

INSPECTION REPORT

**APPLEDORE COMMUNITY PRIMARY AND NURSERY
SCHOOL**

Appledore

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113125

Headteacher: Dr Susan Freeman

Lead inspector: Mr M Burghart

Dates of inspection: 17th – 19th November 2003

Inspection number: 255355

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, infant and junior
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 210

School address: Richmond Road
Appledore
Bideford

Postcode: EX39 1PF

Telephone number: 01237 474365

Fax number: 01237 424325

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs S Hughes-Whiffing

Date of previous inspection: 1st June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized primary school with an attached nursery for 26 full time equivalent children. In addition a new nursery plus facility funded by the LEA for children with communication and interaction difficulties was opened two weeks prior to the inspection. The school is part of the Sure Start initiative designed to enhance opportunities in the Foundation Stage. Of the 210 pupils on roll over 20% have special educational needs. This is above average. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than in reception or from Year 6 is well above average. No pupil requires extra help for having English as an additional language. The school was awarded a Basic Skills mark in 2001 and complemented this with a DfES Achievement award in 2001 and 2002. The school became an Investor in People in 2002 and reached Healthy Schools and Activemark Achievement Gold status in 2003. It holds both an eco award and a school travel plan award. As part of its community status the school provides opportunities for parents to learn in school and supports a parent and toddler group on the premises. It offers breakfast and after school clubs and wrap around care for the youngest children. In a new community initiative the school field is being drained and refenced to provide facilities for local use. This is being funded by Sport England. The school is a centre for the initial training of teachers and regularly entertains students from other countries. The attainment of children when first entering the school is below, and in some cases well below, average overall but represents a wide range. During the inspection two teachers were on long term sick leave. Their classes were taken by temporary staff familiar with the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20865	Mr M Burghart	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage; Information and communication technology; Art and design; Design and technology.
9644	Mr M Whitaker	Lay inspector	
22578	Mr D G Jones	Team inspector	Science; Geography; History.
32296	Mr W James	Team inspector	Mathematics; Music; Physical Education.
18498	Mrs D Morris	Team inspector	English; Religious education; Special educational needs; Personal, social and health education.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a sound standard of education that effectively enables pupils to achieve well. Teaching is good and the school is well run. The learning environment is good and the school has a positive ethos. It gives good, and improved, value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education (RE) is good.
- Provision for the Foundation Stage is very good, with excellent features in the nursery.
- Provision for special educational needs (SEN) is good. All pupils are fully included in all activities.
- Standards in art are good.
- The school takes very good care of pupils, who respond with positive attitudes and behaviour.
- Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is very good.
- Teaching is good, and the school plays a good part in the training of new teachers.
- Skills of applying mathematics and of investigative science are underemphasised.
- Design and technology (DT) and music are underdeveloped.
- Some aspects of monitoring of teaching and learning need further improvement.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1998. Improvements to planning for the curriculum and as part of the strategic management of the school are having positive effects on pupils' learning. Accommodation has been enhanced with the development of a new library and moves to improve sporting facilities. The quality of teaching has been improved with better planning and assessment. Resources and provision for information and communication technology (ICT) are much improved and standards have been raised to the satisfactory level.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	C	C	C
Mathematics	A	D	C	D
Science	A	C	B	B

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

Somewhat weaker results were not unexpected by the school in 2002 - 2003. The year groups tested had a high proportion of SEN and a significant number of pupils who because of being born in the summer had spent less time in school. The effects of pupils moving into the school, in some cases not long before the tests, were marked. Currently standards are broadly consistent with what is expected nationally of pupils aged seven and eleven in English, maths and science. Pupils' achievement is usually good. Those with SEN achieve well. Pupils in Year 2 are average in reading and maths, but better than this in writing where the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level in 2003 tests was double the national average. Standards in other subjects are satisfactory with strengths in art, and personal, social and health education. Children in the Foundation Stage make at least good progress, especially in the nursery, and most achieve the goals expected by the time they are six with many doing better than this. Although improved, standards in design and technology are still below expectations.

Pupils' personal development in terms of spiritual, moral and cultural aspects is good.

Social development is very good. Children are helped to become mature and act responsibly.

They show good consideration and tolerance of other people and work well in groups and are developing the capacity for independent learning. They respond and behave well. The school takes very good care of pupils. Attendance is satisfactory being broadly in line with the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is improved and is satisfactory overall. Mostly good planning provides for a broad and mostly balanced curriculum. **Teaching is good with very good features in the nursery.** Of the 47 lessons observed over two thirds were at least good. All teachers were observed unannounced on several occasions and all had good lessons. Literacy teaching is nearly always good throughout the school and there are good features notably in art and ICT. Strengths are in making learning objectives clear and good questioning. Support staff make a good contribution to teaching. Pupils with SEN are well taught and there is appropriate consideration of more talented pupils. There are notable strengths in Years 2 and 5. Areas for further development are in improving teachers' marking, the pace of some lessons, and in the emphasis laid in some classes on DT and music.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the head continues to be good. Staff make a good contribution to management as co-ordinators. The strategic management of the school is good and senior managers have a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses. The budget is well managed and the school is well run. Weaknesses in monitoring actual teaching and learning continue to be addressed, but there is still more to do to make use of a wealth of assessment data to bring about improvements. The leadership of the Foundation Stage, RE, PSHE and ICT is strong. Governors support the school well especially in matters of finance, accommodation and personnel. **The governance of the school is good.**

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are pleased with the school. In response to the Ofsted questionnaire and in meetings with inspectors parents were positive, especially about the nursery, provision for SEN, community links, expectations, teaching and how the school helps pupils to become mature. A small group of parents feel that the school is not approachable, that they are not well informed about pupils' progress, and that PE is underemphasised. Inspectors find that communication and links with parents are good and that planning for PE will ensure full coverage. Pupils feel positive about the school and most have confidence in the staff. They enjoy extracurricular provision. Breakfast and after school clubs are well supported.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards further, by developing opportunities for pupils to use and apply maths skills, and be more involved in experimental and investigative science.
- Continue to raise the profile of design and technology and music.
- Improve monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators; making more use of assessment data to raise standards, and ensuring that pupils' work is properly marked.
- Further improve outdoor access and facilities for the Foundation Stage.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are average in English, mathematics (with numeracy being the strongest element) and science by the time pupils leave the school. They are broadly satisfactory in other subjects being consistent with national expectations, or in the case of RE in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Considering generally below average starting points pupils achieve well, especially those with special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of pupils' writing is above average at the end of Year 2.
- Standards in art continue to be above expectations.
- Pupils are achieving particularly well in RE and PSHE.
- As a result of very good provision in nursery and good provision in reception children do well and many exceed the goals expected of six year olds before joining Year 1.
- Attainment in using and applying mathematics and experimental and investigative science is negatively affected because these aspects are underdeveloped.
- Both design and technology and music have too low a profile in the school and this restricts pupils' achievement.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.5 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.2 (16.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.4 (16.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (26.7)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	27 (26.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.6 (28.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Results show that pupils reach average standards in English, maths and science at the end of Years 2 and 6 with strengths in writing in Year 2 and science in Year 6 where well above average proportions of pupils achieved higher than average levels. Overall, considering above average levels of special educational needs and high mobility, the school did well and pupils achieved well. Pupils with special needs achieve well in relation to their difficulties. They make good progress towards their individual targets.

