

INSPECTION REPORT

BOXMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117107

Headteacher: Mr N Patterson

Lead inspector: Mr J Sorsby

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd December 2003

Inspection number: 255574

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:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	205
School address:	Cowper Road Boxmoor Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire
Postcode:	HP1 1PF
Telephone number:	(01442) 402244
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Kinley
Date of previous inspection:	6 th July 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Boxmoor Primary School is an average size school located in the village of Boxmoor, which is now part of Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire. The main school and nursery are housed in old but well maintained buildings, the latter being a temporary structure. Pupils are taught in single age classes, ranging in size from 28 to 30. Almost all pupils are of white British or other white backgrounds, with a small number being of mixed backgrounds or of Indian origin. All pupils speak English as their first language. Sixteen per cent of pupils have a broad range of special educational needs and two per cent have statements of special educational needs. The former proportion is about average while the latter is well above average. No pupils are in public care. Eight per cent of pupils joined or left the school at times other than normal in the past year, which is below average. Overall, pupils' attainment on joining the school is above average. There is a new acting headteacher who has been appointed headteacher from April 2004, and there have been very extensive staff changes. All teachers in Years 3 to 6 are new to the school. The school achieved Investor in People status in 2002 and received a Schools Achievement Award from the DfES in 2001 and 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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22178	K Robertson	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with special educational needs English Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Physical education Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school, which, under new leadership, is developing rapidly. It provides good value for money. Children in the foundation stage and pupils in the school achieve well and their standards are above average by the end of Year 6. They have very good attitudes, behave well and attend very well. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is good overall. The school provides a well-enriched curriculum, cares well for its pupils and works very well with parents. Leadership and management are good. Deficiencies in the school's accommodation limit pupils' progress.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is very good provision in nursery and reception.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and the pupils learn and achieve well, reaching above average standards. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. The school provides well for pupils of all abilities.
- The leadership, management and governance of the school are good.
- There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and for their personal and health education, resulting in their good attitudes and behaviour.
- The presentation of pupils' work and their writing are very good.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory resulting in some pupils' standards in some subjects being below what they could be.

The school was last inspected in July 1998 since when it has improved very well. The quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum, pupils' standards, relationships with parents and the community and the quality of leadership, management and governance have all improved. All issues identified in 1998 have been addressed well.

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	A*	A	B
mathematics	A	A	A	C
science	A	A	A	C

Key: A - in the top five per cent nationally; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average;*

D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Pupils achieve well throughout the school, except in one class. Children join the nursery or reception classes with standards that are above those expected for their age. By the time they complete their year in reception, most have exceeded the goals expected of them. Throughout Years 1 to 6 pupils make good progress and in the national tests for eleven-year-old pupils in 2003, standards in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average. In the national tests for seven-year-old pupils in 2003, standards in mathematics were well above average, in writing they were above average but in reading they were below average. This was because of weaknesses in pupils' comprehension skills. The school identified this problem and has, for the past two terms, been emphasising this aspect of pupils' learning, and the same pupils are now reading at standards that are above average. Current standards in reading and mathematics in Year 2 and English, mathematics and science in Year 6 are above average. Standards of writing in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good**. Pupils' attitudes to school and studying are very good. They behave well and develop very good relationships. The rate of the pupils' attendance and their punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education being provided is good, as is the quality of teaching. As a consequence of recent improvement teaching is very good in the foundation stage. Teaching is good in almost every class throughout the rest of the school. All teaching is at least satisfactory. Teachers assess well what pupils know, understand and can do and make good use of the information to ensure that lessons are appropriately challenging for each pupil. Pupils receive good guidance on how to improve their standards and good counselling with regards to their personal development. There is a very good range of activities in the foundation stage. A good curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is well enriched by extra-curricular activities that motivate pupils and contribute to their good progress. Pupils' progress in some year groups and some subjects is limited by deficiencies in the accommodation. Pupils are well cared for and feel valued. In lessons this contributes to their confidence and their good learning. Parents play a particularly good role in the school volunteering to help in lessons; parents support their children's learning well. The school's strong links with the community, including industry, contribute well to pupils' standards.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is under the leadership of an acting headteacher appointed in September 2003, who has now been appointed to the substantive post from April 2004. She is leading the school very well. Of particular merit is the school's excellent commitment to the full inclusion of all pupils in all activities, regardless of ability or disability. Also excellent is the role model provided by the headteacher; this has motivated all staff and resulted in a very strong team being established in a very short time, all teachers in Years 3 to 6 being new. Because of the newness of some subject co-ordinators, management is not as strong as leadership, its overall effectiveness being good. The governance of the school is also good. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and make a good contribution to setting its direction and supporting its inclusive ethos. Governors fulfil all their statutory duties well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents expressed strong, positive and supportive views on a wide range of aspects of the school. Only the range of extra-curricular activities and aspects of communications with parents received some criticism, although inspection judgement is that these are good. The school regularly canvasses pupils' views, and these are overwhelmingly positive. Pupils like their school and are proud to attend.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

