

INSPECTION REPORT

AUSTREY C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Atherstone

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125624

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Parsons

Lead inspector: Jane Morris

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th October 2003

Inspection number: 255391

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	89
School address:	St Nicholas Close Austrey Atherstone
Postcode:	CV9 3EQ
Telephone number:	01827-830248
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Stephen Banks
Date of previous inspection:	27 th April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small, rural, Church of England primary school with 89 pupils on roll. Pupils come from the village of Austrey and most are from professional families. The vast majority are of white British heritage. There are no pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at times other than those expected fluctuates, but overall, is average. Attainment on entry to school is above average. Seven per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. This is below average. Their main special needs are learning related. No pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The school works closely with other schools in the area to employ and share the expertise of additional teachers.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18270	Mrs Jane Morris	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, English, Information and Communication Technology, Art and Design, Design and Technology, Music, Physical Education, English as an Additional Language.
19727	Mr Eric Langford	Lay inspector	
27426	Mr Terry Aldridge	Team inspector	Mathematics, Science, Geography, History, Religious Education and Special Educational Needs.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the school is **good** and it offers **good value for money**. Pupils achieve well. Standards are well above average in English and science at the end of Year 6. They are well above average in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2. The school is fully inclusive.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is of a good quality throughout all classes.
- Standards are high in information and communication technology (ICT), art and music.
- Very good leadership and management support and steer the school's determination to strive continually for even higher standards and improvement.
- The curriculum is very good because it is supplemented by a wide variety of additional opportunities.
- Governors play a very productive role in furthering the school's improvement.
- Involvement of parents is very good. They have every confidence in the school.
- A very good ethos is provided by a friendly and welcoming school. Pupils are cared for very well.
- Pupils' problem solving skills in mathematics are insecure.
- Assessment procedures to promote work pitched at a more challenging level in science, religious education (RE), history and geography are underdeveloped.

The school has shown good improvement since the previous inspection. All issues have been addressed well. Teaching is now better with a significant proportion being very good. Standards in writing have risen as they have in ICT, music and art. Pupils' attitudes, personal development and care have improved. There are much stronger partnerships with parents and the community.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals as Year 2 prior attainment grades were not available.*

Caution is needed when interpreting data in such a small school, as national test results fluctuate depending on the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. Also, a number of pupils join this school to receive support for their special needs and others leave to join private schools after doing very well in younger classes. Standards seen during the inspection were above average throughout the school and analysis of pupils' prior attainment at the end of Year 2 shows that all pupils **achieve well** by the end of Year 6.

Reception children exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception in all the areas of learning. Their achievement is satisfactory as they build successfully on their above average attainment on entry.

Test results for 2003 indicate that by the end of Year 2, standards in reading and mathematics are well above average and average in writing. Achievement is good. At the end Year 6 results show well above average standards in English and science and average standards in mathematics. Achievement is good. High standards are reached in ICT and art throughout the school. Year 6 pupils reach standards above the national expectations in music. Standards are well above average in Years 1 to 4 as the skilled music teacher has taught pupils throughout their time at the school.

Pupils' personal qualities and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good, as is their attendance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education** provided by the school is **very good**. **Teaching** is **good** throughout the school with a high proportion being very good, and all pupils learn well. In ICT, art and music teachers use their expertise to plan very good lessons and these encourage pupils to achieve very well and they learn particularly successfully.

The curriculum offered is of a very high quality. Very good extra-curricular provision enriches pupils' learning effectively. The care, guidance and support given to pupils are very good. Partnerships with parents and other schools are very good and have a significant impact on pupils' achievements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has the skills, knowledge and determination to continually move the school forward and improve standards. She manages the school very well. Governors are very supportive and their role as a challenging body is rigorous. They play a very productive part in the work of the school. Financial matters are managed very well and the school has appropriate plans to deal with the budget constraints caused by a falling roll.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents express very positive views. They have every confidence in the headteacher and the school and are generous in their financial support. They are kept very well informed about day to day events and their children's reports are thorough. Some parents would like more specific information in reports about their children's progress and this view is supported by inspection findings. Questionnaires indicated concern about playground behaviour but inspectors did not see any evidence of bullying or harassment and their children did not express any worries at all.

Pupils like school and appreciate the extra opportunities to take part in interesting activities. They enjoy meeting pupils from nearby schools and working with them. Pupils from Years 5 and 6 expressed a good understanding of how well they are achieving and how they are going to improve.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop assessment procedures in science, RE, history and geography so that pupils are challenged more effectively.
- Increase pupils' understanding and use of problem solving skills in mathematics.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good throughout Years 1 to 6. Test results for 2003 were well above average in English and science and average in mathematics at the end of Year 6. At the end of Year 2 they were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Standards seen during the inspection in all core subjects at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 were above average. Reception children reach standards beyond the anticipated goals. They achieve satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' overall standards are above average and they achieve well.
- There is an overall trend of improvement in standards since the last inspection.
- Pupils attain well above average standards in ICT, music and art.
- Presentation and handwriting are of a very good standard.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Talented pupils are recognised and challenged so they achieve well in art and music.
- Pupils' progress is tracked effectively. They are set targets so they know where they need to improve.
- Problem solving skills in mathematics require some improvement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.1 (18.1)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	15.1 (15.5)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	18.1 (18.8)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 16 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	28.9 (27.0)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	27.4 (28.7)	27.0 (26.7)
science	30.0 (26.7)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

NB Caution is needed in interpreting data in a small school

Commentary

1. The overall trend in the school's performance is one of improvement. The analysis of data and documentation relating to the progress of individual pupils supports this. Pupils who have special needs are supported effectively and they achieve very well. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls.
2. The unvalidated data gathered from the tests in summer 2003 show that Year 6 pupils' overall results have risen in English and science to well above average. In mathematics they are average but have declined slightly. An analysis suggests that pupils need to improve their

problem solving skills in mathematics and the school has already taken steps to initiate development in this area. Writing and science have been the foci for successful school improvement during 2002 to 2003.