2. The school's performance measured against similar schools was less successful, but nevertheless shows that most pupils achieved at least satisfactorily and in some cases well. The decline apparent over a three year period is partly explained by the school analysis on the basis of:

- Above average proportions of pupils who because they were born in summer months had spent less time in education than others of their age groups.
- Nearly a third of pupils in Year 6 having recognised special needs.
- Twenty nine per cent of eleven year old pupils being new to the school in Year 6.
- Targets set by the local education authority were unrealistic considering the above factors.

3. Inspectors find these were crucial factors and did have significant effects on results. However the school appreciates that gaps in what pupils had covered in using and applying maths and experimental and investigative science need to be overcome and that weaknesses in teaching in terms of marking failed to make it sufficiently clear to pupils how they might improve.

4. The school has interrogated pupils' answers to test questions and has collected a large amount of assessment data with a view to future improvements to standards. Staff can prove that individual pupils are making progress and that the school does add value (and in the case of many pupils with SEN substantial value) to pupils' education. Optional and statutory testing has been used to set targets for literacy and numeracy. Inspection findings are that these targets are effective but there is still more for subject co-ordinators to do to make use of data to modify planning and targets.

5. Strengths in other subjects are in:

- Improvements made to standards in ICT which are now satisfactory having been unsatisfactory in 1998.
- Art, where pupils' work (especially in two dimensions) continues to be above expectations.
- PSHE which has recently been acknowledged as a subject in its own right, with the school council, eco group, friendship monitors, and work towards the Healthy Schools award, making very good contributions to pupils' good standards.

6. Areas for further development include design and technology (DT) where even though planning identifies what should be taught in each year group the subject has too low a profile. Discussions with pupils show that their understanding of the design, make, evaluate and modify process is not good enough and that insufficient emphasis is put on the subject. Pupils are not clear of the difference between art and DT and this is a criticism similar to the last report. Limited evidence available shows although music is taught effectively by a part time specialist, teachers do not always follow up activities as planned, and opportunities are missed to extend pupils' achievement and appreciation.

7. An undoubted strength of the school is the very good provision for the Foundation Stage in the nursery. As a result children make rapid progress in all six areas of the recommended curriculum with particularly good achievement in their personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils display positive attitudes to school. Attendance is satisfactory and behaviour is good. Pupils' personal and social development is very good (exceptionally so in the Foundation Stage) and there is good provision for spiritual moral and cultural development.

Strengths and weaknesses.

- The personal, social and emotional development of children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Pupils' sense of social development and community responsibility is very good.
- Pupils have good, positive attitudes to school and are keen to take advantage of the opportunities it offers.
- Behaviour is good; pupils work in an inclusive atmosphere, free of oppression or harassment.
- The school offers good opportunities for spiritual, moral and cultural development.

Commentary

8. Pupils have good attitudes to school. In lessons, they are enthusiastic and participate well, as was seen, for example, in a Year 5 science lesson in which pupils were taking their pulses before and after exercise - they derived obvious enjoyment from the practical activity. The school offers a number of opportunities for extracurricular activities and for contributing to the life of the school. These are taken up by a considerable number of pupils - as many as half of the school's pupils may be engaged in after school activities on a particular evening.

9. The range of opportunities on offer, together with the school's promotion of personal responsibility from a very early age, contributes significantly to pupils' very good personal and social development. The school council is very proud of its contribution towards improving the premises (improvement to the girls' toilets is a particular source of pride). Pupils act as peer mediators, supporting younger children at break time and caring for pre-school children whose parents are attending Parent-Teacher Association events. They serve on 'eco committees', in which they consider the care, maintenance and use of the school's environmental area. Older pupils, quite spontaneously, go to the nursery at lunchtime to play with small children. Pupils from Year 6 ran a variety of fundraising exercises to fund the coach hire for their summer residential trip to an outdoor activities centre. In all of these areas, pupils demonstrate a high degree of responsibility and an awareness of community.

10. Behaviour throughout the school is good. Staff make clear their high expectations of behavioural standards to which children are introduced when they join the nursery. Basic routines, such as lining up go to the hall are well established. Lunch is well mannered and behaviour in assemblies is appropriately respectful. Good behaviour is achieved through high expectations and classroom management. There is little obvious use of a recognised hierarchy of sanctions and rewards that is common to all classes and occasionally this leads to inconsistencies. The school works hard at promoting inclusion and has created an environment free of sexism, racism or any other form of harassment. There has been one fixed period exclusion over the preceding year. Relationships between pupils and adults in school are good as are relationships between pupils themselves. Pupils work well in groups or pairs, support each other and share resources and equipment well.

11. Pupils with special needs respond well to adults and to their tasks. Just occasionally a very small minority of pupils with challenging behavioural difficulties find it hard to stay on task and their behaviour has a negative impact on the learning of other pupils in the class.

12. Spiritual development is good and well promoted through art and the environment as well as in religious education lessons and assemblies. The school's ethos of care and inclusiveness, together with the quality of relationships, promotes moral development well. Pupils discuss and agree their own class rules and clear moral messages are sent by the school's emphasis on the natural environment, healthy living and care of the less fortunate, including pupils' work in assembling Christmas shoeboxes for the children of eastern Europe. Moral issues are addressed in religious education (RE) lessons, as was seen for example, in a Year 4 RE lesson which considered the themes of repentance and forgiveness.

13. Cultural development is good. Pupils are made aware of their own town's seafaring traditions by visits to the museum and the Lifeboat station; they take part in the town's annual Arts Festival. Artists and writers come into school to work with pupils and travelling theatre companies visit the school. Pupils have the opportunity to attend a French club after school and the Year 1 class has hosted a Japanese visitor. Other faiths and traditions are addressed in assemblies and elsewhere in the curriculum - the nursery, for example, has a fine display about Diwali.

