

INSPECTION REPORT

BALDWINS HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

East Grinstead

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 125969

Headteacher: Stephen Snowball

Lead inspector: Ray Morris

Dates of inspection: 17th – 19th November 2003

Inspection number: 255409

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	103
School address:	Lowdells Lane Baldwins Hill East Grinstead
Postcode:	RH19 2AP
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Lee Richardson
Date of previous inspection:	15 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Baldwin's Hill is a suburb on the northern edge of East Grinstead. Housing in the area is a mixture of Victorian and modern building and the school draws the majority of its pupils from the nearby estate which was originally owned by the local authority. The school itself is accommodated in a recently refurbished building dating from 1898. With 109 pupils, aged 4 to 11, taught in four classes it is smaller than other primary schools. The school serves families from a range of social circumstances. The number of pupils entitled to a free school meal is above the national average but there are relatively few pupils whose mother tongue is not English. Twenty five pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average, and two have statements that outline particular learning needs. Pupils' attainment when they start school varies from year to year. In the current Years 2 to 6, attainment was below average overall when they started, but it was broadly average when the current Year R and Year 1 joined the school. The school gained School Achievement Awards in 2002 and 2003, and recently won the national Becta ICT in Practice Award for excellence in the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11982	Ray Morris	Lead inspector	Mathematics, science, art, design technology, physical education
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27960	Jane Reed	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology, geography, history, music, religious education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Baldwins Hill is a very good school. The headteacher and senior staff are very effective, and pupils receive very good teaching. Very effective use is made of links with the wider community (and the local secondary school which is a specialist modern languages college) and the school provides an effective curriculum. As a result, although some children join the school with below average skills in language and mathematics, they all make very good progress. By the time they leave the school, a high proportion achieve national standards in all subjects, and many exceed them in information and communication technology (ICT), English, art, geography and history. Although the cost per pupil is relatively high the school's effectiveness ensures good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching and learning are very good, and so pupils make very good progress.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good.
- Standards are above-average overall, and are excellent in ICT.
- Pupils behave well and have good attitudes towards their work and each other.
- In spite of the school's efforts, some parents do not ensure their children attend regularly.
- The governors do not yet play a fully effective part in raising standards.

Very good improvement has been made since the last inspection in 1998 and pupils' achievement is now very good. The headteacher's strong sense of purpose and high aspirations are shared by staff and have brought about significant improvements in teaching. The school has also established ICT facilities that have been recognised nationally as excellent. These improvements have resulted in an overall rise in standards. All the points identified for improvement at the last inspection have been dealt with successfully. The headteacher's realistic evaluation of the school and the increasing effectiveness of the governing body are a firm foundation for further improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievement is very good. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and achieve well in most aspects of their learning. They continue to improve in the infant and junior classes so that, by the time they leave the school, their achievement overall is very good, and they attain above-average standards. A significant proportion of last year's Year 6 pupils had special educational needs, and this was reflected in the school's national test results. The trend in the school's results over time is broadly in line with the national figure. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils currently are making very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their social skills and self-confidence so they make good relationships with adults and each other, and they behave well. The most vulnerable pupils are very well cared for. Pupils enjoy coming to school but, although attendance overall is **satisfactory**, a minority of parents and carers do not ensure their children attend regularly enough, and so these pupils do less well.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good.

Teaching is very good because lessons are well prepared, purposeful and conducted at a brisk pace. Teachers know what individuals can do and what they need to do to improve. Staff build good relationships with pupils and this ensures that they behave and work together very well. Teaching assistants are well trained and make a very good contribution to teaching and learning, ensuring that all pupils (including those for whom English is an additional language and those who have special educational needs) are fully included in lessons. Particularly effective use is made of ICT to bring lessons to life and stimulate pupils' interest. As a result, learning is very good.

The school provides a good curriculum with significant strengths. The extensive provision and use of ICT in all subjects have had a marked impact on standards, in the development of computer skills generally, and especially on boys' achievement in writing. Very good arrangements exist with the local secondary school so that older pupils benefit from specialist tuition in a foreign language, and they are very well prepared and supported for transfer to the next stage of their education. Very good use is made of the local community to enrich pupils' learning.

There is very good guidance for pupils' personal development. Good procedures ensure that pupils settle quickly when they start school, and they are cared for very well. Very good information is provided for parents on how their children are progressing and what is happening in school. However, parents do not always get involved in all that the school offers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has established the clear vision and effective planning needed to raise and maintain pupils' achievement. He is a very good role model, leads by example and ensures staff carry out their responsibilities very effectively so that their work has a strong influence on the quality of teaching and standards. Management is very effective and so the school is orderly, well equipped and maintained, and efficient. The work of the governing body is satisfactory. Many governors are newly appointed and recognise the need to improve procedures for checking the school's performance so that standards can be further improved. Regular visits to the school are now made to observe teaching and discuss pupils' learning. This bodes well for the future.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. They are unanimous in feeling that their children are making good progress. Most pupils say they enjoy school, and all feel confident about turning to teachers for help.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve attendance so that all pupils derive maximum benefit from the school's provision.
- Ensure that governors are fully effective in challenging and supporting the school's efforts to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Pupils' overall achievement is **very good** and they attain **above-average** standards overall by the time they leave the school. When they started school, the language and mathematical skills of the pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 were generally below average. The level at which the majority of them are now working is at least average. Standards are above-average in English and well above-average in art. Older pupils also achieve well above-average standards in geography and history. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective and they make good progress. Standards achieved in ICT are very high.

Main strengths

- Pupils make very good progress.
- Standards in ICT are very high and ICT is very effectively used to support teaching and learning.
- Standards in English and art are above-average by Year 2 and Year 6.
- Standards in history and geography are well above-average by Year 6.

