

INSPECTION REPORT

RAWCLIFFE INFANT SCHOOL

Rawcliffe, York

LEA area: City of York

Unique reference number: 121348

Acting Headteacher: Mr C Wigley

Lead inspector: Mrs S Walker

Dates of inspection: 10th – 14th May 2004

Inspection number: 257275

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll	287
School address:	Eastholme Drive Rawcliffe Clifton York North Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO30 5TA
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stuart Rawlings
Date of previous inspection:	July 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average sized infant school, with 287 boys and girls in ten classes. This includes a nursery class that caters for 52 children who each attend for half days only. The school is situated in Rawcliffe, a suburb of the city of York. Most of the pupils are drawn from the surrounding area, which is predominantly privately owned housing. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage; a very small minority of pupils are from ethnic backgrounds, mainly other white ethnic backgrounds, mixed race and Chinese. None of the pupils is in the early stages of learning English. The attainments of most of the children when they join the school are a little higher than in most schools, although a significant number have average attainments or lower. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below average. Most of the pupils receiving additional help have physical difficulties. Three pupils have statements of special educational needs. The school won a School Achievement award in 2002 and a Healthy School award in 2004. In 2003 it achieved Investors in People status. The school is currently experiencing a period of instability pending the appointment of a permanent headteacher. Following the resignation of the former substantive headteacher there have been two successive interim headteachers, both appointed to manage the school until a decision is made by the local education authority resolving the future organisation of the school. The current interim headteacher is the headteacher of the neighbouring junior school and is managing both schools temporarily. At the time of the inspection this arrangement had been in place for only three weeks.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21045	Susan Walker	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector	
10144	Mary Marriot	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Geography History Religious education Special educational needs
27591	Madeline Campbell	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Design and technology Music Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average and pupils achieve very well because of the good teaching they receive. Leadership and management are satisfactory and the acting headteacher has begun to make his mark on the school after only four weeks in post. However, the uncertainty surrounding the future of the school and the lack of a substantive headteacher have been barriers to development in recent months. The school provides satisfactory value for money because running costs are very high.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good and leads to the high standards and good achievement. The school does not make enough use of information about how well pupils are doing.
- Standards in art and design and in design and technology are better than in most schools.
- The ethos of the school promotes good attitudes to learning and fosters very good behaviour.
- The school is committed to inclusion and makes good provision for all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and children in the nursery and reception classes.
- Some aspects of leadership and management need improvement, notably the role of governors in strategic planning and the management role of key staff.
- There is not enough use of information and communication technology (ICT), and a lack of resources hinders progress in the subject,

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and standards have risen in reading, writing and mathematics. In ICT standards have not kept pace with developments in other schools and pupils underachieve in this subject. Most of the issues identified in the previous inspection report have been remedied satisfactorily. Teaching is now better and there are now better procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment, though assessment still needs further improvement. The marking of pupils' work has been tackled and is now more helpful to pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	A	A	A	A
Writing	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	A	B	A	C

Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average. Similar schools are those with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Pupils throughout the school achieve very well. The attainments of most children starting nursery are about average, yet most are likely to reach or exceed the nationally expected goals by the end of the reception class because of the good start they get in the Foundation Stage. Throughout Years 1 and 2 most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress, and results in national tests and assessments have been well above average in reading and writing year on year both nationally and in comparison with similar schools. In mathematics standards at the end of Year 2 are well above average. Pupils make very good use of their skills in literacy in other subjects. In art and design and in design and technology standards are better than those seen in most infant schools. In ICT standards are lower than in other schools and pupils do not achieve as well as they should because the subject is not given enough prominence in the curriculum and resources are inadequate.

The provision for developing pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, is good. Pupils are very well behaved and they work hard. Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good and contributes strongly to the high standards because most teachers have high expectations of what the pupils will achieve and so pupils are well challenged and motivated. Basic skills are taught very well, with a good emphasis on speaking and listening that helps pupils to be confident and articulate. Teachers make lessons interesting and match work well to the needs of the pupils but they do not feature enough ICT in their lessons, and systems for checking progress are inconsistent. The curriculum is satisfactory and enlivened by a very good range of additional, innovative activities, especially in the arts. Insufficient time is spent on ICT and provision in the subject is unsatisfactory. With the exception of provision for outdoor physical play, which is satisfactory, the curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes is good. The school takes very good care of the pupils and this, together with the good partnership with parents, contributes positively to the climate for learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall, with rising standards in the core subjects of English and mathematics. The acting headteacher is providing effective leadership after a very short time in post. Governors are committed to serving the school but strategic planning over time has not anticipated high staffing costs well enough and has resulted in a lack of resources for the curriculum. The management role of the senior team and co-ordinators is not fully developed so subject co-ordinators are not all effective in managing their subjects. Statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has the confidence of the parents, and pupils are proud of their school. The good links with parents enable them to be involved with their children's learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise attainment in ICT
- Resolve the situation with the temporary headteacher
- Strengthen the role of the governors by developing their monitoring role and making sounder financial decisions.
- Make more consistent use of assessments and performance data to guide planning
- Strengthen the management role of the senior staff and co-ordinators.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve very well as a result of the good teaching. Standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Girls are doing better than boys in reading and writing; boys perform better than girls in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Standards ICT are not as high as they should be because the provision for the subject is underdeveloped.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start with their education in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils are doing very well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good provision made for them.
- Skills in literacy are used very well to help pupils with their work in other subjects.
- Pupils achieve particularly well in art and design and in design and technology.
- Pupils are underachieving in ICT.

Commentary

1. Most children start in the nursery with average attainments, though a significant number exceed this. They settle well into school routines in the nursery class and make sound progress. In the reception classes their progress accelerates as a result of good teaching and so, by the end of the reception year, most are achieving well and are well on course to reach the goals set nationally for their age in all the areas of learning.
2. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2 pupils achieve standards that are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents very good achievement during their time in the school and comes about mainly as a result of good teaching and the positive climate for learning in the school. The school has performed very well in national tests and assessments year on year and maintained well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics almost consistently since 2000. In the national tests in 2003 the school's performance was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics, both nationally and in comparison with similar schools, as can be seen in the table below. Furthermore, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was also well above average. In science too, standards are well above average and results are particularly good in the investigative and practical aspects of the curriculum.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.6 (18.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.8 (16.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.4 (17.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Standards are now higher than at the time of the previous inspection, when they were average. Girls are outperforming boys in reading and writing, though in mathematics the boys are doing better than the girls. The school has recently begun to make use of performance data to monitor this situation, for example by analysing test results to find out which are the areas

where boys perform less well than girls in reading and writing and to explore ways to motivate boys so that this trend does not escalate. There has not yet been an evaluation of this monitoring, to test out any impact on results. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is a priority in the current year's development plan. The school has identified pupils who are perceived to be gifted and talented though no specific provision is yet in place to help these pupils. Teachers do, however, make good provision for the needs of all pupils, including the brightest, within their lesson planning. Almost all parents responding to the questionnaire believe their child is making good progress in the school.

