

INSPECTION REPORT

CHRIST CHURCH CE (Aided) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Oldbury

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103997

Headteacher: Mr P E Willetts

Lead inspector: Mr P Bamber

Dates of inspection: 20 – 22 September 2004

Inspection number: 266611

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 3 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 222

School address: Albert Street
Oldbury
West Midlands
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Telephone number: 0121 552 3625
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr J Barnett

Date of previous inspection: 8 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an urban, multi-ethnic school in which around three-quarters of the pupils come from two wards with considerable social disadvantage. Despite this, pupils enter the school with expected levels of attainment. Nearly half of the pupils come from non-white backgrounds, predominantly Asian or Black Caribbean. Around twelve per cent have special educational needs, which is below average and a smaller than average percentage of pupils have a statement of special educational need. A much higher than average, eight per cent of pupils, have a language other than English as their mother tongue. The mobility of pupils is generally below average. Over the last three years, the school has been awarded a Department of Education and Skills (DfES) Achievement Award for improving standards, Investors in People status and an Activemark Gold Award for the encouragement of physical education and sport. The school has been through much change and crisis since 2000, with frequent turnover of staff, especially amongst senior managers. This has created significant barriers to learning, especially for the Year 6 pupils in 2003 and 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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1329	K Oliver	Lay inspector	
32372	G Davies	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology History Special educational needs
29504	S Herring	Team inspector	Science Art and design Music Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school offers a **satisfactory** quality of education. Standards and achievement are rising again after a recent decline. The quality of teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. The leadership of the new headteacher is good but, overall, leadership and management are **satisfactory**. Governance is **satisfactory** and the school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is well led by a strong headteacher.
- Standards and pupils' achievements are not high enough in science.
- Support staff are used well to promote higher standards.
- More-able pupils do not always achieve as well as they might.
- Pupils are well cared for.
- Pupils' social, moral and spiritual development is good.
- The very good links with local schools contribute well to school improvement.
- Not all teachers manage pupils' behaviour well.

Improvement since the last inspection is **satisfactory**. There has been good improvement in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and Year 6 pupils now attain better standards in writing and mathematics. Whilst boys' attainment, and that of pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue, is now in line with that of their peers, some more-able pupils still tend to underachieve. Recent improvements mean that there is an effective school improvement plan and useful procedures for assessment and tracking pupils' progress. However, the overall quality of teaching is no longer good and pupils' behaviour is only satisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

In the table below, comparisons with all schools nationally show that pupils' 2003 test results were below average in English, mathematics and science. When compared with schools of a similar type, English and science results were well below average, whilst mathematics results were below average. Pupils in the 2003 and 2004 Year 6 groups experienced significant disruption to their learning due to changes in leadership and management and to staff turnover. The 2004 test results, although unvalidated, indicate a similar decline in standards compared with previous years.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	C	D	E
mathematics	C	A	D	D
science	A*	A	D	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.*

Children enter the nursery and reception class with broadly expected attainment. They make good progress in personal, social and emotional development as a result of effective care and training. In other areas of their learning they make satisfactory progress and enter Year 1 having developed as expected. Children who are identified early as having special educational needs or those who do not speak English as their mother tongue achieve well in the nursery and reception class.

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 to 6 are broadly in line with expectations. In science, because of some weaknesses in teaching, assessment and management, standards are below expectations throughout the school. Pupils do not achieve well enough in this subject. Standards in ICT have improved well since the last inspection and are now in line with expectations in Years 1 to 6. In the other subjects fully inspected, standards are as expected.

Pupils who receive focussed support from effective teaching assistants to enable them to improve from just below to expected standards achieve well, especially in Years 5 and 6. Some more-able pupils do not achieve as well as they might because they are not provided with a sufficiently wide range of challenging tasks. Recent national test results show that a below average proportion of pupils achieve the higher than expected levels. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls, or between different ethnic groups.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Although their spiritual, moral and social development is good, a small minority sometimes behaves in a silly manner and do not always show positive attitudes to their learning. Attendance is satisfactory and pupils are punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory, with some good teaching in Year 6. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and there is good provision for extra-curricular activities. Pupils are well cared for and the recently introduced systems to ensure that pupils' progress as well as they should are satisfactory. There are satisfactory links with parents and the community. The very good links with other schools have contributed significantly to recent improvements in provision.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. After much instability in the leadership of the school the new headteacher is now providing effective, strong leadership. The school's self evaluation is a strength. As a result the school is well placed to improve further. ICT is well led and managed and physical education is well led. There are some weaknesses in the management of science. Governance is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Many parents think well of the school. However, a significant minority rightly feel that, in the recent past, standards of work and behaviour slipped. These parents no longer feel as confident as they did about the school. Whilst inspectors acknowledge this, they also judge that those areas of concern to parents are now largely being addressed. There is a small minority of pupils who mis-behave at times, about which the parents are rightly concerned. Pupils like the school. They mention particularly the friendliness of teachers and other children and the range of interesting activities, as positive features.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards and achievement in science.
- Enable more-able pupils to achieve better.
- Ensure consistently good behaviour management in all lessons.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Governors should ensure that all the information statutorily required is included in their annual report to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Attainment meets expectations in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), but is below average in science. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily, but in some lessons a few more-able pupils and those with behavioural difficulties do not always reach the standards of which they are capable.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science are too low.
- Pupils, who have more difficulty learning, achieve well as a result of well-focussed support.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes who have special educational needs or who do not speak English as their mother tongue, achieve well.
- More-able pupils and those with behavioural difficulties sometimes underachieve.

