

INSPECTION REPORT

WOODTHORPE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107071

Headteacher: Mr C Thew

Lead inspector: Ms B Pollard

Dates of inspection: 29th September – 2nd October 2003

Inspection number: 258500

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	394
School address:	Woodthorpe Road Sheffield
Postcode:	S13 8DD
Telephone number:	(0114) 2399167
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Larry Angel
Date of previous inspection:	24 September 2001

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school occupies a former secondary school building due to be replaced with work starting in Spring 2004. It serves a large pre-war council estate in the south-east of the city suffering from deprivation and vandalism. There are 394 pupils on roll of whom 45 per cent are entitled to free school meals; this figure is above average. Most pupils (91 per cent) are white British and of the other ethnic groups, most children were born in Britain. Attainment on entry to the nursery is low mainly because of language deprivation. Almost half the pupils have special educational needs which is well above average; in Year 5 this rises to 80 per cent. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs. There are no pupils needing help with learning English as an additional language. Pupil mobility is significant at 11 per cent. The school shares its site, and enjoys good relationships, with a large number of community groups. It won an achievement award in 2002 for coming out of Special Measures and is currently involved in the following initiatives:

- Education Action Zone
- Excellence in Cities
- Intensifying Support Pilot
- Behaviour Improvement Programme

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1838	Ms B Pollard	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Curriculum Geography History
13895	Ms A Smith	Lay inspector	
29995	Mrs M Walker	Team inspector	Science Design and Technology Religious Education Special Educational Needs
18344	Mr D Earley	Team inspector	English Art and design Physical Education English as an Additional Language
4109	Mr J Barley	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and Communication Technology Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school is giving its pupils an acceptable standard of education but it is underachieving when compared with schools with similar characteristics and standards remain stubbornly low. It is improving, however, in leadership and management and the quality of teaching and learning. It gives unsatisfactory value for money. There is sufficient expertise among staff to improve standards and morale is high.

The school's main strengths are:

- a shared vision, clear direction and commitment to improve among staff and governors;
- good quality teaching;
- positive relationships between staff and pupils lead to good behaviour;
- pupils receive good care, support and guidance; and
- good parent and community links.

The school's main weaknesses are:

- standards are unsatisfactory in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology although they are satisfactory in religious education; and
- there are important aspects of governance which are unsatisfactory although the governing body now takes a more active role.

There have been some significant improvements since the last inspection in the monitoring of attendance, alterations to the building, the quality of leadership and management and teaching but some of these are too recent to have yet had a positive effect on standards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	E*	E*	E*
mathematics	E	E*	E*	E
science	E	E	E*	E

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

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

Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall. There are signs of improvement, however, where better provision is being made for the different capabilities of pupils.

Where standards are graded E* this puts the school in the bottom five per cent nationally. When compared with similar schools, results are well below average at the end of Year 6 and improvement is not as good as that in other schools nationally.

Many children in the Foundation Stage start school with low levels of language capability and most do not reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They reach them in personal, social and emotional development, physical and creative development and achieve well, considering their starting point.

In the current Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are below average. Reading standards are low in Year 1. Standards in religious education are at acceptable levels and pupils achieve satisfactorily because of effective teaching. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in information and communication technology and other National Curriculum subjects.

Standards are beginning to rise because of improved assessment and more rigorous monitoring of progress used to set targets more closely matched to the capabilities of pupils.

In the current Year 6, standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are below average. There is residual underachievement from past practices still remaining. Barriers to learning are the inability of pupils to express their thoughts coherently and they have difficulty remembering what they have been taught. In religious education, pupils reach acceptable standards. Judgements were not made on other National Curriculum subjects. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily because of the good support they receive and the needs of higher attainers are beginning to be catered for through special activities which make more demands of them.

Pupils' attitudes to work are satisfactory; behaviour and personal development are good; relationships are strong; spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is unsatisfactory. The strong sense of community helps pupils feel valued and class discussions help them reflect on the values and beliefs of others.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is acceptable, overall. The quality of teaching, overall, is good. The curriculum is satisfactory. Care, support and guidance are good. The school enjoys the confidence of parents and the community who are supportive of its work.

The efforts put into improving teaching and learning are beginning to improve standards in lessons. The school intends to broaden the curriculum; there is a good range of activities outside classrooms but insufficient use is made of literacy and numeracy in other subjects and some aspects of information and communication technology are missing. Parents appreciate the accessibility of staff. Community links benefit pupils because of access to a wide range of support on site.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall but governance is unsatisfactory although the governing body is becoming more effective. The new headteacher has a very clear vision on how to improve standards and those with management responsibilities are more confident in their roles.

The new headteacher has high aspirations for raising standards and he has identified what needs to be done to improve the quality of education. The senior management team, staff and governors share a strong commitment to improving provision and morale is high. The steps already taken are showing signs of success but there is still much to do. The school's development plan does not provide clear guidance on what the school needs to do.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with the school. Pupils also like the school.

Parents feel staff treat children fairly and help them work hard and grow in maturity. Two aspects came out strongly from the pupils' survey: pupils appreciate the care and respect shown them; they are less happy about the playground facilities. Inspectors endorse the views of parents and pupils.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in the core subjects, with a continuing emphasis on literacy and numeracy, by ensuring that all pupils achieve as well as they can and provide more opportunities to develop basic skills across the curriculum;
- improve the ability of pupils to express their thoughts and ideas and help them to develop retention skills;
- review the school development plan to make it more focused on long term school improvement and the raising of standards;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure the annual report to parents contains the appropriate information and all the requirements for information and communication technology are included in the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are below the appropriate National Curriculum levels in the current Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science. In Year 6, information and communication technology standards are also below average. Standards are at acceptable levels in religious education. There is evidence of past underachievement that is affecting current standards. Despite some signs of improvement in national tests in 2003 at Year 6, pupils do not achieve as well as those in similar schools. Most children do not reach the national goals by age five in language and literacy but they achieve well in personal, social and emotional development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving slightly and the school is well aware of the need to improve further.
- The nursery is successful in settling pupils into work routines and establishing positive attitudes to learning.
- The lower attainers achieve as well as they can but there is some underachievement among other groups of pupils.
- This school does not achieve as well as other similar schools as pupils have poor retention and language skills.