4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the thorough provision that is made for them. Individual education plans are thoughtfully tailored to suit the needs of the pupils and adults are well deployed to help the pupils. The pupils are well supported by classroom assistants who help them with their physical needs, assist them with writing and encourage their spoken responses so that they benefit from full access to lessons, and learn well. Staff use well-planned teaching strategies and resources, which enable the pupils to achieve well in relation to their capabilities.
5. Throughout the school there are very good opportunities for pupils to use their skills in literacy to help them in most other subjects. For example, they record their holiday experiences in imaginary postcards, describe historical events such as the life of Florence Nightingale or record their scientific observations. Skills in numeracy are used satisfactorily in other subjects, but not as extensively as for literacy and this is an area the school could usefully develop further.
6. The school's provision for art and design and for design and technology is a real strength and pupils do particularly well in these subjects. Standards are higher than those seen in most infant schools. As a result of enthusiastic and knowledgeable teaching and a rich and varied curriculum, pupils experience a broad range of interesting tasks that develop their creative skills and imagination very well indeed.
7. Standards in ICT are lower than in most infant schools and pupils are underachieving in this subject. The subject has not developed sufficiently well since the last inspection and standards have not kept pace with other schools. This is partly because of the lack of resources, which impedes teaching and learning, partly because teachers do not include enough ICT in their planning and partly because pupils do not have frequent enough access to computers. As a result of all these factors pupils do not develop a wide enough repertoire of computer skills as they grow older, nor do they apply them to support their work in other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are good overall and their behaviour is very good. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance is very good; pupils are keen to attend school and most arrive punctually.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils work hard and show maturity and responsibility for their age.
- Pupils' personal development is well catered for.
- Rates of attendance are well above the average.

Commentary

8. The very good behaviour of the pupils and their attitudes to learning are a real strength of the school and help pupils to achieve well in their lessons. Parents share this view, as can be seen in their positive responses to the questionnaire and their favourable remarks at the meeting prior to the inspection. Most pupils have good attitudes and are keen to learn. The school fosters the independence of the pupils well and they are very willing to help out with the smooth

running of the school. Even the youngest children in the school are involved in helping in a number of ways, for example by acting as register monitors. Older pupils too are pleased to help as lunchtime monitors, where they can assist younger children, for example to open the tops of their drinks. Lunchtimes are very well organised and this allows all pupils to enjoy sharing meal times together and all are served very quickly and efficiently from two queues. Pupils say they feel that adults listen to them and respond well to any of their concerns. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their work because teachers and teaching assistants expect them to behave well and work hard.

9. Behaviour at break and lunchtimes is very good because it is very well managed by staff and because most pupils are sensible and mature for their years. Pupils are friendly and very well behaved. They get on very well with each other and with teachers and other adults working in the school. They respond quickly to the teachers' instructions in class and play very well together in the playground. In lessons teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and school rules are well displayed throughout the school and acted upon. Because of the consistently applied policy and very good relationships throughout the school, behaviour has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged to be good. A high number of parents responding to the questionnaire were happy with behaviour in the school. In this they are well justified.

10. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Pupils' personal development is well monitored; teachers and other assistants keep a careful eye on their needs. Parents are very happy that the school is helping their children to develop in a mature and responsible manner. Generally, very good relationships exist in the school. Break times provide good opportunities for enhancing these relationships, whilst in lessons there are many very good opportunities for pupils to work together socially in small groups, for example when they are paired with a 'buddy' to work with. The good provision for the pupils' cultural development helps them to gain an understanding of their own cultural heritage, through their work in history and geography for example, and also provides a variety of cultural experiences, such as the study of Aboriginal art. There are good experiences to develop an awareness of the culture of other world faiths through topics in religious education lessons and through activities such as celebration of the Chinese New Year. Regular, well-planned assemblies incorporate the joyful singing of hymns and focus well on moral and social issues. The spiritual dimension is not always promoted as fully as possible in assemblies, although spirituality is well enhanced in the curriculum through the appreciation of art, poetry and music.

11. Attendance rates in the school are well above average. There are very good systems in place for promoting and maintaining the very good attendance. Parents respond very well by ensuring that their children are punctual and informing the school of any absence. A very few pupils are late; the school monitors this by recording the reasons well and following them up if necessary. There has been one temporary exclusion during the current school year. In the previous year the figure was much higher because of the recurrent exclusion of the same pupil.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.6
National data	0.4

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

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	110	7	0
White- any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good overall. The quality of teaching and learning is good and is the main reason why pupils achieve so well. The curriculum is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, although the provision of ICT is unsatisfactory. There are very good enriching features that enhance the curricular provision considerably, particularly in the arts. The school makes very good provision for the needs of all pupils. Standards of welfare and safety are very good and pupils are cared for very well. Links with parents are good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is sound in the nursery and good throughout the reception classes and in Year 1 and 2. Consequently pupils make good gains in learning over time. The use of assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve.
- Very good standards of behaviour are maintained successfully through very good relationships.
- Basic skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics are taught very well.
- Lessons provide an appropriate level of challenge for pupils of all abilities.
- Speaking and listening are an important feature of all lessons.
- Teaching is creative and interesting so pupils are keen to learn.
- There is not enough use of ICT across the curriculum.
- Assessment is not used well enough to track progress and assist planning.

Commentary

12. Teaching is good overall and this marks an improvement since the last inspection because a higher proportion of lessons is now judged to be very good. Teaching is a key strength of the school and one of the main reasons why pupils make such good progress. One of the main features of the very good teaching throughout the school is the very high expectations of staff, most of whom provide challenging and interesting activities that make pupils think hard. Because the pupils are interested and motivated they respond very well with very good concentration. They want to please their teachers and they work hard to do so. Most teachers expect a very good standard of behaviour throughout lessons and achieve this through the very good relationships with their pupils and through maintaining a brisk pace to their lessons so that pupils are kept on their toes. By contrast, occasionally the pace is too slow in a small minority of lessons and this leads to inattention and restlessness because the pupils become bored and lose their motivation.