3. At the end of Year 2 in 2003 indications are that standards are not as high as in the previous year but are still well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. The slight 'dip' can be explained using the school's data. Individual pupil tracking shows that all the pupils achieved well in terms of their prior attainment. In both the 2002 and 2003 tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 a significant proportion of pupils achieved levels beyond the national expectations.
4. The number of pupils with special educational needs can have a significant impact on results. This happened in 2002 when half of the Year 6 group of 14 pupils had specific needs. The school has a small but important number of pupils who leave to join private schools in the area after achieving well in the younger classes. Others join the school as it has a reputation for providing very good support for those who are struggling with their learning. These factors can have an unfavourable effect on the school's results where year groups of pupils are small. The school keeps detailed records of individual pupils. These show that those who attend the school from reception to the end of Year 6 do particularly well.
5. It is clear from the scrutiny of current work and talking with pupils that standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. There are indications that standards in writing and mathematics, under the very productive guidance of the headteacher and the senior teacher, are set to improve still further throughout the school. Pupils' achievements are constantly monitored, as is the quality of teaching. Successful monitoring has concentrated on improving lesson planning so that teachers take more account of pupils' prior learning. The endings of lessons have also been a focus for development and teachers now use these well to improve pupils' awareness of how well they are doing. It is acknowledged within the school's development plan that assessment in science requires further development to ensure that pupils with higher attainment are challenged further.
6. Pupils' books reflect an emphasis on the very high quality of work which teachers expect, both in the content, presentation and the effort that pupils put into it. Pupils also develop very high expectations of themselves in terms of the standards of work they produce and this supports their good achievement. In English, work is marked carefully to ensure pupils know what they need to concentrate on next. Realistic but challenging targets are set at school, class and individual pupil level and these are supporting the school's determination to raise standards.
7. At this time, four weeks into a new school year, reception children are achieving satisfactorily and often well, in all the areas of learning. Their attainment on entry to the school is above average. The relatively small numbers means the overall character of the group can change from year to year. This is reflected within the very detailed assessment procedures that the school keeps. Information gathered from the completed Foundation Stage Profiles¹ for children starting Year 1 show they make overall satisfactory progress during their reception year and the vast majority exceed the expected goals in all areas of learning.
8. Very high standards are reached in ICT and art throughout the school. Pupils achieve very well. In music pupils reach standards well above the national expectations by the end of Year 2 and above them at the end of Year 6. This is because the skills that are developing so well lower down the school were not taught to them in such detail until the arrival of the teacher with specialist expertise. Talented pupils are nurtured and provided with additional opportunities in art and music. Standards in religious education and design and technology are satisfactory at the end of Years 2 and 6. Insufficient evidence was gathered from lesson observations and

¹ Foundation Stage Profiles are completed at the end of the reception year to show whether children have reached the expected goals.

work scrutiny to make secure judgements about standards in geography, history and physical education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The overall attendance figures and punctuality of pupils' are very good. Their attitudes to learning and to school life are also very good as is their behaviour. Pupils' personal development is also of a very good quality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good behaviour and attitudes to learning have a positive impact on the good standards and achievement of pupils.
- Relationships are very good at all levels and contribute to the positive ethos of the school.
- Very good opportunities are provided to help pupils build self-confidence, develop the ability to reflect and to consider others and to develop a sense of responsibility.
- The school actively promotes very good attendance and monitors absence rates closely.
- There is insufficient emphasis on first hand experiences to support pupils' cultural development.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.4	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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	92	2	0

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

- Parents ensure levels of attendance and punctuality remain very high. Occasional absences, resulting from family holidays taken during term time, do interrupt pupils' learning. Pupils show a very good level of commitment to the school ethos of respecting others. Exclusions are rare, with only one pupil excluded over the past fourteen years due to exceptional circumstances.
- The well-structured system of behaviour rewards and sanctions are clearly understood by pupils and prove to be very effective in supporting the ongoing development of the very good behaviour and self discipline observed during the inspection. There is an unfortunate legacy of concern over rough behaviour amongst a few parents, related to pupils who no longer attend the school. The inspection found no evidence of bullying or harassment.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and know they have to work very hard. They work together constructively, form good friendships and settle their differences amicably, sometimes with the help of the "class book" used by pupils to write in any concerns they have. Many pupils, in conversations and questionnaire returns, expressed many positive features of the school. They think teachers are fair, listen to their ideas and are very approachable. Inspection findings show

that pupils show high levels of respect for one another in the class and playground. Pupils were often seen offering to help others. They politely hold open doors for others to pass through, and regularly say “please” and “thank you”. Inspectors were impressed by their courteousness.

12. Children in the reception class are on course to reach above average standards in their personal, social and emotional development by the end of their first year in school. Very secure learning routines are established and as a result pupils become confident learners.
13. The system of termly year group elections to the school council offers a chance for many pupils to show enterprise and responsibility and to influence school practice and routines. Teachers allocate a range of duties and monitor responsibilities to pupils in their class. Year 6 take younger pupils to the school library and help them select their home reading books. Pupils gain great benefit from these personal development opportunities.
14. The provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good with many opportunities provided for pupils to reflect upon and think about the impact of their actions on others. Through assemblies pupils are learning to appreciate the beauty of the world. This was evident when they enjoyed a presentation from the local Christian music group. The headteacher provides an excellent role model for the pupils; she shows respect for them all and encourages the pupils to think about each other. Pupils have very good opportunities to work in a variety of group and social situations. The very wide range of extra-curricular activities makes a positive contribution to the pupils’ social development. Cultural development opportunities are good overall, but there are insufficient first hand experiences of the different cultures that exist in the wider community. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education. The school helps them to develop very mature and positive attitudes to their learning so they not only achieve well and attain above average standards but gain confidence as learners.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. There is a very rich curriculum and good quality teaching and learning. A very good ethos is shaped by the family atmosphere. This very caring environment is created by a committed team who work within this small village school. They are supported by a very positive partnership with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of both teaching and learning is good. It has some very strong features. Assessment is also good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good throughout the school especially in ICT, music and art. It encourages good achievement.
- All pupils are treated equally and fairly. Those with special needs do very well. Talented pupils are challenged, particularly in art and music.
- Teachers use their subject expertise effectively to raise achievement in their focused areas.
- The commitment of all staff, whether part-time or full-time, is very strong.
- Procedures for assessment and strategies to support target setting are very good in English.
- Planning is very thorough, links subjects and is effective throughout the school.
- Assessment in science, RE, history and geography is underdeveloped and is not used sufficiently to raise expectations and achievement.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	12	2	0	0	0