Commentary

1. When children start in the Foundation Stage, their attainment is broadly average, although some children have significant difficulties with speech and language skills. By the end of the reception year many children reach the standard expected; this is measured against the early learning goals for young children. Overall, achievement is good because the children are well prepared in their basic skills for the next steps of learning in Year 1.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.0 (15.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.4 (15.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.3 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The school's pattern of national test results, at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, is complex and has often depended as much on the capabilities of a particular group of pupils as the quality of the teaching or the best endeavours of the school's leadership. Also, as the number of pupils in each year group is usually small, particularly high or low results achieved by just a few pupils have an undue influence on the overall figures, which should be interpreted with caution. Results in the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 matched the average for all schools in mathematics, were slightly below average in reading and slightly above-average in writing. Compared with similar schools, results in reading were average; they were above-average in mathematics and well above-average in writing.

3. Boys and girls perform equally well. Although results in all three subjects combined have matched the national average for the last three years, they have shown a consistent improvement in the numbers of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. This indicates that the school provides well for higher-attaining pupils. Although last year's overall results in reading were slightly below those for all schools, the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 matched those nationally. The number achieving the higher Level 3 in writing has been above-average for three years, and in 2003 the percentage achieving this level was more than double the national figure. A similar picture exists in mathematics, where the school's results at the higher level also exceeded those nationally by a significant margin.

4. Since the last inspection, the school's results at the end of Year 2 have improved at a greater rate than those nationally.

5. Pupils' work seen during the inspection indicates that the majority are likely to attain national standards in mathematics and science by the end of the year, and exceed them in English. Standards in ICT are very high. As many pupils entered the school with below average language and mathematical skills, this represents very good achievement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.6 (28.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.6 (28.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.4 (28.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

6. In the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 6, results overall were well below the national average, but average compared with similar schools. However, in the previous two years, results had been above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. The reason for this fluctuation is that many pupils had recently joined or left the school in the year running up to the 2003 tests. Evidence shows that those pupils who had been at the school since Year 2 had, almost without exception, attained or exceeded the national average. This represented good achievement for those pupils.

7. Although results fell in English and mathematics in 2003, they were average compared with similar schools, and the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in English was maintained. Pupils who did not attain the target Level 4 for 11 year-olds nevertheless achieved well, as most had special educational needs and one had very recently joined the school with no knowledge of English.

8. A similar pattern of results has been seen in science, although standards have not generally been as high. This is because fewer pupils attain the higher Level 5. The school has identified the reason for this, and action is already being taken to improve the aspect of their work responsible for this.

9. Inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 6 are likely to attain above-average standards in English by the end of the year, and average standards in mathematics and science. More than half this class were identified as having special educational needs when they were younger. As standards in art, history and geography are very good, and those in ICT excellent, this represents very good achievement overall. The headteacher and staff have been single minded in their efforts to raise and maintain standards, particularly in English and mathematics. The high-quality teaching, excellent use of ICT in lessons, and the opportunities provided for pupils to practise literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, all contribute to this.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are **good**. Attendance is **satisfactory** for the majority. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school expects high standards of behaviour and the pupils' response to this is good.
- Relationships between pupils and adults, and with each other, are good.
- Older pupils readily assume responsibility for younger ones.
- Pupils have positive views of the school.
- Attendance is satisfactory but a few parents do not support their children by ensuring they attend school regularly.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness is underdeveloped.

Commentary

10. The school has an effective policy for promoting good behaviour. Teachers and pupils devise class rules together, so that the pupils have an interest in them and their behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school. The positive school ethos successfully emphasises the importance of raising pupils' self-esteem. This is given a high priority and is a major contributory factor to pupils' good levels of enthusiasm, confidence and achievement. This was clearly seen in an excellent Year 3/4 geography lesson when the pupils were using maps to find information relating to Saxon settlements. The teacher clearly valued all their contributions, and every pupil, including those who found the work demanding, remained interested and enthusiastic throughout the lesson.

11. Relationships are good, and reinforced consistently by the way pupils' personal skills are developed in lessons and in the playground. Pupils are strongly influenced by the adults who work with them. Adults are consistently considerate and caring, showing respect to pupils and each other. Pupils feel that their teachers are fair, and this helps them to respect themselves and to develop a sense of empathy with others. The older pupils are very good with the younger children; they play with them at break and lunchtimes, help them to borrow books from the library and organise activities for them during wet playtimes. Pupils take responsibility as house captains, preparing equipment for assemblies and as members of the school council. All these experiences prepare the pupils well to become responsible members of a community.

12. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Throughout the school teachers plan interesting lessons that involve and enthuse the pupils. However, in some lessons, and particularly in assemblies, pupils are not offered enough time to reflect and to develop spiritual awareness. Through joint projects with the main receiving secondary school the oldest pupils are gaining an insight into other cultures, but opportunities for younger pupils to find out about the traditions and daily life in other communities are less well developed.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
93	2	0
2	0	0
7	1	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

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

Attendance

13. Attendance rates have declined since the last inspection, but are broadly average in comparison with other schools. However, a few pupils are frequently absent because their parents or carers do not recognise the benefits of regular school attendance. Staff monitor absence conscientiously and receive support from the Education Welfare Service with cases of poor attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7%	School data	0.3%
National data	5.4%	National data	0.4%

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good** because high-quality teaching and assessment, coupled with an effective curriculum, enable pupils to make very good progress.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is very good and so pupils effectively acquire new skills and knowledge, and learn to work both independently and collaboratively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of ICT is excellent and a strong component in the most effective teaching.
- Teaching assistants are very effective and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- Assessment in mathematics and English is very good and teachers make very good use of this information to plan work.
- Pupils' social development is catered for well, and relationships are good. This creates a good learning environment.
- Teachers' subject knowledge underpins good teaching.

Commentary

14. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is now consistently good in all parts of the school, with many very good and excellent examples seen during the inspection. The headteacher and senior staff regularly observe lessons and provide advice to teachers, and this is a principle reason for its high-quality. All staff are adept at managing pupils' behaviour and promoting good relationships, so that pupils benefit from a calm and positive learning environment.

15. Lessons are well prepared and teachers are clear about precisely what is to be learned. Teachers know their subjects well and often provide clear examples of what is expected of pupils, for example, showing younger pupils on the whiteboard how to re-draft simple text to improve the beginning of sentences. Pupils are told what they are going to learn at the outset and, in the most effective lessons, are continually reminded of this so that they remain focussed on what they are supposed to be learning. The final few minutes of the lesson are devoted to discussing what and how well they have learnt, and, in the best examples seen, identifying and making the next step in their learning.