Commentary

1. The previous inspection judged standards to be rising but said there remained an issue over literacy and numeracy and this is still the case as there has not been significant improvement. Over the last three years, standards in the core subjects have remained well below average or poor when compared with all schools and similar schools. Pupils' performance at Year 6 has not improved on their performance when they were Year 2 which indicates a lack of progress in the past that results in underachievement. The school's rate of improvement is below the national trend. However, recent efforts to improve the school's performance are now showing some success. In 2003, although the Year 6 results are still well below average, 10% more pupils reached level 4 or above in English, 3% more pupils reached level 4 or above in mathematics and in science, 1% more reached level 4 or above. When compared with their performance when in Year 2, most pupils made some progress and more pupils reached the higher level 5 especially in reading and science. The school is setting more challenging targets for improvement in 2004 and hopes to help over half its pupils reach at least level 4. Findings from the inspection show it is on target but there are barriers to learning which affect attainment. Pupils find it difficult to remember what they have been taught and their poor language skills make it hard for them to express themselves. There is a whole school approach to improving communication skills that will take time to make an impact on achievement. Other factors in attainment are the large numbers with special educational needs and the turnover of pupils; in the 2003 Year 6 cohort, almost a third of pupils had not started at the school in the nursery but had joined it at a later stage. There are no significant issues around the performance of boys and girls and ethnic minorities.

Key Stage 1

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	60 (58)	84 (84)
writing	75 (71)	86 (86)

mathematics	73 (77)	90 (91)
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There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	35 (35)	75 (75)
mathematics	40 (45)	73 (71)
science	55 (90)	86 (87)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- The findings from this inspection show that pupils perform better in the classroom where they are effectively supported by staff and tasks are practical. Standards fall when they have to work independently as in test situations. At the end of the Foundation Stage, standards are well below average in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development; they are below average in knowledge and understanding of the world but in line with the national goals in physical and creative development; a significant majority reach the national goals in personal, social and emotional development after a promising start in the nursery where they settle very quickly to learning.
- At ages seven and 11, standards seen in classes are below the national average in English, mathematics and science. By age 11, standards in information and communication technology are below average; no judgement was made at age seven because of insufficient evidence. In religious education, pupils' standards reach those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Although achievement is now improving in lessons, examinations of pupils' past work show a residual underachievement that the school is unable to eliminate in the short term. This is reflected in the poor performance of this school in comparison with other schools with similar characteristics. The focus of the school's work in the past was on personal development; under new leadership the focus has rightly shifted to attainment. Staff training, better analysis and evaluation of standards and a more effective role for subject co-ordinators are proving successful when current classroom practice is compared with the scrutiny of work from the previous year. More demands are being made of gifted and talented pupils who now have additional workshops to give them greater challenges. Reluctance on the part of many pupils to learn independently and actively, because of a lack of confidence, means they do not always do themselves justice and they could achieve more if they were encouraged to apply their learning in different situations and across a wider range of subjects. Reception pupils do not improve their attainment significantly from the nursery and this affects their achievement in Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily because of good support from classroom assistants and usually reach their individual targets. The school compares differences in the attainment of boys and girls and ethnic groups; these vary from year to year and are not statistically significant.
- Information and communication technology standards are unsatisfactory because not all the aspects are taught fully and this undermines pupils' achievement. A significant barrier to learning is the deficit in language that many pupils bring to school. This affects their ability to think clearly, express their thoughts and ideas when speaking and writing and demonstrate their understanding of mathematical concepts. Teachers struggle to help pupils understand their learning and remember what they have been taught. Those with management responsibilities for core subjects are working hard to raise standards and help pupils achieve as well as they can through tasks which are matched to pupils' differing capabilities, whole school targets for improving speaking and listening skills and evaluations of learning styles so that teachers can adapt their classroom practices.

5. The many initiatives introduced to raise standards are beginning to make a positive impact. Excellence in Cities and Education Action Zone funding allow for the provision of a learning mentor who is working with parents to develop parenting skills and helping children with behaviour problems to improve their capacity to learn. The Intensifying Support Pilot is assisting teachers in their questioning techniques to aid pupils' understanding and the tracking of pupils' progress and target setting has improved considerably. The use of the site by community groups provides additional help in classrooms and links with the playgroup are being strengthened to raise children's attainment on entry to school. Improvements in the role of co-ordinators since the last inspection mean they are beginning to have more influence on the quality of provision in their subject. Improvements in behaviour, as a result of revised policies, mean that children learn in an orderly environment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Children's attendance is unsatisfactory. Children's attitudes are satisfactory and behaviour and personal development are good. Children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is well below the national average.
- School does all it can to promote good attendance.
- Children like coming to school and behave well.
- Many children have low levels of concentration.
- School sets high expectations of children's conduct.
- Children form constructive relationships with others.
- School raises children's self-esteem and stimulates their desire to learn.
- School helps children mature through effective strategies for personal development .

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2001/02

Authorised absence	
School data:	7.5%
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	1.2%
National data:	0.5

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of children

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of children on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
397	16	0

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

6. Attendance is unsatisfactory because a significant number of families take holidays during term time. There is also a small minority of parents who condone absence or find it difficult to ensure their children get to school. Most pupils arrive on time and are ready to begin lessons promptly, although children from a few families are persistently late. The school works closely with parents and carers to help them ensure the regular attendance of their children.

7. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have satisfactory attitudes to their learning. Many undertake the tasks set for them with interest and most listen carefully. A significant number have low levels of concentration and a small minority find it difficult to become or stay interested in lessons and activities. This has a negative effect on their ability to achieve well in lessons and to reach satisfactory standards. The nursery makes a positive contribution to attitudes through good provision for the development of personal, social and emotional skills.
8. Behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school. The number of exclusions last year was based on a very small minority of pupils. Pupils know what is expected of them and this leads to a better learning environment and progress in raising standards. All members of staff are consistent in their high expectations of good behaviour and speak to pupils with respect and consideration. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds are made to feel included and very welcome. Any harassment or bullying is dealt with swiftly. Relationships between all staff and pupils are always warm and supportive. As a result, pupils are encouraged to work hard. Pupils respond well to the opportunities to take initiative and responsibility for example by becoming *playground friends* in Year 6.
9. Pupils say they like their school and are keen members of school clubs. They enjoy taking part in community projects such as creating the new environmental area. They appreciate the care and kindness shown by staff. Pupils are given constant guidance to help them distinguish right from wrong and are encouraged to value one another's efforts. They take advantage of many opportunities to discuss and reflect on the impact of their actions. During circle time (confidential class discussion) for example, pupils can be seen growing in confidence and sharing ideas and concerns. This raises pupils' self-esteem and respect for themselves and each other with the consequence that they achieve better in lessons.
10. The school is helping children to develop a range of beliefs and values, particularly those of care and respect. There are many good opportunities for spiritual awareness across the curriculum and a culture within which pupils can grow and develop feelings of self-worth, compassion and empathy towards others. Lessons in religious education give pupils good opportunities to reflect on both the beliefs and practices of their own religion and those of other world faiths. The school fosters the social development of its pupils by promoting a sense of community with common and inclusive values. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory and pupils are taught to appreciate their own cultural and religious traditions through religious education lessons and taking part in local events. The small number of ethnic minority pupils from other cultural backgrounds contribute to the provision.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall.