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

15. Reception children are settling into school routines confidently, at this early part of the school year, because teaching is good. The teachers and their assistant know the children well and are becoming more familiar with their strengths and needs each day. There is very good planning for these children. This ensures they experience quality lessons with activities that are particularly stimulating, varied and challenging. This enables the children to build satisfactorily on their above average attainment on entry. There are some rare occasions when these very young children are over exuberant and this is not curbed quickly enough. Pupils starting Year 1 are confident in their approaches to learning having had a thorough grounding of the basic skills in their reception year. Assessment procedures are very thorough and recorded systematically.
16. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good. It has some very strong features. Teachers' planning is very secure and usually ensures there are well-matched opportunities for developing learning. All pupils achieve well. The successful deployment of effective teaching assistants ensures that pupils with additional needs are supported and achieve very well. Teachers recognise talent and do their utmost to nurture it in art and music. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond to this so they are very focused on their learning, develop very positive attitudes and almost always do their best.
17. English and mathematics are taught well. Teachers are committed to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. They are very keen to develop ICT opportunities in all their lessons and teachers' plans highlight specific opportunities to integrate its use into other areas of the curriculum. The very capable, specialist teacher, who comes into school for a day a week, ensures skills are taught very productively. Art and music are also taught very effectively because teachers have good subject knowledge. Links between subjects are fostered and help pupils view their work in a cohesive way.
18. Assessment strategies are good overall and are currently a major feature of the school's development. Assessment is very effective in English, ICT, music and art. In mathematics and design technology it is good. The school recognises that assessment in science needs improvement and that some foundation subjects do not have adequate assessment strategies in place to ensure sufficient challenge. Staff are working on this with the aim of improving achievement. Marking, particularly in the Years 5 and 6 English books, is very helpful in promoting pupils' understanding of what they need to do next to improve. It provides a very good role model for other subjects. Pupils expressed a good understanding of the thorough and effective target setting procedures that teachers use to help them learn more.
19. The school's attention to monitoring the quality of teaching and its impact on learning through lesson observations and work scrutiny has paid dividends. This is reflected in the higher proportion of good and very good lessons seen during this inspection. For instance, the focus on improving the effectiveness of lesson endings has been productive, as has the development of teachers' skills in how they teach writing.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is very good and ensures pupils build on their prior experiences and learning. It not only meets, but exceeds statutory requirements. Very good extra-curricular provision enriches the opportunities offered to pupils. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and the resources available to teachers to support their lessons are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT provision is very good.
- After school clubs and activities are very good.
- Teachers' planning makes links between subjects so pupils explore themes in their learning and these are very productive.
- The reception children have access to very high quality resources and outside facilities.
- There is some lack of attention to detail in planning for teaching about other faiths and religions.

Commentary

20. This is a very strong feature of the school's work. The curriculum that is offered not only covers requirements but goes much further. Teachers make sure that different aspects of the curriculum are linked together to provide a cohesive approach to pupils' learning. This thematic style is represented in displays that add effectively to the learning environment. Since the previous inspection there have been improvements to the delivery of the science curriculum and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented productively. All pupils, including the reception children, are offered a very well planned and stimulating curriculum that encourages them to learn. Additional art and music focused curriculum opportunities enable pupils to achieve very well and talented pupils are given additional learning experiences in association with other local schools and with specialist teachers.
21. The provision for the personal, social and health education of pupils is good. There are many opportunities to support pupils' awareness of cultural traditions and diversity. There is, however, a lack of sufficient planning to help pupils discover about other faiths and religions in RE lessons. This aspect requires more structure as pupils do not have enough opportunities to explore and develop positive attitudes to and understanding of the beliefs of other cultures.
22. The school provides after school clubs for pupils even though there is such a small team of teachers. Teaching and non-teaching staff make time to offer a number of clubs such as gardening, art and music. Their commitment is noteworthy. The school looks continually for ways to extend pupils' experiences beyond the classroom such as when they work with other schools in the area to celebrate a 'Festival of Art' or attend and take part in concerts with the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. There are sporting opportunities too which include days at the 'partner' secondary school. Links with this school are also set to support the imminent development of pupils' learning of French.
23. Visitors from the community and friends of the school contribute to pupils' experiences and learning; as when they led a 'Printing Workshop Day'. Members of the Church attend school regularly to help pupils gain further awareness of the Christian faith. Resources are of a good quality, particularly in the reception class. Displays and the attention paid to celebrating pupils' work greatly enhance the learning environment. This very effectively contributes to raising pupils' awareness of taking pride in the presentation of all their work.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures pupils' care, welfare and health and safety very well. It provides them with very good support and guidance. It involves them very constructively in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Day-to-day attention to health and safety matters and child protection are very good.
- Pupils receive high quality advice and support.
- Consultation with pupils about how to improve their life and learning in school is very productive.

Commentary

24. The school has established very good health and safety procedures including rigorous child protection measures. Pupils are well supervised at lunch and break times. The school is kept clean and is well presented.
25. Teachers know their pupils very well and provide them with a very high level of pastoral support. They are very supportive and sensitive to their needs. Pupils in the reception class settle very quickly due to the very high quality excellent induction procedures. Parents value highly the seamless induction of their children into the reception class from the on site pre-school setting. The school places a high emphasis on ensuring that teachers keep informative records of pupils' attainment especially in English and mathematics. There is a good practice for identifying and reporting on pupils' personal development progress against targets in their "record of achievement" book. Generally pupils are well informed of their targets, which are communicated to parents during parents' consultations, but these are not always recorded on pupils' annual reports.
26. Pupils' care is supported effectively by very good anecdotal diaries used by staff and parents to monitor and record pupils' specific needs. Consultation with pupils is well developed through the year group members of the school council and their organised discussions with pupils in their class. All pupils appear very happy in school and show they have the confidence and independence to approach staff to raise any queries and concerns they may have.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has developed very good working links with parents, the local community and other schools. The quality of information provided to parents is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school and have full confidence in the headteacher.
- Very good quality day to day information is available to parents.
- High quality partnership links with other schools have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Some parents consider annual reports wordy and lacking sufficient information about their children's progress.

Commentary

27. The school's very good relationship with parents was amply demonstrated by the many positive views expressed in the parents' questionnaire, at the parents' meeting and in conversations during the inspection. Parents consider staff very approachable and responsive and are pleased with the school's expectations and their children's good progress. Scrutiny of pupil records show there are very good arrangements for regular contact with parents, including parents of pupils with special educational needs.
28. Parents are generally provided with a very good level of information about the school. The close partnership between parents and teachers ensures concerns and queries can be quickly addressed. In general, the end-of-year progress reports are well detailed and provide parents with appropriate levels of information about what their children know and can do. However,

reports can be wordy and improvement targets expressed with insufficient detail. This finding confirms parental opinion.