13. The basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are taught very well indeed and this contributes to the high standards in these subjects. Most teachers have a very good knowledge of the subjects they teach and a good level of skills in putting it across to pupils in an engaging way. For example, in a lively literacy lesson in Year 2, pupils reinforced their understanding of punctuation by taking turns to act out sentences, using body shapes to depict each punctuation mark. This activity encouraged the full participation of all pupils and reminded them of the need to remember punctuation marks in their independent writing, whilst making learning fun. In most lessons there is a good balance between practical activities and more formal, direct teaching. Staff have good knowledge of the pupils and plan effectively so that work matches the needs of individuals. In some lessons, notably in Year 1, teachers are also mindful of pupils' individual learning styles when planning work. Extra help is well targeted to those pupils who need support and this is one of the reasons why pupils with special educational needs are doing so well.
14. Speaking and listening are an important feature of most lessons. Most teachers skilfully weave questions into the introductions to their lessons to reinforce learning and to check understanding. At best this skill is probing and challenging, as in a lesson in another lesson in Year 2 when pupils thought of imaginative words to describe windy weather. The teacher's high expectations encouraged pupils to think really hard and her refusal to accept the word 'noisy' because 'it could apply to anything' made them realise they needed to be more focused. As a result the pupils came up with a range of colourful words that broadened their vocabulary and taught them not to settle for the easiest option.
15. One of the reasons why pupils learn so well is the creative approach of many of the teachers. They plan interesting, practical activities that make learning enjoyable. In Year 1, pupils consolidate their knowledge and understanding of plants through role-play in their 'Garden Centre', while in Year 2 pupils deepen their understanding of musical notation by learning to play ocarinas. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the methodical approach to teaching basic skills. Individual education plans are well constructed and form the basis for classroom planning for this group of pupils.
16. Approaches to the presentation of written work are not always so imaginative and there is a tendency to present too much of it on worksheets. This practice makes it difficult for pupils and their parents to get a sense of progress and continuity or to see what has been achieved over time. Although the tasks themselves are generally challenging and well matched to the needs of the pupils they are not always visually appealing to children.
17. The main weakness in the teaching is the general lack of opportunities provided for pupils to use their skills in ICT to help learning in other subjects. There are few occasions when teachers' planning identifies ICT activities to support learning and so opportunities for pupils to develop their skills are lost in most lessons because computers are rarely fully in use. This is partly because the school lacks a broad range of suitable software to promote ICT in other subjects, but it is also a lack of commitment to the subject by most staff.
18. The use of assessment to aid teaching is satisfactory overall. Most teachers are good at assessing intuitively what pupils have learned and understood so that they can plan what needs to be learned next. The school systems for assessment are applied inconsistently however, and are not used to best advantage to complement teaching. The school has recently started to make better use of the performance data to check the progress of individual pupils and to monitor any variations between groups of pupils such as the difference in achievement between boys and girls or to note any variation in standards between classes. This information is proving useful in identifying pupils who need more help and in predicting the outcome of national tests and assessments. But the data is not used to best effect in all classes. There is little information about pupils' progress in science for example. A start has been made on improving the systems in place but there is still work to be done to ensure greater consistency. At present there is an assessment sheet for each pupil that records the levels of attainment of each pupil in reading, writing and mathematics, though not science. However, the system does

not give the staff all the information they need because it lacks a summative sheet that tabulates the results of all pupils on one page to make the interpretation of data more accessible.

19. The use of assessments to set targets for individual pupils in Year 2 in literacy is proving to be effective because pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve their work. This information is then shared and discussed with parents so that they too are involved. The system is an effective means of strengthening links with parents but it is not consistent in all classes. The quality of teachers' marking is generally good, with constructive and encouraging comments to help pupils to improve and know how well they are doing. The teachers' marking is helpful in drawing attention to spelling or grammatical errors and contributes to the high standards, although, again, it is variable from class to class.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	12 (34%)	14 (40%)	8 (23%)	1 (3%)	0	0

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall and meets statutory requirements. It is brought alive by a very good range of additional, innovative activities that goes beyond the National Curriculum. There is not enough time allocated to ICT and provision in the subject is unsatisfactory. With the exception of provision for outdoor physical play, which is satisfactory, the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The accommodation is satisfactory. Apart from ICT, resources for most subjects are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is well planned for all areas of learning.
- The '10th day' curriculum arrangements ensure an interesting, exciting and enriched curriculum for all pupils.
- Insufficient time is sometimes allocated to subjects.
- There is very good equality of opportunity for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for.
- There is too little ICT within the curriculum.
- Visits, visitors and out-of-school activities enrich pupils' opportunities for learning.
- The provision for outdoor physical play in the Foundation Stage is in need of further development to make learning more effective and meaningful.
- Accommodation has limitations because there is no computer suite or library for quiet work.

Commentary

20. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides a wide range of well-planned and structured activities, which give the youngest children a sure start to school in all the required areas of learning. Although outside play areas are regularly used, they could be further developed to enrich children's learning in a more meaningful way, particularly in the development of muscles and balancing skills through the use of climbing apparatus and better use of wheeled toys.
21. The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is broad and varied with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, which is why pupils achieve so well in these subjects. The arts are very well represented in the curriculum, leading to the very good achievement of the pupils. The

provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is effective because it is tailored to meet their needs. Support staff make an effective contribution to pupils' learning.

22. Although class timetables indicate that all subjects of the National Curriculum are represented, there are occasions when the curriculum is compromised. For example, subjects such as ICT do not always take place at the scheduled time and lessons in personal, social, health education and citizenship sometimes take the place of religious education lessons instead of complementing them. Curricular provision for ICT is unsatisfactory because insufficient time is spent on the subject in many classes. There is a need for closer monitoring of the curriculum therefore, to ensure that the all aspects of the curriculum are taught regularly.
23. The '10th day' curriculum provides pupils with very good opportunities to experience a wide range of exciting activities for one day every fortnight. These arrangements are especially successful in promoting the creative arts. Pupils benefit from well-focused teaching in music, design and technology and art and design and this enriches their learning by widening their skills and deepening their knowledge and understanding of other cultures. The 'Cultural Diversity' week provides additional valuable experiences that broaden pupils' awareness of other faiths and cultures.
24. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum. With the support of well-briefed learning and teaching assistants, pupils access their lessons and activities in a way that allows them to achieve success in small, well-defined steps. In a dance lesson in Year 2, a child with a physical disability was fully involved in creating a movement sequence with a partner, based on the story 'Not now Bernard' with the help of a well-trained learning support assistant.
25. Opportunities for developing skills and competencies in ICT are unsatisfactory because the number of computers that the school has does not allow regular teaching or the regular practice and consolidation of skills. Curriculum planning does not always include ICT as an integral part of lessons. During the inspection, several machines stood unused during lessons. The lack of appropriate accommodation for computers and the limited resources for the subject means that staff do not teach the skills necessary for pupils to reach the usual standards of attainment.
26. Visitors and visits add to the richness of the curriculum. The youngest children visit the school wildlife area and collect mini-beasts, which they study back in the classroom. Older pupils also study mini-beasts and a local naturalist takes them on a spider safari. She also visits with animals that do not have fur or feathers, such as a bat, a hedgehog and a toad. This allows pupils first hand experience of seeing these creatures. Sports day brings in local sportspeople who play golf, judo, tennis and football with the pupils. The arts are very well represented in curriculum enrichment by having a visiting sculptor working with pupils and a recycling adviser making paper. Out-of-school clubs have proved popular, with football and rugby skills being taught. Such activities allow all pupils access to a range of activities and help to develop positive attitudes to learning.
27. The accommodation is satisfactory overall although it does have shortcomings. The layout of the building is quirky, which sometimes causes congestion in narrow places and hinders access to rooms. Staff overcome these difficulties and the shortage of space remarkably well. The learning environment is generally vibrant and stimulating for pupils and enhances learning well. Although there is a space designated as a library it is not used to best advantage for pupils to browse or work in groups, for example to retrieve information from books. The absence of a designated area for ICT makes whole-class teaching difficult and this hinders development in ICT. Resources throughout the school are generally satisfactory, though not in ICT, where the shortage of computers and software impedes teaching and learning. The stock of books in the library is barely adequate, with many books looking tired and in need of replacement.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a very good standard of care and looks after pupils very well. Pupils generally feel well cared for and confident because there is a good level of support, advice and guidance. The school takes satisfactory steps to seek and act upon the views of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school pays high regard to pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- Child protection procedures are very well understood.
- Personal development is well monitored.
- Effective induction arrangements help pupils to settle rapidly.