14. Attendance is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.0
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
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
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian

No of pupils on roll
207
1
1
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1	0
0	0
0	0
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 school provides a sound standard of education that enables all pupils to achieve well.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good and this includes teachers, support staff and temporary teachers covering for those on sick leave. Good teaching has positive effects on the quality of learning which in all lessons was at least satisfactory and in over two thirds of lessons good or better. Pupils achieve well as a direct result of being well taught.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy, numeracy and ICT are well taught.
- Teachers use questioning effectively.
- Relationships between teachers and support staff, and pupils are good.
- Good planning identifies learning objectives that staff make clear to pupils.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good with very good teaching and support in the nursery.
- The pace of a minority of lessons is too slow.
- There are weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work, notably for older pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6 (13%)	27(57%)	14(30%)	0	0	0

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

15. Teaching, against more rigorous criteria, has been improved since the last inspection where a high 11% of lessons were seen as unsatisfactory. This is the result of much improved planning and good consideration of the needs of pupils of different abilities. Good use is made of learning objectives to ensure pupils know what they are trying to achieve and that staff can, in referring back

to objectives, gauge pupils' progress. Teaching and support are good for those pupils with special educational needs and are satisfactory and improving for those the school sees as gifted and talented.

16. All teachers were seen teaching on several occasions, all unannounced, and featuring a variety of subjects. All staff had at least one good lesson and three had very good sessions. An undoubted strength is the quality of teaching in the nursery where the school's commitment to learning through first hand experience is very clear and underpins very good progress and achievement. Here relationships are very good and expectations are very high. Teaching for those children who have just started in nursery plus is satisfactory and is fast being improved as the school's policy of full inclusion takes effect. There are notable strengths in teaching in Years 2 and 5, and during the inspection, in Year 4.

17. Relationships in classes across the school are judged as good and this has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Occasionally there is inconsistency in the way pupils are managed, principally but not exclusively, in classes with temporary and less experienced teachers.

18. Literacy and numeracy are well taught because staff are well trained and confident in their own knowledge and understanding of what they are to teach. Good planning ensures that pupils are encouraged to express themselves and are given the opportunity to explain their strategies.

19. Staff are usually well prepared and make good use of support assistants and resources. For example in ICT lessons very good attention to what the pupils were to do and learn was well orchestrated by the class teacher and the technician. ICT teaching is judged as good and much improved. Teaching in extracurricular activities is good.

20. In the least successful lessons there was a tendency for teachers to spend too long on explanations before pupils became active and some pupils lost interest and drifted off task.

21. Areas for development in teaching include: raising the profile of DT and music; making even more use of assessment data to raise standards; making sure that all work is marked and indicates how pupils can make improvements; and providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply maths skills and be more involved in experimental and investigative science. Although there is a clear policy built on very good risk analysis, teachers still allow pupils to join in PE lessons in inappropriate clothing and do not require pupils to remove jewellery. Trailing wires and the precarious siting of the data projector in the ICT suite are causes for concern.

22. Each of these areas for improvement would be less obvious if subject co-ordinators' monitoring was more rigorous. However, the overall quality of teaching has been improved partly as a consequence of the success of performance management of staff by head and governors. The commitment of staff to raising and maintaining standards is good. This coupled with the good quality of relationships leads to the school's positive ethos.

The curriculum

The provision for the curriculum is satisfactory as it was at the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for the school library and its use to support the curriculum is very good.
- Religious education, art, and ICT are all good; the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good.
- The provision for extracurricular activities is good.
- Homework is satisfactory.
- The area of using and applying in mathematics requires improvement.

- Opportunities for investigational work in science are underdeveloped.
- The monitoring of the curriculum is not fully effective.
- The monitoring of planning and the scrutiny of pupils' work are areas for development.
- The effective use of assessment data to improve pupil performance is not fully utilised.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not follow the school's marking policy.

Commentary

23. The key issue of compiling and implementing a scheme of work in ICT has been addressed and the school has made good progress with respect to this. There is a whole school emphasis on personal, social and health education across the curriculum and this focus was recognised many times during the inspection. As a result pupils are sensitive, confident and genuinely feel well cared for and secure. The school has plans to further develop an integrated curriculum, focusing on pupils' personal, social and health education.

24. The overall provision for the curriculum is judged to be satisfactory, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. The school has effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and this is illustrated by the fact that it has received the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The curriculum is well planned and as a consequence lessons are focused and teachers' subject knowledge is good. However the monitoring of the curriculum needs further development as work scrutiny in maths and science in particular identified inconsistencies in the areas of: using and applying; investigational work; and marking. Whilst the planning identified areas for study the evidence gained during the inspection showed that some of the areas, identified in the planning, were not being covered. Similarly in some classes the marking of pupils' work was inconsistent or absent. Some teachers are not consistently following the school's marking policy. Music and design and technology are both areas that require further development. The school has a sex education policy in place, together with a programme for delivery.

25. The provision for SEN pupils in the school is good. Teachers have a well developed understanding of pupils' needs and the effective use of learning support assistants has an important impact on pupils' learning. SEN pupils make good progress as a result of a consistent approach by the teaching staff, appropriate support and a clear understanding of individual pupils' needs. Provision for pupils who are talented or high attainers in a specific curriculum area is satisfactory. Additional tasks are often given to these pupils and some effective academic council initiatives ensure that they achieve their potential.

26. The curriculum has good opportunities for enhancement with a range of events that provide support, including an arts week, a book week and key trips. Each class undertakes a trip every term to enhance different areas of study in different subjects.

27. Evidence from the inspection illustrates that the provision for homework is satisfactory. Pupils receive homework in literacy and numeracy each week, which is marked by the teacher and kept in a homework book. Pupils feel that the amount and type of homework given is fair and they recognise the contribution it makes to their learning.

28. The provision of extracurricular activities is good. There was some evidence to support parental concerns about the range and quality of the provision. However, it should be understood that the school site has been under considerable pressure due to the drainage of the school field. The school makes good use of its resources; good use of ICT facilities; and a very good library provision; together with a well developed nature area. This illustrates the integrated curriculum the school wishes to work towards, with innovation in curriculum planning.

29. The school presents a good learning environment, notwithstanding the convoluted nature of accommodation built on a hill! The lack of a dedicated staff room is a disadvantage which governors are now keen to address. Although Foundation Stage teachers do very well to overcome difficult access and limited outdoor space, these aspects are still priorities for improvement for provision for younger children.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides very high standards of physical and emotional care for all its pupils.