29. Links with parents of pupils identified as having special educational needs are good. Parents are regularly invited to special educational needs identification and review meetings, express their views and be involved in the review process. Contacts with a wide range of outside agencies are strong and include the behaviour support services, educational psychologists, speech and language therapists and others.
30. The school actively seeks parents' views on important issues and values and acts on them. The school has a very good practice to canvas parental views on an annual basis with parents fully involved in the development of the school policies, such as behaviour and homework. Parents are provided with homework guidelines, setting out the type and frequency of homework expected from their children. Pupils' diaries are well used for the exchange of comments between parents and teachers on pupils' progress. Teachers and parents work together effectively to develop strategies to help pupils improve their attitudes and behaviour towards their learning in the home and school environment on the very rare occasion that this is necessary.
31. The school appreciates greatly the valuable contribution of regular volunteer parents, who are able to provide a pre-planned input and support to the learning of the younger pupils. Many more parents willingly make themselves available to help in school on an ad-hoc basis and in assisting on out-of-school visits, all of which greatly enhance the quality of the pupils learning opportunities. Links with the church and local community are very good and this contributes well to the pupils' developing skills of citizenship and sense of belonging to a village church community.
32. Parents and the community give tremendous support to the school through the Friends of Austrey C of E school. This is a very active group who organize regular fund raising social events that are well attended and contribute significantly to enhancing the school environment and learning opportunities.
33. The school benefits considerably from the very good contacts forged with the Anker Valley partnership of schools. This partnership enhances pupils' learning through shared school events and joint staff training. Of note are the very good links with Polesworth High School and the cross-curricular planning arrangements which enable the smooth transition of the pupils into secondary education. Exemplary partnership arrangements exist with the pre-school provision located on the school site. These provide a seamless and quality induction for new children and parents into the routines of the reception class and the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The governance of the school and leadership by the headteacher are very good. The school is very well managed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership is provided by the headteacher and her senior teacher.
- The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and monitor its progress very well.
- The governing body, headteacher and staff share a common vision and commitment to raising standards in a fully inclusive school.
- Management is very good and there is a clear understanding of the needs of the school and action that needs to be taken.
- Parents believe the school is well led and managed.

Commentary

34. The leadership shown by the headteacher is very good and she is totally committed to the school. She displays a very clear vision and sense of purpose for raising standards. She leads very much by example with class teaching responsibilities of two days a week in the reception class. In Years 1 and 2 she teaches some literacy skills and science. She is realistic and has a good understanding of what still needs to be done to raise standards further. This has been effectively shared with staff, governors, parents and pupils. She is well supported by a very efficient senior teacher and dedicated teaching and support staff who work very well together as a team. There is a common purpose and strong sense of direction within the school and relationships are very good.
35. The annual school improvement plan is clearly focussed on raising standards based on an analysis of performance and the needs of the school. Staff, governors, parents and pupils are fully consulted through meetings and surveys to identify focus priorities. It is a well-prepared document clearly indicating planned areas for development, those responsible, resources implications, time-spans and success criteria. For example, it is currently correctly focused on improving assessment procedures. The plan is effectively shared with all those involved and monitored regularly.
36. There is regular and productive monitoring of the quality of teaching by the headteacher, senior teacher and local education authority. All subjects have subject managers and in literacy and numeracy they undertake thorough analyses and evaluations of assessment and performance data identifying strengths and weaknesses. The very small staff and budget constraints mean that not all subject managers can be continually involved in the monitoring of teaching, learning and standards in all their subjects. This is an area identified by the school within an on-going cycle for focused development.
37. The special needs co-ordinator, who works in the school two half days per week, provides very good leadership. There are very good systems in place for ensuring that individual education plans and statements are regularly reviewed. There is good monitoring to ensure that pupil targets are regularly implemented in classrooms so that pupils make very effective progress in meeting them.
38. Performance management procedures are well established for the headteacher and full-time teaching staff and this is helping to raise standards and identify areas for focused staff development. Support staff are not yet included in performance management procedures. Induction procedures for staff new to the school are good ensuring that they are quickly assimilated. The school has been successfully used as a placement for trainee teachers by training establishments in the past.
39. Governors are totally committed and very supportive of the headteacher, staff and school. The governing body is very ably led by the knowledgeable chair of governors. It is well organised and brings together a wide range of expertise and experience to give very effective support across many areas. Governors take a very keen interest in the school, its activities and standards and almost all have children attending the school and so want the best. Good use is made of training opportunities offered by the local area schools' partnership to improve their knowledge and understanding. They have a very good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have been prepared to make difficult decisions in the past concerning financial matters.
40. Governors take a very active role in leading the school through their involvement in producing and monitoring the annual school development plan, setting targets and monitoring test results. There are governors for specific curriculum areas. They meet regularly with staff to discuss issues and report to the full governing body. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school performance through visiting the school are good. The governing body fulfils its statutory

responsibilities very well and regularly appraises the work of the headteacher and successfully sets and monitors appropriate performance targets.

41. The school is running a deficit budget because of falling numbers and is in the process of producing a 5-year budget recovery plan. Day-to-day financial procedures are very secure and managed very well by the conscientious and hard working school secretary. She makes good use of current technology for managing pupils' records although the accurate financial records are still maintained by hand. The very recent external audit identified no major weaknesses. Grants are used effectively and finances are kept in good order. The school has effectively absorbed the principles of best value into its management practices and makes very good use of the expertise on the governing body.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	279,158
Total expenditure	288,562
Expenditure per pupil	2,944

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	17,429
Balance carried forward to the next	8,025

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **good** in all the areas of learning and has improved recently as the class arrangements have changed and this has had a favourable impact on facilities to support teaching and learning. From the start of this school year, the reception children are no longer taught with Year 1 pupils and have a classroom and other areas arranged for them. Fifteen children joined the reception class four weeks before the start of the inspection. Children's attainment as they start school is above average. They achieve satisfactorily in all areas of learning and the vast majority are on course to surpass the expectations of the 'Early Learning Goals' as they commence Year 1.

The leadership and management of the foundation stage are good. The teacher who has this responsibility is in school for three days a week and shares the class with the headteacher. Their joint planning is very detailed and shows a thorough knowledge of the needs of this age group. The organisation and routines they have established ensure that children settle successfully within a very stimulating learning environment. The children's needs were still being assessed at the time of the inspection and it was too early to identify any particular learning difficulties or strengths.

There have been changes in personnel and class organisation since the previous inspection but the overall quality of the provision has remained the same. Significant improvements to the classroom, resources and the outside environment have taken place. Additional and constructive links with the onsite pre-school, supported by funding from the local education authority, have been forged during the past year. These are set to improve the transition to school even further. Most children attend this pre-school setting prior to starting reception. All these factors are now likely to ensure that the school is well placed to raise children's achievement at this stage of their education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults provide good role models.
- Organisation of the classroom and daily routines encourage independence.
- Relaxed 'starts to the day' ensure children are secure and settle quickly.
- Very occasionally, strategies to develop children's ability to sit and listen and take turns in conversation lack sufficient firmness.