The initiatives generated from within school, and those generated from outside agencies, to improve standards are showing some signs of success although more time is needed for them to have a greater impact. The school is making every effort to ensure that all pupils achieve at appropriate levels. The changes in leadership and management are providing a clear direction for future development and there is optimism amongst those involved that the quality of education can be improved because of expertise among staff and a strong team spirit.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall and leads to appropriate learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan lessons with care and alter tasks according to the different capabilities of pupils.
- Questioning techniques are effective at helping pupils to express their opinions and check understanding.
- Management of pupils is good and ensures a conducive atmosphere for learning.

- Classroom assistants are deployed well to support those pupils who need additional help.
- Assessment is used satisfactorily to track the progress of pupils and raise standards.
- The poor language skills of pupils are a barrier to their learning.
- Pupils often show good learning in lessons but have difficulty remembering what they have been taught afterwards.
- There is some residual under-achievement among pupils as new initiatives have not yet had an impact on learning.
- Insufficient use is made of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Commentary

11. Teaching seen in lessons is generally good and it leads to appropriate learning among pupils in most instances. These findings are similar to the judgements from the last inspection but more of the teaching was good this time. In seven out of ten lessons seen, teaching was good or very good. Some very good teaching was seen in each stage of the school reflecting the developing work on monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms as a strategy for raising standards. Some of the new initiatives have not yet had much impact on attainment and the residual underachievement is still apparent in pupils' previous work. There are differences between the nursery and reception classes in the effectiveness of the classroom support. In the nursery, focused activities are targeted by the teacher and nursery nurses so that all children have ready access to the adult help they need. In the reception class, although the class is very small (15 children) the grouping of children into four groups with adult help provided for two of them at any one time means children are sometimes left to engage in activities without support and their learning dips.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 54 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0%	14 %	59%	27%	0%	0%	0%

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

12. Teaching and learning are improving because much is being done to help teachers examine their practices and methods in an effort to address the different learning styles of pupils so that all are included and their learning potential is maximised. An example of this is the provision made for gifted and talented pupils where the highest attainers from Years 4, 5 and 6 receive additional workshops to help them reach their potential. There are barriers to learning which teachers are trying hard to address; pupils find it difficult to express their opinions coherently and there is a whole school approach to helping them to speak in sentences, saying exactly what they mean; retention is another problem – despite the best efforts of teachers, many pupils cannot remember what they learned in previous lessons and they need help to develop retention skills as this is affecting achievement. If more use was made of links between literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, this would help to reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding in the basic skills. Pupils perform better in lessons where they have the support of staff than when working independently.
13. Lessons are planned in detail and highlight clearly what pupils are expected to learn. Different tasks are provided for different capabilities and classroom assistants are well trained, effective and deployed efficiently to ensure the lower attainers have equal access to the curriculum. As a result, pupils with special educational needs learn well and make good progress towards their individual targets. Teachers employ good questioning skills to check pupils' understanding, increase their vocabulary and develop the ability to put forward a coherent argument in discussions. Homework usually reflects the work in class, for example in Year 6, pupils were asked to interview someone they knew who had wartime experiences.

14. A strength of the teaching is pupil management. Expectations of good behaviour are high and despite the potential of some individuals for disruption, they are not allowed to interfere with the learning of others because of the effective implementation of school policies. The learning mentor, provided through the Excellence in Cities funding, is a key figure in supporting pupils with behavioural difficulties.
15. Much work has been done on assessment and this is beginning to raise standards although the procedures are still under review. The Intensifying Support Pilot has identified whole school targets that were seen being addressed in every class (for example, encouraging pupils to talk in sentences) and were understood by pupils. The tracking of pupils' progress has improved considerably and is being used to identify trends and target specific areas of weakness to analyse why pupils are underachieving; for example, to consider whether more pupils could reach higher levels in national tests. There was evidence in lessons of the higher attainers being presented with activities that extended their learning in English and mathematics when they had finished class task. Work on using assessments to set targets for groups or individuals leads to better inclusion for all in the learning process; it is leading to a change in teaching styles and greater consistency between classes. The assessment co-ordinator is an active member of the senior management team ; she is clear about her role and is given regular non-contact time to monitor the implementation of the policy.

The curriculum

The school provides a broad range of curricular opportunities that caters for the particular needs of the pupils. It makes every effort to be inclusive in its provision and to make the curriculum relevant.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of extra-curricular activities.
- An inclusive curriculum.
- Good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Curriculum is relevant to the children's needs.
- A good range of visits and visitors to the school.
- Insufficient use of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.
- Elements of the information and communication technology are missing.
- Sex education is under review.
- A poor building which, despite good efforts to improve it, affects the quality of the learning environment.

Commentary

16. The newly appointed headteacher, with the full support of the senior management team, has declared his intention to widen and enliven the curriculum and to give more emphasis to the arts and music. In information and communication technology, the computer is not used sufficiently as a communication tool and the elements of control and sensing physical data are not yet included. This is because of burglaries at the school and a reluctance to replace equipment until accommodation is more secure. The school provides a good range of opportunities for enrichment through its extra-curricular activities. Sporting activities are well provided for with clubs being run for athletics, football, cross-country running and trampolining. There is a good range of additional musical activities, which include a choir and peripatetic instrumental teaching. The building is poor and in a general state of disrepair. Resources are generally satisfactory and often good, particularly in the Foundation Stage classes and in religious education.
17. Apart from the elements of information and communication technology mentioned above, the curriculum meets statutory requirements including provision for religious education and collective worship. Provision for special education needs is good and is driven by inclusion. Individual action plans are used effectively and provide simple targets for pupils to aim for.

They are clear and precise and offer teachers and classroom assistants effective guidance to enable the child to progress. All pupils with special educational needs and those from ethnic minorities, are fully included in classroom activities and in extra-curricular activities. The learning mentor has established a trampolining class, which is aimed at boosting the self-esteem of some of the lower attaining pupils. It has been particularly successful with those with behaviour or emotional difficulties.

18. In planning, the school is giving serious consideration to the needs and nature of pupils so that as the curriculum is reviewed it becomes more relevant to their particular needs. For instance, instead of taking pupils to Eden Camp when studying the Second World War, a group of locals will come into school and dress up and act out scenes from the war years.
19. The school enjoys good relationships with other local schools particularly those who are also involved in the Education Action Zone and this provides mutual support. It is also associated with a local beacon secondary school and is benefiting from the expertise of the secondary school's music teacher who regularly visits the school, takes music lessons and runs a small singing group. This group will be joining with other schools from the city to perform a work written by a local writer.
20. There is an effective programme of personal and social education. Circle time is an enjoyable activity for every class and is providing opportunities for pupils to discuss issues that are important to them as well as rich opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills, which are high priorities for the school.
21. The work on transforming a run down quadrangle into a pleasant environmental garden is a good example of the innovative element in curricular planning. Every class is involved in planning and developing its section of the area and the experience is proving very useful in providing a host of different learning opportunities in different subjects. During the inspection it was used well for science.
22. The school is now looking for ways to develop further the skills of numeracy and literacy in other subjects. This will help to make the learning of basic skills relevant and should raise standards as pupils apply them in areas such as historical research. The co-ordinator for information and communication technology is keen to develop computer skills across the curriculum and is currently in discussion with other co-ordinators to identify areas where they can be used effectively.
23. The sex education policy is under review and there is an intention to incorporate it into the personal, social and health education programme.
24. The building, although spacious, is in a poor state of repair. Despite this, staff make every effort to create pleasant rooms for learning. The new headteacher has already instigated changes to the building and is determined to continue to improve the facilities as much as he can; an example is the plan to create a Foundation Stage unit; he is not content just to wait for the new school to be completed in 2005.