Commentary

1. Children in the nursery and reception classes enter the school with broadly average attainment. Most make satisfactory progress in five out of six areas of their learning. They achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development. Because they are monitored closely, their needs identified early and good support provided for them, children who have special educational needs, or whose mother tongue is not English, achieve well and make good progress in all areas of their learning.
2. Pupils' learning in Year 6, in 2003 and 2004, suffered severe disruption as a result of a combination of staff turnover, a lack of coverage of important elements of the National Curriculum, and changes in the leadership of the school, which led to a weakening of the school's management. Standards fell, the strong systems for tracking pupils' progress and for targeting improvement were little used and pupils' achievements in national tests deteriorated. The progress pupils made between Year 2 and Year 6 was well below that achieved by most similar pupils nationally. As a result, as the table below indicates, pupils' standards in the 2003 tests were below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Performance compared with similar schools was well below average in English and science, and below average in mathematics. The results for 2004, presently unvalidated, are likely to show even poorer standards, especially in mathematics. In both 2003 and 2004 the targets the school set for its performance in the English and mathematics national tests were not reached.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.8 (27.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.2 (28.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.6 (30.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Currently in Year 6, standards are in line with expectations in English and mathematics. Pupils at this early stage of the year are on track to meet the targets set for them in the 2005 national tests. This represents a considerable improvement on standards indicated by the 2004 unvalidated national test results and has been brought about by good leadership by senior managers. However, science standards remain below expectations because of shortcomings in teaching, especially for the more-able pupils, and in assessment and management. In the other subjects, in which it was possible to make a judgement, standards are in line with expectations. The advances in provision in ICT have enabled pupils to improve their standards and achievement significantly since the last inspection.
4. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils who find learning more difficult, in English and mathematics, achieve well because they are well supported by effective teaching assistants and are given tasks that are well matched to the targets set for their improvement. In Years 5 and 6, some support is provided for these pupils in science, but overall standards and achievement in science are below that expected.
5. The 2003 Year 2 national test results outlined in the table below show that pupils' standards were well below average in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics. In these tests, boys performed much less well than girls. However, when the 2001–2003 average is considered, the gap between boys' and girls' performance in reading, writing and mathematics is narrower than that found nationally. When compared with similar schools standards were well below average in all three subjects. Results of teachers' assessments also indicated well below average standards in science. Again, as with Year 6 in 2003, these results show a marked fall in standards in reading and writing compared with previous years, and can be attributed to the same factors applied to Year 6. More stability in staffing and better teaching resulted in much improved test results in 2004, in relation to the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.0 (16.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.9 (14.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.6 (16.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

6. Currently standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly as expected. They are below expectations in science for the same reasons as in Year 6. In the other subjects fully inspected, standards are in line with expectations.
7. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall. It is good for pupils who receive well-focussed support to enable them to improve to expected levels. Pupils with learning difficulties generally achieve well. Those who are identified as having difficulties behaving well do not achieve as well as they might in all lessons. Inspectors found that when these pupils were engaged in more practical activities, such as physical education, or they were not organised as well as they might be, their behaviour tended to deteriorate. During the inspection, a teacher of very high quality taught the Year 3 class in the absence of the usual teacher, and the pupils' achievements, in the lessons observed, were very good as a result of this very good teaching. In those classes where teachers have good skills and subject knowledge, for instance in Year 6, pupils' achievements in ICT are good.

8. Throughout the school, some more-able pupils underachieve. This is reflected in the recent national test results and other test data, which show that a smaller proportion of pupils than is the average attain at higher levels. Even in Year 2 last year, when a higher proportion than has been the norm achieved the expected Level 2, a lower than average proportion attained the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics. Some weaknesses in planning and in the curriculum for these pupils contributed to this underachievement. The school acknowledges that some more-able pupils tend to underachieve and is currently implementing strategies to ensure that they achieve as well as they should. This is reflected in the school's improvement plan together with the already successful action to improve the achievement of pupils who find learning more difficult.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are **satisfactory**. Punctuality is **good**. Their personal, social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many pupils have positive attitudes to school and are well behaved.
- The inappropriate behaviour in some lessons by a few pupils in Years 2, 4 and 5 disrupts learning.
- The school is a happy community in which, everyone, whatever their race or background is welcomed and encouraged to learn and develop.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities.
- There are good systems to ensure pupils come to school and arrive on time.
- The school provides only limited opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures.

Commentary

9. Many pupils have positive attitudes to their work. Children in the reception class make good strides in their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils in Year 1 and in Year 6 are particularly well behaved because they respond well to quick paced lessons. In Years 2, 4 and 5, where behaviour is not always managed consistently well, a few pupils disrupt learning in some lessons. These findings confirm the concerns of a few parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire.
10. Pupils enjoy responsibility and are keen to contribute to school life. They collect registers and help their teachers to prepare and tidy up classrooms. Older ones operate equipment during assembly and help at lunchtimes. The members of the school council take their roles very seriously.
11. Both 'wet' and 'dry' playtimes are lively, happy and well-organised occasions. Pupils enjoy each other's company, and a wide range of games and activities. Older pupils keep an eye on younger ones. Some rough play was observed, but nothing that could be interpreted as bullying was seen or reported during the inspection. Year 6 pupils confirmed that bullying and harassment are rare and that it is sorted out quickly when it does occur.
12. This is a harmonious, mixed-race community, which reflects the school's stated aim to include all pupils fully in its provision. The pupils have a growing understanding of social and moral issues and they distinguish between right and wrong. Most actively support the recently introduced behaviour *expectations code* and understand the positive impact it is having on the quality the relationships within the school. In assemblies, given by the local vicar, for example, they have good opportunities to reflect and explore their inner feelings.

Cultural development is satisfactory, but the criticism from the last report that the school does not sufficiently tap into the local community's rich diversity of cultures and beliefs still applies.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.8	School data	0.2
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.

13. The above figures were published in the autumn of 2003. The school's own records show that attendance during 2003-2004 has improved to the point where it is now broadly satisfactory. This is a result of the school's drive to ensure that pupils come to school every day and arrive on time.