Commentary

28. The school is a healthy environment for learning and has very good procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of all pupils. The vast majority of parents believe that the school cares well for their children. The school's commitment to pupils' well-being is evidenced in the Healthy School Award recently achieved. There are a high number of well-trained first aiders in the school and sensitive rota arrangements always allow them to be easily contacted. The site and equipment are regularly checked and tested, and health and safety concerns are dealt with very well, sometimes after conducting regular risk assessments. The newly designated member of staff for child protection arrangements has a very good knowledge of procedures, having had recent updated training. The arrangements for child protection have improved since the time of the last inspection, though a policy has only recently been written and is awaiting governors' approval.
29. The school has good systems in place to offer support and guidance for those pupils with special educational needs. There is a close liaison with a good range of support services, ensuring that pupils' specific needs get all the help they need. A very high number of pupils who completed the questionnaire stated that there was an adult they could go to if they were worried at school; many also were able to indicate that they believed teachers were fair. This combines very well to make all pupils very happy and cared for. The support of pupils' learning through monitoring is effective. Achievements are recognised and celebrated regularly and staff know the pupils well and are swift to take action if there are any concerns. Pupils and their parents know the individual targets relating to their academic progress and the helpful marking of their work helps them to know how they can improve further. Induction arrangements to the nursery are satisfactory, though this is an area the school has rightly identified for further development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a successful partnership with parents and keeps them well involved. There are good links with the community and very good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are kept well informed and they support the school's work well.
- There are very good professional links with other schools, especially with the junior school to which most pupils transfer.

Commentary

30. There is a good level of information about the school provided for parents. The weekly newsletters are popular with parents because they contain plenty of helpful information about school events, which allow parents to become more fully aware of the life and work of the school. The informative governors' annual reports provide a further level of communication on wider issues and generate a good level of attendance at the annual meeting with governors.

There are regular opportunities for parents to discuss their children's attainment and progress with teachers and there is a very high level of attendance at these meetings. The 'Celebration Days' provide a welcome opportunity for pupils to share their work with their parents. A small number of parents at the meeting prior to the inspection indicated that they would like more information about their children's progress and the school is seeking to respond to this concern by adjusting the times and days of parents information meetings. Annual reports are detailed and informative. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the education of their children and are fully informed of their progress in school.

31. A small number of parents work hard in the 'Friends Association' to provide generous support to the school by providing funds to buy equipment. The Friends' programme includes social and fundraising events, which are well supported by the local community. Parents' views are responded to well, a good example being the formation of the 'Rainbow' nurture group that is specifically targeted to help pupils who need extra help with social and linguistic skills. Parents are particularly helpful in supporting their children at home with reading and other homework and this contributes substantially to the good achievement of the pupils. The school draws well on the local community through the extensive range of visitors who share their expertise with the pupils. In the past year there have been numerous visitors, for example, a sculptor, a recycling expert and from a history group. In addition there have been many visits, including to the local church, a supermarket and a children's playground.
32. A very productive link has been established with the junior school to which most pupils transfer. The very good level of co-operation means that pupils are well prepared to make the transition to the junior school. Pupils from Year 6 in the junior school come to read to pupils at the school to celebrate World Book Day, dressed as a character in a book. There is good communication between staff at both schools with a useful exchange of information. Prior to moving schools, pupils in Year 2 benefit from a 'taster day', when they visit the junior school to sample some of what it has to offer. The links with other schools are strengthened through the group of local primary schools, which provides useful training opportunities for staff as well as informal social gatherings.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Though the acting headteacher has made a good start in managing the school in a very short space of time, the roles of other key staff are underdeveloped. Governance of the school is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Despite there being several changes in the leadership of the school over recent years, standards have risen, the quality of teaching and learning has improved and the climate for learning has remained a key strength.
- Inclusion is a strength.
- The acting headteacher is providing strong leadership through an unsettled period.
- Governors are committed to serving the school but there are shortcomings in the strategic planning and financial management.
- The management roles of the senior management team and co-ordinators are not fully developed so as to ensure consistency in the implementation of systems between classes and to maximise the expertise of senior staff.

Commentary

33. The school is going through an unsettled period as consultation with the local education authority regarding future organisation of the school proceeds. There is currently no substantive headteacher. The school is being managed temporarily by the headteacher of the neighbouring junior school, who is running both schools until a decision is reached. Prior to his appointment

there was another interim headteacher who led the school for two terms. Despite all these changes and the uncertainty surrounding the future of the school, the high standards and the quality of teaching have been maintained. Indeed, standards have risen since the last inspection and the quality of teaching has improved.

34. The school has successfully maintained its commitment to inclusion and the provision for equality of opportunity for all pupils is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are catered for sensitively so they have full access to the curriculum and do as well as their peers. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has evolved a positive climate for learning where relationships with all pupils are very good; pupils work hard and behave very well. Although the school does not yet make specific provision for gifted and talented pupils the needs of these pupils are well met because teachers' plans ensure an appropriate level of challenge. The school has recently begun to analyse and compare the progress of boys and girls.
35. The leadership of the two interim headteachers in the current school year has been successful in building on the strengths and maintaining the consistently high standards. The current headteacher is already bringing his considerable experience and expertise to the role and has made his mark on the school after only four weeks in post. He is astute and perceptive and has already gained a good oversight of the school's strengths and weaknesses and identified what needs to be done to improve further. Importantly, he has won the confidence of the staff, pupils and parents in a very short space of time.
36. Governors are committed and generous with their time in the service of the school. All are actively involved in the work of the school through the well-organised committee structure. The governors have provided a valuable element of continuity during the unsettled period. However, the governors have yet to develop their expertise in closely monitoring the work of the school to ensure the best possible effects of their spending decisions and to widen their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is currently limited to day-to-day matters but does not extend to a secure knowledge of how well the school is performing compared to other schools and of areas of the school's work that need to be improved.
37. Governors have not taken a sufficiently strategic view with financial planning in past years, particularly with regard to the high staffing costs. Financial management has suffered through an over-estimate of the expected number of pupils joining the school. This has impacted adversely on the budget for several years and has placed constraints upon resources. Consequently, at the start of the school year there was a deficit budget. Staffing costs are much higher than in other schools and governors have not taken enough account of this in anticipation of setting the budget. This has meant that, while the school has better staffing than in most schools and pupils have benefited from comparatively small classes, there has been little money available for the purchase of resources for learning, most notably in ICT. As a result pupils are underachieving in this subject, partly because there is insufficient equipment. Furthermore, financial information provided has not always been accurate, making prudent decisions much harder to make. Financial management does not always obtain best value from expenditure and there is insufficient monitoring of the impact upon spending. For example, the school pays for the upkeep of the attractive wildlife area, yet this valuable resource is used by only the reception classes. The school has an action plan in place to address as a matter of urgency the budget deficit, which in the current school year is £-66183.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	557 930
Total expenditure	608 437
Expenditure per pupil	2119

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	27 515
Balance carried forward to the next	-22 991

38. Despite the relatively good staffing ratio in the school, staff are not always used to best effect. The deputy headteacher has provided a valuable element of continuity through the unsettled period and has provided effective support to the acting headteacher but the full senior management team has had little influence in managing the school. The co-ordinators manage their subjects with varying levels of effectiveness. Some, such as the co-ordinators for literacy, mathematics and art and design, are keeping a close eye on standards in their subjects, monitoring teaching and learning and providing valuable support for colleagues. However, not all are fully aware of the requirements of the role and have little influence on raising standards because there have been limited opportunities to develop their expertise with time away from their classes.