Care, guidance and support

The school has good procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Provision of support, advice and guidance is good. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures are good.
- Pupils have good and trusting relationships with one or more adults in the school.
- Pupils have good quality access to well-informed support, advice and guidance.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to supporting children.
- There is good support for pupils with special needs.

- The school listens to pupils' concerns, but there are few opportunities for them to give their views.

Commentary

25. The school has a caring ethos and provides a well-organised and safe environment despite the difficulties presented by the buildings. Support for pupils' welfare makes a good contribution to improving educational standards. The effective use of teaching assistants contributes to the welfare and progress of many pupils. All staff work hard to develop and maintain the good relationships observed within the school community. The headteacher is the designated person for the good child protection procedures. There are also good procedures for the induction of new pupils that support the individual needs of each child.
26. Pupils are offered help and support for personal difficulties and teachers know the children very well. They are willing to discuss and share opinions on a range of personal, social, moral and health issues through personal contact, discrete lessons, circle time (confidential class discussions) and assemblies. Teaching assistants are also very effective in supporting the pupils' individual needs. Teachers foster the development of personal and social skills and pupils respond agreeably to the opportunities to take initiative and responsibility. The pupils feel well supported by all school staff and are confident that they can always rely on them to offer help when needed as shown in the responses to the pupils' questionnaire. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to share their opinions about matters concerning the school. There is no school council yet but there are plans to form one.
27. The learning mentor is available to offer guidance and support to pupils. Through his support and the activities he undertakes with the pupils, such as trampoline sessions, they are often helped to become more confident enabling them to achieve better in lessons.
28. All members of staff are supportive of both the academic and pastoral needs of pupils, including those with learning and other difficulties. Pupils with learning difficulties are given good support to ensure that the specific needs of each child are met. The school liaises very well with support staff and outside agencies and teaching assistants are thoughtfully deployed to ensure that the most effective support is given.
29. Overall the good provision for care offered by the school helps pupils to feel secure in the school and this helps them to settle down to lessons and to try to achieve higher standards.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents and the community. The school's links with other schools and colleges are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works well with parents.
- The school keeps parents and carers well informed on a day-to-day basis.
- There are good links with a beacon secondary school.
- The school offers good provision for classes in parenting skills.
- The school has good links with community provision.
- The learning mentor offers parents help with understanding their children's education.

Commentary

30. The school works well with parents and carers and has developed a strong partnership with them and the community. This partnership contributes positively to children's learning in many ways. The new headteacher provides a helpful range of information for parents. For example, a whiteboard in the main entrance informs parent and carers of day-to-day matters and events. The school brochure, letters and newsletters also keep parents informed about events, issues, and forthcoming school trips. Reports to parents on their children's progress are satisfactory.

31. Parents are made welcome in the school and the headteacher and class teachers are accessible to parents and carers wishing to discuss matters of concern. There are good opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress and attainment and these are generally well attended. There are good arrangements for parents of children with a statement of special educational need to receive appropriate information through annual reviews.
32. The learning mentor holds a weekly *parents group* for parents and carers. The focus of this group is to provide parents and carers with a weekly contact point with the school in which they can discuss concerns and ideas and receive help in understanding the work the children are doing in school, for example in literacy and numeracy.
33. The school has constructive links with several providers and community organisations that use the school premises. They are significant partners in providing support for children's education. For example, the school works closely with the Woodthorpe Forum which supports the families of children in the school. The Forum helps the parents with opportunities for training and childcare and in turn this enables them to be more involved in their children's education and in raising standards.
34. The school has constructive links with the neighbouring primary schools and with the local secondary school. There are good procedures in place to ensure a smooth transition for children as they enter nursery from playgroup and leave the school for secondary education.
35. Parents co-operate with school activities and events and the school welcomes the help of parents, carers and relatives who give time to help in school. Many more are involved in supporting school and community activities, such as the community day last term for the opening of the environmental area and offering to help with school outings. The good quality links between the parents, the community and the school demonstrate that parents and carers are keen to support the work of the school and to make a positive contribution to what their children achieve.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory overall. Leadership and management are satisfactory but governance is unsatisfactory.

Strengths and weaknesses

Leadership:

- Very clear vision by the headteacher on how to improve standards.
- Staff share a strong commitment to raising standards.
- The leadership vision has not yet had time to impact on standards.

Management:

- Performance data is used effectively to set targets for improvement.
- Finances are managed astutely.

Governance:

- Governors now have a firm grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The school improvement plan is an inadequate vehicle for helping to raise standards.
- The governors' annual report to parents does not fulfil statutory requirements.

Commentary

36. The newly appointed headteacher has a very clear vision and very high aspirations for raising standards and improving the quality of education. He has not been in the school long enough for this to have a significant impact on standards. The headteacher, senior management team and staff with management responsibilities have identified important areas where improvement is needed. These include strategies to:

- improve language skills;
- make children's learning more effective; and
- focus the work of the school and community on raising standards.

37. There is a strong, shared commitment amongst teachers and support staff to improve the educational provision for all children, including those with special educational needs and to raise standards. Teachers and support staff work well together as a team. Staff morale is high and they present good role models to children. Inclusion is given high status and is improving as subject co-ordinators examine lesson plans and sample work to ensure that all pupils are working as well as they can.
38. The management of the school is sound. The school has efficient systems of self-evaluation which have enabled it to identify areas which need to be improved to raise standards. Teaching and learning are regularly checked by the senior management team and the school analyses test results thoroughly. It is developing the use of this analysis to set targets for improvement for the whole school and for groups of children; for example, older children's reading comprehension skills were improved after the need for further work was identified. However, these systems have not been in place long enough for them to make significant inroads on raising attainment. Systems for the professional development of teachers and support staff are thorough so that the school is well placed to support the drive to raise standards. Co-ordinators' roles have been strengthened and they understand their responsibilities.
39. The governance of the school is unsatisfactory but is improving. The school improvement plan does not provide clear guidance on how the school is to develop to improve the quality of education and raise standards. It does not provide a clear long-term vision for the school. It does not make clear the areas of focus needed for development nor does it prioritise the strategies for improving the school. Governors do not meet their statutory requirements in their annual report to parents. However, there has been a change of direction in the involvement of the governing body in supporting the school's efforts to improve standards. Governors now have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school; this was used, for example, in their appointment of the headteacher. They show their commitment to build onto the school's caring ethos and prominent place within the local community and a resolve to improve standards. In this they have been well supported by the local education authority.
40. Although there have been significant improvements in leadership and management with a more active senior management team, more training for staff, better assessment and target setting and attention paid to improving the quality of teaching and learning there has been insufficient improvement in standards. In the past, the school's strengths lay in the care, support and guidance of pupils. Now, management is focused more intensively on raising attainment, building on the previous success of the school in addressing issues of behaviour and its attempts to improve attendance.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,067,128
Total expenditure	1,064,605
Expenditure per pupil	2,702

