulating and attractive, promoting children's learning very effectively. There are very good facilities for outside play. The Foundation Stage is very well staffed with teachers and support staff with extensive experience and expertise. The area is very effectively led and managed by the deputy headteacher, who ensures that the Foundation Stage staff operate as a very effective team. Planning is thorough, detailed, of high quality and closely related to the six areas of learning. It is based on thorough assessment and record keeping so that children's progress is rapid. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Attainment on entry to the nursery is very low overall and many children arrive at school with very low levels of social, personal, communication and language skills. The very good teaching ensures that the children make very good progress during their time in nursery and reception and achieve very well. Children with particular learning or emotional needs and those who have English as an additional language are very well supported and they too achieve very well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good induction procedures in the nursery enable children to settle quickly;
- High quality relationships between all adults and children in both classes help to develop children's confidence very well;
- Adults are consistent in making clear their high expectations so that the children know how to behave well;
- Teachers' planning encourages sharing and co-operative activities.

Commentary

37. Very warm and constructive relationships characterise both classes, so that the children feel secure and cherished from the beginning. Parents are made to feel very welcome when they bring their children into the nursery and reception classrooms each morning. This plays an important part in helping children to settle quickly to their work and play. The exciting activities available in the nursery and the skill and experience of the adults there mean that, even at this early stage, children confidently separate from their parent or carer and are beginning to know what they are expected to do. They chat excitedly to parents or carers when they come to pick them up at lunchtime, telling them about the fish and chips they had made and eaten, for example. Regular routines have been established in both classes, so that the children know what to expect at particular times of the day. Children's particular needs are identified early on and, where necessary, individual or group education plans are developed for those with special educational needs. These children are consequently able to achieve very well. Children learning English as an additional

language are provided with support immediately, because the English as an additional language teacher spends part of her time each week in the nursery and reception classes, working alongside the teachers or focussing on individuals.

38. Children learn to understand what is expected of them in behaviour, turn taking and sharing, because the expectations of all the adults in the two classes are consistently high. These skills are reinforced in small group sessions as well as in whole class times. The rules of circle time in reception are clearly set out, for example, so that the children know that if they want to speak they must be holding the pebble. The 'Ethos Statement of the Week' is discussed at appropriate times during the week. Activities are organised and adults briefed to encourage children to play with and alongside others, so that they learn to share equipment when playing, for example in the sand or with construction toys. Four boys played happily together in the police station, sharing helmets and notebooks without fuss. In both classes, children from different ethnic groups work and play harmoniously and they join whole heartedly in the end of morning prayer of thanks.
39. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is very good and children's progress is very well assessed and recorded. Although they make very good progress from their very low starting point, most children are unlikely to reach the early learning goals by the time they leave reception.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and other adults provide many very rich opportunities for using language;
- Teachers are very skilled in developing children's language;
- Children are beginning to develop their reading and writing skills systematically, because of the teachers' high expectations.

Commentary

40. Teaching and learning in this area are very good in both classes. Teachers are very skilled at developing the communication and language skills of all groups of children, so that those who have weaker language skills or who have languages other than English as their mother tongue are enabled to catch up with the others. More able children have very good opportunities to use their skills in more challenging ways, as when, for example, they are asked to tell the class what they have been doing. Assessments are regular and thorough and are used very effectively to set individual targets, to identify those who need particular support and to help plan subsequent activities. Teachers and other adults take every opportunity to model appropriate language for the children. For example, when discussing three-dimensional shapes, the teacher is careful to use the accurate terms and to insist that the children do too. Children are routinely asked to elaborate their single word answers or to use language instead of the gesture that is often their first response.
41. Every activity is designed to have a rich potential for language development. The classrooms are full of labels and simple written instructions and adults refer to these whenever possible. Some of these labels are in Urdu. Books are displayed attractively and the 'Book Corner' features the 'Book of the Week', The Three Little Pigs. Children independently listen to tapes of stories in the 'Book Corner'. There is an 'Office' where children can make marks or 'write', either as themselves or in role.