Support and guidance, based on knowledge of, and concern for, the individual's needs, are very good and pupils have a variety of opportunities for involvement in the life of the school.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Arrangements for the induction of children into the nursery are excellent.
- Standards of care, welfare, health and safety are very high.
- The school takes notice of pupils' views, expressed through a variety of forums, to a very good extent.

Commentary

30. The school's concern for pupils' welfare is very highly developed. The school has received the Healthy Schools award for healthy eating, emotional health, physical activity and safety. It accepts pupils who have been excluded from other schools and integrates them successfully. The nursery has been selected as one of the first in the local education authority area to host a nursery plus centre for children under five who need additional support. Standards of care for all children in the nursery are extremely high - the atmosphere is both stimulating and caring and the provision is highly valued by parents. Arrangements for the induction of children into the nursery are excellent. Every parent is seen every three weeks by the nursery teacher for updates on how well children are settling in.

31. The ethos of care extends throughout the whole school. All the necessary health and safety procedures are in place and overseen by a committee of the governing body. The headteacher is the person responsible for child protection and all staff are aware of the action to be taken in cases of concern. Pupils are made aware of personal safety through visits from local police and fire officers, and from the local education authority's Life Education Centre, which advises on matters relating to sex, drugs and personal safety. Personal development is well supported through a caring atmosphere and high quality relationships. All children are well known to more than one adult - the high take-up of extracurricular activities assists this process as pupils get to know adults other than their own teachers in settings other than the classroom.

32. Opportunities for pupils to express views and contribute to the life of the school are very good. Pupils know that through taking part in the school council, being a member of an 'eco committee' or becoming a peer mediator, their voices will be heard and account taken of their views. These opportunities are not confined to a narrow band of pupils but involve thirty or forty children. Pupils are confident that they are listened to and that their views can influence school decisions.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

This is a school that seeks to involve parents and the community. It provides good quality information about school activities and pupil progress. Parents are especially happy with the quality of the nursery provision.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The quality, range, depth and availability of information for parents are good.
- Parental views of the standards of care provided in the nursery are particularly positive.
- Good community links enrich pupils' experiences and contribute to their personal development.
- A minority of parents are unhappy about the information provided regarding children's progress.

Commentary

33. The school works hard at developing good, positive relationships with parents. The atmosphere in the nursery is particularly warm and welcoming and the quality of information provided for parents there is especially good. Every parent is seen by the nursery teacher every three weeks for an update on their child's progress. There is a happy relaxed family atmosphere each morning as parents stay for a while, reading to their children, playing with them and helping to settle them.

34. In the pre-inspection Ofsted questionnaire, 27% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the information provided about children's progress. Inspection evidence does not support these concerns. As noted above, the information provided for parents of children in the nursery is exemplary. Elsewhere in the school, information on children's progress is good. Parents have three consultation opportunities a year, during which parents are taken through their children's progress records, and targets for the future are discussed. Children's annual reports are detailed and comprehensive, covering the child's personal development and special interests as well as attainment and progress in each subject of the National Curriculum. Staff recognise that many parents are not comfortable with formality and try to make informal access as easy as possible. Each morning the school foyer is busy with parents asking questions and resolving minor issues; the headteacher is normally available to parents at that time. For parents who want to know more about the learning process, the school hosts training courses during which parents and children work together. For those experiencing difficulties with their children, the school puts on parenting classes. Parents' views on a number of issues are sought and discussed in an open invitation parents' forum. The school listens to parents' views and acts upon them: for example the programme for personal, social and health education was modified following parental comments.

35. Links with parents of pupils with special needs are good. Parents are fully involved in the individual targets set for their child. Links with the local education authority support services are good.

36. The school has good links with its community that enrich pupils' experiences. There are strong links with the local Methodist church; the minister visits the school regularly and pupils sing at a candle-lit carol service in the church at Christmas. A number of community figures visit the school to work with pupils in support of curriculum objectives in art, literacy and history - local artists for example, or to further their appreciation of citizenship - police and fire officers. Visits to the local maritime museum and the lifeboat station support pupils' knowledge of their own community's history. The school is seen as a centre for the community: for example the nursery plus provision is not restricted to children from the school's own area, and much work is presently being done on the school sports field to facilitate its use by the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management of the headteacher is good, as is the governance of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The headteacher and her staff are committed to creating an inclusive school.
- The continuing professional development of staff and the school's contribution to the training of teachers are both very good.
- The leadership of the Foundation Stage is particularly strong.
- Whilst the school gathers a great deal of information about itself, it is not always used effectively to bring about improvement.
- The co-ordination of design and technology and music are not yet good enough.

Commentary

37. The governance of the school is good and governors are very committed. They take advantage of training opportunities and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They gather their information by coming into school and monitoring what goes on. They work closely with the headteacher, especially in formulating budget plans and the development of the school's long term aims.

38. The headteacher's leadership is good. She has a clear vision of the school's future development and is working hard to overcome recent staffing issues. As a result, pupils achieve well by the time they leave, with some pupils achieving very well. The headteacher is a model of good teaching and is prepared to support in classes when needed. Over 80% of parents, who responded to the questionnaire, considered the leadership of the school to be good. The head leads the overall curriculum well and is ably supported by her deputy, the nursery teacher and the teacher who supports the teacher training work in the school. The leadership and management of the nursery provision in the school are particularly strong, and as a result children have a very good start to their time at the school. There are some weaknesses in the leadership of some areas of the curriculum such as design and technology, music, and the investigative aspects of science and mathematics, which should be noted.

39. Leadership of special needs is good. Procedures and policies are very clear and are in line with the Code of Practice.

40. The school is very committed to the training of teachers and it does this very effectively. At the same time, the school provides its staff with very good training opportunities. The school is in the process of sharpening its focus on performance management and is starting to involve members of the support staff in the procedures.

41. The management of the school is good. The school improvement plan is not only a useful tool for future development but is checked at intervals to ensure progress is being made towards the targets set. Self-evaluation is part of the life of the school and a great deal of documentary evidence is collected. However, the school has not yet found the balance between the information it collects and the use it makes of it to improve teaching and learning. At the same time, whilst some co-ordinators are effective in elements of their management tasks, the direct monitoring of teaching and learning has not yet been wholly effective. The use made of assessment information could be more sharply focused on making improvements to learning, and observations of teaching and checking work in books should have highlighted problems in marking.