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-6,478
Balance carried forward to the next year	-9,802

Reductions in the school's roll have resulted in a deficit in the budget. The school is managing this carefully and prudently so that the deficit is near resolution and the allocation of funds is closely linked to strategies for improving standards. The budget has been boosted by Education Action

Zone funding used to provide more support staff which includes a learning mentor who is a key member of the team in helping to raise standards through activities which bolster children's self esteem and help to make them keener to learn.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

The effectiveness of community provision

The support offered by several significant community partners with offices in the school buildings is good and helps to raise children's achievement. No community provision is managed directly by the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Woodthorpe Forum provides a number of good services such as a playgroup and after-school care.
- Close contact with Supporting Families.
- Learning mentor runs parent classes with support from outside agencies.

Commentary

41. Provision on site helps to raise the achievement of pupils in several ways. The Woodthorpe Forum provides a Saturday Club for children with special needs which helps in raising children's self-esteem, social skills and general development so that children are able to achieve better when in school.
42. The Woodthorpe Playgroup ensures that children entering the nursery from the playgroup have a good start to school life. The school, other partners and the Woodthorpe Forum recently collaborated to produce the environmental garden which is a resource that is used by classes and the childcare groups for play and education.
43. The Forum receives funding to run an on-site crèche for parents and this enables those who are undertaking the Introduction to Pre-School Play course in the building to take up training placements in the nursery.
44. Supporting Families also have an on-site office enabling the school to make informal and personal contact with the organisation. The learning mentor is often able to put them in touch with the families of children in the school who are in need of help. This support help ultimately has a positive impact on the children's achievements in school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children generally enter the nursery with low standards of ability but make good progress in the nursery. The rate of progress slows in reception.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in the nursery is good because of effective leadership and teamwork.
- Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception year.
- Personal, social and emotional development is promoted well and leads to very good behaviour.
- Progress is good in the areas of learning knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development.
- A review is needed of the structure and organisation of learning in the reception year.
- More emphasis is needed on developing children's skills in memory, logic and problem-solving.

Commentary

45. On entry to nursery, tests show six out of ten children have moderate to severe language delay. They make good progress where they begin to catch up although their attainment is well below average when they enter the reception year. These findings are in line with the judgements from the previous inspection. Few children reach the early learning goals in literacy and numeracy by the age of five. The rate of progress in the reception year reaches a plateau because fewer demands are made of them and the classroom organisation does not allow children the ready access to adult help provided in the nursery. One of the strengths of the Foundation Stage provision is the success staff achieve in establishing appropriate attitudes to learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall; teamwork is good in the nursery but the Foundation Stage co-ordinator is not yet having sufficient opportunity to influence the work in reception and there is some inconsistency in practice over the management of groups in class. This should improve when the nursery and reception class become one unit later this term.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good and the majority of children reach the national goals for the age group. It is particularly good in the nursery.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good induction to school.
- Many good opportunities for socialisation promote very good behaviour.
- Independence is encouraged.

Commentary

46. The care taken to introduce children to school, which involves home visits by staff and a flexible start in the nursery, ensures children settle quickly and feel secure. They are introduced successfully to the routines of the sessions and the way they co-operate, clear up after using resources, take care of equipment and understand the rules for behaviour show they understand what is required of them. Teaching is good overall and some of it is very good. Staff use every opportunity to encourage children to work in small groups and play with one another, sharing equipment and taking turns. This was seen in role-play in the home corner where the presence of a teacher helped children who were pretending to prepare a meal and playing host to visitors. The high quality dressing-up clothes and the attractive resources enhanced the activity. Children are encouraged to make some choices about the activities they engage in and good examples were seen of them choosing when to have refreshments; they

were observed chatting amicably together over their milk and fruit in the refreshment area. Despite problems with explaining their needs and wants, very few instances were seen of inappropriate behaviour as children learn how to share their space with others and look after their personal hygiene.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory overall although most children are still well below the national goals at age five, especially in reading, because of their low starting point. A language project in the Foundation Stage is already making a positive impact.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Language and literacy is a key aspect of the work of the Foundation Stage.
- Every opportunity is taken to develop vocabulary and encourage speaking and listening across all activities.
- Pupils are introduced to a wide range of stories and rhymes.
- Pupils' low levels of concentration and inability to express themselves coherently are barriers to learning.
- The organisation of lessons in the reception year denies the access to adults that many pupils need to improve their performance.

Commentary

47. In the nursery, although they have only just begun school, children already show signs of enjoying stories and they listen attentively, joining in with the repetitive elements where they can. Staff are skilled at helping those who have difficulty talking to say what they mean and they encourage them patiently to speak in sentences and avoid one word answers or grunts. Every aspect of classroom life is geared to developing language skills; pupils' milk bottles are named, displays are labelled, there is a designated early writing area for making marks with felt pens and pencils, story books are readily available and staff and helpers provide running commentaries to help children understand what they are doing and why. In the reception year, the emphasis is still on language development and pupils begin to shape letters and learn key words they will need for their reading. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception year. Lesson plans are clear about what children are expected to learn and every session has an objective to develop language. In the nursery, staff are deployed very effectively to help small groups and this maintains a good pace of work. They are skilled at seizing opportunities to question children in a variety of situations to broaden vocabulary even if it is a painting or craft activity. In the reception year, the rate of progress slows because not all children have access to adults when they need this because of the way activities are organised. Some opportunities are lost to raise standards in communication in informal situations, for example in play activities and when reading and writing by choice. With more efficient use of staff, some children could achieve more. The low standards of reading when children begin the National Curriculum in Year 1, hamper their progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory overall although many children are still well below the national goals at age five because of their low starting point.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff in the nursery are skilled at making learning fun.
- The focus on language helps children to learn appropriate mathematical vocabulary.
- Some activities do not encourage, or require, children to think for themselves or solve simple problems.