Commentary

42. Over half of the current group of children will have their fifth birthday after the start of the summer term 2004. This has had a significant impact on their levels of maturity on entry to school and therefore on their personal and social skills. Teaching is good so lessons are very well planned and take this into account. Children learn how to relate to one another and adults in a very wide range of stimulating situations. Most children enter school being able to share. They are keen to find out about the interesting activities and they are eager to explore. Sometimes their excitement is over exuberant and the teacher and her assistant have to work hard to keep them focused. The timing of the inspection means that children are still settling into the routines and learning how to apply themselves but they are on course to exceed the expected goals in this area of learning during the year. For instance, considerable effort was put into teaching children how to approach a cafeteria role play situation. They chose a cake, paid for it, selected a drink and carried both back to their 'café' seat. They did this sensibly and independently. Parent helpers were on hand to support this activity. Planning shows that this

will be followed up with a visit to a real cafeteria at the local garden centre, indicating very effective links with the local community.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good quality of discussion between teachers, the teaching assistant and the children.
- There are good procedures to encourage and track the development of pre-reading skills such as the teaching of letter sounds.
- Teachers provide a good range of independent activities to encourage writing and listening.
- Very productive role play scenarios with adults develop children's language skills.

Commentary

43. Children achieve satisfactorily. Their standards are above average at this early stage of their schooling. Teaching is effective. Activities, such as those that encourage children to write birthday cards to the class's friend, 'Spencer Bear' are productive and develop writing skills in an interesting way. The classroom provides a wealth of opportunities for children to try out their early, but already emerging writing skills. An 'office base' with a telephone encourages children to chat, which they do with a good deal of confidence. Some can make a good attempt to sound out their friend's name and have a go at writing them down. This is because they have been involved in productive sessions that develop their knowledge of initial sounds. Words on display around the class encourage children to experiment with sounding out words or guessing what they might mean. A great deal of attention is paid to the acquisition of the knowledge of letter sounds. This provides a very secure basis for the on-going development of skills in Year 1. The self-registration system in the mornings effectively supports their recognition of their own and others' names. Parents have a thorough understanding of the carefully planned stages to initiate reading and are very supportive when children start to take their reading books home. They have every confidence in the school and fully appreciate the benefits of allowing children to become confident in handling books. They are keen to explore pictures and words before they start to try and read sentences in their 'reading books'.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan good activities that include interesting counting and sorting games.
- There are very good quality resources to support practical activities.
- Small group activities, such as cooking, encourage the development of the language of mathematics.
- ICT is used well to support counting games.

Commentary

44. Children take part in well structured practical activities, including the use of the computer, and enjoy singing games that promote their awareness and understanding of the value of numbers. They achieve satisfactorily and are well placed to reach standards beyond the anticipated levels by the end of the year. Good teaching ensures there are detailed plans to make sure that the children are learning successfully and they respond well to the tasks they are given. Assessments provide clear guidance for teachers to ensure that lessons extend children's

knowledge with a wealth of well focused tasks. Some children are very confident in counting and recognising the numbers 1 to 5 and beyond. They are introduced to comparative words and understand 'bigger than', 'smaller than' etc. and show a good understanding of their use. The value of money is introduced through role play situations and children handle it with increasing awareness. When making colourful mobiles they talk knowledgeably about circles, squares and triangles.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Stimulating activities are very well planned to support the full range of aspects in this area.
- Quality discussion takes place with the teachers, teaching assistant and parent helpers which help children to discuss their ideas about the world around them.
- Resources are well chosen and of a very high quality.

Commentary

45. Teaching in this area is good. It develops children's confidence well and promotes and broadens their awareness and knowledge of the world around them securing above average standards. Children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to exceed the 'Early Learning Goals'. This is because the tasks that are prepared for them are motivating and the quality of the teachers' and teaching assistant's discussion ensures all children are fully involved. They are challenged to think about and express their thoughts aloud. For instance, they explore how potatoes, parsnips, carrots and sweet potatoes grow in soil by digging them up out of a 'sand tray' filled with earth. They melt chocolate, mix it with marshmallows and crispy rice and discuss confidently what happens to it as it cools down to make 'crispy cakes'. They are given ample opportunities to work at the computer both independently and with help. They explore the environment around their classroom, discovering natural and man-made objects. Carefully planned topics help them consider the work of different people from the community and they celebrate events such as Easter and Divali thus exploring Christian beliefs and faiths of other people. This ensures the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are followed. They taste foods from other countries such as China and India. An understanding of past events and their place within them is encouraged as they consider the appropriate toys for different aged children. Construction sets are of a particularly high quality and are used with a real purpose in mind. Children design and make party hats with some skill, and are careful about deciding how to decorate them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for climbing and developing hand eye co-ordination are good.
- Outside facilities and resources are of a very high quality.
- Children's skills in manipulating small objects such as paint-brushes and pencils are well developed.

Commentary

46. Achievement in this area is satisfactory. Standards are above average. Teaching is good and ensures that the outdoor environment is used at every opportunity to promote the development of physical skills. Large climbing apparatus is available in the hall and children can explore,

climb and explore spatial awareness frequently. Bikes, scooters and other ride-on toys are available in the secure outside play area. As there is a covered outside play area, children often have access to throwing games that increase their hand-eye co-ordination very effectively. Painting activities illustrate that the majority of children can hold and manipulate smaller items such as paint-brushes and glue sticks correctly and this helps them with their work in creative areas.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide variety of creative experiences are offered, including music with teacher who has expertise.
- Teachers plan well for different role play scenarios and 'small world' play that stimulate children's imagination.
- A wide range of different and good quality art equipment and resources are introduced to the children.

Commentary

47. Children are taught well in this area and they achieve satisfactorily. They build on their previous experiences to improve and refine their skills in using colour and experimenting with different shapes and textures because teachers encourage their independence and give them numerous opportunities. Their standards are on course to be above those expected at the end of the school year. They are given ample opportunities to paint, draw, model, use collage materials and sculpt. Musical opportunities are made available frequently to the children and they are learning how to hold musical instruments correctly. They are given lots of opportunities to dress-up and play imaginatively. They create 'play-dens' out of sheets and chairs and use 'small world' equipment to create scenes that depict stories from books such as the story of 'The Brave Lion and the Scared Lion'. The classroom reflects the attention given to this area of the curriculum. It is colourful and celebrates the many different types of activities that are offered.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in all aspects of English.
- Teaching is good or better in all lessons.
- Teachers make very good use of the National Literacy Strategy and use a wealth of different types of books and styles of writing.
- Handwriting and presentation of work is of a very high standard.
- Literacy skills are practised and developed well in other subjects.
- The headteacher has very good knowledge and is in a strong position to lead the subject.
- Assessment procedures, including marking and target setting, track pupils' achievement very successfully.
- Very occasionally, pupils could be more actively involved in tasks during the introductions to lessons rather than just listening to the teacher.

