

INSPECTION REPORT

**MONK FRYSTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Leeds

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121577

Headteacher: Mrs C Middleton

Lead inspector: Mr J J Peacock

Dates of inspection: 9th – 11th February 2004

Inspection number: 256934

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 – 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 183 |
| School address: | Chestnut Green Monk Fryston Leeds West Yorkshire |
| Postcode: | LS25 5PN |
| Telephone number: | 01977 682388 |
| Fax number: | 01977 680564 |
| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr William Holmes |
| Date of previous inspection: | June 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School moved into a new building in September 2002. It is situated in an attractive village and serves two communities, both of which are fairly affluent. It is smaller than the average primary school. Numbers have increased steadily since the previous inspection with just over a quarter of the pupils travelling from out of the normal catchment area. The school is full and faces constant pressure to admit more pupils, resulting in frequent appeals from parents who want their children to come to this school. There are 183 pupils on roll, 87 boys and 96 girls in 7 single-age classes. There are no children from ethnic minority backgrounds. The attainment of most children on entry to the school is above average although the full range of abilities is represented.

The number eligible for free school meals, 1.6 per cent, is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is well below the national average with about 6 per cent on the register and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school provides for most pupils from its own resources but additional help has been sought from specialists for a few pupils with moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural problems. The mobility of pupils is above average. Last year 10 joined and 16 left the school during term time.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|--|
| 25344 | Mr J J Peacock | Lead inspector | Science Geography History Physical education English as an additional language |
| 9039 | Mr B Eyre | Lay inspector | |
| 15551 | Mrs P Mitchell | Team inspector | Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Religious education |
| 17907 | Mr M Bowers | Team inspector | The Foundation Stage English Art and design Music |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a highly effective and very successful school where most pupils achieve very well. 'Look up and aim high' is the inspirational motto for the school and there is a solid commitment from all staff to create a centre of excellence where pupils can enjoy their learning. This has resulted in an excellent ethos for learning where high standards are maintained from year-to-year despite the disruption caused by a significant number of pupils moving in and out during term time each year. It accounts for the excellent reputation the school has in the area and the strong parental support. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and the sustained efforts of the highly effective governing body are largely responsible. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy coming to school and they benefit greatly from the very good quality of teaching and excellent curriculum. Overall, the school is providing very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership and management of the headteacher, supported by the highly effective governing body are key elements in the school's continuing development;
- The highly motivated teachers work very effectively as a team and strive for excellence in all they do;
- Provision for the Foundation Stage is a strength, giving children in their reception year a very good start to their education;
- The standards achieved by pupils in Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science are consistently well above average and often very high;
- Pupils enjoy a rich, exciting and imaginative curriculum and it very effectively promotes a love of learning. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. As a result, pupils have a very positive attitude towards school and behave impeccably;
- Links with parents and the community are very good and links with other schools, some of which are in other countries, are excellent;
- Assessment procedures for some subjects do not provide sufficient information to accurately assess pupils' attainment and progress.

The level of improvement from the previous inspection has been very good. An astute and caring headteacher, appointed shortly after the last inspection, has had a substantial impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning and management. The new school building now provides a pleasant working environment for all. The previous key issues have been successfully corrected, with the biggest improvement happening in curriculum planning and the role and involvement of governors. Both of these areas are now significant strengths.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| English | A | B | A | A |
| mathematics | B | A* | A* | A* |
| science | A | A* | A* | A* |

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

Achievement is very good overall, with pupils reaching high standards in the national tests by Year 6. Pupils achieve so well because of the exceptionally good quality of provision in many areas such as teaching and the curriculum. In mathematics and science, pupils' performance was in the top five per cent nationally. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Year 6 are set to achieve very high standards in English, mathematics and science. The trend of improvement is above the national trend, confirming the very good progress of all pupils. In Year 2, standards have

been improved on those for 2003 and are well above average in English and mathematics and very high in science. Standards have also improved in information and communication technology (ICT) and are above those normally seen throughout. Most pupils attain above average standards in history and physical education. In religious education, pupils achieve well with standards being fully in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good due to the support they receive. Most children in the Foundation Stage achieve the early learning targets in all six areas of their curriculum well before the end of their reception year because of the very good provision for them.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Provision is carefully planned so that it is included in all subject areas, wherever possible. School assemblies enhance the provision and reflect the Christian values and beliefs of the school very well. Pupils have lots of opportunities to take responsibility and they willingly embrace these. As a result, most are self-confident and enjoy an excellent relationship with staff. Pupils have an extremely positive attitude to school and attendance is above average. There has only been one exclusion in the last two years. A concern for the school is the number of pupils going on holiday in term time and the disruption this causes.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is also very good. In almost half of the 37 lessons seen, teaching was either very good or excellent. Good teaching featured in 97 per cent of the lessons seen, which is a remarkable record. Key strengths are; the quality of teachers' planning and the links they make between different subjects; the engagement of pupils, the use of the skilled teaching assistants and the equality of opportunity provided for pupils of all ability levels. Some teachers, however, did not allow sufficient time to wind up some lessons with an effective review of learning. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good, ensuring that most children make very good progress. The assessment of pupils learning is very good in English, mathematics and science and good in ICT but there is room for improvement in subjects such as geography, music and history. The school has a very successful partnership with its parents. The staff provide pupils with high levels of care, support and guidance.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and governance is excellent. The quality of management is very good and a strength of the school. All statutory requirements are met. The headteacher and governors are deeply committed to improvement and use their considerable skills to good effect. Under the exceptional leadership of the dedicated and very knowledgeable headteacher, very good monitoring procedures have been developed, giving the school a clear understanding of how well it is doing and what it needs to do better. Governors have adopted a 'hands-on' approach and fully support the headteacher and her staff. Together, they have created an excellent atmosphere for learning. The principles of best value are applied to all areas, ensuring areas for improvement are identified and acted upon.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has an enviable reputation that is well deserved. Parental confidence in the school is high and this was reflected in the very positive response to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection. A few would like more information on pupils' progress. Inspectors think the school is doing very well on this aspect. Pupils' perceptions are also very positive. However, some pupils questioned whether other pupils behaved as well as they should. Most behave very well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Review the assessment procedures for subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT to ensure that they are consistent from year-to-year and that the information on pupils' attainment and progress is sufficiently detailed to make forward planning even more effective.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, pupils' level of achievement is very good. Most children enter the school with above average levels of attainment and quickly achieve the learning targets set for them in their reception year. By Year 6, all pupils have made very good progress in relation to their prior attainment with overall standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science being very high. Standards in the current Year 2 are well above average in English and mathematics and very high in science. Overall, standards by Year 6 are rising at a faster rate than the national trend.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children do well in their reception year because of the very good quality of provision for them;
- Year 6 pupils' did very well in the national tests in 2003;
- Pupils do particularly well in the standards they attain in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in Year 2 and Year 6;
- The rate of progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs is very good throughout because of the consistently high quality of teaching;
- Pupils produce a large amount of neatly presented work in most subjects.

Commentary

1. Very good provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that all children quickly settle into school and make very good progress. Most are expected to achieve the targets set for them in all six areas of learning which make up the Foundation Stage curriculum, well before the end of their reception year. The calm, caring approach of the very talented class teacher helps to quickly establish very good relationships and this gives all the children confidence. All make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Children's progress is also very good in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematics and creative development. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement for children's physical development or their knowledge and understanding of the world.
2. The school's performance in the national tests for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils has usually been well above average and often very high. The very high standards in lessons and in the national tests are due to a combination of factors which all gel perfectly, contributing to the school's enviable reputation and its success. These factors are;
 - the determination and drive of the headteacher;
 - the quality of teaching;
 - governors' wholehearted involvement and support;
 - an excellent curriculum;
 - pupils' very positive attitudes and their very good behaviour;
 - parental interest and support and;
 - the new building, which is very well resourced.

Pupils of all ages and abilities, for example, do very well in science. There is a strong emphasis on pupils conducting their own experiments and scientific investigations and the subject co-ordinator has been most effective in involving all staff in looking constantly for aspects to improve.