39. Because there has been so much change at senior management level, the management systems that are in place are not always implemented or interpreted consistently. Though these are satisfactory overall, they are not as good as they could be with a more systematic and coherent approach. For example, there are different approaches to the presentation of pupils' work, assessment and curriculum planning between year groups. Co-ordinators are beginning to play a more prominent part in monitoring their subjects and picking up such inconsistencies. The monitoring of teaching and learning at senior management level has been satisfactory and has helped to raise standards. The school provides a good level of induction for newly qualified teachers so they are quickly familiarised with school methods and supported with advice and practical help, such as observing the teaching of colleagues.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** overall. Children in the nursery and reception classes are given a good start to their education. Most children are of average attainment in most learning areas when they start nursery. These standards are soundly maintained throughout the nursery and there are a significant number of children who exceed these levels by the end of the year. During their reception year, children's learning accelerates as a result of the good teaching and by the time the children enter Year 1, most have achieved or exceeded the expected standards in all the areas of learning. In speaking and listening, they are well above. Most children make satisfactory progress in nursery and their achievement, by the end of reception, is good. This is due to overall good teaching throughout the Foundation Stage, the joint planning that takes place to ensure commonality of experience across the classes and the judicious blend of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities, which are appropriate to the age and abilities of the children. The well-briefed and enthusiastic teaching assistants contribute significantly to the quality of experience that the children receive.
41. The curriculum is well planned and children are given a wide range of experiences that is stimulating, interesting and of good quality. This motivates all children, including those with special educational needs, to learn well and children enjoy all areas of learning that lead into the National Curriculum. Assessment arrangements are most effective and build up a clear picture of each child's development, enabling staff to match activities closely to individual needs so that all groups of children make progress. All staff bring enthusiasm, skill and understanding to the children's learning and every opportunity is taken to develop spoken language, literacy and numeracy skills. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but there needs to be better communication and cohesion between the classes to bring about a greater consistency so that provision in the nursery is of the same quality as in reception.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well because good teaching ensures that they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions.
- The children reach above the standards that are expected of them by the end of the reception year, even though standards were average when they started the nursery.
- Children quickly settle into school routines and learn to work and play together.

Commentary

42. Because there is good teaching and learning in this area of development, children achieve well and most will have surpassed expected levels by the end of the reception year. They receive patient, caring and appropriate support and much of the teaching in personal, social and emotional development underpins the work in the other areas of learning. This ensures that expectations are reinforced through the range of different activities on offer and that learning in this area is set within meaningful contexts.
43. Once in nursery, children settle quickly and get to know daily routines. They understand the need to change activities and learn how to make independent choices. In reception, routines such as self-registration and working independently are consolidated and extended. When they set off on their tasks, they show interest and share resources. Children play happily in the 'Garden Centre' or are absorbed watching snails through hand lenses. They take part willingly

at tidy-up time, because they have learnt that working together makes the task easier. Relationships are positive throughout the Foundation Stage and children have the opportunity to develop effective working relationships with one another and with the adults who work with them. Adults set good examples for the children to copy, and interactions are positive; this plays an important part in the children's learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching promotes speaking and listening at every opportunity.
- Children make good progress with their early writing skills.
- The children get off to a good start with their reading.

Commentary

44. All staff take every opportunity to develop the children's speaking and listening skills and to promote early reading skills. Children achieve well. Most are likely to have reached and surpassed the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes and will be working on the early stages of the National Curriculum. In speaking and listening, progress is even better and they reach standards well above those expected. In both the nursery and reception classes, good and often very good teaching is characterised by secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and the very well organised and exciting activities that motivate them. Throughout the nursery and reception classes, children develop their confidence in speaking and listening because staff engage in almost continual conversation with them. They chat, question and encourage the children to extend their vocabulary and their confidence in the spoken word. The children initiate and develop their own conversations and all classes talk about a range of mini-beasts with knowledge and enthusiasm. In nursery they know the number of legs on a spider and reception children create a park scene with small models.
45. Children practise their skills with letter sounds and this helps them to write new words. Most children already recognise individual letters and use these in recognisable form in their early attempts at writing. Teachers provide a range of activities to encourage children to explore writing. They can write shopping lists from the home corner or can write about what makes them happy, such as "mummy, because she is soft". Basic writing skills are taught and children see the purpose of writing because activities are often linked to work in other areas of learning such as knowledge and understanding of the world. The development of reading skills has a high priority and is well supported by parents. In the nursery children are becoming confident about handling books. They learn to read from a very early age and this is extended once in reception. Many children have already started to make good progress with their reading.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many opportunities for children to count and use number.
- Teachers make good links between areas of learning.
- Resources are used well to promote learning.

Commentary

46. Achievement is good and children are well on course to achieve standards that are above those expected by the end of the reception year. Teachers make purposeful links between children's mathematical development and other related activities, for example the 'mini-beast' topic. In nursery, children identify numbers up to 10 and sequence them in a 'number caterpillar'. In reception, these sure foundations are consolidated and extended. Higher attaining children can use a square of 100 numbers with confidence, whilst other children understand that a symmetrical design has both sides the same. A good range of attractive resources stimulates and focuses learning nicely, such as the use of plastic mini-beasts when counting. Opportunities for children to learn and say number names, sing number rhymes, use the computers and play mathematical games ensure they gain a secure understanding of the work they are covering. Children who need extra help with their learning receive good support because the tasks they are given are broken down into smaller steps. This builds in success and children show great pleasure in their achievements.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan an interesting range of first hand experiences that promotes curiosity.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT as an integral part of the curriculum so that children are taught the skills necessary to extend their learning.

Commentary

47. Achievement in this area of learning is good and standards at the end of the reception year are likely to be above those expected. Staff plan a range of activities which arouses curiosity and helps children learn about the world around them and helps them develop an appropriate vocabulary. For example, in nursery, children go into the wildlife area to look at animals that live in a pond. They have looked at a frog's life-cycle and they understand animals change as they grow older. Older children have studied spiders and snails as part of their mini-beast topic and understand that a snail carries its home on its back and that a bee's home is a hive. Such activities provide chances for children to draw on their own experiences and this helps them develop an awareness of themselves and others. All children have access to computers but opportunity for teaching skills is limited because of a lack of resources throughout school in this area of the curriculum. This limits opportunity for the children's development. They learn about feasts and festivals, such as Chinese New Year, celebrated by different cultures and this enables children to learn how different groups of people are the same and yet different.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given a wide range of exciting indoor opportunities to develop their skills.
- Although staff make sound use of the existing outdoor areas, they are not used to best effect to enrich children's learning.

Commentary

48. Standards in physical development are above those expected by the end of the reception class and achievement is good. Teaching is satisfactory and children learn quickly because they

participate in well-planned activities both indoors and outdoors. At present, the outdoor areas in nursery and reception are purposefully used but more could be done to improve the quality of the learning environment. For example, though children have a variety of large wheeled vehicles on which to play there are no markings or street features such as a zebra crossing to make their play more meaningful. The poor drainage in the area means that for much of the year it cannot be used to the full. Children use the hall for physical education lessons, using large and small apparatus. They run, jump, try to skip and make good attempts at throwing and catching a ball, showing developing control of their bodies. All staff give children opportunity to develop their manipulative skills by rolling and moulding dough, using scissors and tools, and playing with small toys. They also have access to a wide range of construction equipment, which further enhances their physical development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are exciting and capture the imagination of the children.
- Teachers promote language well.
- Attractive displays of children's work celebrate their achievement.
- Teaching is better in the reception classes, where children are taught to practise and improve their skills.