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	102	6	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	22	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	14	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	21	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

14. One pupil was excluded for a number of fixed periods as the school dealt with problems related to extreme behaviour.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and there is good enrichment through out-of-class activities and through very good links with other schools. The quality of care is good and guidance and support satisfactory. The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** overall. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is generally good in Year 6.
- Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning and achievements.
- Teaching is not always good enough for the more-able pupils and those who have difficulties behaving sensibly.
- There are some relative weaknesses in the teaching and assessment of science.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	10	14	1	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons;

**During the inspection the Year 3 class was taught, in the absence of the normal class teacher, by a very skilled teacher from one of the schools that is in close partnership with Christ Church School. Three out of the four very good lessons were observed in this class. Written evidence from local education authority and school documentation indicates that the quality of teaching in this class is not normally as good.*

15. Overall, the quality of teaching for children in the nursery and reception class is satisfactory. A strong feature is the contribution of teaching assistants, which particularly promotes children's achievements in their personal, social and emotional development and in their speaking and listening skills. A current relative weakness is that staff do not always ensure the correct balance in children's activities.
16. In Year 6, teaching is of good quality in most lessons. This results in pupils enjoying their work and responding positively to the tasks and activities planned for them. Year 6 lessons are often characterised by the creative use of ICT to support and promote learning and a well ordered positive atmosphere, which results in pupils being productive.
17. In Years 3 to 6, well-focussed effective support is provided for pupils who have been identified as needing extra help. As a result, those pupils who had attained at below expected levels make good progress and achieve well, which reflects the school's aim to get the best out of all the pupils. Teaching assistants, some of whom are qualified teachers, work in close harmony with classroom teachers to plan well matched tasks to the pupils needs, often creating their own, effective resources to help explain more difficult ideas. Pupils respond to this focussed teaching well and try hard to improve, often co-operating well and showing a self control sometimes lacking when they are taught with the whole class.
18. The needs of more-able pupils are not always fully met in lessons. The school is aware that these pupils sometimes underachieve in national tests and is seeking ways, through its very good partnership with a local school, to ensure that they all achieve consistently well. Currently teachers do set tasks of different levels of difficulty for pupils, which in the best examples sufficiently challenge pupils of all abilities. However, they pay too little attention to questioning at different levels or to providing a wider range of tasks that would stretch more-able pupils. When teachers manage behaviour well and lessons proceed at a good pace, all pupils respond sensibly to instructions and have positive attitudes. On those occasions when lessons are not organised well enough or are taught at too slow a pace, a minority of pupils take advantage and do not learn well enough because they do not listen properly or their behaviour is silly. In those classes in which this was noted teaching, learning and behaviour is often much better in the morning, when lessons are more formally structured. In the more practical lessons, in particular, often held in the afternoon when pupils are left to organise themselves and take responsibility, a few misbehave and underachieve.
19. There are some shortcomings in the quality of teaching and of assessment in science. Because the school has rightly focussed much attention on improving standards and achievement in English and mathematics, less attention has been given to science. Although teaching in science is satisfactory overall, teachers lead the practical activities too much and pupils are given little choice about how they record their findings. As a result, pupils,

especially the more-able, do not achieve as well as they should. Work in science is marked, but assessments made by the teachers lack the necessary rigorous links to National Curriculum levels and fail to highlight a lack of progress or below expected standards.

20. Overall, teachers use assessment satisfactorily. Pupils' work is marked systematically and regularly, which in the best examples, help pupils' to improve. The lessons planned for pupils satisfactorily reflect teachers' knowledge gained from their day-to-day assessments and the school's analysis of test data, about what pupils need to learn next in order to progress. However, this is not always the case for the more-able pupils. Discussions with pupils revealed that they are well aware of the targets set for their improvement in English and mathematics and that their learning is enhanced as a result of them striving to achieve these targets.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory**. The quality of opportunities for enrichment is **good**. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Extra-curricular provision is good.
- Pupils are prepared well for the transfer to secondary school.
- The quality of learning resources is good.

Commentary

21. The curriculum is now satisfactory and remains of similar quality to that reported at the time of the last inspection. Between that time and currently, during the difficulties experienced by the school described elsewhere in this report, weaknesses in the curriculum for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science emerged. These weaknesses contributed to the unsatisfactory Year 6 national test results in 2003 and 2004. Much improvement has taken place in the English and mathematics curriculum and standards in these subjects have improved as a result. The school acknowledges that weaknesses remain in the science curriculum and that, subsequently, standards are still not high enough. The ICT curriculum is a strength and has resulted in good gains in pupils' achievement.
22. The school's stated aim to fully include all pupils in its provision is satisfactorily achieved. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Teachers match work well to the pupils' detailed individual education plans and the teaching assistants work effectively with individuals and small groups. As a result, most pupils make satisfactory progress and most achieve the targets set for them. The exception is those pupils who are identified as having difficulties behaving well. Whilst these pupils normally achieve well in lessons that are well structured, for instance, those held in the morning, normally English and mathematics, some do not learn as well as they should when they are engaged in less structured practical activities. The provision for pupils whose mother tongue is not English is satisfactory. This is a good improvement on that found at the time of the last inspection. These pupils are supported adequately, either in classrooms to enable them to work effectively alongside their classmates, or individually or in small groups, to help those who are at an earlier stage of learning English. However, the needs of more-able pupils are not always fully taken into account in curricular planning, which means that they do not all achieve as well as they might, either in lessons or in national tests. The school provides satisfactorily for those few pupils who are identified as having a particular talent. For

example, the school's good involvement in the national sports co-ordinator scheme has provided opportunities for talented gymnasts to perform on a wider stage.