42. Initiatives in the training of new teachers are managed and monitored well and as a result the school makes a good contribution. The newly established nursery plus feature is being effectively managed. Initial differences over philosophy have been ironed out with the effect that children benefit from being fully included in all activities.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	576223	Balance from previous year	21849
Total expenditure	527416	Balance carried forward to the next	41807
Expenditure per pupil	2511		

43. The financial management of the school is secure and helps the school attain its educational priorities. Recent underspends and grants have been used well to brighten the environment of the school and are earmarked to improve facilities further: for example providing a dedicated staff room.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good overall**, with excellent features in the nursery. Consistently good planning means that intentions follow the guidance of the recommended curriculum and give high priority to learning through structured play and first hand experience. The quality of teaching (which includes the very good work of support staff) is usually good in reception and consistently very good in the nursery. Planning takes very good note of children's needs and is considered in the light of very good assessment. The very recently established nursery plus provision for children with communication and interaction needs is satisfactory, with good features in the full inclusion of such children with others in the regular nursery. Throughout the Foundation Stage expectations are very high and children respond very well. Most children will reach the expected goals set for six year olds, many well in advance of Year 1.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good opportunities are created to encourage children to share and take turns, interact with others, and show independence in choosing activities.
- Children are very successfully introduced to the routines of school.
- They are encouraged to appreciate and express their feelings.
- Behaviour and children's response to nursery and reception is very good, notwithstanding those with behavioural targets who could, and sometimes do, present problems.

Commentary

44. In a short space of time nursery children have become confident with the daily routines of the school. They respond very well to high expectations and opportunities to show maturity. For example they help put away apparatus in the hall and choose and 'plan' their start of the day activities, appreciating that they need to be involved in a range of things and that sometimes there are constraints on the numbers of children who can be in each group.

45. Children, some of whom have little experience of playing with others, soon learn to work and play together. Relationships with staff are very good and are developing well with other children.

46. Staff communicate well and as a result know children well. Very good care and consideration provides a safe, secure environment where children readily put their trust in staff. This has very good effects on personal development and makes a significant contribution to the school's good ethos. Children soon learn that their opinions are valued and that staff are prepared to listen to them.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given many opportunities to respond orally and in efforts on paper.
- Early literacy skills are successfully taught which will enable children to emerge as readers and writers.
- All activities are used very effectively to develop communication skills.

Commentary

47. In all activities a high priority is put on encouraging children to describe and discuss. Staff create opportunities for children to talk and listen to each other: for example in daily news time and role play where children experiment with different types of clothes for different weather conditions. Staff are prepared to listen to children and children respond well. From a generally below average start children make rapid progress and gain in confidence.

48. Children are emerging as readers and writers because teaching is good. Phonic skills¹ are introduced at an early stage and all efforts to record thoughts and ideas on paper are very strongly encouraged. Before they leave reception all children are building on the very positive start made in nursery and many can write simple sentences. More able children are reading familiar stories fluently and developing strategies to make sense of new words.

49. Skilled questioning prompts children to explain what they see and feel, and seeks to involve all children regardless of ability. Consideration of what others have to say plays a significant part in children's personal development.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Numeracy is skilfully encouraged in counting games, through singing rhymes, and matching and sorting.

Commentary

50. Good opportunities are created for children to appreciate numbers, especially up to 10, and come to an understanding of what is bigger and smaller; greater and less than. Varied play activities reinforce children's concepts of heavier and lighter, and the beginnings of work on simple measuring.

51. Staff are careful to use correct vocabulary: for example in terms of naming shapes, and encourage children to make observations which will lead to addition and subtraction: for example in matching games and appreciating what is missing.

52. In common with other areas of learning, staff are well aware of the stepping stones of the mathematics Foundation Stage curriculum and plan activities which are carefully managed to ensure that all children gain essential experience in ways which build on what they already know and can do. As a result children make good progress in learning and achieve well.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning to encourage children to find out about and reflect upon the world around them is good.
- Opportunities to use computers are good and children's achievement is very good.

Commentary

¹ 'Phonic skills' refer to what the school describes as 'segmentation, blending and a knowledge of the alphabetic code', commonly known as sounding out.

53. Staff seek to make children appreciate and learn from as much first hand experience as possible. There are good opportunities for children to explore using their senses and develop the use of communication skills.

54. Children are developing a good awareness of themselves and how they have changed in their short lives. They are developing good observation skills and learning is secure as a result. Good use is made of the outdoors and the environmental area to begin to widen children's horizons.

55. Very good use is made of computers and listening stations to promote literacy and numeracy. Children are already able to control programs such as a commercial paint program and can manipulate mouse and keyboard to dress teddy on screen. Very good use is made of the very good ICT suite to introduce children to the potential of technology. In a very effective lesson children were observed manipulating a paint program to create their own pictures and varying colour, shape and size. Their achievement and response were very good. There is very natural use of computers in the classroom and children are expected to be able to start up and begin to control programs using simple menus by the time they leave reception.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to learn to be aware of what their bodies can do and develop control skills.
- Access to outdoor space is difficult, but staff make good use of the playground, veranda and hall as well as excellent use of the 'jungle' environmental area to promote physical activities.

Commentary

56. Staff make good use of what the school has to offer in space and resources to promote physical development. Teaching is good with support staff making a significant contribution. Very good care of children is a feature of all physical activities with children responding enthusiastically and growing in confidence. There is a good balance of activities which encourage climbing, balancing and using apparatus with developing fine co-ordination skills: for example completing jigsaws and using small and large construction sets.

57. Expectations are high and children are given opportunities to cut, stick and make, handling tools such as scissors, brushes and glue sticks, and to work with hammers and saws. They respond very well and demonstrate considerable maturity in the care for equipment, themselves and others.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children express themselves well in art and join in singing with enthusiasm.
- Role play is well used to encourage social and creative skills, and to develop communication.

Commentary

58. In a mixture of activities, some teacher directed and others child led, children have the chance to draw, paint, make and respond to different stimuli. For example using colours very effectively in illustrations of Diwali and creating collages of bears. There are some very good examples of children's splash paintings and firework montages, and three dimensional work in teddy mobiles.

59. Children learn and sing nursery rhymes and reception children join in with considerable gusto in more formal music lessons. They treat instruments with care and are beginning to experiment with simple compositions.

60. Dressing up clothes and themed areas are used well in role play and children and staff were observed exploring language which suited the situation when getting ready for journeys in different weather conditions.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning in English is almost always good.
- Boys and girls of all attainment achieve well, and standards are broadly in line with those achieved nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Literacy skills are developed well throughout the curriculum.
- Leadership is good.
- The quality of marking of pupils' work is inconsistent.
- The new library is very good and a strength of the provision.