16. The school's ICT resources are very effectively used by teachers to secure pupils' interest and to assist in teaching. In the Year 1/2 class, for example, the idea that multiplication is the same as repeated addition was brought vividly to life in an animated video clip, which was projected on to a whiteboard and controlled by the teacher on her laptop computer. She frequently stopped the clip or

re-ran it so that she could explain and confirm pupils' learning. As a result, they made very good progress in this part of the lesson. As well as securing their interest, pupils have been systematically taught how to use computers, and so they readily turn to them and recognise that they are a tool for learning. Teachers, therefore, are able to supplement the school's library resources because older pupils can acquire information systematically and safely from the internet.

17. Teaching assistants are very effective and provide good quality support for all pupils, particularly for those with special educational needs, or for those who are learning English as an additional language. This is because they are well trained, are well briefed by teachers on their role in the lesson, and are resourceful when faced with a new challenge. An example of this was when the teaching assistant working with a newly arrived, non-English speaking pupil in Year 6 used her initiative to locate and download a specific program from the internet to help him learn English.

18. Teachers are adept at assessing pupils' progress during a lesson and modifying their teaching accordingly. In a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, for example, the individual task planned to extend pupils' knowledge and use of the five times table proved too demanding for many of them. The teacher recognised this, and adapted the final part of the lesson so that she could re-visit the activity to ensure that pupils understood. Procedures for assessing pupils progress over time are particularly well used in English and mathematics. In English, for example, pupils complete a special termly writing task. They are asked to evaluate this themselves against a checklist, before discussing the accuracy of the work with the teacher. Then, together, they assign the appropriate National Curriculum level to it. The notes made on the checklist are then discussed with the pupils and the next step in their learning is identified as a target. The assessments are shared with parents and form a part of the pupils' annual report. Parents find this particularly useful.

Example of outstanding practice

Precise planning, clear objectives and good SEN support lead to very effective learning for all pupils.

The OS map projected onto a whiteboard immediately secures interest. It amplifies the teacher's explanation of how place names provide information about who first lived there - these are Saxons - and what pupils will look for, and learn in the lesson. Result - they know what they will learn, and how they will use maps to do it. Enthusiastic groups then pore over separate maps of different areas, acquiring information about Saxon, Viking, Celtic and Roman place names, to be shared with others in the final session. Constant reminders throughout the lesson about its purpose ensure that, when they finally come together, all pupils are clear about what they have learnt and explain it with evident pride. Learning is then ratcheted a notch higher! A second map is projected of a different location. Pleasure, and evidence of learning, is abundantly obvious when pupils spontaneously declare that the area shown, carefully chosen by the teacher, has been settled by all four peoples. Use of ICT, enlarged maps and text for SEN pupils, and excellent use of questioning by both the teacher and teaching assistant, secure total engagement in learning from start to finish.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	4	12	0	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum is **good**. All statutory requirements are met. Curriculum provision is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors. Opportunities for extra-curricular clubs are satisfactory. The school has very good accommodation and learning resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in ICT is excellent and literacy and numeracy are used well to support learning in other subjects.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Visits and links with the community enrich the curriculum.
- The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Opportunities are missed to develop independent learning in the reception class.
- The time allocated for teaching science in Years 1 and 2 is insufficient in some weeks.
- The curriculum for Year 1 pupils is not consistent between the two classes.

Commentary

19. Since the last inspection, there has been very good overall improvement in the curriculum, with developments in many aspects of the school's work. Resources are better, for example, and accommodation for children in the reception class is now very good. The school places a strong emphasis on providing many practical activities and encourages pupils to work collaboratively. The curriculum is now good overall, with particular strengths in the junior classes, and carefully planned to meet most pupils' needs.

20. Most noticeably, there has been outstanding development in ICT, which reflects excellent links with a commercial company. Provision in ICT is now excellent. The school has improved resources to a very high standard, and teachers use the technology imaginatively to motivate pupils to learn. This has had a positive effect on their standards of work and achievement. Added to this, there has been a strong focus on bringing learning alive, by making activities fun and relevant. Literacy, numeracy and ICT act as the backbone for learning. The school also strongly emphasises the use of drama to widen pupils' speaking and writing skills.

Example of outstanding practice

Excellent curriculum practice in the development of boys' writing.

When in Years 3 and 4, the attainment of a group of boys was well below average for their age and ability. In just half a term this rose to above-average during a special project. The project focused on using drama to act out 'Beowulf', the story of an ancient warrior. Following this, pupils wrote at length, preparing their own play scripts, which were modified and developed using the computer, until a final version was published. This demonstrates how powerful language can become spontaneous when a pupil acts in role and the moment is captured in words such as "Grendel scooped up the warrior, ripped him to pieces, sucked every drop of blood from his veins and then swallowed him whole".

21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Although she has limited time, the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has created effective procedures. Pupils are supported with very good individual educational plans, carefully implemented by class teachers and teaching assistants. These are regularly checked and targets reviewed. The governor responsible for monitoring special educational needs works effectively with the SENCO and together they draft policies and report to the full governing body. Very good organisation and planning by the teachers ensure pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in lessons and make good progress.

22. Teachers understand that pupils learn best when the curriculum is made relevant and exciting, and so much effort is put into providing a good range of visits and opportunities for visitors to come into school to widen pupils' knowledge and skills. Good links with the community and practical activities also enrich the curriculum. In geography, for example, pupils study coastal erosion

in Cornwall on a residential visit, and have produced their own film as part of their studies about the immediate locality. This work is another example of excellent practice.

Example of outstanding practice

Pupils learn best when the curriculum is relevant and exciting.

Pupils used the Internet to research historical and geographical facts about East Grinstead. From this, several dressed up in character and acted as 'Zig and Zag', two intergalactic travellers who were taken on a tour of the village sites. Their adventure was scripted and filmed by the pupils, who also added music and factual captions about the local environment.