23. The school prepares pupils well for transfer to secondary school. In Year 6, pupils expressed enthusiasm and confidence at the prospect of studying new subjects and making new friends when they move on to secondary education.
24. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. Sports include football, basketball, athletics, and there is a well-attended gymnastics club. The school has done well to achieve the prestigious Gold Activemark for participation in sport. Pupils visit a range of places of interest to see and experience things at first hand including the local church and library. Until recently music and the arts have played a significant part in the school's curriculum, contributing well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. However, the school's main priority to raise standards in English and mathematics has meant that less time is now devoted to such activities as musical productions. A number of pupils still continue to receive instrumental tuition. The school council meets weekly and pupils feel that their views are taken into account and viewed as important by the school.
25. The school has good resources that support teaching and learning well. Pupils are provided with good quality books and materials and these are used effectively and efficiently. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. The good sized hall comfortably accommodates the whole school for assemblies and places no restrictions on physical education activities. There is good provision for pupils' physical development on the playground and, for Foundation Stage pupils, in the covered area outside the reception area. Classroom accommodation for older pupils is unsatisfactory resulting in cramped conditions.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are **good**. The monitoring of pupils' achievements and personal development is **satisfactory**. There are good arrangements for involving pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good care and concern that governors and staff show for all pupils ensures that everyone spends their days in a secure, safe and healthy environment.
- There is a positive family atmosphere and the school gathers and responds to pupils' ideas and views well.
- There are effective procedures to track pupils' academic progress in English and mathematics.
- There is a lack of a formal system to monitor pupils' personal development.

Commentary

26. This is a caring community, which is justifiably proud of its long held reputation as a family-centred school. Health and safety arrangements are good. There are regular safety inspections of the whole site, which is secure. A good risk assessment system, which covers both visits and in-school activities, is in place. First aid provision is good because there is always a fully trained adult on site. Child protection arrangements are in place, and include links with the relevant local agencies. All staff are properly briefed.
27. Teachers, teaching assistants and other support staff know their pupils and their families well. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' learning, progress and personal development are satisfactory but, until very recently, have depended too much on informal procedures and individual teachers' record keeping. The school is well aware of this shortcoming and has just introduced an effective

comprehensive 'school-wide' system for target setting and monitoring and recording pupils' progress in English and mathematics. A similar system, dealing with key aspects of pupils' personal development, is in the development stage, the school having acknowledged this as a weakness in its provision.

28. The headteacher, staff and governors value the pupils' ideas and judgements about all aspects of school life. The findings of a recent survey of all pupils are influencing plans for the school. The school council, which is used to gather pupils' ideas and views, is already making a positive contribution to school procedures.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good steps are being taken to restore parents' confidence in the school and involve them in their children's education.
- Pupils are benefiting from the school's very good professional links with two other local primary schools.
- There are good arrangements to ensure Year 6 pupils make a smooth and happy transition to their secondary schools.
- A number of parents feel that they do not receive enough information about how their children are progressing.
- Some of the required information is not in the current edition of the governors' annual report to parents.

Commentary

29. Links with parents are satisfactory overall. At the time of the last inspection they were judged to be very good. The principal reason for this significant difference has been parents' loss of confidence during a long period of turmoil and change, which affected the whole school community. However, parents now feel that the new headteacher has brought stability and direction to the school. They have growing confidence in his ability to lead the school forward and restore its reputation.
30. The new headteacher, governors and teachers are totally committed to working in partnership with parents. Parents are welcomed into the school, and the new headteacher has re-established the 'drop-in' culture in which parents and teachers meet informally at the beginning and end of every school day. The headteacher is nearly always available to anyone who wants to meet with him. Parents' views and ideas are valued and, where appropriate, acted upon. A recent questionnaire and a series of consultation meetings are good examples of how the school is determined to give parents a voice in its development.
31. The information parents receive about the school and how their children are progressing is satisfactory. Regular newsletters and information about what children are learning are good. Formal documents are well presented, but the current edition of the governors' report to parents does not provide all of the required information. Some parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that they do not receive enough information about how their children are progressing. The school is aware of this problem and is encouraging parents to make use of the 'drop in' facility. End-of-year reports, which were judged unsatisfactory in the last inspection, now meet requirements. The termly formal parents' evenings are well attended. The new pre-school *Sure Start* group is already having a positive impact by helping 'future' parents become more aware of the ways in which they can help their children to learn.
32. There are good arrangements to make sure that Year 6 pupils have a smooth and happy transfer to their secondary schools; they visit their new schools and some teachers visit Christ Church School.
33. Through the local education authority's School's partnership scheme, the school is forging very good working links with two other local primary schools. The headteacher and the

teaching staff share ideas and expertise with the teachers from the other two schools. Early indications are that the scheme, which will run for three years, is already having a positive effect, particularly in the nursery and reception classes, on the quality of teaching and learning.

34. The school effectively consults with external agencies, teachers, teaching assistants and parents, so that pupils' progress is monitored and reviewed regularly.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. Governance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher provides strong, clear leadership.
- Information and communication technology is well led and managed.
- There are weaknesses in the management of science, due partly to the many responsibilities currently held by the new deputy headteacher.
- The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is very accurate and this enables it to plan necessary improvements well.
- Financial management is good.

Commentary

35. When the present headteacher took up post in January 2004, he inherited a school that had experienced considerable turmoil over the last three years. Over that time, the school had been subject to many changes in leadership and management and a considerable turnover of staff, especially in Years 3 to 6. Existing staff were unsure about the expectations of them and many effective management systems had ceased to be efficiently and consistently used. This is no longer the case. The new headteacher accurately reviewed the effectiveness of the school and, together with governors, staff and the support of the local education authority, astutely identified main strengths and weaknesses. The school is currently implementing a realistic and effective action plan to improve standards and the quality of education. Inspectors were asked by the school to look specifically at the potency of the priorities for development in the new school improvement plan. Inspectors confirm that they are relevant and necessary and provide a good platform for improvement. At the time of the headteacher's appointment, staff morale was low, but his purposefulness and clarity of vision have ensured that they now share a determination to play their part in improving provision. The headteacher, supported well by the local education authority and the very newly appointed senior management team, has forged a very effective partnership with two local schools, with the aim of sharing good practice. There are already indications that the quality of teaching and learning, provision in the Foundation Stage and the use of ICT, are improving as a result.
36. The headteacher's determination to improve provision is exemplified by the rigorous way in which he has evaluated the quality of teaching in the school and the rigorous action he and the governors have taken to improve or eliminate unsatisfactory practice. Whilst all efforts to support weaker teachers have been given, more stern measures have not been avoided.
37. Whilst the contribution of middle managers is satisfactory overall, major strides have been made in improving ICT provision as a result of knowledgeable and enthusiastic leadership by the co-ordinator. The strong partnership with other schools has contributed significantly to

staff training and confidence in using new technology in the classroom and purpose built ICT suite. The leadership of physical education is also a strength in the school and contributes well to pupils' physical, social and moral development and to positive links with the community.