Commentary

61. The literacy strategy has been effectively implemented across the school. Pupils are encouraged to use their reading and writing skills in many subjects. This leads to good achievement for almost all year groups. The standards that pupils attain at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average, although there was a dip in standards in the 2003 national tests. This dip remains, and the current Year 3 pupils attain standards below those expected in reading and writing. This is due to past difficulties in staffing and to the high level of pupils with special needs in that class. Overall, standards have improved since the last inspection, and all pupils of all abilities, including those with special needs, achieve well.

62. The quality of teaching and learning in English is almost always good, despite the high proportion of teachers who are relatively new to the school. Lessons are well planned and resources are used effectively to promote interest and enjoyment in reading and writing. For example, in Year 4, pupils achieved very good understanding of alliteration because of the high quality presentation by the teacher using the overhead projector. Pupils' achievements in reading are promoted through good systematic teaching and access to many new, exciting reading books. Teachers create many opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. They enter into discussions and share their ideas with enthusiasm. This helps pupils to write in a grammatically correct way. Some effective spelling strategies are used by teachers to help pupils remember more challenging spellings. In Year 6, pupils were observed learning to spell words with unstressed vowels by saying 'rap rhymes'. They showed great enjoyment as they chanted the rhymes and a small test at the end of the session showed how well they had learnt them.

63. The quality of marking of pupils' work by some teachers is weak. In some classes, particularly for older pupils, there is too little evidence of work being adequately marked. This leads to repetitive errors and pupils being unaware of how to improve their work.

64. Leadership of English is good. The co-ordinator has good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Effective analysis of standards has identified areas for development. For example, improvements in provision for reading have been initiated because of weaknesses identified in the 2003 tests. Because of this, pupils are benefiting from some good new reading materials that are grouped according to difficulty. The very good library facility promotes enjoyment and a willingness to borrow books. This has led to a good reading partnership between school and home.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. English skills are used well to support other subjects. Whether in writing about life in Victorian times in history or explaining about feelings in circle time as part of PSHE, pupils are learning to express themselves effectively. For many this represents good achievement and gives good relevance to what they are learning in literacy lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory** as it was at the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are satisfactory and in line with national expectations.
- Achievement is satisfactory and good for SEN children.
- The provision and planning of numeracy within the mathematics curriculum is good.
- Opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematics are underdeveloped.
- Opportunities for pupils to use data handling in Years 3 to 6 need further development.
- The monitoring of the subject needs further development to ensure that analysis is used more effectively to raise standards.
- There is insufficient use of scrutiny of pupils' work to bring about improvements, with weaknesses in marking.

Commentary

66. The provision in mathematics has been maintained since the last inspection and continues to be satisfactory. The standards achieved by pupils were in line with the national average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 in 2003.

67. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop a good understanding of the number system as a result of focused numeracy teaching. This enables pupils to have a good mental recall of multiplication facts and number bonds with an emphasis on doubling and halving. In one observed lesson some pupils were engaged in their consolidation of quarters, whilst others were finding a quarter of odd numbers, using trial and error methods. Pupils are able to use both digital and analogue representation of time and solve simple problems.

68. By the end of Year 6 there is an inconsistent approach to mathematics. Whilst the emphasis on numeracy continues to be good, there was too little evidence of pupils using and applying their mathematics or the use of data handling in some year groups. For example in one observed lesson pupils were investigating the numbers of triangles that can be made by joining the vertices of a regular pentagon. The pupils were using an array of skills and their achievement during the lesson was good. By way of contrast, work scrutiny revealed that some year groups had done very little in the way of problem solving. As a result the full range of the mathematics curriculum is unbalanced with only some year groups experiencing all the necessary elements of the curriculum in sufficient depth. Special educational needs pupils receive good support and their achievement is good in comparison to prior attainment. Lessons are inclusive, support staff are used effectively and they have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

69. The quality of teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall. Lessons are well planned with good planning for different abilities. However there is evidence that not all teachers are following the planning and as a result although opportunities for problem solving and data handling appear on the planning, they are not undertaken. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources effectively. Relationships are good and the regular use of homework to support learning is satisfactory, as are pupils' attitudes to the subject. Pupils' books in some year groups have not been marked consistently and this does not follow the school's marking policy.

70. There are good procedures for assessment but there is insufficient use of the data produced. As a result there is not a consistent approach from all members of staff and targets are not monitored so as to have the required impact.

71. The co-ordinator is confident and understands the importance of the full range of the mathematics curriculum. She monitors teaching and planning and is well supported by the headteacher. The future improvement of monitoring as a vehicle for further development to include work scrutiny and the precise auditing of planning are foci which the co-ordinator should be aware of.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Mathematics is used appropriately to support other curriculum areas. Pupils are encouraged to use their numeracy skills in a variety of situations. This was well illustrated by pupils using simple calculations on a spreadsheet to support their topic work, the use of charts in science, and younger children using positional language to describe movements in physical education lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school secured good results in the last national tests in both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well, with a significant minority of pupils achieving very well.
- Significant good work is carried out in 'Physical processes' and in 'Life processes and living things'.
- There is too little evidence of work carried out in 'Materials' and in 'Investigational science'.
- Marking in Year 6 is weak and does not help pupils to see how they might make progress.

Commentary

73. Results obtained in the last National Curriculum tests, showed that all but two pupils reached the expected national level in Year 6, whilst almost half of the pupils reached a level higher than this. Considering the below average start that these pupils have when they enter the school and the large percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the class, this shows good achievement. For a significant minority, it shows very good achievement. In Year 2, although there are no tests for this age group in science, class teachers considered that similar percentages of pupils reached the nationally expected level for pupils aged seven, with over a third reaching the higher level. Again this shows good achievement for the vast majority of pupils.

74. The scrutiny of previously completed work shows that two areas of the scheme of work were covered in good detail. Those of 'Physical processes' which includes work on light, sound, electricity and forces, together with 'Life processes' which includes work on animals, plants and human life, were well covered through good teaching. However, work on materials and evidence of work in scientific investigations were not seen. As a result, pupils appeared to have little access to carrying out experiments or investigations and putting their skills, knowledge and understanding to best use. At the same time, pupils' literacy skills could not be best used in writing about their experiments as

there was no evidence of pupils being given writing frames within which to use their growing writing skills.

75. Although results of the tests, together with other assessment information have been analysed, the absence of a co-ordinator for science does show that the information collected from data, together with monitoring of work in classes, have not been used effectively to point to strengths and weaknesses in the subject.

76. A weakness noted in work from the Year 6 class, was that very little appears to have been marked. Even though work may have been discussed with pupils, notes in books, which could be referred to by both teacher and pupils, had not been made for future reference. This had not been noticed through monitoring.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT have been improved to satisfactory, being consistent with what is expected nationally.
- The school is well resourced with good quality equipment in an ICT suite, the library and each classroom, networked throughout.
- The full time ICT technician gives invaluable support both in terms of maintaining equipment and as a teaching assistant.