Key words of the week for literacy and numeracy are displayed with space nearby for children to practise copying them.

42. The teacher in reception uses a puppet who is clearly from a minority ethnic group and who is also quite shy. The puppet is used very skilfully to stimulate the children to share their feelings with it. Its diffidence serves to encourage the children to speak to it confidently. Adults in both classes systematically introduce children to letters and sounds and the older children are beginning to learn to form letters. A group of children in reception with special educational needs worked successfully with the special educational needs support teacher to match sounds and letters. More able children in reception are able to make their own Mother's Day card and write in it independently 'To mummy I love you from ...' Most children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning, with many being a considerable way off, but children of all levels of ability achieve very well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide regular meaningful and stimulating opportunities to count and use mathematical language in both classes;
- Very good planning is based on regular assessments;
- The high expectations of teachers and other adults ensure that children achieve well.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are very good. From the time children come into the nursery each morning, they experience activities that involve counting or other mathematical skills. At registration, the teacher and the children count together those who have self-registered by handing in the card with their name on. A small number of children manage to keep up with the teacher as she goes past ten, but all remain interested in trying to recognise the number names and enjoy joining in the last number, 22. The same routine in reception sees more children able to join in with the teacher, with more secure recognition of the numbers. Children in both classes are made aware of shape and size, through activities such as making particular shapes with play dough, and are encouraged to talk about big, small and middle sized when discussing the story of The Three Little Pigs. Children in reception learn to build on their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes in order to identify the number of faces and corners found on common three-dimensional shapes. Interesting practical activities using shapes enable the children to explore these characteristics, often independently, and make them into patterns to show the rest of the class later. The teacher worked directly and successfully with a small group of pupils with English as an additional language, to ensure that their use of the appropriate mathematical language matched their understanding of the concepts involved. Children of all levels of need achieve very well in this area of learning but are likely to remain below the expected goals by the end of reception.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are offered a variety of interesting experiences;
- They show high levels of interest and motivation.

Commentary

44. Teaching and learning are very good. Children in reception learn about how to plant cress seeds and what the seeds need to grow healthily. They relate their learning to healthy eating and to the story of Lent. They explore the snow and collect some to record the changes that take place. They make buns and taste them to see how successful they have been. Children in the nursery, with help, prepare and cook fish fingers and chips and check to see whether they have been cooked properly by eating them. In the outside play area, children in both classes learn to use the road layout safely and apply their experiences to the safe use of roads in the real world. The computers in the classrooms are always accessible and children visit them regularly, developing their keyboard and mouse skills, helped when necessary by the teacher or other adults. Children achieve very well in this area of learning in both classes but are unlikely to meet the expected goals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outside play area provides very good opportunities for children's physical development;
- There are many productive opportunities to develop children's skills of manipulation.

Commentary

45. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers and other adults support and encourage very effectively in the outside play area, which has been set up as a challenging circular road with bends, crossings and traffic lights. Nursery children use the bicycles and cars confidently and with a measure of control; older children do this with more confidence and skill. Many children in reception are learning to form their letters securely and can draw recognisable shapes. Children achieve very well and many are on target to approach the learning goals for this area of learning by the end of reception.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have many opportunities to paint, draw and sing in both classes;
- There are rich opportunities for role play and acting out.