23. The curriculum in the reception class places a strong emphasis on basic literacy skills, but there are missed opportunities for the children to develop their imagination and general creativity. The outside play area is of high-quality, but is not used as often as it could be as an outside classroom, where children could spontaneously explore the world around them and engage in many informal physical pursuits.

24. During the week of the inspection, planning for science had not been thought through well enough to ensure that pupils had sufficient quality time to learn about the subject. In addition, some of the Year 1 pupils who are currently in the reception class do not have the same opportunities to work within the National Curriculum as other Year 1 pupils. This was particularly evident in work on numeracy.

25. Although the staff is small, the school provides a satisfactory number of extra-curricular clubs, mainly open to older pupils. This limits the amount of sport regularly on offer for pupils, compared with what is often found in larger schools.

26. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good and further details about this can be found at the end of the report.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are **very good**. Achievement and personal development are monitored well. The involvement of the pupils in the school's work and development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very well cared for and they feel secure in school.
- The school monitors pupils' personal development very well.
- Pupils are not clear about their individual targets for improvement.

Commentary

27. Adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils. These enable staff to monitor pupils' personal development very well. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire show that all pupils feel there is someone to go to if they are worried at school. Health and safety and child protection procedures, first aid and other medical support, are very thorough and ensure that pupils and staff work in a safe environment.

28. Through the pupil questionnaire the younger pupils expressed very positive views of the school. Year 6 pupils said that their lessons are more varied this year and that they use computers a lot to support their learning. They would like more after school clubs and are pleased to have the opportunity to be involved in improvements through membership of the school council. Pupils say there is no bullying in the school and that teachers promptly deal with any problems that do occur.

29. Teachers assess pupils' academic needs effectively during lessons. They know the pupils in their classes very well and adjust their teaching methods to keep them all interested and involved in

set tasks. However, teachers do not routinely share pupils' targets with them, or refer to them when marking their work, and so pupils are not always clear about what they need to do next to improve.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **satisfactory** partnership with the parents. Links with the community and with other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information provided for parents, including the annual reports, is very good.
- Pupils are very well prepared for their transfer to secondary school.
- Very good links with the community enrich the curriculum.
- Parents do not always get involved in all that the school offers.

Commentary

30. Parents are kept very well informed about what their children are learning and how they are progressing. There are termly parent/teacher consultations and teachers are very willing to meet parents at other times. The new format of annual reports provides parents with very clear details of their children's achievements and personal effort, and explain what they need to do next to improve. The prospectus, annual reports, newsletters, information about the curriculum and what children will be studying, and details of activities in mathematics and science weeks, are all keeping parents up to date with their children's education.

31. There are very good links with the main receiving secondary school. For example, the oldest pupils receive tuition in Italian from specialist teachers, and secondary school students support the after-school football club. These, together with special projects using ICT, help pupils to make a smooth transition to their secondary education. The headteacher has developed very strong partnerships within the community that greatly enhance the opportunities that the school offers its pupils. These include sporting links with other primary schools, visits to a local restaurant to make pizzas, visiting the church and museums, and having visitors into school such as theatre groups, the police and fire officers. Local businesses have funded projects to enhance the school grounds, and innovations in drama and ICT have been supported by a computer manufacturer.

32. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting were positive and reflect parents' confidence in the school. The school works hard to involve parents and carers as partners in the education of their children. For example, a new format for parent/teacher consultations was introduced last year and attendance improved dramatically. However, a number of parents and carers do not always take up the opportunities provided. Some educational visits have had to be cancelled due to lack of parental support. There are no parents helping in school regularly, and some pupils appear to receive little support at home with their homework or reading. A small number of families do not send their children to school regularly and this adversely affects their achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The management and leadership provided by the headteacher and senior staff are **very good**. The governors play a **satisfactory** role.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership has a significant impact on standards.
- The school makes very effective use of its detailed improvement plan.
- High-quality professional development of staff is instrumental in raising achievement.
- Procedures for improving the quality of teaching make a significant contribution to raising standards.

- Governors are not fully involved in establishing the strategic direction of the school.

Commentary

33. Together with the senior management team, the headteacher has established a very strong ethos and a commitment to high standards. This is particularly evident in information communication technology, which is a major strength of the school. The school has focused on raising standards in all subjects, but notably in English, mathematics, science and ICT. As a result, pupils' achievement has risen and is now very good overall. This, in turn, represents very good improvement since the last inspection.

34. Senior staff have established a rigorous system for checking pupils' progress that provides accurate information on how individuals and groups are performing. This is used effectively to plan the next steps for individual pupils and for improvements in teaching. Lessons are regularly observed by key staff and feedback provided to teachers on their performance. This has a strong influence on the quality of teaching.

35. The governing body provides satisfactory leadership for the school, and fulfils its statutory duties. Governors are conscientious and support the school's work in areas such as the curriculum and special educational needs. They meet with subject co-ordinators, help to devise policies and discuss standards, achievement and resources. Although individual governors share a common purpose, the governing body as a whole is not fully involved in shaping the strategic direction of the school, nor does it rigorously challenge aspects of its performance. Individual governors attend regular training courses and this is helping to provide a sharper focus to their work.

36. Management of the school as a whole is very effective. The detailed school improvement plan clearly outlines areas for improvement. Where appropriate, these have been fully costed. The school evaluates its performance well and the outcomes are used to establish priorities for future development. There is strong emphasis on staff development incorporated into the school's procedures for performance management. The training in ICT, in particular, has had a significant impact on standards. It has provided staff with the skills to manage and organise their planning and assessment effectively, with all teachers making constant use of laptop computers for administration and teaching. The school has very effective financial procedures, and minor issues resulting from a recent audit report were resolved promptly. As a result, taking into account the pupils' achievements and the resources available to it, the school provides good value for money.

Particular aids and barriers to raising achievement

37. The clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations of the headteacher are excellent. ICT is very effectively used in teaching and in day-to-day management of the school.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	363,788
Total expenditure	361,976
Expenditure per pupil	3,320

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	24,347
Balance carried forward to the next	1,812

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 **good** overall. This section of the report relates solely to the provision for the reception aged children. Reference to the Year 1 children, who are also in this class can be found elsewhere in the report.