3. In the national tests for Year 2, there was a slight dip in 2002 due to the relatively small numbers taking the tests and the proportion of lower attaining pupils in that particular year group. It was enough to pull the school's average National Curriculum points for all core subjects to below the national trend for improvement. However, things improved in 2003 with pupils' performance in reading and mathematics being well above average and above average in writing. Standards in the current Year 2 are likely to be very high in science and well above average in English and mathematics, with about 60 per cent of pupils set to achieve the higher Level 3 in these subjects.
4. There was no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys. Detailed tracking records show all pupils made good progress in relation to their prior attainment level. The comparison with similar schools showed their performance was well above average for reading, above average in mathematics and in line with the average in writing. Staff were quick to respond to the lower than expected performance in writing and improving standards was set as an immediate priority. Judging by the standards seen in the scrutiny of work, their efforts have been successful. Teacher assessments for science show pupils' performance was well above average for those achieving at the higher Level 3.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 18.1 (16.3) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| writing | 15.8 (14.9) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| mathematics | 17.6 (16.6) | 16.3 (16.5) |

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

5. In the national tests for Year 6 in 2003, the school's overall performance compared to all schools nationally and to similar schools was very high in mathematics and science, being in the top 5 per cent. In English, standards were well above average in both comparisons. Detailed school records show that individual pupils achieved very well in all three subjects. The targets for English and mathematics in 2004 have been raised to 92 per cent reaching expected levels, with just over half expected to achieve the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. Pupils produce a lot of neatly presented work in all three subjects. The trend in the school's results over time is above the national trend for improvement.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 29.6 (28.3) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| mathematics | 31.1 (30.5) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| science | 32.3 (32.7) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. Pupils make good progress in the core subjects through Years 3 to 6, thanks largely to the consistently good and often very good quality of teaching. Additionally, all pupils have a very good attitude to their learning and most behave with a mature and sensible approach in lessons. Nearly every parent who responded to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection agreed that staff expect pupils to work hard. Pupils attain well above average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, making good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
7. In history, ICT and physical education, standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above those normally seen. An extensive amount of neatly produced work was available in history, showing that this is a well taught subject. There has been a significant improvement in standards in ICT since the previous inspection and more computers and resources are to be

added to further improve pupils' access to modern technology. Standards are undoubtedly rising, due to the developing staff expertise and the efforts of the knowledgeable subject co-ordinator. Inspectors saw that computers were used extensively to support learning in most subjects. The new building and resources have had a major impact on standards in physical education. Previously, the old building was reported as having limited space and as being far from ideal.

8. In religious education, standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in both Year 2 and Year 6. Provision to teach pupils about other world religions has been significantly improved. As a result, pupils are knowledgeable about other faiths and show a good understanding of other cultures as well as their own. There was insufficient evidence for inspectors to make a reliable judgement about standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and music at either Year 2 or Year 6.
9. Great care is taken to ensure that pupils with special educational needs take a full part in all lessons. The quality of teachers' planning ensures that they have suitably challenging work and teaching assistants give valuable support in many lessons. In the wind-up sessions at the end of lessons, these pupils are encouraged, along with the rest of the class, to confidently demonstrate the good progress that they have made. Care is taken to incorporate pupils' specific targets for learning from their individual education plans in lesson planning. As a result, their achievement is very good, like that of all other pupils. The school has large group of very able pupils and great care is taken to ensure that they are provided with sufficiently challenging work, through the excellent curriculum, in each lesson. A register is maintained for the highly gifted or pupils with special talents. None are currently identified but in the past, special tuition has been arranged for this small number of pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' relationships with one another are excellent. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good and bullying is not a problem. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are happy, fulfilled, confident and outgoing. All are totally immersed in all aspects of school life;
- Almost without exception, pupils behave very well in class and around the school;
- Children in the reception class interact with each other very well, making rapid progress in their learning;
- Pupils are good listeners and have well developed independent learning skills;
- Older pupils support younger pupils and are sensitive to each others' feelings;
- Pupils responses to questionnaires and discussions with them reveal mature attitudes and an ability to think independently.

Commentary

10. The pupils are a delight to meet. They are self-confident, socially adept and are very keen to do well. All work hard in a school that has successfully developed a very pleasant and trusting ethos. The youngest children exude joy in their activities and rapidly develop social skills. The very good provision for them is largely responsible. All are well on course to achieve the learning targets set for them before the end of their reception year. Older pupils show maturity in the way they assist others and in how they take initiative for their own learning. Parents confirm that the school develops well rounded, outgoing individuals who fulfil their academic potential.

11. In their behaviour around the school, pupils consistently show kindness and consideration to others regardless of gender, age or social and cultural background. Bullying is not a problem at this school. Discussions witnessed at a school council meeting confirm that the pupils have high expectations of each other and the school encourages them to develop self-control in their actions. Older pupils are very proud of the opportunities they have to 'look after' their younger colleagues.
12. The excellent relationships pupils have with each other link in effectively with the very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These strengths are made possible because the school has created a proper balance between high academic endeavour, self-assurance, curiosity and the development of social skills. The school has a clear policy on racial equality and racial harmony. Respect and sensitivity for others regardless of background, colour or creed is promoted effectively. In a Year 3 history lesson, for example, the importance of high moral values was linked effectively to the impact on the school when children from Leeds (including a number of 'The Jewish faith') were evacuated to Monk Fryston. Reference to school records gave the pupils an opportunity to reflect on the range of emotions the evacuated children must have experienced and the way local people coped with their arrival. Interesting school assemblies provided by local clergy and the headteacher add effectively to pupils' spiritual development.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 3.9 | School data | 0.1 |
| National data | 5.4 | National data | 0.4 |

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

Commentary

13. Attendance is good, overall and for many pupils it is very good. However, 18 pupils were missing during the inspection as a group of families had arranged a skiing trip. This disruption to their children's learning is difficult to reconcile with the very high expectations parents say they have regarding the attainment of their children.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British | 183 | 1 | |

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good. There is an excellent curriculum provided for pupils of all ages and abilities and all are very well cared for. Children in the Foundation Stage are given a particularly good start to their education because of the quality of provision for them. There are excellent links with other schools and colleges, some of which are in other countries.

Teaching and learning

The very good quality of teaching throughout the school ensures that all pupils achieve very well. Assessment procedures are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent relationships between pupils and their teachers result in an excellent atmosphere for learning throughout;
- Teachers work very effectively as a team, striving for excellence and to make learning enjoyable for pupils;
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. All these pupils are fully included in all lessons;
- Teachers plan lessons very carefully and link subjects effectively;
- Teachers make excellent use of the extremely conscientious teaching assistants and many parent volunteers;
- The quality of assessment of pupils' work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is very good. The information is used very effectively to plan lessons;
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory, overall for all other subjects but there is some inconsistency in the procedures between classes;
- Pupils apply themselves very well in lessons, as a result of the lively and stimulating quality of teaching. They produce lots of very neat work;
- Some lessons end with insufficient time allowed to review the learning objectives.