Commentary

48. In the nursery, good teaching was seen where numeracy work was linked to the story of The Three Bears and the nursery nurse made very effective use of a puppet bear to maintain children's interest and make learning fun. As well as focusing on the number *three*, opportunities were taken to introduce the notion of size. This activity highlighted the problems many children have with retention of what has already been taught (some could not remember the story) and their difficulties in expressing themselves (one child described a chair as *fell down* when he meant *broken*). They benefited from being in a small group as this provided a good adult to child ratio of one to ten and meant every child could participate at his or her own level. Children can count to ten and have been introduced to zero. In the reception year, teaching is satisfactory; it would be better if more efficient use was made of a good adult to child ratio of one to seven. Instead of grouping children into four groups with the teacher and nursery nurse targeting two of them at any one time, the small class could be divided into two groups so that every child has ready access to adult support. Children are beginning to recognise numbers to ten and they are beginning to count beyond ten. The higher attainers could go beyond what the teacher required and their achievement is not as high as it could be. More problem-solving tasks that enable children to show what they are capable of would provide more challenge for the more capable children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory overall and is sometimes good. Although many children are below the national goals by age five, considering the starting point of the majority of the children, progress is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum planning based on relevant topics enriches children's experiences.
- The links between knowledge and understanding of the world and language and literacy help children's communication skills.
- Practical classroom activities help to motivate children.

Commentary

49. In both the nursery and reception classes, lesson plans show that activities cover the full range of aspects of this area of learning. Including them under a topic heading such as *Myself* or *Pets* links learning together and staff are able to reinforce what has to be learned across a wide range of activities. The practical nature of the tasks helps children to remember what they have been taught and is an effective teaching strategy. In the nursery, children use all their senses to taste food, plant bulbs, sort objects that float and sink and learn how to look after pets. They begin to learn computer skills and control the mouse using games to learn about the features of a face or the order in which to dress. In the reception year, they play hospitals and go on walks round school to gain a sense of place and express their likes and dislikes about their immediate environment. They are beginning to contribute their own experiences, for example of hospital, to discussions, which shows the success of staff in providing relevant activities that children can understand. Teaching is good, overall in this area of learning. Staff involvement in the activities gives them high status, and reinforcement through talking, reading and writing helps children to achieve appropriate success in their tasks.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is good. Most pupils reach the national goals by age five and their progress is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the outdoor facilities.
- High quality resources encourage appropriate use.

- A wide range of activities develop the hand and eye co-ordination necessary for reading and writing.

Commentary

50. There is a large, safe, outdoor play area and a garden designated for the Foundation Stage. Good use is made of these on a regular basis to develop skills of sharing space safely with others and children learn to control bikes, scooters and prams. They learn to jump, run, travel in different directions and hit balls with bats and small hockey sticks. Good play was seen where children, dressed as the police, directed traffic and pretended to use mobile phones. When painting or writing, they can hold brushes and pencils correctly and they use scissors and glue sensibly; this is because of careful training by staff. Teaching is good and progress is good considering the starting point of many children. They achieve well. Staff provide a good balance between tasks they require children to do and structured activities which allow children a measure of choice. A lot of thought goes into lesson planning to ensure children receive maximum benefit from the tasks.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is good. Most children reach the national goals by age five and progress is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils experience a wide range of media.
- Pupils are taught the correct techniques for handling, paints, glue and scissors.
- Classroom assistants are deployed very effectively in the nursery.

Commentary

51. Staff provide a good range of activities for creativity and the high quality materials make activities attractive to children. Many were seen opting for a creative activity such as painting, craft or music-making from choice. Effective links with language and literacy provide opportunities to reinforce communication skills as children learn rhymes and songs, illustrate their writing and learn about the colours of a rainbow for science. Good teaching was seen in a singing lesson led by a nursery nurse who accompanied a class on a keyboard. Children showed they had learned a range of nursery rhymes and songs and they responded spontaneously to the music. Their behaviour was very good as they moved, under the direction of the teacher, to the music; even the shy, new children were persuaded to take part. The problems with the language deficit of many children was apparent when only two children knew what *curl up* meant and the teacher had to demonstrate.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Overall the quality of provision in English is satisfactory. Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are below average at the end of both key stages. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. The achievement of pupils in both key stages is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Co-ordination is effective.
- Use of the Literacy Strategy is helping to improve attainment.
- Marking of work provides helpful guidance.
- Planning of strategies to raise standards are sound.
- Standards are unsatisfactory.
- There is inconsistency in approaches to spelling and handwriting.

- Library provision is still being developed.

Commentary

52. A significant factor in the unsatisfactory achievement is the residual low achievement, which has existed in the school alongside well below and poor standards for several years. The school has a lot of ground to make up. However, in lessons seen during the inspection, achievement overall was satisfactory. This is because the quality of teaching was good and because the school has improved its analysis of work and tests provide targets for improvement. However, this has not yet resulted in significantly improved standards.
53. Many children enter school with poor language skills. In order to address these the school has identified the need to focus on such areas as:
- speaking and listening skills;
 - vocabulary extension;
 - the arts and drama to enrich the curriculum; and
 - the use of literacy and language in other subjects.
54. The school has identified the need to focus on the teaching of speaking and listening skills because these form the basis of learning in English. Staff throughout the school encourage children to speak in sentences and to listen carefully. This has resulted in some improvements at both key stages in the structure of spoken and written work and in children's responses in conversations. In order to enrich children's written and spoken language teachers encourage children to use interesting and varied vocabularies during lessons and for example, in interactive displays throughout the school. Visits out of school and visitors to the school such as poets, theatre groups and pupil performances in the Crucible theatre, help to enhance this work.
55. Most teachers have a good command of the subject. They teach the basic skills of reading effectively, but there is a lot of ground to make up. By the end of Year 2 most pupils know a range of strategies such as the use of letter sounds, picture clues and text meaning when meeting new or unfamiliar words. By the end of Year 2 the small group of higher attaining children read fluently and clearly understand their texts. However there is a considerable gap between them and the rest. Lower attaining pupils struggle with letter identification and their memory of words is poor. By the end of Year 6 higher attaining pupils read fluently, understand the meanings of a range of texts and compare and contrast authors. However, not enough pupils reach this level. Because teachers make good use of the literacy framework most children in both key stages deepen their understanding of how to write for different purposes and audiences. However, spelling and handwriting standards, particularly for pupils of average and below average attainment, are weak. The school does not have a consistent approach to the teaching of spelling and handwriting to help children to build on their skills.
56. Teachers generally manage pupils very well so that they behave well and sustain their concentration. Relationships are very good and pupils are confident to join in discussions because they know that their efforts will be valued. This helps to raise their self-esteem and is a further help in improving the generally weak speaking and listening skills at both key stages. The school makes good use of its well-trained teaching assistants, particularly in their work with pupils with special educational needs. Staff make good use of their individual education plans so that their achievement is satisfactory. Because teachers provide pupils with useful comments when they mark their work pupils have a clear understanding of how they might improve. In Year 6 the teacher commented, *Good ideas. Try building up the tension by describing sounds and setting.*
57. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject. She has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and of how it is to be improved to raise standards. She manages the subject soundly and provides useful support for colleagues.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

Although the school makes use of information and communication technology in English, in skills such as word processing and internet research, its use is underdeveloped. Although by the end of Year 6 most pupils know how to use index and contents in locating information in text, skills in the location and selection of books are generally weak and this affects standards in other subjects. This is because the library provision is in the process of redevelopment in both key stages and children cannot gain sufficient access to well organised books. The school is developing the use of literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum so that these are extended and pupils' knowledge of other subjects is deepened. In history, for example, Year 6 pupils used bullet points in work on the Tudors and carefully organised their writing about a local river study in geography. These are well considered initiatives to raise standards.