Commentary

46. Teaching and learning are very good. Much learning in both classes is supported by songs. For example, counting and word songs are frequent occurrences during the morning. In reception, children recount the life cycle of the butterfly by singing 'Tiny Caterpillar on the Leaf' and listen to weather music in the listening corner, while accompanying it with percussion instruments.
47. Children in the nursery experience a wide range of materials and mark making implements. There is always a painting, drawing or modelling activity available and the teacher ensures that everybody has a turn. Children's attention is drawn to the colours of the week, this week green and yellow because they are observing daffodils. Children in reception too have many opportunities to draw, paint and model. During Africa Week, for example, they make elephant pictures and create an African mask. Children achieve very well in this area of learning and are approaching the expected goals by the end of reception, though most are unlikely to reach them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good** and has significantly improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the subject are very strong;
- Teaching and learning are of a high quality, so that pupils of all levels of ability and need achieve very well;
- The provision for the development of the language skills of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is very good;
- The very strong emphasis on speaking and listening in all subjects is leading to above average standards;
- The targeting of writing has led to a consistent and systematic approach to the teaching of writing skills;
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their independent research skills.

Commentary

48. Year 6 pupils' performance in the national tests in 2004 was well above the national average and in the top 5 per cent in comparison to similar schools. This far exceeded the school's targets. This was in spite of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, and the high mobility rate that applied to that group of pupils. Such a very strong performance was the result of careful targeting of writing by the school, the very effective subject leader and the intensive support provided for pupils of various abilities and needs. A number of national strategies and booster classes were used and the individual and group support provided for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language was also very successful in raising the standards of these pupils. Trends over time in English results have been downwards, although obviously this trend was reversed last year. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys or girls or of any ethnic group. The results for pupils in Year 2 reflected the low levels of language and communication skills with which these pupils started school. In national terms, the results were well below average in both reading and writing and they were below average for similar schools as well. The performance of boys and girls varies year-on-year but, overall, girls achieve significantly better than boys in reading and writing. This was very noticeable in 2004, when boys performed poorly. Effective action has been taken by the subject leader and no significant variations in the work of boys and girls were in evidence during the inspection.
49. The initiatives mentioned in the previous paragraph continue to have a positive effect on standards and pupils' achievement. The very sensible management decision to maintain the focus on writing, while adding an emphasis on speaking and listening across the curriculum, is having a positive effect on standards in the present Year 6, which, although being a very challenging group, is on target to attain above average standards by the end of the year. The effect on pupils in the present Year 2 is also positive. Although these pupils are on track to attain below the

national average, they are achieving very well as a result of the very good teaching they experience.

50. Pupils of all abilities and need achieve very well, because of the very rich curriculum and the high quality teaching and support they receive. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, higher attainers, pupils from all the ethnic groups in the school and children in care achieve very well. Traveller children also achieve very well when their attendance is regular.
51. Pupils' oral skills benefit from the many opportunities they are given to speak purposefully to each other in pairs, small groups or as a whole class. They make decisions, discuss observations, recount experiences and then feed back their own or their partners' views to the rest of the class. This breadth of experience in communicating inevitably improves their skills in expressing themselves clearly. These skills are then transferred to their writing, aided considerably by the knowledge they have been taught of the characteristics of various writing genres and the good writing habits that have been instilled. Pupils are used to using props and scaffolds such as story outlines, structures for persuasive writing or the sequence of a piece of non-fiction writing. They are used to drafting, re-drafting and editing their work and, occasionally, word processing a finished version. These more advanced skills are founded on the systematic teaching of basic literacy skills such as spelling, punctuation and handwriting. Less able pupils and those for whom English is an additional language are enabled to catch up to a considerable extent because of the expert support that both groups are given individually and in small groups. The teachers and support staff are very good at motivating these pupils and catching their interest, so that they make rapid progress in developing their English skills and enjoy their learning. Pupils' reading skills are also well developed, benefiting from regular and systematic teaching of reading techniques throughout the school. However, pupils do not receive enough regular opportunities to use their research and information retrieval skills independently, either in the library, by using computers or through the Internet.
52. The quality of teaching is high. Teachers are very good at fostering the joy of literature and their enthusiasm transfers to the pupils. An excellent dramatic retelling of the story of Perseus and the Gorgon, for example, had the class on the edge of their seats, as they awaited the outcome of the hero's daring. They waited in vain, however, as the teacher left them with a cliffhanger until the next lesson. Along with the expert story telling, however, came rigorous questioning that took the pupils deep into the experience and feelings of the story and a consideration of the moral dilemmas that were being faced. A teacher with a class of younger pupils, as a preparation for their consideration of character in story, used drama and role play to catch their interest and provide depth from the start. Teachers and support staff work very well together, so that all pupils can be included in the often exciting activities that occur in lessons. Lessons are planned thoroughly and planning is based on very good assessment so that it is carefully matched to the needs of all pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Pupils' oral skills are very well developed in lessons in all subjects and there are sound opportunities for them to read and write in other subjects such as history and religious education. However, more opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills to research aspects of other subjects could be provided.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well, despite many having barriers to learning;
- Teaching and learning are very good;
- There are very good relationships between adults and pupils, which lead to very good behaviour and attitudes to work;
- Leadership and management are very good;
- Assessment of pupils' work is thorough but pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in the assessment of their own work.