Commentary

14. The previous inspection in June 1998 described a conscientious team of teachers producing a good quality of teaching and this was regarded as a strength of the school. Since then there has been the appointment of a new headteacher and the old building has been replaced with a new one. Teachers work as a very effective team, more so now than before. They are extremely well led and guided by a headteacher with exceptional professional skills and a strong determination to create a centre of excellence, where all pupils can thrive in a caring and supportive learning environment. The quality of teaching has improved significantly as a result.
15. During this inspection, in 36 out of the 37 lessons seen, the quality of teaching was either good, very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This consistency has a major impact on the quality of pupils' learning, which is very good. Teachers working closely together ensure that pupils' learning is a continuous process. The exceptionally close and trusting relationships pupils have with their teachers are a key factor in promoting an excellent ethos for learning in the school. Pupils behave maturely and responsibly in lessons and can be allowed the freedom to work together in groups, often independently of their teacher. On occasions, pupils were so involved with their work that insufficient time was allowed by the teacher to wind up lessons with a review of the learning objectives. This meant that pupils were unable to share their experiences with others, helping to consolidate learning for all. In physical education, lessons before lunch also had to be cut short as the hall needed to be prepared for dinner time.
16. Five excellent lessons were seen in reception and Years 2 and 5, but there is strength in depth as almost all teachers produced lessons which were either very good or excellent. Lessons of this high quality accounted for almost half of those seen. Excellent planning, great ideas, which successfully motivated and interested pupils and very high expectations, coupled with an excellent use of support staff and other adults in the classroom, ensured that pupils full attention was guaranteed and as a result, learning was very effective. All teachers plan their lessons with meticulous attention to detail, matching work to the ability

level of all pupils and at the same time providing sufficient challenge for all. Equality of opportunity is a key consideration for all staff and support or guidance is always on hand for anyone who needs it.

17. Another strong feature is the way skills from other subjects are used in lessons. In one Year 3 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils had to read and write the vocabulary associated with directions as they were taught how to recognise right angles. In a science investigation into water resistance, mathematical skills were used as pupils used stopwatches and recorded their results to plot on a graph. All pupils make good use of computers to research facts about the function of the heart and use their writing skills to record information for history topics. Class teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and enjoy excellent relationships with their pupils. Pupils work hard and inspectors were able to make judgements about standards in subjects, such as science and religious education from the volume of neatly produced work.
18. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is of a high standard. All teachers set the targets for the pupils in their class and these are checked carefully to make sure they are relevant and sufficiently challenging by the experienced special educational needs co-ordinator. Care is taken to include these targets when planning pupils' work. This ensures that all pupils are fully included in lessons and that the tasks they are set are matched to their ability level.
19. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from the teaching of an experienced and skilful teacher and dedicated teaching assistant. Parent volunteers and students also add valuable support and substantially reduce the number of pupils in each group when they work with one of the many adults present. Children settle in quickly and make very good progress in most areas of learning. All of the teaching seen in the reception class was either very good or excellent. The accommodation is imaginatively used to provide interesting areas which stimulate children's interest. The good range of resources in this key stage is an added benefit. The outdoor area, although fairly small, is sufficient in size for the number of pupils and is used most effectively for promoting learning in all six areas which make up the Foundation Stage curriculum. Good use is made of computers in this section of the school.
20. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is undertaken regularly and in depth for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Results of assessments made of progress in pupils' termly work and their performance in the national tests are carefully analysed. Assessment information is used to modify the planning for future work and to track progress from year-to-year. Specific learning targets are planned for pupils from the results of the detailed assessments, ensuring all pupils build progressively on their previous learning. These targets are communicated very well to individual pupils and their parents in order to involve them more and give a better understanding of what needs to be achieved. In the non-core subjects, assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. All subject co-ordinators are at present reviewing assessment procedures with a view to making the information gathering more consistent for each subject so that it will be more useful when planning future work.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 5 (14) | 12 (33) | 18 (50) | 1 (3) | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is refreshingly broad, innovative and imaginative. It caters excellently for all pupils and offers extensive enrichment opportunities. The accommodation and resources are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is of a very high quality because it is innovative and underpinned with a commitment to provide excellence and enjoyment;
- There is a comprehensive range of enrichment activities both within and outside of the school day;
- The school is meticulous in ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities;
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good;
- The very good resources help pupils to achieve very well;
- There are no significant weaknesses.

Commentary

21. The curriculum is constantly being re-evaluated and improved to incorporate the schools' philosophy that learning should be fun as well as promoting high achievement. Each term starts with a 'theme week'. Last term it was 'myths and legends'. This very effective arrangement helps pupils to settle back into school as well as providing a wealth of experiences to stimulate and excite them. Teachers' very detailed planning ensures that the full curriculum is taught for all subjects and that skills, knowledge and understanding are progressively built up as pupils move through school. Teachers' planning identifies how links can be made between subjects and 'topic webs' identify how a rich and varied range of activities cover several subjects, enabling pupils to use and develop the skills of one subject in another. For example, when studying the Fire of London, pupils in Year 2 develop their literacy skills by writing diaries and newspaper reports and by questioning pupils about what it would have been like to be there. Learning is reinforced by visits and visitors also contribute to the diversity of pupils' experiences.
22. Each year, pupils take part in three performances that involve art, dance, drama and music. Some recent ones were 'Crickey Moses', 'Hot dates' and 'Omutugwa', an African version of Cinderella. These, as well as being hugely enjoyable, help to develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Science is planned to provide pupils with a wealth of opportunities to experiment and investigate. Mathematics is planned to help pupils become adept at mental calculations and using different strategies to solve problems. Pupils are provided with many planned opportunities to speak, read and write in many different ways and for different purposes throughout the day. This results in very high achievement in these subjects.
23. The curriculum in the reception class is excellent. It is based on themes and practical activities and there is a good balance between adult directed and child-initiated activities.

The school deserves the International School Award for its outstanding development of the international dimension in the curriculum, where pupils learn about other countries and cultures in a very personal way. Teachers from six other countries have spent time in school talking to pupils about their lives and their schools. Pupils enjoy being pen pals with children from many different countries and were surprised at how fluent their pen pals were in English. This has spurred them on to want to learn another language and the school now teaches German as part of the curriculum. Last week, causing much excitement, the school received a parcel from America with three teddy bears and their diaries. The diaries have been completed by the American pupils and now it is this schools' turn to take them home and write up their daily diary. This international perspective pervades the curriculum as, for example, pupils study the effects of the Second World War on other countries as well as on their own.

24. The wide range of activities that take place out of school, including sport, music, visits to theatres and residential experience are very well supported. The computer club is for pupils of all ages and this has a waiting list for those wanting to attend. There is another computer club which targets pupils in Year 6 without a computer at home to support their revision for the national tests.
25. Full integration is made possible because of the determination of senior management, teachers and support staff that the school will be fully inclusive, with all pupils having equal opportunities. Pupils who have special educational needs are taught alongside their classmates. Additional support is carefully planned and targeted where it is most needed. Teaching assistants are well trained, experienced and very effective. Teachers plan work that is carefully adapted to pupils' needs. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored and appropriate targets are set for them and, when appropriate, *with* them. This enables them to achieve very well and they often reach national expectations by the age of eleven. Pupils who have special educational needs are identified at an early age and carefully thought out strategies are put in place to help them to succeed, Consequently, many pupils move off the special educational needs register as they get older.
26. A high percentage of pupils are identified as high achievers. These pupils have challenging work planned for them in lessons and they achieve very well. Teachers ensure that pupils who receive extra tuition to play musical instruments, and there are many, are given time and teaching to make up any missed work.
27. The new school building is a pleasant learning environment. The colourful and informative displays make it also a stimulating environment. There is good outdoor play space and areas to be used for sitting and learning. The plans to build a new, larger staffroom will also release a much needed room for small group work. Teachers and teaching assistants are highly qualified and the level of staffing enables single age, small classes where pupils needs are very well met. The amount, quality and suitability of resources are very good and they contribute to the very good achievement pupils make.

Care guidance and support

Pupils are very well cared for, guided and supported. Their views are often sought and acted upon.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good arrangements to allow pupils to share confidences and concerns;
- Adults have a high level of awareness of the needs of each individual;
- Systems for monitoring and assessing pupils' personal development and their work are very effective.

Commentary

28. High standards result from the teamwork and shared commitment to ensure compliance to guidelines and regulations. The school fully and effectively ensures that the duty of care it has for such matters as child protection, medication and safety is met. All teachers and assistants have undertaken the appropriate training.
29. Pupils appreciate the guidance they have to help them to improve their work. Information from the assessment of their work is used well to set future targets for individuals or the whole class. The guidance older pupils have to prepare them for the next stage of their education is comprehensive and effective. The arrangements the school has to ensure that pupils new to the school settle quickly are very good. They are excellent in the reception class where expertise of the highest calibre is evident.