Good relationships with parents and carers enable the children to settle quickly into school. Overall, achievement is good because the children are well prepared in their basic skills for the next steps of learning in Year 1. Teaching and learning are good. Very good relationships help the children to feel secure and gain confidence to learn. Assessment information is used effectively to plan lessons that are challenging for all abilities. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, which has resulted in very good accommodation for young children.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in learning social skills.
- Learning opportunities and the curriculum are well planned.
- Routines are already very well established.
- Behaviour is very good.
- When the children choose activities for themselves, there are no simple systems for them to record what they have been doing.

Commentary

38. Good teaching and learning opportunities help the children to grow in confidence and take risks. Most significantly, they are helped to feel special and to respect others. Many of the children are only just beginning to play directly with others, but through encouragement and intervention, adults help them to learn how to play co-operatively. By Year 1, children have made good progress in these skills, which shows good achievement. Behaviour is very good because the teacher has high expectations and has established clear routines and rules. Most sessions are effective and help children to think and make decisions for themselves and show their initiative, as well as to listen to adults and to do the activities as set by the teacher. However, it is not easy to identify whether children have a balance of activities, as there is no simple method of noting which free choice activities the children have chosen.

39. Children are sensitively helped to explore their emotions when playing in the role-play area and through discussions about stories. At the sand tray, four children worked well together, following the teacher's suggestion of taking turns at building a giant sand mountain. Here, they quickly learnt how to take turns, overcome their frustrations and persevere. Most children reach the early learning goals by Year 1. No comment was made about personal and social development at the time of the last inspection and so it is not possible to evaluate improvement in this aspect of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children quickly learn the basic skills of reading and writing.
- Good use of assessment information, by the teacher and assistant, helps the children to make quick progress and achieve well.
- Staff and children make very good use of ICT resources to enrich teaching and learning.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided to develop informal speaking skills.

Commentary

40. The provision and teaching in this area of learning is good. The children are already able to sit and listen attentively for short periods because the adults help them to understand how to do this. Many children need considerable help to talk about their ideas in a group, although a few higher ability children are often very confident and speak with clarity. Nonetheless, a significant proportion of the children are at the early stages of communication, often choosing to observe or communicate by pointing. Adults constantly talk to the children, helping them to use new words and to express their ideas, but there are missed opportunities to inform and promote flowing chit-chat. For example, opportunities are not provided for retelling stories using puppets or by establishing a snack time, when the children talk with an adult about their daily lives.

41. A strong emphasis is placed on developing early reading and writing skills. This has been a focus area for development, which has resulted in improving provision and good achievement by Year 1. Children choose to make their own little books, letters and cards, but also benefit from formalised literacy activities as well as times to write independently. The teacher has high expectations and encourages them to think and learn for themselves, often giving them much individual attention. An example of this was seen when the children had to write about their teddy. During this session the adults made quick assessments of how to help the children to make best progress in both handwriting, phonic skills and in their development of writing simple sentences using interesting describing words. Regular daily reading activities, games and phonic activities help children to make good gains in their knowledge, skills and overall achievement. Careful modelling of writing by the teacher helps the children to see how writing should look. The very good use of computers and a large white board helped the children to spell simple words for themselves using letter sounds. By Year 1, children have made good progress in language skills, which shows good achievement as most achieve the early learning goal and a few work confidently within the National Curriculum.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Basic skills of number are quickly introduced and understood. This leads to good achievement.
- The use of ICT resources supports children's learning.

Commentary

42. Teaching is good. Children achieve well because work is interesting, meaningful and challenging. This helps the children to make progress and really understand what they have learnt. For example, the teacher used glittery bags with numbers on to help them to sort and count objects accurately. From this, they practised writing numerals and higher ability children were helped to add two bags together and record this as a simple addition sum. Counting and shape recognition are built into many other activities. For example, the children made a brick house for a toy tiger and as they did so, they counted each brick up to 47. During the inspection, sand activities helped the children to widen their mathematical language such as full, empty, and half full and half empty. Throughout the day, children can use different computer number games, which help them to consolidate their understanding and recognition of numbers to 20. By Year 1, an average proportion of children are working at the early learning goal, and a few higher-ability children are confidently working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum. For example, they can work out addition and subtraction of numbers up to 10.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

No overall judgement is made about this area, as it was not possible to see enough teaching and learning during the inspection. However, there are several significant strengths in the curriculum, which is **good** overall. Foremost is the way in which the children are mastering computer skills, which leads to above-average skills and attainment. Children quickly learn how to use a computer

mouse and can find and use a range of programs. For example, they confidently put all the bones on a dinosaur.

During the inspection, the children were encouraged to make models using a good range of construction toys. Photographic records show the children learning about living things and exploring their senses. Planning shows that the children learn about their lives and their families and what it is like to belong. They follow a suitable programme of work for religious education, which includes work about Jesus' parables and opportunities to talk about being different but equally important.

Although the children use their outside area, there are missed opportunities to explore nature, by children having a nature and planting area. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about their attainment overall by Year 1, but assessment notes suggest that this is average.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a range of experiences, which are especially helpful to them in developing fine hand control.
- During the inspection, they did not use the outside area enough to practise and develop agility skills.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching is often focussed on helping children to learn how to hold and control small things such as pencils. Many children find this hard, but are making good progress. During the inspection, limited use was made of the outside area to help the children to move spontaneously, practising how to move with greater agility and confidence, and to take risks in trying new skills. This limits achievement to satisfactory overall. Currently, this space is not sufficiently used as an outside classroom, which the school recognises. It is also important to note that there is no covered section for use in poor or bright weather. Formal lessons in the school hall allow the children to develop an average ability in using space imaginatively. Most move with growing precision. For example, in a good lesson, they learnt to dodge around each other using creative movements to music from the Nutcracker Suite. Attainment is average by Year 1, as most reach the level expected in the early learning goals.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strength and weakness

- Children enjoy an adequate range of activities, but opportunities to let the children's imagination blossom are too limited.