Commentary

54. The standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 in the national tests in 2004 were below the national average, although they performed better than pupils in similar schools. The standards reached by pupils in Year 2 in the tests were well below average. Many of the pupils in these groups started school with a very low level of mathematical development.
55. There are significant barriers to learning for many of the pupils in school at present. There is a well above average number with special educational needs, about a third of pupils have English as an additional language, there are children from some Traveller families who miss some of their schooling and children from refugee families. Pupils come and go regularly throughout the year and only about a third of the pupils in last year's and the present Year 6 have been at the school for all of their school lives. Despite this, pupils achieve very well because they receive very good teaching and they work hard.
56. Higher attaining pupils are given challenging work to do and additional lessons to 'boost' their achievement. These are successful in helping these pupils to reach more advanced levels of work. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language achieve very well. This is because their needs have been carefully assessed and teachers plan work that is adapted to take account of these. Pupils are very well supported by expert teaching assistants, who help them to join fully in class lessons and guide them sensitively during group sessions. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on learning and ordering the seasons of the year, a group of pupils at the early stages of learning English worked as a small group with a teaching assistant. They cut out and matched pictures of the seasons with the name. The teaching assistant helped them to read the words and they discussed the meaning of the words and the pictures. A group of pupils with special educational needs worked with the teacher to match pictures and words, discussing them and putting them in order. Some pupils completed the tasks on their own, others put the pictures of the seasons in order and started to write the names themselves.
57. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are fully integrated into the classes, working according to their abilities. They are represented in all ability groups and achieve very well. The achievement of children from Traveller families is sometimes limited by poor attendance, but those who attend regularly achieve very well, along with the rest of the pupils in their class.
58. Teaching and learning are very good, an improvement since the last inspection. Learning in lessons is evaluated and this information is used to plan future lessons. This ensures that numeracy skills are built up systematically. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the numeracy strategy and so are able to provide very clear demonstrations and explanations, and help pupils to see connections and patterns. They use questioning expertly to ask pupils to explain how they worked out their answers and to encourage pupils to explore a range of strategies to solve problems. There are, however, too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. This is particularly true for the older pupils, who do not get enough chance to collaborate in groups, to investigate and to solve problems. Assessment is thorough and very well used to ensure that tasks set are well matched to the needs of pupils. Marking is good and helps pupils to understand what they have

done well and what they need to do to improve. However, pupils are not yet involved in the assessment of their own work and do not always know their individual targets or have them to hand.