30. Care arrangements (child protection, risk assessments etc) are well secured by trained staff. The governing body provides an appropriate overview, but needs to ensure that it has recorded agreement with new or revised policies. The pastoral expertise the school provides is very good. Sensitive information is handled with great care. Everyone involved in the life of the school works together well and this consistency and teamwork is a major strength.
31. Pupils' views are canvassed regularly; they are valued and acted upon. Discussion with the pupils confirms that they appreciate highly the support they receive, both in their lessons and in matters that impact on their personal lives. All staff are trusted; confidences are respected and adults do all they can to make everyone feel valued as an individual.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links and relationships with parents and the local community are very good. Links with other schools and colleges both locally and internationally are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are exceptionally good links with educational partners across Europe and beyond;
- Local artists, musicians and members of many faiths and cultures visit the school regularly;
- The partnership with parents and their support for all aspects of school life is very good, except attendance in the case of a few.

Commentary

32. Parents commend the school for the high academic and personal standards it promotes. They like the way their children's efforts are celebrated and they are enthusiastic supporters when events, shows and concerts are arranged. Parents are totally committed to the values the school promotes and support it very effectively, helping in classrooms and with social and fund raising activities. There are good opportunities for formal and informal discussions on the pupils' progress. The collaboration and support for parents with children who find learning difficult is very good.
33. Newsletters and information about topics and the prospectus all combine to provide a good flow of information. Published information in the brochure and governors' annual report is accurate and detailed and the attractive newsletters and topic information are valued by the parents. The school is justifiably proud of its own website. The annual reports parents receive about the year's progress their child has made explains well what has been attained academically but with appropriate emphasis on the effort and hard work their child has put in to achieve this. A few parents in the questionnaires sent out prior to the inspection felt that communications could be improved. Inspectors judge the amount and content of information to be of a high standard and believe these few parents are being unrealistic in their demands.
34. Visits and visitors offer an international perspective to many strands of school life. These include the introduction to the French and German language skills and academic links through the Comenius initiative. This provides a wonderful range of experiences so that the pupils' perceptions of the world are enriched and expertise is shared. This international aspect is highly valued by the parents and is a major factor contributing to the school's reputation as a highly regarded educational establishment. The school also has very good links with other local primary schools for sporting activities and staff training. Good links exist with the private pre-school nurseries and pupils are well prepared for the secondary phase of their education through a close liaison with nearby comprehensive and independent schools.

35. Fund raising and social events for the school and for charities are supported by almost everyone who is connected with the school; these include strong links and collaboration with the church and other local organisations. Discussions with members of the PTA confirm that they ensure that its fund raising projects do not clash with other local interest groups and that the funds raised are used wisely. Two major projects concluded recently have been the purchase of an imaginative range of playground equipment and stage lighting.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher is providing excellent leadership and the quality of governance is also excellent. The management of the school is very good. All statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. She has empowered staff to demonstrate their leadership qualities and has created a strong sense of common purpose and direction;
- The governing body helps shape the direction of the school. It is fully aware of the strengths and areas for development and works closely with the headteacher;
- Very effective systems are in place for the monitoring of teaching, which involves both governors and subject leaders. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved substantially since the previous inspection and standards of achievement have risen;
- Finances are well deployed.

Commentary

36. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and carry out their statutory duties very effectively. A very effective system of committees is in place to enable the governing body to be fully involved in strategic planning and formulating policies. An excellent 3-year planning and evaluation cycle is in place and progress towards the objectives within the plan is closely monitored and reported to the fully governing body regularly. This ensures that the pattern of its work meshes well with the school's developmental cycle. Individual governors have responsibility for key areas of the curriculum, visit school regularly and meet with the relevant curriculum leader. The governing body has successfully implemented a 'hands-on' approach to their role, deeply involving themselves in the life of the school.
37. Statistical documentation, such as national comparisons and previous national test results, are carefully analysed, with the headteacher and subject leaders reporting back and involving themselves in discussions. In this way, the governing body acts as a critical friend, identifying areas where development is needed. The governing body's vision is concerned with the raising of standards. It also shares with the headteacher the vision to create an ethos where there is a love of learning, where pupils achieve their maximum potential and develop positive and effective citizenship skills. They are fully aware of, and support the curriculum innovation that has occurred such as the themes, the school's involvement the Comenius Project and its commitment to provide a residential experience for Year 6 pupils each year. Since day one of the headteacher's appointment, it has supported her in promoting change and valuing creativity:
38. The astute and caring headteacher has provided clear guidance of where and how the school should develop and has successfully enlisted the full support of governors and parents to make the journey towards excellence with her. She has forged a team of like-minded professional staff and together, they provide the excellent ethos for learning, which exists in the school. Standards have been raised considerably since the previous inspection, as all pupils benefit from the exceptional quality of teaching and a curriculum that is both exciting and challenging.
39. The headteacher's leadership is excellent. By initially involving parents, governors staff and pupils in a thorough review of the school's mission statement and aims she has created a very strong sense of working as a single team. 'Look up and aim high' is an apt motto for the

school and everyone works hard to achieve this principle aim. Teachers and support assistants are fully aware of the school's priorities and are fully committed to them because they are involved in deciding them. They show mutual support, hard work and excellent teamwork. Subject leaders are very good managers and are fully aware of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects.

40. There are very good systems in place to monitor rigorously the quality of pupils' education. Monitoring of the curriculum and of teaching is in place and subject co-ordinators are increasingly responsible for this process of evaluation, completing reports for the headteacher and governors. Very good use is made of the monitoring reports completed by the local education authority inspectors. Subsequent action points are discussed with teachers and, for example, the current initiative is related to the further development of plenary sessions.
41. The school improvement plan is an invaluable tool for staff development, with clear measurable criteria for extending programmes of learning and improving achievement, teaching and learning. It is closely linked to the planned provision for in-service training. The progress of the school improvement plan is evaluated at the end of each year by the headteacher, all teachers and the governing body, identifying areas where further work is necessary. This is then carried forward to the next year. New initiatives are also identified to form the core of the new 3-year plan.
42. Budgeting procedures are very good and any expenditure is carefully costed in respect of 'best value', with surpluses given over to both capital projects and educational resources. For instance, since the new building was opened a new classroom has been provided and the planned provision of a new staff room will enable a quiet study room to be created. Most of the yearly budget is used to support teaching and learning and consequently the school carries a very small reserve. There are no barriers to learning. The only barrier raised by the headteacher was about insufficient funds.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 461,383 | Balance from previous year | 26,770 |
| Total expenditure | 455,222 | Balance carried forward to the next | 6,180 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,447 | | |

43. There are excellent procedures for the induction of new staff and very good use is made of the information from performance data to provide appropriate staff training and development. This adds to the staff's sense of security and confidence and enables the school to maintain the high levels of expertise and commitment of all those who work with the pupils. Many students involved in initial teacher training benefit from their time in the school. They gain in expertise and insight into what is best practice in primary education.
44. There are significant aids to raising achievement in this very successful school. The most important are:
- the leadership of the headteacher;
 - the quality of teaching and teamwork of the staff;
 - the excellent curriculum and the staff's effort to further enrich learning opportunities for all pupils;
 - pupils' attitudes to learning and their very good behaviour;
 - parental interest and support;

As a result, the school is doing very well for all of its pupils and taking account of the slightly below average costs per pupil, it is providing very good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good and has improved since the last inspection. Children are prepared very well for transfer to Year 1. The children enter reception in the September before they are 5, and at the time of the inspection all were attending full-time and taught in a single age group. The majority of the children have attended some form of pre-school provision. All children achieve very well because the teaching is always very good and sometimes excellent and the curriculum is exceptionally well planned to provide a wide range of interesting and relevant activities which are well matched to their needs. All adults set excellent role models for the children and manage them well. There is a good ratio of adults to children and an effective rota of committed and skilled parents. This ensures that the needs of all are well met. All staff work very well as a cohesive team, carefully monitoring and evaluating all children's progress. The accommodation, including the outside facilities, is good. However, there is insufficient space to include a permanent quiet area.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because of the very good teaching and the high expectations set by staff;
- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's development and all children are in line to reach the expected goals by the end of the year;
- Supportive relationships are being established and so children feel confident and happy;
- Whilst all children co-operate well together to share resources and take turns, a few have difficulty in working together as part of a team on a general task.