Commentary

44. Teaching and learning in this area are satisfactory; it leads to satisfactory achievement by Year 1. Broadly, attainment is average and in line with the early learning goal for this area, although teachers sometimes give too detailed directions which inhibit children from using their own creative ideas. For example, when making stick puppets, the range of resources, papers and fabrics was limited, and so children were restricted in what they could create. Equally, although the children paint, this is not done often enough. The timetable can be quite rigid for creative development, and the art area resources are not always accessible to the children. At the time of the last inspection, creative development was also noted to be too teacher directed, with only one weekly session and not enough development of the imagination. There has been some satisfactory improvement, but there is still room for further development. Good skills of colour mixing are developing, as seen in their lavender pictures. Planning places a suitable emphasis on singing, but there is no special music area in the classroom (or even outside), to allow the children to explore sounds and delight in

music making. When using the role-play area, the children are helped to develop their stories and games by adults, who join in to extend their discussions. This is effective. However, there are not enough dressing up clothes to extend children's imaginations.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths

- Teaching is good overall, and very good in Years 1 and 2.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Lessons are well organised and meet the full range of pupils' learning needs.
- The use of ICT is excellent.
- Planning ensures that literacy skills are well developed in other subjects.

Commentary

45. Work seen during the inspection indicates that pupils in Years 2 and 6 are likely to achieve above-average standards by the end of the year. As the majority of these pupils started school with below-average literacy skills, this represents very good achievement. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

46. Teaching has many strengths; it is good overall and very good teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2. Staff know their pupils well and lessons are planned and organised to ensure that those with special educational needs are well supported and fully included in lessons. A very good system to assess pupils' writing provides a good analysis of achievement and the necessary targets to drive performance further still. Teachers' marking generally provides helpful comments for pupils, so that they make consistent progress throughout the school.

47. The imaginative use of ICT, in particular, has had a direct impact on pupils' language development by making it topical, relevant and interactive. The investment in laptop computers for the Year 5 and 6 pupils provides a portable aid to support language skills. When, for example, they were taken to the National Gallery, pictures of paintings to be studied had already been scanned in so that pupils could add bullet-pointed notes and comments directly to them. Pupils turn readily to computers to word process their written work, and use classroom terminals to search the internet for information to supplement library resources. Digital video recording is employed, for example, to collect adults' recollections of life in the 1950s for later transcription. Writing scripts for short films about the school's locality, and preparing computer presentations to communicate ideas, are both valuable opportunities for applying the skills learnt in the classroom in practical situations.

48. Planned opportunities are provided for pupils to speak and listen to each other. They listen well, express thoughts clearly, and ask questions of each other confidently. In a Year 1/2 lesson, for example, pupils asked questions in a role-play activity to determine a person's occupation. This was good because the pupils were beginning to understand the difference between a question to elicit facts and a random guess at the occupation.

49. Pupils have very good attitudes towards, and are confident in, reading and writing. Younger pupils follow text and spell out words that are unfamiliar to them. They use books appropriately, understand that a book has a title and author, confidently describe the key events in a story and predict a possible ending. Older pupils read confidently and with feeling, and readily discuss preferred types of books. Pupils are encouraged to read at home and there is a very effective reading journal in place where pupils comment on books they have read, and teaching assistants respond by asking questions to extend the pupil's understanding. Handwriting is systematically taught, and reinforced through the school's use of a similar computer script for classroom notices and labels. By Year 2, higher-attaining pupils are already writing with interesting descriptive language, and developing accurate spelling and punctuation. As they progress through the juniors they learn to edit and draft their writing so that, by Year 6, many use increasingly rich sentence structure, draft and re-draft their writing, and present neatly written and paragraphed work.

50. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Good progress has been made in developing this area of learning. Planning and resource needs are well documented and there is a thorough understanding of priorities for improvement. Lessons are regularly observed and feedback provided both verbally and in writing. Progress reports are also provided for the governing body. The co-ordinator is involved in her own further professional development. Staff are kept abreast of current developments in the subject, and suitable training recommended for them.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. Teachers are aware of the need to provide opportunities to develop literacy skills in other subjects. As a result, there are many occasions when pupils extend their writing and reading skills throughout the curriculum, most notably in history, geography and religious education. In a history lesson, for example, Year 3/4 pupils were encouraged to describe events in complete sentences. The effective links made with ICT greatly enhance the development of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Drama is used as an effective medium for stimulating interest in writing, and excellent results have been achieved with older boys who are reluctant to write.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well as result.
- ICT is used well to stimulate pupils' interest and involvement in lessons.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Assessment is used very well.
- Written comments on pupils' work, particularly that of the most able, do not make it clear what they need to do next to improve.

Commentary

52. The majority of the current pupils in Years 2 and 6 will achieve at least average standards overall by the end of the year. For these pupils this represents good achievement. Improvement since the last inspection when pupils' achievement was satisfactory has been good.

53. Achievement is good for a number of reasons. Teaching is consistently good throughout the school, with a very good example seen during the inspection. Lessons are well planned, have a mix of mental and written work, and make very effective use of ICT. In the Year 1/2 class for example, the teacher used digital video to provide an animated sequence to illustrate the principle of multiplication. This enabled pupils to see what was being explained and their understanding improved as a result. In another excellent example, the use of the interactive whiteboard for playing a game in which pupils had to navigate their way to particular co-ordinates in four quadrants was highly successful because it secured total involvement of the whole class, including one pupil who speaks little English. Teachers introduce their lessons very clearly, explaining the purpose of the lesson so that pupils know what it is they are to learn, and so the final part of the lesson can be used to help pupils themselves check and confirm what they have learnt. Pupils have more understanding of their own learning as a result, leading a Year 2 girl to comment "I'm feeling confident today." There is an emphasis in all lessons on using correct mathematical vocabulary, such as the many ways of expressing the term multiply and a particularly notable feature is the encouragement given by teachers for pupils to think before answering, rather than expecting an instant, but possibly wrong, response.

54. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress. Their work is matched very closely to their level of attainment and is planned so that they work towards, and often reach, the level of the majority of their classmates. In a Year 5/6 lesson, for example, lower-attaining pupils were provided with a separate introductory activity. This was completed quickly with the help of the teaching assistant, so that those in the group quickly moved

on to, and succeeded with, the work being done by the next ability group. The contribution of teaching assistants was a key factor in the success of the teaching observed. They helped younger pupils to concentrate and listen when the teacher was talking to the class as a whole; they supported individual children with separate activities matched to their particular learning need and, for a pupil who understands little English, provided an alternative description of the two dimensional shapes being discussed by the teacher with the whole class.

Example of outstanding practice

Contribution to an effective plenary by a teaching assistant.

During the plenary in a Year 3/4 lesson when the teacher and pupils were reflecting on what had been learnt about the five times table, the teaching assistant typed out pupils' questions on a laptop computer to be immediately projected for all to see on a whiteboard. This allowed the teacher to continue her discussion with pupils uninterrupted by the need to turn and write on the board.

55. Teachers assess pupils' progress very well. Regular assessment tasks are carefully marked and matched to a National Curriculum level of attainment. This provides a clear picture of what has been achieved and what pupils need to do next. They establish specific targets for groups of pupils and display these in the classroom. Not all pupils, however, are fully aware of these, and they do not yet have individual targets. Pupils' written work is marked promptly and efficiently, but few examples were found of teachers' written comments that provided a clear explanation of what needed to be done to improve. Homework is used sensibly to follow up work done in the classroom, or to collect information for use in future lessons.

56. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Lessons are regularly observed in order to improve teaching colleagues teaching, pupils' work and assessments are scrutinised and training provided for teachers and teaching assistants. For this reason, there is a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be done to raise standards. The need to raise the achievement of higher-attaining pupils is endorsed by the inspection findings. Priorities are clearly outlined in a detailed section of the school improvement plan.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to use mathematics in other subjects. As part of their work on water use, for example, older pupils kept a record of how much they used at home over the weekend, and presented their findings on a computer spreadsheet. A recent Mathematics Week proved very popular. Parents were encouraged to come in to school and play mathematics games with their children, while the pupils themselves were presented with challenges such as making a model person twice their height, but with accurately calculated dimensions.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths

- The subject co-ordinator provides imaginative leadership and effective management.
- ICT is used effectively, and planning ensures all aspects of the subject are taught.

Commentary

58. As it was not possible to observe a full lesson during the inspection, judgements are based on scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with staff. The work of pupils in Years 2 and 6 indicates that the majority are likely to attain at least average standards by the end of the year. This represents good achievement for these pupils.

59. Planning for science is based on national guidelines and covers all elements of the National Curriculum. Pupils in the Year 1/2 class sort materials found in everyday objects into natural and man-made categories and explain their different properties in very simple terms. They begin to

consider natural phenomena, such as our sense of smell, and they know that light comes from the sun and can be reflected off various surfaces. The different states of materials are explored through simple experiments. For example, they time how long ice cubes take to melt when placed in different parts of the classroom. Although some pupils are hampered by weak literacy skills, they successfully provide reasonable explanations for why they melt more quickly by the windowsill than in a cupboard. The samples seen indicate that much of their work is now being approached through practical investigations. This is good, and will underpin development further up the school of the skills needed to carry out science investigations competently. The school is rightly attempting to link science with other subjects in order to make it as relevant as possible for the pupils. However, the arrangements for doing this do not always ensure that the science element is covered as fully as it might be.

60. The curriculum for older pupils also covers the same physical and natural elements of science and links them, where appropriate, with their personal, social and health education. For example, they acquire factual information about the human body by studying the heart, lungs and circulation, and then discuss the implications that the use of alcohol and tobacco has on health. In physical aspects, pupils develop the understanding of light started lower down the school by making shadow puppets and pinhole cameras, and explaining how they work. Although pupils work hard at this and produce pleasing results, they are not challenged to extend their understanding of the underlying scientific principles by explaining what they have seen. For example, pupils stated that the image in a pinhole camera is upside down, but did not attempt to explain why this happens by reference to their diagrams.

61. The school's assessments and analysis of test results have shown that pupils are not yet sufficiently skilled at carrying out practical investigations. However, this has been included as a priority in the school's improvement plan, and inspection evidence indicates that this is already having a positive effect. In the briefly observed introduction to a Year 5/6 lesson, for example, the teacher provided a clear template for pupils to use in planning and carrying out an investigation into how light is reflected. Discussion and questioning directed pupils' attention to key aspects of the process: the need for a precise plan which identifies the method to be used and variables to be controlled, how information can be collected and, most importantly, interpreted accurately so that conclusions can be drawn. A school Science Week was recently devoted to promoting these activities, when a variety of stimulating and valuable opportunities were provided for pupils to watch, and join in with, the eccentric Professor Northski as she carried out experiments. The emphasis on posing questions and suggesting solutions was further developed through pupils' own investigations, such as building a structure from spaghetti to support an egg.

62. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Pupils' work and assessments are regularly checked. A portfolio of annotated work is maintained for staff to use as a guideline, and teaching is observed in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision. Better provision and pupils' achievement indicate that good improvement has been made since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **excellent**.

Main strengths

- By Year 6, pupils' competence is excellent and contributes to learning effectively in all subjects.
- Pupils use a wide range of ICT confidently, and view it as a tool to assist their learning.
- Leadership and management are excellent.

Commentary

63. Standards in ICT at the end of Year 2 are well above-average, and very high by Year 6. ICT is viewed as a tool to extend and enhance learning, and so its use is an integral part of pupils' work. A distinctive feature is that many pupils independently research and manipulate information to assist their learning. Pupils rapidly learn to log on and off the computer, and use the mouse with increasing accuracy to select tools and text and to move from one function to another. Younger pupils successfully create and manipulate images to illustrate stories such as the Three Bears. Older pupils combine pictures and text for class magazines. They have their preferred internet search engines and use these to access a wealth of information. For example, in the Year 5/6 class, pupils have researched the work of Andy Warhol as the basis for an art project. Computers are used as a design tool, exemplified in a project in which pupils designed their own bedrooms. They understand spreadsheets, and use these to create formulae to demonstrate the 7,468,574 times table. Routine use is made of digital photography and video. In physical education, for example, pupils video their own gymnastics sequences so that they can assess their quality and consider improvements. In science, the accuracy of experiments on falling parachutes is much improved because they are recorded on video and timed electronically from the playback.