Commentary

48. The headteacher leads this subject very well and has worked with teachers to introduce very good assessment systems and strategies that are improving standards in writing. These are having a significant impact and pupils' standards have risen since the previous inspection. Governors play their part in providing challenge to the school as the literacy governor visits frequently and makes sure she is well informed about the standards pupils achieve and the quality of lessons. A scrutiny of pupils' past and current work indicates that pupils of all ages from Years 1 to 6, boys and girls, achieve well in all aspects. Pupils of differing ability are identified and receive appropriate support to challenge or help them more. Those with special educational needs achieve very well. The school promotes equal opportunity very effectively.
49. Standards in speaking and listening are above national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and a very significant number of pupils perform well above the expected levels. Achievement is at least satisfactory and often good. In the Years 5 and 6 class there are many high quality opportunities for discussion with both the teacher and the teaching assistant. This was seen when pupils explored how religious traditions encourage and organise charitable giving. It was interesting to hear their well constructed comments. Younger pupils in Year 1 expressed themselves clearly and confidently when they explored the school gardens to prepare for an art lesson. They described the texture and colouring of tree bark with a good command of vocabulary.
50. Reading standards are high. They are above and often well above expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve well because the school places an emphasis on the progression of the development of skills. Reading diaries are kept and provide a useful record indicating pupils' good progress throughout the school. When talking with a group of Year 6 pupils they selected entries in these diaries as examples of work of which they were particularly proud. Their selections show their good levels of interpretation and understanding of the text which had been praised by the teacher. When hearing pupils read, it is clear that they practise reading aloud and this enables them to develop their fluency and expression in a productive way. Their ability to read with good expression is evident. They always have a range of strategies to try out unfamiliar words. These strategies have developed well, right from the start of Year 1. This is because in the reception class a great deal of attention is paid to the acquisition of the knowledge of letter sounds. This is also apparent in their spelling of basic vocabulary. Classrooms have a wealth of books, including dictionaries and thesauri that pupils are keen to use. Members of the community support the school by coming in to school to hear pupils read regularly and often and this reflects the school's determination to do as much as it can to promote high standards.
51. Standards in writing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Teachers follow the National Literacy Strategy successfully. All teaching seen was good or better. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn very successfully when the teacher challenges them to complete tasks in a specified time, giving them no time to get off track, as was seen when pupils were reading and writing about 'The Judgement of Paris'. In Years 3 and 4, good quality teaching ensured that pupils set about the task of brainstorming a 'story setting' very confidently, building on prior knowledge and with a very good command of adjectives. They also used their ICT skills very competently and independently to produce 'brainstorms' emphasised by boxes using different fonts and highlighting. The endings of lessons draw together, very successfully, the learning intentions. For example, Years 1 and 2 pupils were able to draw meaningful comparisons between how to write in prose and how to use 'bullet points' and other numbered lists.
52. The standard of handwriting and presentation from the vast majority is of a very high standard. Pupils take great care and show pride in their work whatever the task. Homework is used well to support learning and pupils described this element of their work as interesting and for some, it was what they were especially proud of.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. This area is a strength of the school. A scrutiny of past and current work in other subjects suggests that this area has been very productively developed. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their speaking skills in role play and during drama lessons. They take part in numerous discussions, make use of the internet to research facts and information to support their topic work, write letters related to their current studies, compose poetry and describe and appraise the work of artists and musicians indicating the school's determination to use and develop language and literacy skills whenever possible.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain above average standards.
- The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good.
- The results of pupils' assessments are thoroughly analysed by the co-ordinator to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Pupils are very keen to learn, and enjoy their lessons.
- ICT is used well to support the teaching of mathematics.
- Pupils' problem solving skills in mathematics require improvement.
- Teaching assistants are not always used effectively at the beginning and end of lessons.

Commentary

54. The standards of work seen during the inspection at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were above average. This presents a similar position to that seen at the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve well. They build successfully on their prior knowledge because teachers assess their understanding and then help them to develop effectively newly introduced concepts during lessons. Those identified as having special educational needs learn and achieve very well. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
55. At the end of Year 2 results are consistently above or well above average. End of Year 6 test results for 2003 indicate that standards, although average in comparison with all schools, are lower than the previous year and below the results of similar schools. An analysis has shown that the area causing some pupils difficulty is problem solving. This underdeveloped element of mathematics work meant fewer pupils were able to reach levels beyond those expected and this is reflected in the 'dip' in the results for summer 2003.
56. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons seen is good overall and sometimes very good. Teachers display good knowledge and understanding of the mathematics curriculum and the numeracy strategy. They use the strategy well in their teaching. Planning is clear and thorough, based on national guidance, and indicates appropriate activities for different ability groups. Most lessons begin briskly and learning intentions are clearly shared with pupils, which raises their interest and provides good motivation. The beginning mental/oral session provides pupils with good opportunities to explain the strategies they are using to solve problems and acquire further knowledge.
57. Teachers use questioning well to challenge pupils and assess their understanding. However, they often only take answers from those who put their hands up which means that not all pupils are involved and challenged. Lessons proceed at a good pace. The last part of the lesson is often used well to allow pupils to explain what they have been doing. As a result of this clear structure, pupils are interested in their lessons and keen to learn.

58. Regular homework extends learning very well beyond the school day. Teachers regularly acknowledge pupils' work but marking provides few helpful suggestions that let pupils know how they can improve and is sometimes over generous. Teaching assistants are used well to support groups of pupils during the main part of the lesson although they are not always involved sufficiently at the beginning and end of sessions to support individual pupils or taking notes of any significant responses that need to be clarified. ICT is used effectively to help pupils practice their data handling and other associated skills. Group and individual targets have been set effectively and these are helping to raise standards further.
59. The management and co-ordination of mathematics is very good overall in the limited non-contact time available. The co-ordinator provides very good support and encouragement to colleagues and has undertaken a thorough analysis of recent test results across the school identifying strengths and weaknesses. She has already initiated an action plan to address the issue raised about problem solving skills. The good assessment procedures for monitoring attainment, tracking pupil progress, and for using optional tests, enables teachers to identify pupils who need additional support and set group and individual targets for improvement.
60. Progress since the last inspection has been good. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully adopted and implemented across the school. Resources have been improved to support the strategy and the co-ordinators has become much more involved in managing the subject especially in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, analysing performance data and tracking pupils' progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. The use of mathematics and numeracy skills across the curriculum is good. From the samples of work provided and evidence from lesson observations and displays, pupils are given many opportunities to use mathematics and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, mathematics is used very well in science when making measurements and recording findings in charts and tables and data logging activities. In design and technology pupils carry out accurate measurement when making products and use co-ordinates effectively when locating places in geography lessons. In history they have a good sense of ordering chronological events by date when producing time lines.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain above average standards.
- The curriculum coverage is good.
- There are some weaknesses in using assessment to ensure sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in mixed year group classes.
- More opportunities are required for pupils to present their results in a variety of ways.