Commentary

49. Because lively and exciting activities capture children's interest they make good progress in imaginative work and play. Good teaching ensures that children have a good understanding of their learning. They express their feelings through a range of materials and media, music and movement, story making and imaginative play. Children develop a range of skills because they have access to daily activities such as paints and a variety of fabrics, papers and artist's materials. Nursery children create colourful mini-beasts from recycled materials and older children recreate Matisse's *The Snail* from coloured papers. Conversations with adults in these activities are a strength of teaching, expanding ideas and vocabulary. In reception classes, children are surrounded by very good displays of their work, and the use of colour and different materials stimulates children to produce high quality painting and collage work. However, creative work in the nursery lacks the vibrancy of the other classes and the learning environment is not as dynamic or exciting. In music, the older children sing and play musical instruments with confidence and enthusiasm but younger children have less opportunity for this aspect of learning because the teaching lacks confidence to show children how they can improve. By the end of reception year, standards are above those expected and children's achievements are good.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** and leads to the **high standards** achieved by the pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are well above average and pupils achieve very well because they have good attitudes to work.
- Teaching is very good
- Speaking and listening are promoted very well.
- The quality of assessment is variable.

- Skills in literacy are used very well in other subjects but ICT is underused.
- The library area is uninspiring and underused.

Commentary

50. Standards have risen well since the time of the last inspection and the quality of provision in the subject is a real strength of the school. By the end of Year 2 standards have held up very well both nationally and against similar schools for the past three years. In particular, the proportion of pupils who achieve the higher levels in reading and writing is well above average. Girls perform better than boys in national tests, especially in attaining the higher levels. Pupils achieve very well during their time in the school and make very good progress over time. In Years 1 and 2 they build on the good foundations in basic skills that are laid in the reception classes. The standards are given a boost in Year 2 by the generally very good teaching. The pupils do so well because they have mature attitudes to their work. They concentrate, listen attentively, work hard and want to please their teachers. Most pupils are confident to make a contribution to a discussion or to try out new work because of the supportive climate in the school.
51. The quality of teaching throughout the school is the main reason why the pupils are doing so well. Most teachers have secure knowledge of how best to teach the basic skills in reading and writing, and the ability to put it across in interesting and well-focused direct teaching. They have very high expectations of what pupils will achieve and through very good relationships with their classes maintain a productive working atmosphere in most lessons. Consequently pupils make good headway with their reading, and writing skills such as spelling, grammar and punctuation become increasingly more accurate as pupils grow older. In Year 1 pupils start to use direct speech, using cardboard 'speech bubbles' to record what characters in a story are saying. In this way the pupils establish a good level of understanding of punctuation and how its use enhances their writing. By the end of Year 2 most pupils write fluently and independently for a range of different purposes and audiences, often showing a good level of understanding. One pupil in Year 2 pointed out that, "We could use a comma so we don't keep saying 'and'", in response to a question about punctuation. Pupils enliven their writing with adventurous words such as 'rushing', 'blustery' and 'wailing' to describe the wind. Through practice in writing the beginning, middle and endings of stories, their writing is developing a good structure. A good way of reinforcing this was seen in Year 1 when pupils composed their own endings to a story and compared it to the author's.
52. Speaking and listening are an integral part of most lessons and teachers are mindful of the need to encourage all pupils to participate in class discussions. Drama is effective in promoting confidence and spoken language in most classes. Because staff have benefited from recent training, the profile of drama in the school has been raised. It is now a regular feature of the curriculum, involving pupils in activities such as role-play in the 'Garden Centre' in Year 1, and re-enactment of the story of the Three Bears and the use of puppetry and improvisation in Year 2. Most teachers are good at encouraging a high level of contributions to class discussions through the way they talk to pupils. They ask open-ended questions that make pupils think hard and then take pupils' responses to a higher level by teasing out further ideas and even better words.
53. The development of a whole-school system for assessing pupils has been a recent focus and there are some good examples where the information from assessments is used well, for example to set targets to help pupils improve their work. Overall, however, there is work still to be done to ensure inconsistency between classes in the ways pupils are assessed and the use that is made of the information from assessments. The school has made a start in analysing performance data to help to identify which pupils need extra help, to note any variation between groups of pupils and to predict the likely outcomes in national tests. There has not yet been a thorough evaluation of the procedures to monitor their effectiveness in raising standards. Marking too has been a recent focus for development and there are good examples of marking that is both encouraging and informative to help pupils improve their work. A policy for marking

was produced following the previous inspection, but it is inconsistently applied because of the lack of monitoring.

54. Although there are isolated good examples of pupils using their skills in ICT, there is considerable scope to extend the use of ICT in the subject. The lack of ICT in samples of pupils' work indicates that it is not used well enough to support learning in English. There are frequent missed opportunities for pupils to use computers, mainly because teachers' planning does not address the matter. The school lacks an appropriate range of attractive computer programs to enhance the teaching of reading and writing.
55. One of the strengths in the teaching is the provision of stimulating learning environments that provide plenty of reminders for pupils to help them to write fluently. In most classes, for example, there are colourful prompts for pupils to refer to, such as 'word walls' and displays that remind them which punctuation marks to use or of useful connecting words. These helpful aids enable pupils to write confidently and independently, without the hindrance of having to look for common words. Pupils are further encouraged to be independent by using thesauruses and dictionaries to look up words.
56. The pupils make very good progress with their reading and the school promotes love of reading through events such as 'Book Week'. Parents too play an important part in contributing to the high standards through their continuing involvement at home. The library provision in the school is barely adequate for this purpose. The area in the corridor does little to promote the love of reading to which the school aspires because many of the books are displayed out of the reach and sight of the pupils and with little to attract pupils to the books on display. The books themselves are of variable quality.
57. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The co-ordinator has a sound overview of what needs to be done to take the subject forward, but lacks regular time away from the classroom to check teaching and learning. Over time the lack of systematic monitoring has led to variations in practice and inconsistencies in the application of school systems between classes and year groups. The use of ICT has been identified as an area to be developed further but has yet to be remedied through rigorous action planning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Literacy is used very well to support other subjects. Teachers are skilled at weaving into most lessons plenty of opportunities for pupils to use their reading and writing and so they hone their skills in a range of genres, for example when they re-tell the story of the Florence Nightingale in history or write descriptive passages about Katie Morag's island home in geography. Sometimes opportunities for pupils to use their skills in literacy are limited through the over-use of worksheets. Speaking and listening are a key component of most lessons and pupils are confident and articulate in sharing their thoughts and ideas with the rest of the class and talking productively in pairs.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in the subject.
- Curriculum enrichment is limited by the lack of computers and software.
- The good teaching challenges pupils' learning.
- Assessment is well used and targets are set.
- Whilst very good provision is made for pupils to apply their skills in mathematics, relatively little work is recorded and this limits teachers' opportunities to check on pupils' progress.
- Problem solving, investigation and numeracy are well used.