38. The newly appointed deputy headteacher has many responsibilities, including teaching a Year 2 class and co-ordinating provision in Years 1 and 2, mathematics, science and the school's assessment procedures. Much work has needed to be carried out quickly to improve provision in the latter of the three areas. Whilst the leadership of mathematics is effective and new efficient assessment and tracking procedures are now in place and beginning to impact positively on pupils' progress, the leadership and management of science has weaknesses. The below expected standards pupils attained in recent national tests have not been fully acknowledged, nor the reasons for the lack of achievement analysed in sufficient depth. As a result, standards and the quality of teaching in science continue to be weaker than in other core subjects. Whilst the turnover of staff and other more pressing priorities have deflected attention from this issue, it is a weakness in management that should be addressed.
39. The school's finances are prudently managed. Governors have been faced with a considerable drain on the school budget because of staffing issues beyond their control. They have managed this well and, despite running down contingencies, have maintained staffing levels and ensured good quality resources. Financial management and budget monitoring are strengths of governance. In the last report, governors were found to be relatively unchallenging of the school's performance. The most recent local education authority review found this to be improving and under the guidance of the chairperson, governors have recently been more rigorous in seeking explanations for apparent weaknesses in test results. However, this aspect of governance remains only satisfactory because there is still a relative lack of understanding of the role of governors in evaluating the effectiveness of the school's curriculum.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	625,879	Balance from previous year	68,182
Total expenditure	645,020	Balance carried forward to the next	49,041
Expenditure per pupil	3,086		

Aids and barriers to raising achievement

40. The many changes in leadership and in staff experienced over the period 2000- 2004 have proved to be a significant barrier to achievement, especially for Year 6 groups of pupils in 2003 and 2004. This was reflected in weaker national test results. Pupils in these year groups were more affected by the factors mentioned than others. Currently, significant aids to raising achievement are the appointment of an effective, clear thinking headteacher and the very good partnership established with two other schools, one of which has been identified as a centre of good practice. Improvements in standards and provision are already noticeable as a result.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
42. Children start in the nursery when they are three years old. Whilst their attainments are average overall, a number of children have speech difficulties. The good level of care helps children to settle quickly into school. At the time of the inspection there were 19 children attending part-time in the nursery and 30 children attending full-time in the reception year. The accommodation is good. It has recently been substantially refurbished. There is direct access to an interesting outdoor play area, though planning to make more varied use of this area is at an early stage.
43. Following close co-operation with a local school to share expertise, the school has recently integrated the nursery and reception years into a Foundation Stage unit. Children belong to small groups, comprising both nursery and reception children, led by one of the two teachers or three learning support assistants. As the new structure has been in place for less than half a term it is too soon to make a secure judgement about the overall impact on children's learning. However, observations show a positive effect on children's personal, social and emotional development, as children new to the nursery settle quickly into smaller family groups, and reception children feel comfortable in already familiar surroundings. Because of the very recent changes in the way of working in the Foundation Stage, comparative weaknesses currently exist in the rigour in which children's progress is tracked and in providing children with appropriate challenge during those activities in which they are free to choose what they do.
44. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. The adults, who co-operate and work together well, form an effective team. Planning covers all areas of learning to provide a satisfactory balance between activities that teachers direct and those that the children choose for themselves. However, there is not yet an effective mechanism for tracking that those activities that children choose for themselves provide an adequate balance across the different areas of learning. A satisfactory start has been made to assess children's skills. However, the use of this assessment information is currently not used well enough to fully plan work suited to the differing needs of children of different ages and ability.
45. Provision for children with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue is good and they achieve well. Teachers take great care to speak clearly to children, who respond well to the good language modelled. Targets in individual education plans are apt and provide a good focus for adults to support children's learning, individually or in small groups.
46. Teaching is satisfactory overall. A strong aspect is the very good contribution made by the skilled support staff, who play a full part in all aspects of provision, to children's learning. Teachers make good use of resources to capture children's attention and improve learning. For example, a teacher used a tape recorder to record children's retelling of 'The Gingerbread Man' to good effect. Children showed great interest in listening to themselves when the tape was played back later in the day, and this encouraged them to expand on the story. There is a weakness in the use of time during the day. A significant proportion of the day is allocated to

activities of the children's choice. However, some of these activities are insufficiently linked to the particular learning needs of individual children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between all adults and children are very good.
- The small family groupings help children to settle quickly and to develop good attitudes to school.
- Opportunities are missed in snack time to develop social skills.
- A clear system of rewards encourages children to work well.

Commentary

47. Teaching is good and children achieve well. The majority reach the recommended Early Learning Goals in this area by the time they enter Year 1. A strong feature is the good relationships between all adults, which sets a good example of co-operation for the children. Children respond well to the good interaction with an adult within the small family group, and so develop confidence and a good attitude to learning from an early age. Teachers make good use of praise and rewards to encourage good behaviour. The many opportunities to choose their activities helps children to develop responsibility, but there is not enough advice or direction given to help children to make more balanced choices. In snack time, children learn the value of healthy eating. They help themselves to fresh fruit, but there are missed opportunities to develop social skills, for example in passing fruit around on a plate or requiring children to say *'please'* and *'thank you'*.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills are developed well.
- Teachers are not yet clear about how they will develop children's literacy skills systematically in the new structure, and how to provide appropriate challenge.
- Children develop an interest in books from an early age.