Commentary

62. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain standards which are above average. National test results in 2003 were well above average because all Year 6 pupils reached the expected level and half of them exceeded it. Pupils usually achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. There are some occasions when higher attainers in mixed age classes could be challenged further. Sometimes these pupils undertake the same tasks as others without sufficient opportunities to extend their thinking. As a result they consolidate rather than broaden their learning.

63. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers recognise and are working on the development of scientific skills so that all pupils can reach even higher standards. Support staff are used effectively during the main activity in lessons. Pupils have good general knowledge and are knowledgeable about scientific issues. They are enthusiastic and they want to learn. Teachers have good subject knowledge, make lessons interesting and use time effectively. They clearly explain what pupils will be learning and doing at the beginning of lessons. Good use is made of scientific vocabulary to develop pupils understanding.
64. Teachers' marking is satisfactory, but it is sometimes over generous with instances of work being praised which is clearly not the pupils' best. Some lessons have insufficient opportunities for pupils to use graphs and set up their own ways of recording experiments.
65. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator, who works part-time in the school, has few opportunities to monitor the subject but is very hard working to secure improvement. She knows her subject well and provides good support to colleagues. The school has maintained the above average standards identified in the previous inspection and the quality of teaching is still good. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good and the science key issue fully addressed as the subject is now planned and taught on a weekly basis. Whole school assessment procedures are currently and rightly under consideration. Resources are much improved in quantity, quality and accessibility. ICT skills are promoted effectively. For example, sensors linked to computers support investigations well. Good use continues to be made of the school grounds for developing pupils understanding of life cycles and living things.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain very high standards.
- There is outstanding commitment, high quality teaching and expertise from the specialist, part-time teacher.
- Very detailed planning and assessment supports learning and very high achievement.
- Pupils have access to very high quality additional resources, both hardware and software, that are shared within the cluster of other small schools in the area.
- ICT is used to support other areas of the curriculum including pupils' personal development, very effectively and enriches the learning environment.

Commentary

66. There is a very secure and effective programme for the teaching of ICT and this is reflected in the very high standards all pupils attain by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Teaching is of a very high calibre in the focused group work and in class it is also of a high standard. All pupils achieve very well. Standards have improved since the previous inspection.
67. The teaching of ICT skills revolves around the lessons that the teacher who comes to school for one day a week prepares and teaches. She is the subject leader and her commitment and enthusiasm is outstanding. She ensures that pupils receive very focused and profitable sessions with her on a regular and very well planned basis. Teachers are kept informed of the progress pupils make during the sessions she leads. There are very good assessment procedures in place. For example, assessments and evaluations of work undertaken during the 'day a week' sessions are recorded and e-mailed to the school for the following day. The skills that pupils have developed are then fostered effectively in class lessons.
68. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils achieved very well with the specialist teacher as they used a 'floor turtle' (a programmable toy). They were given a route to follow but additional challenge

meant they had to program the toy to move forward and make ninety degree turns in order to reach a specified destination. This work required them to estimate the distance it needed to move forward thus encouraging problem solving skills and mathematical development alongside the furtherance of their ICT capability. These Year 2 pupils understood that if the toy turned through two right turns it would travel in a straight line.

69. In class-based lessons, ICT is used well and learning effectively developed by good and very good teaching. This was seen as Years 5 and 6 pupils recognised, named and measured angles. In Years 3 and 4 pupils used their skills in word processing to record a brainstorm of the features of a setting for a story. They explained clearly how they could change the size, colour and type of lettering and put a box around their title to emphasise it. They also checked the spelling of words using a facility on the computer. In Years 1 and 2 pupils researched how artists had represented trees in their paintings by looking up the National Gallery web-site.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. This is a very strong feature of the school's work. Every lesson, where possible, includes opportunities for the development of ICT skills. Each class has a 'bank' of computers which are used by pupils in turn. The learning environment is greatly enhanced by examples of pupils' work in ICT. These show a commitment to the furtherance of the use of ICT. For example, in science it is used as a way of recording the cooling of liquids when a sensor is attached to a data logger. Cultural diversity is celebrated through the use of the Internet when different geographical locations are researched and when British heritage is examined, as when Year 4 pupils found out about Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

HUMANITIES

Religious education is reported in full below. History and geography were sampled.

71. Time-table arrangements at the time of the inspection meant that no lessons in history or geography were seen. Pupils' work and teachers' planning were scrutinised, and inspectors had discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator. The geography and history co-ordinator, who only works for three days a week in the school, provides good leadership and management in the limited time available. She provides effective support to colleagues but has little opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and standards and this is an area identified by the school for development. Although teachers make assessments, there are no whole school assessment procedures in place to ensure that activities provide sufficient challenge for all ability groups in the mixed aged classes.
72. Progress in history and geography since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall. The planned curriculum, based on national guidance, is now firmly established based on a two-year cycle to cater for the mixed age classes and ensures national curriculum requirements are met well.

Religious Education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is soundly planned based on the locally agreed syllabus.
- There is a good range of artefacts to support pupils in their learning.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths.
- There are no whole school assessment procedures in place based on the locally agreed syllabus to ensure activities are suitably matched to pupils' needs in the mixed-aged classes.

Commentary

73. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards by the end of Year 2 due to limited samples of recorded work. By the end of Year 6, from talking to pupils and looking at work samples, standards are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus although there is a weakness in pupils' knowledge and understanding of faiths other than Christianity.
74. The quality of teaching seen was good with high expectations and challenge. The teacher was well-prepared and displayed good subject knowledge, which was used effectively to develop pupils' understanding. They were fully involved in small groups as they undertook research into the role of different aid agencies across the world. Pupils were very interested and very well behaved and co-operated well, and achievement was good during the lesson.
75. The co-ordinator, who works two days per week in the school, provides sound leadership and management but has few opportunities to monitor the subject. However, he provides good support for colleagues in the limited time available. He has already identified the need to introduce assessment procedures so that activities are more closely matched to pupils' needs and provide suitable challenge.
76. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. There has been an improvement in the quality and quantity of artefacts and the revised locally agreed syllabus has been successfully introduced. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of others faiths through visits and visitors or video resources and this is an area for development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and music are reported in full below; design and technology and physical education were sampled.