59. The very effective mathematics co-ordinator has identified mathematics vocabulary as an area that has caused problems for pupils. This has been targeted by the school and is now particularly effective. Correct mathematical vocabulary is always used and teachers ensure that pupils understand and use this naturally. Many opportunities are given for pupils to talk about their work, both to the class and to their 'talking partners'. The very good relationships between adults and pupils, aided by humour, mean that classrooms are very pleasant places to learn, where pupils enjoy their work, work hard and gain in confidence, as well as achieving very well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. ICT is used satisfactorily to support mathematics lessons. Particularly effective was the use of an interactive whiteboard to teach co-ordinates in a class with pupils in Years 4 and 5. Pupils were excited as they were 'map detectives', using words such as origin, horizontal and vertical axis, X and Y axis, to solve problems. Mathematical skills are promoted satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum, such as history where pupils present the daily routine of life in Victorian England as a pie chart.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory** and is improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership has correctly identified areas for development through self-evaluation, and the school has sought outside expertise;
- Classroom assistants give very effective support so that the needs of all pupils are very well met;
- Very good use is made of speaking and listening to develop scientific language, knowledge and understanding;
- Older pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop ways of working independently.

Commentary

61. The picture of standards in science has changed since that of five years ago, when they were above average, as the nature and characteristics of the school community have changed. However, standards in science have been rising steadily from a low point of four years ago and, although below average compared to all schools, are well above average when compared to similar schools. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils make very good progress and in Years 3 to 6, they achieve well in the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, although their ability to work independently and to undertake their own investigations is still below expectations. The present Year 6 pupils are expected to attain lower than average standards but will achieve well. There is a high proportion of children who have special needs, or have only been in school for a short time, but nevertheless have made good progress.

62. Throughout the school, teachers have a good knowledge of science. A characteristic of the teaching of the subject is the very good use that is made of discussion between pupils to explore ideas, extend their subject vocabulary and consolidate concepts and understanding. Pupils in Year 2 were testing forces and friction by running model cars down a ramp and over a range of different surfaces. Two boys created their ramp out of books. When the car ran down the ramp, it was slowed at the joint between two books. 'We've made a barrier' they said. The teacher astutely steered the conversation to discussing the use of speed humps on roads for the same purpose.
63. The well trained classroom assistants contribute very well to learning, by supporting groups and individuals, and those pupils with special educational needs or English language needs make very good progress. They contribute well to the scientific knowledge and understanding of pupils, because of very good planning, and teamwork.
64. Standards in science are rising, because the subject leaders have identified the need to develop the pupils' knowledge of scientific vocabulary and of carrying out investigations. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now being given opportunities to work independently and are making very good progress. In the Year 2 lesson referred to earlier, to make their tests fair the pupils released the cars rather than pushing them. A girl said that the force was 'gravity'. 'It's in a book I've got.' She opened her book at a page showing an apple dropping on Newton's head. 'Look,' she said, 'it is gravity.'
65. At present, independent work is less well developed for the older pupils. In some instances, the work is too constrained by the use of worksheets or pupils copying the results of their investigations. However, although it is by instruction rather than investigation, pupils are now being shown how to carry out tests fairly and systematically, and to record their predictions and compare their findings.
66. ICT is being used to support learning in science and pupils are using and applying their literacy and numeracy skills.
67. The subject leaders are making a good contribution towards the development of the subject. With the help of an advanced skills teacher, they are developing ways of fostering independence and of finding ways to extend the pupils' grasp of scientific vocabulary. They are monitoring lessons to develop good practice and are improving the quality and range of resources.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**, largely because of insufficient computer hardware.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Insufficient resources make the pace of learning slow;
- Some aspects of ICT are under represented;
- The school is developing the use of ICT across the curriculum;
- The curriculum is benefiting from innovation and enrichment.