Commentary

77. Standards which were unsatisfactory in 1998 have been raised to the satisfactory level and when the much more rigorous requirements which now apply are considered, this represents a substantial achievement. It has been brought about by very good subject leadership and the school's commitment to providing high quality resources and a dedicated ICT suite.

78. Planning is good and ensures that all aspects will be covered in sufficient depth. As a result Years 2 and 6 have had good opportunities to work on all National Curriculum requirements and are making good progress. There is evidence of good achievement in lessons where pupils learn and apply new skills, and over time where pupils with little previous experience do well in response to good provision. Non computer elements such as the use of digital cameras and listening stations are used effectively to support other subjects.

79. There is evidence that teaching is at least satisfactory and in some cases (notably for Year 6) good. Teachers make objectives clear, give plenty of meaningful advice and encourage all pupils to have a go. Pupils respond very well, growing in expertise and confidence and by Year 6 readily evaluating their own success: for example in work to create book jackets on screen. ICT makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development in terms of working together, sharing opportunities, and appreciating the part ICT has to play in modern culture.

80. The subject is very well managed, by a co-ordinator who, despite not having monitored the quality of colleagues' teaching, has a very good understanding of strengths and relative weaknesses. She has a clear idea of how ICT is to be developed in the school and has created a good action plan to achieve this. Governors and senior managers are committed to the continued improvement of ICT provision and make good links between intentions and funding. Some very recent initiatives, for instance in developments to assessment and record keeping, are too new to be fully evaluated, but it is clear that the co-ordinator sets a good example and supports staff effectively.

81. Staff use the data projector effectively in the ICT suite. However, it raises cause for concern in terms of health and safety, being balanced precariously on a box and presenting trailing wires.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

82. Appropriate, and increasing, use is made of ICT to support other subjects: such as in writing directly onto the screen in literacy, providing interesting exercises in numeracy work for those with SEN, and using the Internet and CD ROMs for research in geography and history. Good use is made of listening stations in reading and musical activities, and there is satisfactory, and improving, use of digital and video cameras: for example to document PE and allow pupils to analyse their own performances.

83. An area for further development is how ICT is utilised to present data: for instance in maths and science, and how planning for each subject will identify opportunities both to use and to promote ICT skills.

HUMANITIES

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Provision in geography and history are both **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in both subjects.
- The use of visits and visitors supports history well.
- Work produced in some history topics is of a good standard.

Commentary

84. It was not possible to observe any history being taught and only one lesson of geography was observed and that was in Year 2. However, the very good collection of previously completed work in history allows the judgement to be made that by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with those expected of pupils in these age groups. Pupils achieve well in history, with a significant minority of pupils achieving very well. Work retained in geography was not as carefully collected or presented and shows that standards are adequate in Year 6 and clearly satisfactory in the lesson seen in Year 2. Here, pupils achieved well, as a result of good teaching and the high interest level of the topic, which was linked to work in literacy.

85. A wide range of very successful visits helped pupils across the school to have good first hand experiences in a number of their history topics, helping them to understand the chronology of the period and empathise with some of the important issues. Pupils visited Coldharbour Mill, and the resulting work about life in Victorian times was linked well to the use of literacy skills. Pupils wrote a letter applying for a job at the mill. They looked at the life of Lord Shaftesbury and studied the work of William Morris. The breadth of this topic illustrates well the school's interest in making topics cover a wide range of curriculum areas.

86. Work of similar good quality completed by Year 5 in their Tudor topic, following a visit to Montacute House, shows a wide range of topics and subjects being brought together to make an interesting package of work for pupils. Pupils looked at portraits of Henry VIII, trying to find pointers to his character. They looked at rooms in the Tudor mansion imagining life in the kitchens. They wrote instructional texts, trying to explain how Tudor houses were built. Again this was a very well constructed topic which covered several curriculum areas and fired pupils' imaginations.

87. In discussion with Year 6, pupils showed sound recall of geographical facts about St Lucia, which they had studied and compared with their own area. They remembered physical features of the island and knew why it was so attractive to tourists. For homework they had been asked to listen or watch news broadcasts and try to locate parts of the world which were in the news. Whilst this

interested the pupils, they all agreed that history was made much more interesting for them through visits and as a result they tried harder, produced better quality work and enjoyed the topics. The use of videos and of a range of websites gave pupils opportunities to use their ICT skills.

88. The co-ordinator for history was not in school, although the standard of work suggests that the co-ordination of the subject is at least satisfactory. The co-ordinator for geography has recently revised the scheme of work and is actively trying to ensure that the subject encompasses other curriculum areas.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' subject knowledge is good.
- Links with the local churches are strong.
- Literacy skills are used effectively in religious education.
- The subject contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There is a lack of independent learning in some lessons.

Commentary

89. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, because of this, pupils achieve well in the subject. By the end of Year 6, they show clear understanding of the key beliefs and teachings of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. They know some of the similarities between religions and are aware of some of the ways in which religion influences people's lives. In a lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils prepared questions for a local visiting church minister. They asked about the value of the Bible in the world today, showing awareness of moral and religious issues. Pupils in Year 2 achieve well. They show good understanding of the different religious symbols of Judaism. They can name several religious festivals, making links between the celebration of Diwali, Hannukah and Advent, all of which focus on light.

90. Good links with local churches ensure that pupils' knowledge is extended through visits, and through church services. Many pupils take part in the annual carol service and improve their skills through visits from local clergy.

91. Literacy skills are well used in religious education. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 retell religious stories in words and in writing. They ask and answer questions about different faiths and customs. Older pupils discuss and compare aspects of their own experiences. They write extended accounts of religious symbols and stories that they know, showing good awareness of differences between faiths and customs. Religious education contributes very well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Pupils benefit from many varied opportunities to reflect on their own experiences and behaviour, considering the values of living as part of a community, and the matters of right and wrong. Just occasionally lessons do not allow pupils to develop independence in learning. At these times pupils are all required to complete the same tasks or answer the same questions. This limits the sharing of the various experiences pupils have and, consequently, learning dips.

92. Leadership of the subject is new and has not yet had time to have an impact on provision. The good local syllabus makes a major contribution to the planning, teaching and good quality learning that takes place.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

93. This curriculum area was not a major focus during the inspection. Few lessons could be observed and judgements depend heavily on examples of pupils' past work and teachers' plans and records.