Commentary

48. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Children's achievement is satisfactory and the majority reach the recommended Early Learning Goals in this area by the time they enter Year 1. A strong aspect is the development of speaking and listening skills. Adults speak with children constantly and with great clarity, whatever the activity, and this gives children a good example to follow. Good questioning encourages children to expand on their explanations, for example when reporting at the end of each session on what they have chosen. The organisation of children into small groups gives them the confidence to join in discussions. The warm relationship with adults encourages children to listen carefully.
49. Children develop an interest in books from an early age, and enjoy regular *storytime* with adults, who make good efforts to engage their interest. Reception children learn to recognise their own name each morning as they choose their name card from the table and post it in the box to show they have arrived. They also take a book home each evening to share with their parents, which promotes both their interest in reading and the early involvement of parents in

their children's learning. Analysis of the work of the previous reception class shows a steady development of children's knowledge of letter sounds and of writing, which matches well their stage of development. However, staff are still coming to terms with how they will develop children's basic skills in reading and writing within the new way of working. Children currently at the early stages of writing are encouraged to develop their skills by making marks to indicate their shopping list, and copy words to make labels for objects on the shiny board.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children practise counting in many different situations.
- There are good opportunities for children to make direct comparisons when measuring.
- Planning does not pay enough attention to the needs of children at different stages of development.

Commentary

50. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Achievement is generally satisfactory and most children reach the recommended Early Learning Goals in this area by the time they enter Year 1. Children develop their counting skills well as teachers exploit every chance to count. For example, they punch the air ten times as they tackle *brain gym* or sing a range of counting songs in music. They learn the meaning of the language of measurement as they build *taller* or *shorter* towers and compare their own height with that of a friend. Teachers evaluate lessons carefully and note children who have had particular success or difficulty. However, no mechanism has yet been developed to collate this information in a useful way to enable teachers to plan future work that better matches the needs of children of different abilities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The indoor base dedicated to this area is stimulating and inviting.
- Plans to develop the interesting outdoor area are at an early stage.

Commentary

51. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Achievement is satisfactory and most children reach the recommended Early Learning Goals in this area by the time they enter Year 1. Teachers plan a suitable range of activities. There is an attractive, dedicated indoor base in which staff encourage the children to use stimulating displays to learn about different materials. They enjoy sharing large jigsaws with the teacher, who uses questions skilfully to help them appreciate the differences between the town, the country and the seaside. They learn well from first hand experiences, such as drawing plants from close observation. There is good access to a large and inviting outdoor area. However, there are currently some shortcomings in the use of this area to develop children's understanding of the world around them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

52. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on provision in this area of learning. However, observation of children riding bicycles and running up and down the hillock in the interesting outdoor area indicates that achievement is satisfactory overall, and children work at an appropriate level of attainment for their age. Children have the opportunity to use a good range of tools, such as scissors and paste spreaders, and the self-portraits of reception children indicate that they are developing suitable pencil control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

53. There is insufficient evidence so early in the school year to make an overall judgement on provision in this area of learning. However, work on display shows that children have opportunities to try a good range of painting techniques, such as using string, blowing bubbles and marbling. Careful drawings of plants from close observation indicate that children are working at a level appropriate for their age. A good feature is the popular creative play area, where children enjoyed acting out the story of *The Gingerbread Man*. Good intervention by adults extends children's imagination and develops their speaking skills. Children enjoy singing in their groups and with older pupils during singing practice.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Effective use is made of good quality resources to support the English curriculum.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support teaching and learning.
- Until very recently, the tracking of pupils' progress was unsatisfactory.

Commentary

54. Since the last inspection, standards have both risen and fallen, as explained elsewhere in this report. Weaknesses in last year's test results, particularly in writing in Years 2 and 6, have been recognised by the recently appointed headteacher and newly appointed subject co-ordinator and are being successfully addressed. As a result of subsequent improvements in provision, current standards in writing in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with expectations. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection.
55. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Those with special educational needs are identified early and make satisfactory progress towards achieving the targets in their individual education plans. Other groups of pupils, such as those whose mother tongue is not English, similarly make satisfactory progress because teachers make effective use of teaching assistants to check their understanding. Pupils who receive focussed teaching because their standards need to rise to expected levels achieve well.
56. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Most pupils listen well to teachers and to each other. They demonstrate, by their questions and answers, a satisfactory understanding of what is being said by the teachers and other pupils. Teachers encourage all pupils to speak clearly, to answer in sentences and to give reasons for their answers.

57. Standards in reading in Year 2 are satisfactory. Pupils use a satisfactory range of skills to tackle unfamiliar words and enjoy reading fiction and non-fiction. Year 6 pupils demonstrate how they have built on these skills by reading increasingly difficult texts for information and understanding. They read an adequate range of fiction and non-fiction, sometimes aloud, and begin to read 'between the lines' in order to read in more depth.
58. Standards in writing are satisfactory in Year 2. Handwriting is generally well formed and is usually neat. Pupils are beginning to organise their ideas in sequence. In Year 6, pupils use paragraphs, more complex sentences and a range of punctuation accurately. They know about different forms of writing and adjust their own style accordingly. In a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils showed confidence in using these skills. They explored styles of writing to attract readership and demonstrated a good combination of imaginative and descriptive language.
59. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good teaching observed in Year 1 and very good teaching in Year 6. Teachers plan lessons well and teaching assistants know exactly what to do to give effective support to individuals and groups. The quality of relationships between adults and pupils is generally good. Resources are ready to hand and well matched to pupils' ability in both reading and writing.
60. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator recognises the weaknesses and is putting strategies into place to assess much more rigorously pupils' progress towards the targets set for them. Currently, standards this year are in line with national expectations.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. Opportunities for the use of language and literacy across many subjects are satisfactory and are included in teachers' planning. Pupils write concise notes in ICT and their descriptive and comparative writing skills are used effectively in history. They frequently use their speaking skills to initiate conversations and to articulate their thoughts and ideas.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is well-focused support for those pupils who need extra help with their learning.
- More-able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should.
- Teachers use resources well to engage pupils' interest and to make mathematical facts and relationships clearer to them.