64. There were no discrete lessons observed because teaching of ICT is integral to all subjects. Staff have a high level of confidence themselves, and so provide very good role models because they are seen using ICT for teaching and administration.

65. Leadership and management are excellent. Not only does the school benefit from impressive resources, but their use is firmly embedded in practice across the curriculum. Very good use is made of a computer technician to ensure that pupils and staff have access to ICT at all times. Improvement since the last inspection has been excellent.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Effective use of ICT was observed in nearly all lessons during the inspection and examples are provided in other subject sections of this report.

HUMANITIES

It was only possible during the inspection to observe one lesson in each of these subjects. Additional evidence was obtained from sampling pupils' work in history and geography, and from curriculum plans.

History

Provision in history is **very good**.

Main strengths

- Teaching in the lesson seen was excellent.
- Resources are good and readily available to pupils.

Commentary

67. From the lesson observed and work seen, standards are judged to be above-average and pupils are achieving very well. This is very good improvement since the last inspection.

68. Key features in the excellent lesson seen in Year 3/4 were the teacher's subject knowledge and high expectations, and the emphasis on historical investigation. The teacher started with a brief review of a previous lesson about the Sutton Hoo burial and what historians had learnt from it, followed with a vivid description of the Saxons that provided a very sound introduction to this period of history. Pupils were then expected to use secondary source material from texts provided by the teacher, and from their own internet searches, to draw conclusions about life in Saxon towns. The final session of the lesson was used by the teacher to draw information from pupils to confirm and share what they had learnt. All pupils contributed things they had discovered. Pupils with special

educational needs were equally successful because the teaching assistant gave them very good support in accessing the texts.

69. The school makes very good use of a range of resources, particularly old photographs of the school and its locality, and old objects such as a hand operated sewing machine. These support the teaching for younger pupils, who study Florence Nightingale for example, and older pupils who study the Victorians. Many are attractively displayed in the library area and constantly available for pupils' use. First-hand information is sought from visitors to the school who are able to describe what life was like when they were young. In a combined history, drama and literacy project, older pupils researched information on the locality and used the school's ICT resources to create and edit a light-hearted digital video guide to the area.

Geography

Provision in geography is **very good**.

Main strengths

- Teaching in the lesson seen was excellent.
- Very good use is made of ICT.

Commentary

70. From the lesson observed and work seen, standards are judged to be well above-average, and pupils are achieving very well. This is very good improvement since the last inspection.

71. An account of the lesson seen is given as an example of excellent practice in the Teaching and Learning section of this report.

72. Planning shows that pupils study their immediate locality, learn to represent it in simple maps, and compare it with contrasting places abroad or on an island. E-mail links with a school in Italy enhance this comparison for older pupils. They learn about physical features of the landscape such as mountains and rivers and that human activity has an impact on our environment. Older pupils consider the implications of this impact, for example by measuring their own water usage and by reflecting on the effect that building a by-pass has on the community.

Religious education

It was only possible to observe a single lesson during the inspection. From this, and examination of teachers' planning, provision in religious education is judged to be **satisfactory**.

73. Teachers' planning indicates that the school adheres to the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus for religious education. In the lesson observed, which considered why sacred texts such as the Bible and Koran are important, teaching was good and pupils' attained the standards expected. The teacher's good subject knowledge and questioning helped to make the lesson fun. As a result, by the end, pupils had begun to understand how Christians and Muslims view Christ and Mohammed, and why Muslims wash their hands before touching the Koran. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Three art lessons were seen during the inspection and pupils' work was looked at. No lessons were observed in design technology, music and physical education so it was not possible to judge provision in these subjects.

Art and design

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

Main strengths

- Teaching is consistently good in all classes.
- ICT is very well used by pupils for researching ideas and experimenting with colour and design.

Commentary

74. Pupils attain above-average standards in art. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.

75. Teaching is good and pupils achieve very well. Effective use is made of pupils' sketchbooks for experimenting with drawing and the use of different media, and for assessing their progress. A good example of this was seen in a very good Year 3/4 lesson in which pupils drew designs for their own Celtic brooches. They first drew a brooch freehand from an actual example available in the classroom, then gathered more printed examples for which they had searched and downloaded off an internet site. From these, they experimented with their own designs and created a finished drawing. This was then reproduced in card and string which attractively emulated the real examples they had studied. Teachers have good subject knowledge. As well as encouraging pupils to create their own work, their understanding and appreciation of artists is fostered through visits to the National Gallery, for example, and by the use of the interactive whiteboard to manipulate a picture and demonstrate how the artist created it.

76. First hand observational drawing underpins much of pupils' work. From this they experiment with printing in single and multiple colours, beginning with simple wax resist and monoprints. They use a variety of media including pastels, ink and paint, create collages and some display their work as computer presentations, as well as using it for practical purposes such as making their own Christmas cards. Teachers attach strong importance to displaying pupils' work attractively and providing a visually attractive environment. As a result, pupils respond positively and present their own work with care and patience.

77. ICT provides a strong stimulus for pupils, broadens their knowledge and extends their technical competence. Year 1 and 2 pupils, for example, confidently used computers in an art lesson to design Joseph's coat of many colours. They were adept at manipulating various tools in the program, such as cutting, pasting and changing colours, and efficiently experimented with shape and colour, constantly altering and refining their work in a way not easily done using conventional materials. Year 5 and 6 pupils, meanwhile, use digital cameras and the internet as a resource for studying the work of Lichtenstien and creating their own work in his style.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

Although only one lesson was seen in this subject, evidence from discussion with staff, pupils and parents, together with the school's documentation, indicates that provision for PSHE is **good**. The school is currently reviewing its scheme of work in this area so that staff can readily address the particular need of pupils as they arise. For example, the Year 6 lesson observed during the inspection was one of a series specifically planned by the teacher to address a friendship issue that had arisen amongst a group of pupils in the class.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2
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	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).