Commentary

59. There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection. Standards have risen because of the very good teaching and the good planning for the subject. Standards by the end of Year 2 are well above the national average and pupils achieve very well. Boys and girls do equally well in the various strands of the subject. The use and application of mathematics and number are particularly strong.
60. Teaching is very good. Most teachers have very good subject knowledge and skilful questioning in particular helps them to adapt the National Numeracy Strategy to suit pupils of different abilities. In the best lessons the effective use of assessment and feedback helps teachers know how well the pupils are doing and what they need to do next. A good example of this was seen when the teacher in Year 2 first asked pupils to recall the previous day's learning at the start of the lesson on subtraction. The ensuing combination of well-focused questions, the use of whiteboards to show the steps involved and the discussion that followed developed the numeracy and reasoning skills of the pupils very well. Most teachers have developed a very good balance between support and independence by giving plenty of help to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, but challenging those with higher attainment to do more for themselves.
61. As a result of good assessment procedures, including self-assessment by pupils of how they are doing in lessons, teachers plan individual targets for all pupils. Pupils also set their own targets alongside those of the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs have targets set in their individual education plans. By contrast, on the few occasions when teaching is not so good, insufficient use is made of assessment information. Consequently planning is not as thorough as it should be and tasks are not always suited to all pupils' needs and this does not help them to understand what they are doing. Throughout the school there is a tendency to record work on worksheets and this limits teachers' opportunities to check on pupils' progress.
62. The subject has been well led temporarily by an acting co-ordinator who has established a clear overview of the subject in a short space of time and who understands the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. She has a very good understanding of the subject and leads by her own example.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily to support their work in other subjects; for example, pupils in Year 2 created graphs to help with their work in geography and in science. This helps pupils to see how their work is linked together. Problem solving and investigation develop pupils' social skills well as they work in pairs and in groups. Overall, pupils' skills in numeracy are not used in other subjects as extensively as literacy. ICT is underused in supporting mathematics, partly because the school does not have the facility of an ICT suite and there are not enough computers in classrooms and partly because teachers do not plan enough opportunities for ICT in their lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 2 are above average and achievement is good.
- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy the school's creative, practical approach to the subject.
- ICT needs further development and use as an integral part of the subject.

Commentary

64. Standards of attainment are above average by the end of year 2 and achievement is good. These findings indicate a rise in standards since the last inspection. This is due to good teaching and the development of investigation science skills throughout the school. Lessons are prepared carefully and the practical nature of the work supports pupils' learning and helps to consolidate and extend their understanding.
65. In a good lesson in Year 2, pupils showed good awareness of the differences between natural and man-made materials. They knew that sand was involved in glass making, and wood was made into paper. Pupils were continually engaged with well-planned, practical activities. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as their classmates because they are well supported by well-briefed teaching assistants.
66. The enthusiasm of pupils for science is shown by the way they respond to questions and to the tasks set. Work in a class in Year 1 involved pupils smelling herbs whilst studying plants and most of them knew that that roots "were at the bottom of the plant". Work in science contributes well to the development of pupils' personal skills because they learn to work effectively in groups or with a partner and to share resources. Most teachers' subject knowledge is secure and throughout the school there is a growing emphasis on developing scientific vocabulary. The focus on literacy and numeracy standards has contributed to the raising of standards in science. A pupil in Year 2, studying mini-beasts, had written an information book that he felt "would make you love spiders"!
67. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware that the use of ICT needs to be further developed in science so that it becomes an integral part of the subject and, at present, has no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Fieldwork and visitors to school help to enrich the science curriculum well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are underachieving in the subject.
- The subject is under-represented in the curriculum.
- The school lacks resources for the subject.
- ICT is not used sufficiently in other subjects.

Commentary

68. Standards are lower now than reported at the time of the last inspection because schools nationally have moved forward in ICT considerably in the interim years. The provision in the school has not kept pace with developments in most schools and so pupils are underachieving. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have mastered basic skills, partly because many of them have computers at home. But the repertoires of the pupils are narrow and pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their skills in a range of other subjects. Very few examples of ICT are evident in samples of pupils' work or on display in the school. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall because of the general lack of opportunities for ICT to be used and the inconsistent approaches to the subject. However, despite the drawbacks, there are pockets of good teaching and pupils learn well when explanations are well paced and thorough. This was seen in a good lesson in Year 1 when pupils made good gains in learning as they plotted the pathway to be taken by a programmable toy on a simple floor plan. On another occasion pupils

reinforced their understanding of doubling numbers well with a computer program. The pupils showed that they were competent at manipulating a mouse and familiar with a keyboard as they followed the instructions of the program.

69. One of the reasons why pupils do not achieve as well as they might that is the subject is not given sufficient status in the curriculum and pupils have infrequent opportunities to access computers regularly. Teachers' plans do not always include the use of ICT as an integral part of lessons and the class computers are not always in use. In some classes the curriculum is planned in half-termly units that alternate with another subject. This means that some pupils go for half a term without ICT lessons. Sometimes lessons that are scheduled do not take place. During the inspection it was possible to observe only one lesson; two others that were timetabled did not take place.
70. At the time of the last inspection resources were judged to be adequate. The school has not invested in updating and improving the range of equipment and resources are now inadequate to teach the subject fully. There are currently only two computers in most classes and this and the lack of interactive whiteboards makes it difficult for teachers to demonstrate skills to the whole class or groups of pupils. Furthermore, the lack of attractive software to complement teaching in other subjects further hinders effective teaching.
71. The school is aware of shortcomings in the subject and there have been some developments since the last inspection. In particular there has been training for teachers to develop their expertise and confidence. A simple form of assessment has been introduced to check the progress of pupils and there is wider use of digital cameras. The co-ordinator for the subject has little influence in moving the subject forward through a lack of opportunity away from the classroom to observe standards, teaching and learning in all classes. There has not been a rigorous evaluation of what needs to be done to improve matters. At the previous inspection the monitoring of teaching and learning was unsatisfactory and this is still the case.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. ICT is not used well enough to support other subjects. There are occasions when it is used satisfactorily, as when pupils in Year 2 undertook research on the Internet into the life and times of Florence Nightingale in history, or when pupils combined the gathering and interpreting of data with their mathematical skills well when they recorded their favourite toys as a block graph and a pie chart. Overall, however, there are many missed opportunities to build ICT into lessons and for pupils to practise their skills in a range of contexts and for different purposes.

HUMANITIES

73. Work in **history** was sampled and no lessons were observed because of timetabling arrangements. However, displays and work in pupils' books show that pupils' attainment is typical for their age and achievement is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The history curriculum is rich and interesting. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has worked effectively to ensure that the curriculum is enriched through visitors who bring the subject to life and help young children to understand the past. Photographs displayed in a Year 2 classroom, for example, show that pupils took part in a drama workshop where they re-created the life and times of Florence Nightingale and the Crimean War. In Year 1 pupils investigated old and new toys by taking part in a 'Toy workshop'. This gave them 'hands on' experience as they travelled along a 'time line' to view toys from the past.
74. Standards seen in displays and work in pupils' books, together with a very short observation of one lesson shows that attainment and achievement in **geography** are in line with expectation for their age. In part of the one lesson seen, the teacher effectively helped the pupils to draw together the similarities and differences between pupils' experiences at school in Rawcliffe and compared them with those in Tocuaro in Mexico. Open-ended questions and gentle probing provided pupils with good opportunities for speaking and listening. The very good curriculum for

geography enhances and extends the learning of all pupils. Displays show that geography is developed well through art and design. For example, pupils' artwork was displayed in a 'gallery' when pupils pretended to be artists like the artist on the Island of Struay, from the story of Katie Morag. They painted different views of the Island of Struay from their imagination and deepened their understanding of different environments. Other links include a book of Rangoli patterns taken from life in India, and striking Aboriginal art, which help pupils to understand life in Australia. Standards have been maintained in the subject since the last inspection.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education effectively promotes the significance of major world faiths.
- Teaching makes suitable links between subjects.
- Marking and presentation of work are inconsistent.