Commentary

45. The personal, social and emotional development of the current reception class is generally above what is expected for their age. A few children entered the reception class with under developed social skills and found it hard to conform to the high expectations set by staff. However, the presence of clear boundaries and consistent role models set by adults in reception ensure that children know exactly what is expected of them, so they quickly learn the correct way to behave. All children now know the routines well, settle to tasks with the minimum of fuss and behave sensibly. The excellent teamwork of the adults gives the children superb role models for co-operation and a calm, but vigorous approach to work. The vast majority of children show interest in what they are doing, concentrate well, even when not supervised and are eager to learn.
46. Children are continually encouraged to feel confident about what they achieve. They are reminded of the high standards that the adults expect. They are friendly and take pride in their work, taking it very seriously. For example, during role play, 'when an inspector was asked if he wanted a drink, he replied yes, and that he had a sweet tooth. The child who was playing the role of a waitress brought him an orange drink because, 'That is the sweetest'. She also brought him the sweetest form of popcorn available'.
47. Children are encouraged to share and take turns amicably and put up their hands when answering a question. When they do not conform, they are dealt with firmly but fairly so that they learn how to appreciate the needs of others in the group. Very good use is made of 'Circle Time' to help children to examine such ideas as trust, happiness or sadness. For example, these are related to the story of 'The Three Bears' and how they felt. Children take

turns to complete tasks around the classroom and to take messages to the school office. This develops their sense of responsibility. Children are able to select relevant tools to complete specific tasks, wait their turn, not talk over each other and tidy up after themselves. More advanced children are beginning to take a lead in activities that they have developed themselves.

A group of children used construction kits to assemble wheeled vehicles. When they had finished, a spirited discussion ensued about which one was best. It was decided that each model could be tested by being rolled down a ramp. Immediately the group moved to the outside play area and assembled ramps using wooden blocks to complete their investigations.

48. The very good quality of teaching identifies continuous opportunities to help children become social, sensible members of the class, taking turns, being a leader and responding positively to the adults who work with them.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop children's language skills and teaching is very good and sometimes excellent;
- The use of topics effectively draws together the children's skills and knowledge from the different areas of learning.

Commentary

49. The majority of children are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning and many are already working within the first level of the National Curriculum. Children are making very good progress as the result of the many opportunities teachers give them to talk and listen. Staff understand the importance of role play.

During the inspection, the reception children's performance of the story of 'The Three Bears' was excellently presented. All were involved and had specific responsibilities, which they took seriously. Children acted out character roles, guided visitors to their numbered seats and took orders for refreshments using tick lists. They had designed and made their own musical instruments and painted the props for the show, including the bedcovers for each of the three bears' beds.

50. The teacher has created a language rich environment with 'word walls' highlighting keywords and displays suitably labelled with relevant vocabulary. Adults are fully aware of the range of expertise in the class and complete accurate records of their progress. This enables suitable activities to be planned to meet the needs of all children in reading and writing. More advanced children write sequenced sentences about the stories they have read whilst others are at an emergent writing stage. These children are beginning to form letters correctly and can write their names. One can hear a pin drop as children listen intently to a story, hanging on every word. More advanced children have a well developed visual memory of words. The well used reading record booklets are an excellent medium for communication between home and school and parents use them very well to record their children's reading progress.
51. Many language-based activities are planned within a theme. This enables children to communicate purposefully and ensures that they practise their language skills in a dynamic and challenging atmosphere.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of activities are planned to support learning, which enable children to achieve well;
- Every opportunity is grasped in all activities to promote children's mathematical development.

Commentary

52. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. Most children are working at levels above those expected for their age. Most children are counting accurately to 6, with the more advanced counting to 10 and beyond. The most able children place numbers in the correct space on a number line. Adults use a variety of number rhymes and songs to help children count and more advanced children count in 2s. The language rich environment extends to the display of books with number puzzles and stories. This challenges children to think and reason out answers.
53. During one very well planned lesson, children were being challenged to estimate which item was the heavier, a piece of play dough or a wooden block. When they had compared these objects and made their estimate the children used pan balances to check their accuracy, quickly learning that the heavier object would be in the pan that touched the table. More advanced children were involved in the same task using three different quantities of dry porridge oats. This activity gave them invaluable introductions into ordinal numbers when they placed the bowls in rank order. When involved in role play, children accurately tally their classmate's preferences for drinks and snacks and are able to recognise two-dimensional shapes in a 'feely bag' by handling the objects and counting the number of sides and corners. There is a very good balance between the use of practical activities, play where children measure and count out strips of paper to make decorative tabards and direct learning about subtraction, where they learn to count one more and one less. This ensures that children do not become bored and are prepared well for future learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards, but the work on display indicates that standards are at least as expected. Children have created imaginary maps and look after Thelma and Louise, the class guinea pigs. They paint enthusiastically, mixing colour to create a particular shade. Very good provision is made for ICT with children using both computers and tape recording systems.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

No judgement can be made about overall provision or standards but the observation of children performing during a movement lesson indicates above expected levels of achievement in movement. Children have continuous access to a designated outdoor play area and their fine motor skills are developed well through their involvement in drawing and assembling models using construction kits. The teaching in the one lesson observed was very good, leading to high interest levels and ensuring that children sustained regular, vigorous exercise to develop co-ordinated movements, including travelling and balancing.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A full range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning in this area;
- Activities are carefully planned to enable children to follow their own ideas;
- Creative development is enhanced through imaginative and enjoyable tasks in all the areas of learning.

Commentary

54. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well and most are on course to reach the standards expected. Very effective planning ensures that there are sufficient activities to enable children to make choices and experiment with a full range of tools and materials. For example, children mould play dough to create mini environments such as fields for animals and plates of food. They use a full range of paints, sticking powder and gummed paper to create three-dimensional balloons that are happy or sad. Children use a variety of recyclable materials to construct musical instruments including a drum, a shaker, a scraper and a miniature guitar with elastic bands of different thickness that create different sounds. They used these in their music making sessions.
55. Children spoke confidently and with imagination about why their balloon faces were angry or sad, making up appropriate stories to explain the emotion or about the life of the animals in the field represented by the play dough.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English in Year 6 are very high;
- Standards in reading by Year 2 are well above average;
- Standards in writing by Year 2 have improved significantly;
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout and pupils achieve very well, as a result;
- Pupils are taught to write for a range of purposes;
- English is used effectively across the curriculum including in ICT;
- The subject is expertly led and managed.

Commentary

56. Standards in English are well above those achieved nationally by Year 2 and are very high by Year 6. There was a significant improvement on the national tests in 2003 in writing by Year 2. This represents very good progress overall from the time children join the reception class.