MATHEMATICS

The quality of provision in mathematics is satisfactory, overall. Standards in mathematics in both the infants and the juniors are below average. Although there has been some slight improvement, results in the National Curriculum tests remain well below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are planned according to the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Lessons are generally adapted for different ability groups.
- Teachers take care to involve all children in the activities often by effective use of support staff.
- Learning objectives are often shared with pupils so that they have a clear idea about the purpose of the learning.
- Standards are below average.
- There is not enough pace in the mental and oral sessions.
- Length of lessons often does not match pupils levels of concentration.
- Level of challenge is sometimes inappropriate.

Commentary

58. The work seen in lessons is better than that which could be expected when looking at test results. The previous inspection's findings were similar. Pupils have a severe language deficiency on entry that remains throughout their time in school. There is a greater than average number of pupils with special educational needs and this combined with a general inability to retain what they have been taught accounts for the differences between what is seen in lessons and test results.
59. Standards in both the infants and juniors are still below average. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils with below average attainment are managing to work at appropriate levels with lots of support which they need as they are not confident without it. The average pupils work with reasonable confidence in level 2 and are able to order numbers to 1000, to find out half of a quantity and to identify odd and even numbers. The above average pupils, which represent the minority of the children in the year group, are the only ones fully confident in the accepted levels for Year 2 children. They are able to complete different number sequences and are able to identify right angles and two-dimensional shapes by different attributes.
60. By the time they leave the school at 11, the average and below average pupils are able to use positive and negative numbers in temperature for instance, are able to multiply by 10 and 100 and are able to add two decimal numbers. They are able to find the area of a rectangle by using a formula. The higher attaining children, who are the minority of the year group, are able to order and multiply decimals, measure and read angles and use inverse operations to check their answers.
61. Teaching is generally satisfactory and sometimes good or very good in both the infants and junior classes. There is a consistent approach to planning which identifies the learning objectives, which are then shared with pupils to ensure that they have a clear idea of the

purpose of the learning. In the better lessons, teachers return to the learning objective at the end of the lesson to find out how successfully pupils have learned. In most lessons, support staff are deployed effectively to give support to those pupils identified as having special education needs. They are sometimes given a group to supervise but have discussed the planning with teachers before the lesson and understand what is expected. In some lessons the pace of the initial mental and oral lessons is slow and children become restless through a lack of stimulation and activity. Similarly in the main activities some teachers do not match the activities to the concentration levels of the pupils. In one Year 3/4 class the pupils were given a long list of examples to finish. They were immediately put off by the full sheet and needed to be given less to do in a shorter time span so that they could remain focused. In another Year 6 lesson the level of challenge was far too high and inappropriate for the pupils' capability. Although the lesson was consistent with the target for the class, of increasing their knowledge of mathematical language, the language used, such as intersections, point of intersection and diagonals was beyond the general level of understanding of most pupils. The teacher also found that the pupils needed other skills such as using a protractor in order to do the tasks but did not possess the skills.

62. The subject co-ordinator has only been in post a few weeks but has already clearly identified her first priority is to raise standards. The introduction of individual targets for each child is a helpful first step.

Mathematics across the curriculum

The school is developing ways of reinforcing mathematical skills across the curriculum. In history, timelines are used to order historical events and in geography, instruments for measuring weather are used to record climate patterns and tables are produced to show results. In science, pupils learn the importance of accurate measuring although some opportunities are lost to combine mathematics, science and information and communication technology to present findings of investigations.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is satisfactory. Although standards are showing improvement they are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Science was not judged specifically at the last inspection but pupils were seen making significant gains in lessons then.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching which helps children to learn well in lessons.
- Well planned practical experiences, together with very good learning support that encourages all children to do as well as they can.
- Many opportunities for the development of scientific investigative skills.
- Children's good attitudes to their learning, interest and enjoyment of science.
- Leadership by the co-ordinator is both enthusiastic and effective.
- Children's retention of the key concepts and vocabulary learnt in lessons is a weakness.
- Informative regular checks on children's progress need to be more rigorous.
- Independence in carrying out investigations needs developing.
- Presenting and interpreting data in a wide variety of ways, particularly using computer technology needs improving.

Commentary

63. Because teaching is good overall, children do better in lessons where they are supported by staff than in tests where they have to be more independent. Discovering that science is fun, Year 1 pupils take great delight in finding the most suitable material for an umbrella, carefully using their new pipettes to test for waterproof qualities, exemplifying the very best teaching and learning. Most teachers understand well how science can be taught. They prepare thoughtful and challenging experiences so that children want to learn more about science and they work consistently on developing children's listening and speaking skills by insisting they use precise

scientific words and explanations. Year 2 pupils were really enjoying sharing their sorting activity and they were able to concentrate on their science decision-making. Because of the clearly labelled items of food they could independently record their sets of fruit, vegetables, meat and dairy produce. For those with learning difficulties, very good support by experienced teaching assistants quietly develops their confidence, expanding and clarifying understanding of their tasks.

64. Appropriate expectations of pupils' participation, responses and good behaviour in lessons encourages all pupils to take an active part in their learning. After exploring with interest different habitats in the school's environmental area, which pupils helped to create and of which they are justifiably proud, from the hot gravel garden to the pond - Year 6 then researched details about the animals they had identified. Year 4 successfully share their ideas of how to test the hardwearing properties of different fabrics, considering fair testing and predicting outcomes. However, many investigations seen in the work of previous Year 6 pupils are recorded within the structured format of worksheets and show few examples of working more independently. Opportunities for pupils to plan and undertake their own enquiries, apply their knowledge in different contexts and record their own results in a variety ways, interpreting what they find, including using information and communication technology, are not yet fully considered when work in science is planned.
65. Central to the work undertaken in his capable leadership of science is the co-ordinator's priority to raise standards. Through his checks on teaching and children's work and by analysing national tests results, he already identifies key areas for improvement including ways to help children remember the things they have learned. Whether the detailed information about children's learning in science that the newly established scheme of work can provide will be sufficient for teachers as they plan appropriate new work for all children to be able to improve their rate of progress has yet to be evaluated.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology, overall, is satisfactory except in the use of the computer as a tool and control and sensing. Standards are below average in Year 6; a judgement could not be made for Year 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective use of the inter-active white board as a teaching tool.
- Well-planned lessons, which engage children's interest.
- Teachers confident in using the technology.
- Standards are not at the expected level for 11 year olds.
- Electronic mail is not yet used as a communication tool.
- Elements of control and sensing physical data such as light and temperature are not yet included in the program.