Commentary

75. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and with those seen in most schools. All groups of pupils make satisfactory progress and their achievement is sound because planning ensures that all aspects of the syllabus are taught and the needs of all pupils are suitably met.
76. The good first hand experiences and the satisfactory teaching mean that pupils are beginning to have a sound knowledge of the celebrations of the major world faiths. For example, during their topic on 'Light and Dark' pupils celebrated the festivals of light including Diwali. They learn about holy days and the beliefs and practices of Judaism and also of the Christian Church. At present they are learning about the Creation, which teachers skilfully link to the science topic of life, growth and living things. This helps children to see how subjects link together and makes learning cohesive. It also provides opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills. A wide range of books supports the curriculum for religious education and this helps to develop pupils' understanding of different faiths, for example as they read for themselves the story of Rama and Sita.
77. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Work is soundly planned and appropriately pitched and organised for pupils of differing abilities. Pupils and teachers are sensitive to each other's needs and this helps the pupils to develop a sense of empathy and to understand the viewpoints and feelings of other people. The marking and presentation of work are inconsistent across the school.
78. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Because the co-ordinator is temporary, she does not have a complete overview of the subject. However, because the school uses the locally agreed syllabus together with national guidance, teachers have maintained sound progress in the teaching the subject. There is very little use of ICT to extend and enrich the subject although some use is made of the Internet to gather information.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology, music and physical education were sampled, as too few lessons were seen to make judgements about overall provision.

Design and technology

79. No lessons were seen during the inspection therefore no judgement could be made about overall provision. However, scrutiny of work samples and the attractive displays indicate that standards of attainment are above those expected at the end of Year 2 and achievement is good. Curriculum planning indicates that all pupils get opportunities to design and make articles using a range of materials. They are taught specific skills, such as how to join materials, how to sew and make moving mechanisms and how to evaluate their work. Because of this, work is of a high quality.
80. Pupils in Year 1 practise weaving techniques by weaving images of stars. They create moving pictures using simple levers and, to celebrate Chinese New Year, they made dragon puppets with moving parts. This contributed well to their cultural development. Older pupils experience food technology by making bread and they created attractive pictures of leaves in appliqué work in the autumn. Some really exciting work, combining planning, designing, making and using ICT, was based on *Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat*. The pupils were very keen to talk about this project which they thoroughly enjoyed and which culminated in the displays of high quality.

Music

81. Only two lessons were seen in music and pupils were observed singing in assembly. In these activities standards were satisfactory and pupils made sound progress. In collective worship pupils sing to the piano accompaniment with great enthusiasm. Their singing is tuneful with clear diction. The use of a published scheme gives the music curriculum structure to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study are followed and that work builds appropriately on what has gone before.
82. In a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils' skills in performing were challenged. They worked on activities concerned with pitch, during which all were able to keep a simple rhythm going, following the conductor's beat. A pupil with physical disability was fully included in the lesson with the good support of a learning assistant. Subject-specific vocabulary was stressed and pupils used the terms 'rhythm', 'beat' and 'pitch' with confidence. Pupils in Year 1 played and sang sweetly to an accompaniment on two chime bars.
83. The music curriculum is enriched by inclusion in the '10th day' curriculum arrangements when, for example, pupils listen to and play African music. This contributes well to their cultural development. The acting co-ordinator supports the other staff well and her teaching is good.

Physical education

84. Three lessons were seen during the inspection. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with expectations for their age and pupils make sound achievement. This is because the well-planned teaching is good and staff are careful to teach specific skills, such as the correct way to land from a jump or apparatus. During a very good dance lesson, the teacher altered the planned lesson so that the story she used for pupils to create a sequence of movement could also fully include a physically disabled pupil who was well supported by his learning assistant. Pupils enjoy their physical activities and enter into the lessons with enthusiasm. They use the space well for warming up, as they know that this prepares them for the next stage of the lesson. During floor work, they skip, run, and jump safely, with an awareness of those around them. Pupils listen well to instructions and know what is expected of them. When moving large pieces of apparatus they are aware of the need to work co-operatively. Such teamwork contributes well to their social development.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection and pupils achieve very well.
- The curriculum is very good and displays enrich the learning environment.

Commentary

85. Standards in art and design are well above those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. The subject has improved because of the high status it is given in the curriculum and the way in which the school is constantly looking for ways to further enhance the provision. Most pupils make very good progress and achieve very well. The curriculum is broad and it is enlivened by good links with other subjects. No teaching was seen during the inspection but scrutiny of pupils' work and displays around the school indicate that the quality of work is high. Observational work shows good attention to detail and pupils become increasingly proficient in using a wide range of materials and techniques. The artwork on display enriches the learning environment of the school.
86. Pupils' work over time demonstrates very good progress in the development of drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, use of textiles and printing. Pupils demonstrate sensitivity as they study the painting techniques of great artists such as van Gogh and try to emulate their style in paint. There are many examples of high quality work, such as copies of van Gogh's painting *Saintes Marie de-la-Mer*. Pupils have looked at illustrators such as John Burningham and Michael Morpurgo and a striking display shows how they have tried to work in the same mode. Cultural links are good. Pupils studied Aboriginal art for example, and produced a T-shirt with an Aboriginal design printed on the front, which they proudly modelled to their parents. Visiting artists and sculptors encourage and engage pupils' interest, for example by demonstrating how pupils might sculpt using natural materials – 'Mother Nature's Design.'
87. The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. The links between other subjects of the curriculum enhance and inspire pupils' work. Spiritual development is fostered well through opportunities for pupils to appreciate great works of art and to express their own feelings through art. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator provides a clear sense of educational direction through her own example and has established an enriched curriculum, which helps to enhance the learning environment of the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

88. The school makes satisfactory arrangements to teach pupils about personal, social and health education and citizenship. The curriculum is based on a published scheme, which gives a helpful structure for planning. The subject is suitably represented in the curriculum and there is sometimes an overlap with religious education. This helps to make learning more meaningful to young children but can also have the effect of reducing the amount of time spent on both subjects. Lessons provide plenty of good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in speaking and listening when they express their own thoughts and ideas and consider the feelings of other people. Pupils in Year 1, for example, learned to be good citizens as they discussed the impact of re-cycling and thought of ways in which they could help the environment. In Year 2 the teacher introduced the very effective techniques of 'brainstorming' and role-play to enliven the lesson. Strengths of this lesson were in the teacher's sensitive evaluations of pupils' efforts and the way in which the discussion was skilfully guided to involve the contributions of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Through the improvisation of vignettes of real-life situations, such as in a doctor's surgery, pupils developed their skills in negotiation and compromise as well as learning about the work of people who help

them. The subject also provides a focus for school and class assemblies. The impact of lessons in personal, social and health education and citizenship can be seen in the positive ethos of the school and the responsible behaviour of the pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
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	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	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	3
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).