57. The inspection team found that the small number of pupils with special educational needs and the higher attainers achieve very well throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported by skilled learning support assistants and every effort is made by staff to raise their attainment by carefully planned work and by very good support and encouragement. Girls do better than boys by the end of Year 2 but by the end of Year 6, boys have caught up. This is because the school has identified reading material that interests them and has worked successfully to raise boys' achievement.
58. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 confidently retell the story they are currently reading and make good verbal contributions to class discussions. By Year 6, pupils have excellent levels of vocabulary. One pupil describes in great detail the plot of a book he is reading (*Skeleton Key* by A Horowitz) and states that he likes to feel that he is part of the plot. Another pupil engages herself confidently in a discussion with inspectors, showing excellent inferential and deductive skills from the text (*Creepe Hall* by A Durant) to form judgements about the characters in the book. Very good use is made of drama and themes where pupils explore language as part of their speaking and listening development.
59. Pupils achieve very well in reading with the development of their knowledge and enjoyment of books going hand-in-hand with the development of their reading skills. Standards are well above average throughout the school. Pupils have a very good choice of reading books and there is a structured programme in Key Stage 1, with children working through a published scheme. Non-scheme books are available for those pupils working at a more advanced level. There are very good opportunities during the school day for pupils to engage in group or silent reading. All pupils are encouraged to read with their parents or carers at home and this helps them to move forward very well. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are clear about the strategies they need to work out how to read words and sentences and they tackle new reading materials confidently. Book areas in the classrooms are well organised. Older pupils have very good referencing skills; one pupil described a 'glossary' as a 'sort of technical dictionary'. They use ICT very effectively to access information.
60. Standards in writing are very good throughout the school. Pupils achieve very well because of the very good teaching. Factors that have achieved these standards and very good teaching include:
- very good knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and flexible organisation of the various elements;
 - very good assessment systems that identify what skills the pupils have achieved and the introduction of the next learning objective;
 - positive marking that gives pupils feedback about what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve;
 - challenging and interesting writing tasks set and opportunities for pupils to extend their writing across a range of genres;
 - high expectations of handwriting and presentation.
61. In the lessons seen, teaching was very good. It is evident from both lessons and the work in books that teachers help pupils to develop literacy skills of very high quality through purposeful and enjoyable activities. This enables pupils to achieve very well, for example, in Year 6 they created journalistic headlines from their study of *Macbeth*. These include:

'King Duncan is Dead, but the question is, who killed him?'
and
'Guilty Guards Kill King Duncan, Malcolm distraught and devastated'.

Other pupils created Autumnal poems including the following;

*'To the blackberries,
Protected by sharp daggers,
But even I can get past them,
When I do I chomp them. ...mmmmm'*

62. There are many examples of similar passages of pupils' own writing completed by all members of the class. These are meticulously punctuated and presented using word processing techniques, including vivid independent accounts of Duncan's death in both broadsheet and tabloid styles.
63. This excellent quality of work is a product of the challenging programmes of study that ensure pupils make maximum progress as they move through the school.
64. Year 2 pupils learn to use speech marks to present a poem to identify the rhyme and style, then to add a new line. Year 5 pupils write character descriptions of 'A Hero' and successfully use bullet points to analyse the plot of The Highway Man poem, as they prepare to dramatise the story incorporating music. Year 4 pupils compose a class poem based on 'The Door' by Miroslav Holub.
65. The subject leader's current action plan is coming to the end of its 3-year cycle. Specific issues have been addressed including:
- meeting the needs of boys;
 - writing for purpose;
 - development of a school handwriting policy and script;
 - sustained reading;
 - use of ICT and writing across the curriculum.

These objectives have been achieved and standards have improved since the previous inspection. The excellent management of the subject has been fully directed by its improvement plan.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum

66. Pupils use their language and literacy skills very well in other subjects, particularly in history and science. For example, Year 4 pupils used a computer to compile a biography of the events in their grandfather's life during the Second World War.

Modern Foreign Language

67. Pupils in the junior classes enjoy learning German because the teaching is stimulating and challenging. They are confidently developing a good vocabulary. Very good teaching includes the use of music, word games and the use of vocabulary as pupils practise their German conversational skills.
68. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' cultural development and their awareness of being members of the European Community.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well and reach very high standards by the time they leave school;
- Teaching and learning are very good;
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent; they work hard and enjoy the lessons;
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

69. The standards achieved last year by pupils in Year 6 were in the top 5 per cent of all schools. These very high standards are being maintained and approximately half the pupils in Year 6 are working at levels above those expected in relation to their ages. They are able to use angle measurers and rulers to draw angles, equilateral and isosceles triangles, accurate to within one degree. They understand some of the properties of angles and triangles and use this knowledge to help them solve problems. They concentrate extremely well and are justifiably proud when they complete work correctly.
70. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve very well. This is because their needs have been carefully assessed; they have clear mathematics targets to meet in their individual plans and teachers plan work that is adapted to take account of these. Pupils are very well supported by teaching assistants who demonstrate a high level of professional expertise. They help pupils to join in fully in class lessons and guide them sensitively during group sessions. More able pupils also achieve very well. Work is planned that is challenging for them and teachers make sure there are always harder questions for them to answer during whole class sessions. For example, in a Year 2 lesson when pupils add together more than 2 numbers to play 'bingo', the more able pupils use dice with larger numbers on and are encouraged to think of strategies to help them add the numbers together rather than use their fingers. Pupils who have special educational needs use dice with smaller numbers, have help from a teaching assistant and use cubes to help them add the numbers correctly.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Assessment is thorough and the results are very well used to provide pupils' own individual targets and to plan future work. 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. Particularly effective are the mental and oral sessions at the beginning of lessons and pupils become extremely agile and accurate in mental calculations. Correct mathematical vocabulary is always used and teachers ensure pupils understand and use this naturally. The excellent relationships between adults and pupils, aided by humour, means that there is a very pleasant atmosphere for learning in all classes. Pupils enjoy their work, work hard and gain in confidence as well as achieving high standards.
72. The experienced and highly effective numeracy co-ordinator has a very good grasp of the subject's strengths and has identified how to develop it further by providing information and training for parents. The progress made by all pupils is tracked and any pupils who are underachieving are quickly identified and effective strategies put in place to help them. Resources have improved since the previous inspection and are now very good. There is a good range of software and computers are used well to support numeracy.
73. The level of improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. All areas for development raised in the previous report have been addressed, standards have risen and teaching and learning have been significantly improved.

Mathematics across the curriculum

74. Teachers are very good at identifying links between different areas of the curriculum. The use of mathematical skills is evident in design and technology, where pupils measure and weigh accurately and science, where pupils present results in graphs and tables.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a very good attitude towards the subject and enjoy doing experiments and investigations;
- The curriculum is excellent, with a very good emphasis on practical work in all classes;
- Pupils achieve very high standards by Year 2 and Year 6;
- The quality of teaching is very good;
- The subject is extremely well led and managed.

Commentary

75. Although only two science lessons were seen, there was a wealth of evidence from national test results, pupils neatly completed work, science displays in classrooms and teachers' excellent planning files to make secure judgements about standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 have improved significantly since the previous inspection, when they were above average. They are now very high throughout and Year 6 pupils' performance in 2003 was in the top 5 per cent nationally.
76. Pupils' performance in the national tests for Year 6 over the past four years, confirm that science is a particularly well taught subject, where pupils do exceptionally well. In teacher assessments for Year 2 in 2003, standards were well above average with almost half of all pupils achieving the higher Level 3 and almost all achieving the expected level. The current Year 2 pupils are set to improve further on last year's performance with about 60 per cent on course to achieve at the higher Level 3. There is no difference in the performance of girls and boys. Detailed assessments show that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress as they move through the school.
77. The excellent curriculum offers pupils a wide range of exceptionally well planned learning opportunities, often drawing on skills from other areas of the curriculum. In the two lessons seen, pupils enjoyed conducting investigations, working sensibly in small groups. In a very good Year 2 lesson on the effect of heat on materials, pupils had to predict the outcome before testing which of two ice lollies would melt first. They had to discuss with classmates all the factors, such as size, location and whether iced water or ice cream lollies would melt the quickest, before testing their theories. Year 4 conducted an investigation into the water resistance on different shaped objects. Both these lessons involved pupils making good use of skills and knowledge from other subjects. They used computers, for example, to record results and literacy and mathematical skills when recording and measuring.
78. The scrutiny of work showed that all aspects of the curriculum are covered in some depth and that pupils in all classes have lots of opportunity to conduct experiments or investigations for themselves. There were records of pupils' attempts to dissolve materials, for example, and investigations involving evaporation, condensation and filtering, electrical circuits and friction. All cover topics on sound and on growing plants. Pupils work hard and obviously take pride in their work, which was neatly presented. All have a good understanding of fair testing.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. This is, in part, due to the sustained efforts of the extremely conscientious co-ordinator. The willingness of all staff to support one another and their determination to work as a team to maintain the very high standards results in science being a strength of the school. Teachers' planning is excellent. It ensures that lessons are interesting, enjoyable and challenging for pupils of all ability levels. The skilled teaching assistants and many parent volunteers support and encourage pupils exceptionally well as they work in class.