Commentary

62. Currently standards in Year 6 are in line with expectations. This is an improvement on the standards pupils gained in the 2003 national tests and the unvalidated results for 2004, when standards were poor compared with schools nationally and of similar type. The reasons for the drop in standards in 2003 and 2004, compared with previous years, are explained in detail in Part A and Part B of this report. Current standards also represent an improvement on those reported at the time of the last inspection. Particularly important are improvements in Year 6

pupils' grasp and use of measure, shape and of how to represent and interpret data. Standards in Year 2 are broadly average, remain similar to those at the time of the last inspection, show an improvement on the 2003 test results and reflect the standards Year 2 pupils attained in 2004 national tests.

63. Improvements in older pupils' attainment are the result of more focussed teaching for those whose standards have been identified as below those expected. A strength in management is the recent rigorous analysis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses, which has persuaded the school to provide well-targeted support for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The teaching assistants provide small groups intensive support to help them to improve to expected standards in number, shape and problem solving. As a result, these pupils are enthusiastic, keen to improve and achieve well.
64. Whilst provision is good for pupils whose standards fall below those expected, there are shortcomings in the diet offered to more-able mathematicians. Although teachers do plan and set more difficult work for these pupils, the range of tasks and opportunities for more-able pupils to apply their knowledge and skill to solving problems is often too limited, in all year groups. As a result, in both Year 2 and Year 6, some more-able pupils underachieve in national tests and currently.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Good lessons were observed in Years 5 and 6, where pace and rigour were strengths. A strength in teaching throughout the school was the creative use of resources to help pupils understand mathematical facts and relationships more clearly. Many teachers used ICT for this purpose, which held pupils' interest and promoted some good achievement in lessons. A good Year 6 lesson provided a positive example, enabling pupils to achieve well by responding to a computer program that simplified problem-solving techniques. Where teaching has relative weaknesses the most-able pupils have too few opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to explore mathematical relationships and to solve more complex problems.
66. Leadership is good and management satisfactory. The co-ordinator has introduced a much more rigorous approach to analysing data and to tracking pupils' progress. This is resulting in improvements in the achievement of pupils whose standards were previously below expectations. Resources have improved, especially to support mental mathematics, and staff are clear now about how standards can rise. However, the amount of detailed analysis of teaching and learning in classrooms has been limited. As a result, some relative weaknesses in classroom practice have not been fully addressed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Pupils use mathematics satisfactorily in a range of subjects. They successfully organise data and interpret information in science, measure accurately in design and technology and incorporate mathematical shapes creatively into their art and design work.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are currently unsatisfactory, especially in relation to the inadequate procedures to track pupils' progress through the school.

- There is insufficient challenge for more-able pupils.
- There has been recent improvement in planning opportunities for pupils to learn through practical experiences.
- The quality of learning in some classes is affected by a weakness in the management of behaviour.

Commentary

68. There has been a significant fall in standards in Year 2 and Year 6 since 2002, arising from a sustained period of traumatic change in the school. Results in 2003 showed standards were well below average in Year 6, with significantly fewer pupils than average achieving expected or above expected levels. Unvalidated results for 2004 show a further deterioration for pupils in Year 6. Teacher assessments in Year 2 show standards were well below average in 2003. Though there was some improvement in Year 2, in 2004, standards were still below average. Observations of lessons reveal some improvement in standards in the current Year 2 and Year 6 due to a recent emphasis on the investigational aspects of science, though standards are still below average.
69. Achievement is unsatisfactory overall. The weakness in providing pupils with opportunities for scientific enquiry has prevented them acquiring a sufficient depth of understanding in science. This has particularly affected the more-able pupils, who have not acquired the research skills necessary for attaining higher levels. The school has recognised this weakness in planning and is now focusing on the investigational aspects of science, though this has been too recent to have significantly improved standards. On those occasions, for instance, in lessons observed in Years 5 and 6 when teaching assistants provide pupils, who need extra help, with effective support, these pupils' achievements are satisfactory. However, overall the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those whose mother tongue is not English, matches that of their peers.
70. The quality of teaching and learning observed was satisfactory. However, the low standards achieved indicate that teaching has been unsatisfactory over time. No lessons observed were good or better. This is a less favourable picture than at the time of the last inspection, when teaching was judged good, and this is a factor in the fall in standards. Teachers now provide a satisfactory range of practical activities to help pupils learn. For example, pupils find seeds in fruit or test which changes are irreversible though, in this early stage of development, there is a tendency to tell pupils the answers rather than to pose questions to help pupils draw their own conclusions. A relative weakness in teaching is that the silly behaviour of a minority of pupils in some lessons is not effectively managed. This causes the pace of learning to slow. Teachers do not always give more-able pupils enough responsibility to choose their own method to record their findings, which limits their achievement. Pupils apply their numeracy skills well to make accurate measurements in science.
71. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The inadequate assessment procedures in place were insufficient to help to identify and remedy the significant fall in standards. In response, new procedures have been recently introduced, but it is too soon for them to have had an impact on raising standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils use ICT effectively to support learning in other subjects.
- The leadership and management of ICT are good.
- Very good use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning in Year 6.
- There is a relatively limited range of hardware and software to support ICT development, outside the dedicated suite.