Commentary

68. Whilst standards and progress are below expectations overall, there are some areas of ICT where the pupils' work is at or above the expected level. In Year 1, pupils use a rich variety of applications to do artwork, independent writing, language, mathematics and problem solving. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to write confidently and freely, using a range of word processing programs. They learn to include graphics with their text. They use ICT confidently to create pictures using an art package.
69. In Years 3 to 6, pupils use word processing well to record work in a variety of subjects. They use data handling programs to create graphs and charts, and to problem solve. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 used a spreadsheet to investigate the optimum dimensions of packaging to hold biscuits they were making to sell for charitable funds. In Years 4 and 5, they use simulations involving problem solving, such as creating plans for a classroom. Through Years 3 to 6, they develop their artwork, for example creating symmetrical patterns, and learn to create repetitive patterns for use as wrapping paper.
70. The ICT curriculum is enriched through pupils visiting the South Leeds Computer Learning Centre to undertake some exciting work, such as developing multimedia presentations. Each classroom has been networked, and pupils are beginning to use the Internet to investigate and retrieve information. However, at present there is a tendency to copy work verbatim rather than rewriting it in their own words. The subject benefits also from a project undertaken with Leeds United Football Club.
71. Despite developments in the use of basic ICT skills to support work in other subjects, the pace of learning and applying new ICT skills is slow. In consequence, some aspects of the subject, such as control technology, have not been covered and some important areas, for instance communication, are under represented. This is because there is insufficient hardware to support effective teaching and learning in the subject. Lack of appropriate facilities means that on occasion the pupils are being taught about ICT rather than using it. No lessons were observed during the inspection where children were being directly taught skills and applications. This has an impact on the pace of learning, on the coverage of the programs of study, on opportunities for pupils to use ICT and on teaching methods. The school is beginning to introduce the use of interactive whiteboards, and this provides one solution for teaching a whole class skills, programs and applications.
72. The school has recently begun to develop assessment procedures for ICT but these have not yet been developed for saving pupils' work systematically, so that progress can be seen readily, and for pupils to begin to appreciate the progress that they have made and what they need to do next. The frequency of pupil's usage of ICT is not yet systematically monitored. This can result in some pupils having more regular practice than others. For example, one pupil had many more examples of work saved than another in the same class. Discussion showed that the pupil who exhibited fewer examples of work did not have access to ICT at home.
73. The subject leader has made valuable contributions to its development through the introduction of a new scheme of work and through piloting the introduction of interactive whiteboards. However, there is plenty of work to be done to ensure that the school keeps pace with recent national developments and raised expectations in the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory.

HUMANITIES

75. It was not possible to observe any lessons in **geography** and only one lesson was seen in **history**. There is insufficient evidence to judge overall provision in either subject. However a range of pupils' work and teachers' planning was examined. There are clear and detailed plans for both subjects that fulfil statutory requirements and identify where ICT is used, the skills to be learnt and assessment opportunities. There is good support for the development of speaking and listening skills by teaching the specialist vocabulary and providing many opportunities for pupils to speak. Good use is made of the local environment and visits to places of interest, such as a Victorian schoolroom, to help bring these subjects alive for the pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. Very few lessons were observed in **art and design, design and technology, music** and **physical education** and insufficient evidence was available to judge provision in those subjects.
77. Pupils are justifiably proud of their work in art and design, keen to show it and able to talk about how they produced it. They use their art skills both in art lessons and to illustrate work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 made clay pots decorated with Greek designs as part of their project on Ancient Greece. These were carefully executed in detail and pupils are proud of them. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 used the paintings of Wolf Kahn as a stimulus to mix their own colours and make their own imaginative 'dreamlike' paintings.
78. A good level of resources supports an interesting and varied curriculum that includes a weekly art club and a visiting artist. Pupils enjoy textiles, printing, painting, drawing, pottery and sculpture. They study a range of artists' work, with much of it from other cultures such as Aborigine and Chinese. Theme weeks such as the 'Africa week' also include a range of art activities. Pupils made colourful masks decorated with beads and seeds, and painted colourful and stylish landscapes, including hunting scenes with a real sense of movement.
79. The school has adopted the national scheme for design and technology. The teachers' planning is very detailed and indicates that construction, food technology and textiles are given due attention. The subject is appropriately resourced to support the scheme of work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 evaluate their products soundly but the school does not use a systematic method for developing designing and evaluating. Photographic evidence shows that a suitable pro-forma has been used on occasions but there was little evidence of this currently in use. Overall, the school has not developed a systematic means of retaining pupils' work in the subject and, in consequence, it is difficult for either teachers or pupils to be clear about the progress being made.
80. ICT is used on occasions to support learning in the subject. For example, pupils in Year 6 used a spreadsheet to determine the best size of packaging to make a container to hold the biscuits that they were making for Easter presents. In the lesson seen, pupils with special educational needs and English language needs were very well supported. The subject's documentation and a portfolio of samples of

work are very out-of-date and need to be updated in the light of the current National Curriculum requirements.