80. The subject is very well led and managed by a co-ordinator with a high level of subject expertise and a deep commitment to raising standards. The very high standards pupils achieve in the national tests and the outstanding quality of the work they produce each term are assessed rigorously. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is equally rigorous. In January 2004, for example, a paper was presented to the governors following a survey by the co-ordinator into the extent pupils are involved in planning their own investigations. This demonstrates the attention to detail which exists and the involvement of everyone at the school in creating a centre of excellence where all pupils can achieve their full potential. It also demonstrates that everyone is continually striving to raise standards even further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvements have been made since the previous inspection and standards of attainment are now above expectations in Year 2 and Year 6;
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well;
- Pupils' enjoy learning and work hard;
- Leadership and management of the subject are good;
- Computers are used well to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

81. The school is better equipped now than at the previous inspection and teachers have benefited from training, being confident in teaching all aspects of the curriculum for ICT. The computer suite allows groups of pupils to work individually or in pairs and the introduction of laptop computers has given the school much greater flexibility in the way lessons are planned. Pupils are taught skills as a whole class and then have opportunities to practise and improve these in small groups or by using the computers to support other subjects. The school makes very good use of the expert help provided by a parent volunteer who works with groups of pupils using work planned by the teacher. The pupils really benefit from the more individual help they receive. Pupils save the work completed on their own individual files and so they can continue where they left off at the next session.
82. Pupils who have special educational needs are given more help and are able to complete the same work as their classmates. More able pupils are able to race ahead and complete harder tasks. Approximately half the pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are working above the expected level for their age. There is a computer club that runs after school, that is open to all pupils and there is a waiting list to join this. A further club is held for pupils in Year 6 without a computer at home to support their preparation for the national tests.
83. By the end of Year 2, pupils use word processing and drawing programs to present their work, which they can save in their own folders and print, using the mouse confidently. Year 6 pupils demonstrate confidently how they are preparing multi-media presentations about the Victorians, complete with a sound track of Victorian music. They are looking forward to making a video next term. Pupils say that they thoroughly enjoy working with computers. Some said that they enjoyed controlling the 'turtle' most whilst others said that they preferred doing research on the Internet.
84. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and provides helpful advice and support for colleagues. She knows the standards pupils achieve and has an action plan to improve these further. Although the school does not yet have an interactive whiteboard, priority being given to the purchase of laptops, this has been identified as the next step in developing the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. The use of ICT in other subjects is good. Pupils use digital cameras to record their models in design and technology and they use word processing extensively to present work in English. Particularly effective newspapers are produced, using columns and adding photographs taken with digital cameras. They display complex results in science as block and line graphs, use spreadsheets to compare pulse rates after exercising and use a data base to present information on food groups as bar charts, line graphs and pie charts. Pupils use the Internet to gather information for history, geography, religious education and science. One pupil, researching famous people, was disappointed that Elvis Presley was not on the web site.

HUMANITIES

86. No overall judgement on the provision for **geography** is possible as only one lesson was observed.

One excellent lesson in Year 2 was observed. Pupils showed that they had a very good knowledge of lifestyles in Mexico as they compared what Angelica, a Mexican girl did out of school with their own activities. Literacy skills were used effectively as first a girl and then a boy took the hot seat to answer questions from other pupils as if they were Angelica. After tasting eight items of Mexican food and finding out about volcanoes, clothes and exciting local customs, all had to decide if they would like to live in Mexico. Not many were tempted!

87. Each class follows a range of topics and a scrutiny of work from the limited amount produced so far this year shows that it is of an above average standard. Year 6, for example, study rivers and coasts and Year 2 compare the physical and human features of Tocuaro in Mexico to their area. There was much evidence in the scrutiny of work of computers being used to support pupils' learning in geography. Year 2 selected the correct statements from a range about Mexico and Years 3 to 6 frequently use the Internet for researching information. All, including those with special educational needs, were able to describe the main human and physical features of an area from maps. Year 3 clearly understood how to use maps and showed that they had a good knowledge of their local area when studying the nearby village of Hillam.
88. Teachers plan their lessons in detail and take care to provide work which is enjoyable and suitably challenging for pupils of all ability levels. A strong feature of their planning is the close links that are made with other subjects, such as history, design and technology, German and religious education. Comparing the German town of Gladenbach with their own, designing masks used by the Ancient Greeks in their theatres and comparing lifestyles and religions with in both an Indian village and Monk Fryston are some examples. Pupils work hard and produce neatly presented work.
89. The subject is led and managed well. Teachers' planning is closely monitored by the headteacher and co-ordinator. As part of a whole school review, the satisfactory assessment procedures for geography and the other non-core subjects are to be improved this year to make them more consistent from class to class. The headteacher and co-ordinator have responded to comments in the previous report about monitoring classroom practice more often, in particular the quality of teaching and learning. Monitoring visits are well established in the school and staff work very well as a team to eliminate quickly, any weaknesses that are found. Resources for geography are good. The school has succeeded in building up a suitable range of books, maps and photographs for each topic.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are above those normally seen;
- The quality of teaching is very good throughout;
- Very good links are made with other subject areas;
- Pupils enjoy doing history as lessons are very well planned;
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, but in some classes they provide insufficient detail to help forward planning.

Commentary

90. History is a popular subject with pupils and all concentrate very well in lessons and produce a copious amount of neatly presented work. Standards throughout are above average. Each class has a topic to study and teachers plan work exceptionally well to ensure that skills from other subject areas are also used in history lessons. In Year 1, for example, pupils were asked to sort a range of toys by their age. Mathematical skills were employed as some set up a toy shop and a Viking coin brought in by a pupil following a visit to a museum in York resulted in a revision of historical facts about the Viking Era. In a very good lesson seen in Year 5, the teacher used a whiteboard projector linked to a computer to brainstorm ideas about Captain Cook. She spoke in German to gain attention and to curb some pupils over excitement! A trip to Whitby later in the year will combine pupils' historical and geographical knowledge.
91. By Year 6, pupils demonstrate a good knowledge about the Victorian way of life. They have studied famous people, such as Lord Shaftesbury and Dr Barnardo. They have also studied in some depth the events during the Second World War. Year 2 pupils study the Tudor period and use their literacy skills to good effect when writing newspaper articles about the Fire of London.
92. The quality of teaching has improved from good in the previous inspection to very good now. Teachers plan their lessons very carefully and make good use of historical artefacts, books, old photographs and the Internet to make lessons interesting for pupils. Classes studying the Second World War had arranged some very imaginative displays in their classrooms. In Year 4, for example, citations for bravery were displayed along with photographs of grandparents and the teacher's own parents who had their house bombed in Castleford. The Internet was used most effectively to let pupils hear a wartime air raid siren. Detailed planning and challenging work successfully engages pupils' interest and all work extremely hard, concentrating very well. Teaching assistants ensure that support is readily available for any who need help.
93. The subject is very well led and managed. A very good range of topics cover all aspects of the statutory curriculum well. Resource levels are good throughout. Satisfactory opportunities are now provided to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the subject, such as standards and teachers' planning. Assessment procedures have been identified as an area for improvement by the co-ordinator. Most classes assess the success of each topic at the end of each term. However, in some classes, assessment procedures provide insufficient information about the level of attainment or progress of individual pupils, making it difficult to plan effectively future work.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' achieve well;
- The provision fully meets the requirement of the locally agreed syllabus;
- Pupils enjoy the lessons, behave very well and work hard.