Commentary

66. As only one lesson was seen in the infants no judgement was made regarding standards or quality of teaching and learning. In the juniors, standards are below where they should be at 11 because there is no use of the computer as a communication tool and the elements of control and sensing physical data are not yet included in the school's program of learning. The school has recently experienced two burglaries in which many computers were stolen. They are not being replaced until secure accommodation can be made. This loss has inevitably led to a delay in implementing the full program and in particular to the full use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. The previous inspection did not judge this subject.
67. Although standards in the juniors are below where they should be, the work seen in lessons and the work discussed with Year 6 children is of an appropriate level for their stage of

development. Pupils are able to use the full range of elements in a word processing program. They are able to add to, amend and combine different forms of information to their work including clipart, digital images and work from the internet. The internet is used widely for research in a range of subjects including history (*Tudors*), religious education (*Judaism*) and science (*Plants and Pond life*). Information and communication technology is used effectively to follow a residential visit when data handling and subsequent graphs are produced. Pupils are beginning to understand the need for care in framing questions when finding information. They are able to produce a multi-media presentation using PowerPoint.

68. Although no overall judgement could be made on teaching and learning in the infants, in the one lesson seen, teaching was good. The teacher taught the children how to program a robotic toy by using links with geography and literacy. She asked children to program the robot so that it would move to different places mentioned in the book about Katy Morag's island, thus giving a real meaning to the work and immediately gaining the interest of pupils. The quality of teaching in the juniors was also good. In both lessons teachers displayed confidence in using the programs and deployed the support assistant well to ensure that all children were able to make progress. The lessons were well planned and organised and ensured that there was a brisk pace to the learning. Pupils with special educational needs were included well in the activities by partnering them with a more able child and together they contributed to the lesson.
69. The capable co-ordinator is well aware of the omissions in the information and communication technology curriculum and is awaiting suitable training for staff before introducing them. She has introduced a new scheme of work that is working its way through the school and as part of that scheme the co-ordinator has devised and implemented an assessment system that is already working effectively. The poor state and nature of the building is creating a barrier to learning and is presenting difficulties in developing the subject. It is hoped that when the new school is completed all of these problems will be overcome but in the mean-time the school is doing its best to overcome the many problems it faces in the present building.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision for religious education is satisfactory. Children reach acceptable standards in their learning in Years 2 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in lessons seen and all children learn well.
- Literacy skills are developed effectively in infant lessons.
- Valuable contributions are made to children's personal development.
- Good understanding of the requirements of the subject by the co-ordinator.
- Too few opportunities for children to widen their personal understanding through first hand experiences of the different faiths they study.
- Teachers need more guidance to know how well children are learning.

Commentary

70. A programme of work is followed that takes into account the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Only two lessons in the infants were seen during the inspection. The previous inspection did not judge this subject.
71. Children learn well because of good teaching. Thoroughly enjoying their experience of the symbolic Jewish Shabbat meal, children in Year 2 sample the challah bread and grape juice and respond to each other with a traditional greeting, delighted when the candles are lit as the table is prepared. Sharing both the reading of the story of the Sabbath and the meal, children begin to know how important this occasion is to Jewish people. In the excitement of a very well prepared lesson, high standards of behaviour and complete attention are expected and careful

listening and clear answers are consistently encouraged. For those with learning difficulties, quiet efficient help, using extra pictures and further explanations, provides good support.

72. Personal qualities are developed well through carefully planned lessons. From previous work, young children consider how to help and treat others and think about their own actions. In Year 1, exploring their feelings and emotions in their lesson, initially through the book *Can't You Sleep Little Bear?* children share their experiences openly and sensitively, encouraged through the very good relationships established with the teacher to think how friends make them feel happy. In discussion, Year 6 children show good respect for the beliefs of others and the symbolism and differing religious traditions of the faiths they have studied, recalling their enjoyment of a visit to the local Christian church to take part in role-play to celebrate a baptism and the annual Christmas service which is held there. Although learning about each faith is well presented, using video extracts and good quality artefacts, and recently through Year 6 research into aspects of Judaism using the internet, there are few first hand experiences of the places of worship or contact with members of the faith communities to enrich children's understanding of each religion.
73. Sound leadership is shown by the co-ordinator and as a result of her thorough understanding of the current agreed syllabus, she offers valuable support and advice to colleagues through her detailed programme of work and assembled resources. Looking forward to introducing the revised syllabus and its newly devised ways to track children's progress, she will be able to widen her responsibilities to explore how well the revised programme is being used to strengthen children's learning and progress throughout the school and to establish relevant links with other subjects.

Geography and history

These subjects were not a focus of the inspection and there was insufficient evidence on which to make a judgement on standards. An examination of pupils' work and displays in school show that National Curriculum statutory requirements are met. In history, a Year 4 class were preparing for a visit to the Viking museum in York and were learning facts about how Vikings travelled. They had some difficulty remembering work done in previous lessons and found it hard to describe what they saw in pictures – one child describing the figurehead on the prow of a boat as *a monster thing*. In a Year 6 class, pupils were encouraged to respond to questions in full sentences and they showed empathy with families experiencing the blitz in the Second World War. Geography is enhanced by a residential visit to Derbyshire.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and physical education

During the inspection only one lesson was seen in each of these subjects and a limited amount of children's work in art and design, so no overall judgement on standards can be made. Planning indicates that statutory requirements are met in both subjects. The work seen in art and design and physical education indicates that, overall, provision is satisfactory.

Design and technology

Judgements cannot be made about standards as no lessons were taught, or samples of children's work available, during the inspection. Units of work are selected from the national guidance to teach the design and technology curriculum and are taught in blocks of time planned within each year group as part of topic work. Skills are used and reinforced in other curriculum areas for example in Year 1, when in literacy focusing on following instructions, good use is made of children's cutting and joining skills when making teddy bears with moving arms and legs.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Insufficient lessons were seen to make a judgement on standards but the school is committed to the development of these aspects.

Commentary

74. Pupils usually behave well and they co-operate with staff and one another to carry out tasks. Parents appreciate the way in which school helps their children mature and encourages them to work hard. Assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on the consequences of their actions and class circle time (where pupils sit round to discuss relevant and personal issues) is used effectively to help pupils articulate their thoughts and feelings in a warm supportive atmosphere. Pupils are encouraged to consider the points of view of others; in a Year 6 lesson, pupils acted out the roles of a friend or teacher to view issues from another perspective. In a Year 1 class, pupils' self-esteem rose as they talked about what they were good at. There is an effective program for personal and social education. The current sex education policy is being reviewed with plans to incorporate it into an overall personal, social and health education program. Citizenship is promoted through activities such as the creation of an environmental area in the school grounds that won an award for improving the city. The plans to form a school council will strengthen this aspect further.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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