94. Only two **art and design** lessons were observed, but there are lots of examples of work in two and three dimensions around the school in displays and in pupils' work books. From these and teachers' records it is possible to judge that there are strengths in observational drawing, painting and using art to support other subjects, and to conclude that standards are still above national expectations. The school promotes art effectively and discussions with pupils confirm that they enjoy the subject: for example it is clear that the annual art week is popular with pupils, staff and parents, and makes a good contribution not only to art but to pupils' personal development. Little work in the style of famous artists was evident but planning shows that this aspect, and developing pupils' ability to appreciate and appraise works of art, are covered. Resources for art are sufficient to teach the subject and the quality of display around the school is a credit to pupils and staff alike.

95. No lessons were seen in **design and technology (DT)**. Cooking offers good opportunities for children from the Foundation Stage to Year 6 to follow recipes and try out their own ideas: for example in cake making and decorating in an after school club. There were some sound examples of links with art and history: for example in producing picture frames for Year 3 work on repeated patterns in the style of William Morris. However, from discussions with pupils it is evident that few understand the difference between DT and art, and that the design, make, evaluate and modify process has been underemphasised. From limited evidence (there are almost no examples of pupils' work around the school past or present) it appears that DT has too low a profile and currently suffers from the long term absence of the co-ordinator. It would appear that not enough progress has been made in this area since the last inspection.

Music

Provision in music continues to be **adequate** as it was at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has developed the music curriculum by employing a music specialist to teach the subject.
- The specialist music teacher provides a good model for teaching.
- The music curriculum is underdeveloped in the school.
- Some year groups do not receive the expected amount of music from the class teachers.

Commentary

96. Provision in music is adequate but it does need further development. Pupils' standards are just in line with national expectations and pupils achieve similarly. During the inspection three lessons of music were observed in Year R, Year 1 and Year 4. The music curriculum is planned by the school's music specialist, using a published music scheme. She spends the equivalent of a full day each term with each class covering part of the music curriculum, which is then to be supplemented by class teachers. Evidence gathered during the course of the inspection identified that this was not always the case especially in Years 3 to 6.

97. Pupils' progress is satisfactory by the end of Year 2. Pupils undertake musical activities on a regular basis and take part in the performance of class songs. There needs to be more emphasis on the music curriculum to allow children the opportunity to experiment, compose, refine and perform pieces of work on a regular basis. In one lesson pupils knew the names of instruments but could not correctly make their sounds. Similarly older pupils were unable to name any simple percussion instruments with the exception of drums.

98. The standard of teaching was overall satisfactory, with notable good features from the visiting specialist. In an early years lesson children were using musical instruments to try and represent the rain. Children under the instruction of the teaching assistant could interpret their instrument and use it to represent different types of rain.

99. There were many occasions when music in the school could have been emphasised. For example music is used in assemblies but hardly referred to: teachers do not give either the name of the piece, the composer, or why that particular type of music was chosen. There was no formal singing in assembly during the inspection as this is confined to praise assemblies usually held on Thursdays. There is no action plan for music at present, but there is to be a new co-ordinator, and the school is aware that this is an area for development. The school has a number of appropriate resources that are kept centrally. The music curriculum is enhanced by visiting workshops, including a drum workshop, annual concerts and a carol service. Teachers have received in-service training on percussion instruments, and a drum group was formed.

100. Peripatetic music teachers support the overall music curriculum including a small number of children taking violin and flute. The school has a recorder club and most pupils take part in a termly musical assembly.

Physical Education (PE)

Provision in physical education continues to be **satisfactory** as it was at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning for PE is improving.
- The co-ordinator provides a good role model for staff.
- The teaching of gymnastics has improved as a result of targeted in-service training and is now a strength.
- The building work has negatively affected the quality of the PE curriculum with regard to games.
- Health and safety guidelines established through risk assessment are not always followed by teaching staff.
- Monitoring by the co-ordinator needs further development

Commentary

101. Pupils' standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are average and in line with national expectations as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are positive. Pupils respond well to teachers and behave well during lessons.

102. The planning of the PE curriculum is developing with an emphasis on activity. Pupils are expected to be very active during lessons and in one Year 4 dance lesson, pupils were out of breath for the majority of the active part of the session. Relationships are good and teachers provide good role models. Staff understanding is good as is their subject knowledge. As a result pupils make the required progress in the lessons by practising their skills in a structured environment.

103. Overall the standard of teaching is judged to be satisfactory. Some parents questioned the amount of PE that pupils were having. The evidence gathered during the inspection shows that the amount of PE provided during this academic year has been satisfactory. However it is acknowledged that the provision of team games has been affected because of the drainage of the school field. Teachers are looking forward to using this facility during the spring term and have rearranged the curriculum to minimise the impact. The teaching of gymnastics is good. Teachers are confident and pupils respond well to this. During one observed lesson younger pupils were able to put together a sequence of movements using the forces of pushing and pulling and were able to describe these in detail.

104. There were several health and safety issues that came to light during the inspection. Mainly that: some pupils were not wearing the correct footwear for an activity; some pupils were not wearing appropriate clothes; and some pupils were wearing jewellery. It is essential the school follows its own published procedures to minimise the risk of pupil injury.

105. There are appropriate assessments made during lessons focusing on both group and individual performance. Teachers use these as opportunities to help pupils improve, and in the better lessons this was a feature. The co-ordinator keeps an assessment record of achievements, school teams and the skills level of the most able pupils. The school has a successful gymnastics club that runs in the spring term, a football club and a netball club.

106. The co-ordinator provides appropriate leadership and direction for the subject. She has good subject knowledge and has a good understanding of how to develop the subject further. The monitoring of the PE curriculum is an area that has already been identified for development. The subject is well resourced and teachers make good use of equipment.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of activities ensures high standards.
- The high number of national initiatives that the school is involved in is a major strength.

Commentary

107. Personal, social and health education was not a major focus during the inspection. However, evidence suggests that pupils across the school achieve very well in this area of learning. They benefit from the very good provision which includes some national initiatives, such as the eco-schools award, the Healthy Schools Programme, the school travel plan award, as well as Investor in People. These activities have led to whole-school discussions that promote sharing and respect for others and awareness of healthy lifestyles.

108. Only one lesson of personal, social and health education was observed during the inspection and no detailed judgements are being made about the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. However, discussions with pupils and staff, and observations of pupils' behaviour in and around the school, show that their personal and social skills are very good. Evidence from pupils' past work indicates good provision to promote drugs awareness. Sex education is taught through the study of relationships, enabling pupils to develop confidence and self esteem.

109. Leadership of personal, social and health education is good, with a clear action plan identifying clear tasks for improvement.

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	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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