77. In design and technology, the collection of work and photographs that the school has gathered and the assessment of that work indicate that all pupils achieve well and reach above average standards. This is because the coverage of the subject is planned comprehensively and led and managed well. All areas of the subject feature in the tightly structured planning framework followed by teachers. Pupils often cook and take part in food technology activities as well as working with textiles and resistant materials. Links with business partnerships have encouraged projects involving pupils making land yachts which they designed, made and then tested to try out the effectiveness of their models. The subject currently features on the school improvement plan and joint training with other schools in the area has taken place. The school is in a strong position to continue the good improvement that has taken place since the previous inspection.
78. Although no teaching in physical education was observed during the inspection, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussion with the subject leader suggests that provision is at least satisfactory, as is leadership of the subject. This represents a similar picture to that of the previous inspection. All aspects of the subject are covered within a clear programme and structured framework. Pupils expressed to inspectors their enthusiasm for all the additional events that are arranged for them. In this way they extend their physical activities which in turn supplement their achievements productively. For instance, they take part in sports events and competitions both at the local secondary school and with other primary schools in the immediate area. There are also after school clubs that draw on the expertise of members of the community who come to school to help pupils. For example, a trainer comes in to help them develop their football skills and professional guidance is available for cricket and tennis.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain very high standards.
- Very good quality lessons have imaginative ideas.
- There is very effective leadership of the subject and standards are closely monitored and assessment is used very constructively.
- Extra opportunities are offered to pupils through clubs, visits and the access they have to a wide range of media.
- The use of ICT increases pupils' awareness of the work of a range of artists very effectively.
- Art is linked with other areas of the curriculum very well.

Commentary

79. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6 was of a very high quality. These lessons supported the other evidence that the school provided that shows how all pupils achieve very well and the majority reach very high standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 across all aspects of the subject. This is because pupils are exceptionally motivated by the very well planned activities that teachers introduce. The school offers an after school club and many opportunities for pupils to extend their experiences beyond the classroom. For example, in Years 1 and 2 they make good use of the environment to study tree bark and its form and texture before adding detail to their paintings of trees. In the same lesson they are encouraged to develop additional skills as they are shown how to prepare a colour wash as a background.
80. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and concentrate on developing pupils' skills so they can master techniques effectively. This was seen in the lesson with the oldest pupils when their commitment to the very challenging but highly productive task of creating a design on foil was excellent. Pupils compared the use of colour on their own selected swatches of different and blended colour hues. They talked about these with obvious interest and could explain their reasons for using the different types of fabrics and beads they had selected. Their collaboration and discussion on developing one another's bookmarks in the style of Charles Rennie Mackintosh was very constructive.
81. The leadership of the subject is particularly effective. The attention to the monitoring of planning, standards, teaching in lessons and the use of assessment and the continuous striving for improvement is very clear. This has helped to ensure good improvement since the previous inspection.
82. Art and design contributes significantly to raising pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures as they study the work of artists from around the world. They have learnt to appreciate the different styles of artists such as Lowry, Monet and Chagall. ICT is a strong feature of the work as pupils access the Internet as they research the work of these artists. They also use the digital camera to enhance their observational skills. This was evident with the younger pupils who had taken close-up shots of individual leaves and then used these to produce very detailed and skilfully executed watercolours. Parents come into school to help teachers give focused support to pupils and this has a significant impact on their achievement.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High standards.

- Very good use of teacher expertise to ensure very high quality lessons and learning.
- The enthusiasm of pupils is tangible, especially in assemblies.
- Specialist tuition for a variety of instruments is available and supports very high achievement for a significant number of pupils.
- Very good additional opportunities are made available to pupils through clubs and involvement in high profile events.
- Subject leadership is of a very high quality and particularly effective.
- More able and talented pupils are identified and challenged and they achieve exceptionally high standards.

Commentary

83. Since the previous inspection there has been an appointment of a music specialist to the staff. This teacher takes music throughout the school. Standards are now well above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and above them at the end of Year 6. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. In Years 5 and 6, previous good learning and standards are being supplemented further by the specialist teacher's efforts. Their standards are not as high as those in Years 1 to 4 because the skilled teacher has not been teaching them for all their time at the school.
84. The quality of teaching seen was very good, and as a result pupils achieved very well and reached standards well above national expectations. This was because the teacher used her very good subject knowledge to help pupils compose pieces of music using the pentatonic scale. She introduced pupils to a new concept of a 'drone' note. As the teacher recapped previous learning, the pupils showed very good understanding of the pentatonic scale and practised singing pieces of music using the five identified notes. Once directed to their next tasks, they were very keen to produce high quality compositions to share with others. They used, very capably, a variety of tuned instruments. They wrote down their ideas for an arrangement of notes, practised and rehearsed them and evaluated the effect of their different combinations. During this lesson, pupils' ICT skills were enhanced very innovatively through the use of digital movie cameras. Pupils recorded their classmates' playing on keyboards, glockenspiels and chime bars so their efforts to provide background music for a 'Dragon Dance' could be further evaluated.
85. This teacher's commitment to the role of the music co-ordinator is praiseworthy and very productive. A scheme of work has been developed alongside effective assessment procedures. This means she is totally secure in her planning thus ensuring very high quality lessons and learning for all age groups. She is in a very strong position to monitor all pupils' progress, helping them to build on their prior knowledge very effectively by supporting the less able and challenging the talented and more able.
86. Videos and CDs supplemented the copious amounts of quality documentation available for scrutiny. These illustrate how the school strives to support musical talent and how it offers additional opportunities for performing and composing beyond those experienced in normal lessons. Cultural development of pupils is fostered successfully through activities such as the examination of a range of Chinese instruments. There are numerous occasions when pupils perform in front of audiences and take part in events such as 'Drumming Workshops' and 'An Autoharp Day'. An after school music club enriches pupils' experiences and on occasions, involves members of the school community. This was seen when the school caretaker took time to teach pupils marching routines whilst developing their appreciation of a different style of music and encouraging their responses to it.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Commentary

87. Although not a focus for the inspection, information gathered from talking to pupils and the assigned co-ordinator indicates that provision and leadership in this area is at least good. The school gives significant and effective attention to pupils' personal development and this is supported by the lessons that focus on this area. It is promoted successfully within RE lessons and throughout many other areas of the curriculum.

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

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