Commentary

72. During the inspection, only three discrete ICT lessons were observed. However, teachers and pupils used ICT to support teaching and learning in a range of subjects. Evidence from these lessons, from discussions with teachers and pupils and from documentary evidence, indicates that pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with expectations, and all, including those with special educational needs and those whose mother tongue is not English, achieve satisfactorily. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below nationally expected levels.
73. The quality of teaching is good overall. Most teachers and teaching assistants have a good knowledge of the subject, which enables them to support pupils in their use of computers. Teaching was most effective where teachers demonstrated very good command of subject knowledge and lively style of delivery. As a result, pupils' interest and attention were always maintained, enabling them to acquire new knowledge and understanding.
74. The most effective learning in the subject occurs when pupils use a wide range of software and the Internet. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieve better because they have access to an interactive smart board in their classroom. Using the Internet, Year 6 pupils eagerly researched an area that they were studying in geography, indicating a secure knowledge of how to access relevant web-sites. In a Year 3 history lesson, a group of pupils confidently used the computers in the ICT suite to retrieve and record information in their work about Roman soldiers. In a Year 2 lesson in the ICT suite, pupils used computers effectively to sequence instructions, enabling them to predict outcomes.
75. Although the ICT suite is well equipped, there are a limited number of computers across the school and the range of software available is relatively narrow. As a result, the amount of time that many pupils spend in lessons, other than those dedicated to ICT, reinforcing their knowledge and improving their skills, is restricted.
76. Leadership and management are good. The relative weakness in provision referred to earlier in this section of the report has been acknowledged, and the subject has a high priority for development in the school improvement plan. More equipment is to be purchased and plans to equip more teaching areas with interactive whiteboards are at an advanced stage.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. Good use is made of ICT to support learning in several subjects. The scope of this provision is detailed in the third paragraph of the above section of the report. However, there is not enough use made of ICT in science lessons to support pupils' learning.

HUMANITIES

Geography

78. No lessons were observed. Analysis of teachers' plans and the very limited evidence of pupils' work available so early in the school year indicated that the National Curriculum is fully covered. Pupils' understanding and knowledge of the local area is enhanced by visits to sites of interest. The work in pupils' books shows that Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of maps and the use of symbols to represent key features. Evidence shows that Year 6 pupils satisfactorily use ICT to support their learning.

History

79. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. There is insufficient evidence, therefore, to make a secure judgement about standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, from the one very good lesson observed in Year 3, discussion with teachers and evidence from pupils' work displayed, pupils' research and enquiry skills are well developed. Pupils demonstrate a secure grasp of change over time and begin to give reasons for why things happened as they did.
80. The very good lesson on the Romans in the Year 3 class was characterised by the detailed planning of interesting activities. Pupils were encouraged to use a range of ways to research and describe the past, including specialist language, pictures and use of the Internet. The temporary class teacher worked very well in co-operation with the teaching assistants and, as a result, all pupils responded very enthusiastically, maintained concentration throughout the lesson and made rapid gains in their subject knowledge and understanding.

Religious education

Because of the denominational status of the school this subject was not inspected under Section 10.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and Design

81. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on provision. No lessons were observed but the limited range of work on display at this early stage of the year indicates that pupils are working at an appropriate level for their age.

Design and technology

82. No lessons in design and technology were observed during the inspection. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, evidence from displays of pupils' work across the school indicates their competent use of a range of tools, materials and components, including textiles, wood and plastics. Discussion with teachers and pupils and school documentation indicates compliance with the National Curriculum requirements.

Music

83. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on provision. The quality of singing in assembly and in the singing practice indicates that standards are broadly average. The school arranges specialist violin and cello lessons for some pupils who as a result make a good contribution to school assemblies. The school offers additional activities to enrich the musical and cultural life of the school, including recorder club, Bhangra Dancing Workshops and music and drama productions.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is well led.
- Lessons are not always well managed.
- Effective links with other schools contribute significantly to the good provision for out-of-class activities and competitive sport.
- Use of assessment is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

84. Overall, standards in dance, gymnastics, games and swimming are in line with expectations. This represents a decline compared with above expected standards reported at the time of the last inspection. However, the good provision for out-of-class activities has been maintained and pupils have had better success in competitions against other schools.
85. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Where lessons are good, as in a Year 1 dance lesson, instructions are clear, demonstrations helpful and pace and control are maintained well. As a result, pupils enjoy their activity, are keen to improve, develop critical awareness and achieve well. However, when teaching has shortcomings, as in an unsatisfactory Year 5 gymnastics lesson, pupils underachieve because they are insufficiently well controlled and activities are not well organised or thought through. In many of the other lessons observed, little use was made of teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment to set

them well-matched tasks. As a result of carrying out the same tasks at the same level, more-able pupils, whilst consolidating their skills, often failed to improve during the course of a lesson. At the same time, less-able pupils sometimes struggled to cope with the demands made of them.

86. The subject is well led by a very knowledgeable and pro-active co-ordinator. The accommodation and resources available to support learning are good and have been improved since the last inspection. A brand new, hard standing, multi-purpose court is a very positive addition to games' provision. A notable strength in leadership is the school's achievement in gaining an Activemark Gold Award, which few schools attain. A significant feature contributing to this work are the good links with other schools, particularly a local secondary school, which provides good opportunities for competitive sport, widening the range of out-of-class activities offered to pupils and for staff training. Pupils with a special talent in dance and gymnastics have good opportunities to receive extra tuition and to perform to a wide audience as a result of these links.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. There was insufficient evidence to report fully on this area of the curriculum. The majority of personal social, health and citizenship education is not taught through specific lessons. It is dealt with through other subjects when teachers take opportunities to introduce and explore ideas and issues as and when they arise. The school, as part of a wide-ranging review of this area of the curriculum, has just completed a comprehensive mapping exercise to ensure that nothing is left out. In the one dedicated session, a Year 5 'circle time' about misuse of drugs, pupils were very sensible, listened to one other and were keen to contribute to discussions.
88. Pupils' good relationships with each other, and with the adults who work with them, ensure that they have opportunities to grow in confidence and develop as contributing members of their school and the wider communities. Anti-social behaviour and any racism are confronted and not tolerated. The recently introduced *Expectations Code* is having a positive impact on pupils' awareness of how best to behave in, and contribute to, a happy and peaceful community. The responsibilities pupils have around the school and in school assemblies contribute well to their personal and social development. The newly elected school council is advancing pupils' understanding of citizenship and of the workings of democracy and enables them to contribute to important decisions about aspects of school life.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
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	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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