Commentary

94. Religious education is taught through specific lessons, using identified themes. These have been well thought out so that the agreed syllabus is covered and pupils learn about their own, as well as other religions. The religious education curriculum, however, does much more than this. It promotes the values and attitudes needed for citizenship in a democratic society by helping pupils to understand and respect people of different cultures and beliefs.
95. This was demonstrated in a very effective lesson for Year 6 pupils. Pupils were able to maturely discuss issues, such as 'is the Bible true?' and 'what is truth?' Pupils had the confidence to raise many issues that were important to them and many were able to explain the difference between literal and symbolic truth. Pupils were engrossed as the teacher used her 'treasure box' to help the pupils understand that special things may not be valuable but are very precious to the person concerned and this should be respected whether it is the Bible, the Torah or the Koran. This led pupils into thinking about what was precious to them. As they shared these with the class pupils listened attentively.
96. There are very effective displays and activities that take place in other subjects that help pupils to appreciate other cultures and religions. Pupils in Year 2 study Hinduism. This is made more real by experiencing wearing Indian clothing, eating Indian food and having many artefacts and books from India. Computers are used well. Pupils listen to recordings of music and use CD-ROMs and the Internet for research.
97. There are very good links with the local church and the curate is involved in the life of the school by taking some assemblies and religious education lessons. Assemblies are well planned with relevant themes and help pupils to learn to take responsibilities and respect each other.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

98. Insufficient lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology and music to be able to make firm decisions about the quality of provision or overall standards.
99. In **art and design**, it is evident from teachers' extremely detailed planning and the work displayed around the school, that the tasks provided for pupils are varied and interesting. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. Good attention to the development of specific techniques, where pupils smudged and merged pastel colours to create particular shades was a feature of a lesson in Year 1. Pupils achieve well because they are skilfully supported, for example, in painting in the style of Rousseau.
100. The subject very effectively supports other areas of learning. Original, unique and well-finished masks add a dimension of imagination to Year 6 pupils' Fantasy Poems, inspired by their reading of 'Lord of the Rings'. Year 5 pupils' studies of the Ancient Greek Civilisation are enhanced through their working with a resident artist to use papiere maché based materials to create vases, plates and coins based on Greek designs, and decorated to a very high standard. The inclusion of art alongside other subjects is creating very high levels

of involvement and enjoyment and is motivating pupils to produce artwork of very good quality.

101. Only one lesson was seen in **design and technology**. Teachers' detailed planning shows that pupils follow a scheme of work that fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum. They design, make and evaluate their projects, an improvement from the previous inspection. Pupils measure and weigh accurately and use a digital camera to record their work.
102. In Year 6, pupils made masks. These were imaginative and made to a high standard. Pupils worked carefully and accurately and added many details, showing a real pride in their work. Pupils in Year 5 investigated and evaluated biscuits, finding their favourites and presenting the results in a graph using a computer. They then designed their own biscuits, then made and evaluated them.
103. In **music**, lessons were only observed in Years 3, 5 and 6, although the whole school was heard singing in assemblies. It is quite clear that the good subject expertise of teachers is used to help move pupils forward. Year 6 pupils sang tunefully with an awareness of breathing and diction. They explored and combined musical ideas incorporating instruments, rhyme and clapping to create an all round effect. Groups of pupils volunteered to sing a vocal ostinato, and enjoyed taking part on a 'round' song.
104. Year 5 pupils enthusiastically joined in a song with German lyrics - Die Familie - to the tune of 'If you're happy and you know it'. Exceptionally enthusiastic teaching challenged all pupils to take part in the singing, changing key vocabulary and incorporating instruments to create a fullness of melody.
105. Good links are made with their current history topic about Second World War, when Year 3 pupils sang, 'Hey Little Hen'. This gave them clear insights into the type of songs their grandparents might have sung. Good comparisons with modern music were made when they were encouraged to create a modern rap of the tune. This they attempted with enthusiasm and performed with considerable gusto.
106. Many pupils benefit from the involvement of peripatetic music teachers. Pupils turn up at the right time, enthusiastically carrying with them a full range of instruments, including stringed instruments, wind instruments and keyboards. Once they have completed their work, usually in small groups, they quickly return to their classes, where they work with very good pace to catch up with their classmates.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achieve well;
- Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and behave very well;
- The quality of teachers' planning is very good and ensures a breadth of opportunities for pupils;
- Insufficient time is allowed to wind-up some lessons properly;
- Equality of opportunity is promoted very well;
- The accommodation for physical education in the new building is very good.

Commentary

107. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, work hard to achieve standards, which are above those normally seen. This represents an improvement from the previous inspection. Behaviour in lessons is invariably very good and pupils enjoy excellent relationships with one another and their teachers. This enables pupils to work very effectively individually, in small groups or as a whole class. Teaching assistants are quick to help and support those pupils who need help. It was refreshing to see the lack of inhibition shown by Year 1 pupils as they confidently volunteered to demonstrate their gymnastic skills for the whole class. They worked very hard in their lesson, showing above average levels of control and co-ordination. In Year 5, boys also took part wholeheartedly in an excellent dance lesson, performing their response to 'The Snowman' music with feeling. Most succeeded in adding dramatic effect to their performance by using exaggerated movements and appropriate facial expressions.
108. In all four lessons seen, teachers' planning was very good, showing all had a good command of the subject and high expectations of pupils. Teachers constantly challenge pupils, maintaining their interest and involvement. Pupils' capacity to work collaboratively or independently and their positive attitudes are helping to raise standards. Appropriate time was given to warm-up sessions and for pupils to demonstrate and then discuss ways of improving their performance. However, some of the cool down periods were rushed and some teachers did not allow sufficient time for pupils to review their performance against the lesson objectives. There was pressure to leave the hall so that lunchtime arrangements could be made by dining staff.
109. Swimming provision is good. Pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6 travel by bus to a pool for ten lessons each year and the school reports that all pupils attain the expected level of competence before the end of Year 6.
110. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The new building provides very good accommodation for physical education and the grounds are spacious, with good grassed areas and an adventure play area. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection and pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities. Older pupils have the chance to represent the school in competitive events such as netball and football matches. There is also the opportunity for Year 6 pupils to take part in a residential experience with adventurous activities such as orienteering. The assessment procedures for physical education are satisfactory overall. Some teachers record individual pupil's attainment and progress following the terms teaching programme, but others leave the assessment of progress to the end of the year when it is reported to parents in pupils' annual reports. As the methods are not consistent from class to class, it makes it difficult to focus on individual pupil's progress and to plan future work effectively. The headteacher and co-ordinator frequently monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and are quick to discuss any problems identified with all staff.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for PSHCE is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education lessons and assemblies make a significant contribution to the provision for these aspects of pupils' development;
- Teachers and all staff are very good role models for pupils;
- The close and caring relationships between staff and pupils aid discussion.

Commentary

111. Although only two specific lessons were seen in Year 1 and in Year 6, an overall judgement about provision is possible because of the wealth of other opportunities provided for pupils. In a religious education lesson, for example, pupils had the opportunity to discuss different peoples' views about Bible stories and understand and appreciate beliefs in the different world religions. Assembly themes, such as responsibility and respect, encourage pupils' thinking about other people, helping them to be more aware of people's feelings and to be more tolerant. The quality of provision is enhanced by the very good attitudes of pupils and the close and trusting relationships they enjoy with staff.
112. A Year 1 'Circle Time' lesson was observed where the teacher had the class sitting in a circle around her to discuss friends and friendship. Pupils showed a surprising level of maturity when expressing their opinions. Most showed a good level of understanding in the key message about 'sharing'. The maturity of Year 6 pupils was readily apparent as they tried to grasp that all medicines are drugs but all drugs are not medicines and the dangers of some.
113. The development of the provision for PSHCE is having a significant impact on pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school in general and towards one another in particular. Pupils behave in a mature and responsible way in school and this helps to create the excellent ethos for learning seen in most lessons. Pupils' views are regularly sought and a meeting of the school pupil council was held during the inspection to discuss a range of issues. Pupils were very articulate and when discussing minor behaviour problems, agreed that they would welcome firmer management. This shows that they have very high standards of behaviour. Discussions were developed well and pupils shared their ideas about living in a democratic society.

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

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