81. The school has recently introduced a commercial scheme for music, which all staff are confident to use, and this ensures coverage of all the elements of the National Curriculum. There is a satisfactory number of musical instruments to support this programme, some of which are of very high quality and very appealing, such as the African drum kit. Staff expertise is bolstered by the use of external expertise. Music lessons are supported by the weekly visit of a music teacher and singing is accompanied by a trained pianist. On occasions, these two combine to help the school prepare for performances. The curriculum is also enriched by drumming classes taken by a visiting expert. This activity is greatly enjoyed by all classes. Further opportunities are provided for some pupils to perform at special events, such as 'Flashdance' at the City Varieties, participation in local festivals and for some singers to join the Leeds Schools Choir.
82. An overall judgement cannot be made on the provision for physical education because only gymnastic lessons were observed. The provision for gymnastics is good and most children reach a good standard and make very good progress.
83. Physical education is an area that the school is currently developing. Outside expertise has been brought in to help the school, staff have received training in the three areas of the subject and resources are currently being improved. The school has increased the number of physical education lessons in the week for all classes. This is having a very positive impact on standards. The standard of teaching in all lessons was good or very good. Staff are confident, have good subject knowledge, model activities well for the pupils and make very purposeful interventions to develop the performance of individuals and groups. Learning in lessons is very well supported by the classroom assistants, who also have a good grasp of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs and English language needs are very well supported and make very good progress. For the most part, pupils are fully involved, work with sustained effort and good concentration and, consequently, the lessons have very good pace.

84. Health and safety aspects are covered well. The pupils are shown how to set up and use the apparatus safely. They are asked to consider the effects of exercise on their bodies. In most lessons, the children made very good progress because of skilful teacher intervention and opportunities provided for them to evaluate their performance.
85. Swimming is the one area where standards are known to be below the expected level. The school recognises this and pupils in Years 4 and 5 have a two year programme of swimming tuition in place.
86. The subject's provision is also enhanced by a good programme of after-school sporting activities, inter-school competitions and access to specialist coaching, for example from Leeds United Football Club.
87. The subject is very well led. The school has identified the need to improve the provision and the results of its work have had a major impact. The school's schemes of work and documentation are good, thorough and supportive.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal development permeates the whole of school life;
- The subject benefits from the work done to achieve 'Healthy Schools' status;
- Education about puberty is not yet fully developed.

Commentary

88. Pupils' personal and social development is at the core of most school activities and approaches. It is supported by procedures such as the weekly Ethos Statements and in assemblies and prayer times, as well as by the very good example set by the adults in the school. Consequently, pupils of all ages are confident in discussing moral and ethical issues that arise from daily events, often stimulated by the staff's interesting approaches. For example, children in reception were encouraged to help a puppet with a problem he had. The regular opportunities that pupils have to talk with their partners or to the class ensure that teachers are very well in touch with the views of a full range of school issues. The school is planning to develop more formal opportunities for pupils to share their views through, for example, a school council. Pupils respond very positively to the messages about behaviour and concern for others that feature in the very good school assemblies. PSHCE is delivered largely through the science and religious education schemes of work, which emphasise personal and social aspects well. The recent work to achieve healthy school status has included diet and self-esteem. Proposals to develop an allotment garden are at an advanced stage. However, the policy on sex and relationships education, especially preparing pupils for puberty, is not as clear as it might be.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	4
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	2
How well pupils learn	2
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	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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