Enhance the learning environment and improve pupils' standards by dealing with a range of accommodation and resource issues.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. In ICT, achievement is satisfactory throughout the school, as it is in physical education in Years 3 to 6. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education are above average in Years 2 and 6, while in ICT they are average. Standards have improved in science and ICT but have declined slightly in reading.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' writing in Years 2 and 6 is very good as is the presentation of their work. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils make similarly good progress to all other pupils. Pupils' achievement in ICT is restricted by limitations of the accommodation.

Commentary

1. In the national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2003, pupils' standards were above average in writing, well above average in mathematics but below average in reading. Compared to similar schools they were average in writing, well above average in mathematics and well below average in reading. The latter was because of weaknesses in pupils' comprehension skills. The school identified this problem and has, for the past two terms, been emphasising this aspect of pupils' learning. The same pupils are now reading at standards that are above average. Their standards in writing are now well above average, and in mathematics they are above average.

2. Standards in the tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 demonstrated pupils' good achievement. In English, mathematics and science they were well above the national average. Compared to similar schools they were above average in English, and average in mathematics and science. These comparisons with similar schools cannot be relied upon. They are based on the progress pupils made between the tests they sat at the end of Year 2 in 1999 and their results in 2003. There is evidence that the tests in 1999 were incorrectly marked, thus not being a firm basis on which to monitor progress. What is clear is that their standards were well above average in 2003, and as they joined the school with standards that were above average, they achieved well.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.4 (30.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.8 (28.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.2 (29.9)	28.3 (28.6)

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

3. Most children join the school either in the nursery or reception. Their standards in reception are above those expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1, children have exceeded the targets expected of them, some significantly so. Pupils currently in nursery and reception are benefiting from recently improved teaching, which is now very good as a consequence of much improved management. This provides an even firmer basis for their future learning.

4. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is good and current pupils make good progress, achieving well. This is so for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils. In Year 2 pupils' standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average. In writing, standards are well above average. In mathematics, science, religious education and design and technology, standards are above average. In ICT and history standards are average. In ICT this is because pupils do not have the opportunity to systematically practice their developing skills because of limitations of the accommodation. Inspectors were unable to judge standards in geography, art and design, music or physical education.

5. Between Years 3 and 6 teaching overall is good and pupils progress well. Little direct correlation can be drawn between the quality of teaching and the standards current pupils reach because all the teachers in Years 3 to 6 are new to the school. Pupils now in Year 6 are on course to reach above average standards in English, mathematics, and science, and above expectations for their age in religious education, history and design and technology. Standards in English, mathematics and science are slightly lower than those of the previous Year 6 pupils because they are less able than their predecessors. Pupils' standards in art and design and physical education are those expected for their age. In ICT standards are also in line with expectations, as a consequence of the difficulties encountered in teaching ICT because of the limitations of the accommodation. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils make similarly good progress to all other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

6. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and studying. They are very well motivated and act very responsibly. They behave well and there have been no exclusions. Pupils form very strong friendships and relationships. Their attendance rate and punctuality are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like their school and their lessons.
- Pupils act very responsibly and show great initiative, playing a major role in school life. They are very enterprising.
- Pupils behave very well except in a small number of lessons that lack stimulation.
- Pupils' attendance rate is very good.

Commentary

7. Among the strengths of this school are the respect pupils show for each other and adults, the respect they receive in return and the very positive learning environment that results. Many pupils spoke to inspectors of their pride in their school, how much they like their lessons and teachers and, among older pupils, of how sad they will be to leave. With confirmation from her group of friends around her, one pupil spoke of how her teacher made learning, fun. Pupils' liking of the school is exemplified by their high rate of attendance. Several eloquently expressed how they became upset if they ever had to miss a day at school. Parents confirm that their children like school.

8. By the time they move to secondary education, most pupils have become mature young people ready for the challenges that face them. They develop a keen sense of their self-worth, because of the respect in which each is held by teachers and support staff. They also have a very good understanding of right and wrong, and of how society works best when people help each other. For example, many enterprising pupils initiate and participate in activities for other pupils and play a very active role in the school council. The school is providing well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

9. The pupils are encouraged to use their initiative, for example, a group of Year 5 pupils, without prompting from the school, decided they wanted to raise money for cancer research. They

approached the acting headteacher and were given permission to run a raffle, which they did very successfully, including obtaining the prizes. Other pupils wanted to form a dance club. Again, with the school's permission, they now have a lunchtime club that they run themselves.

10. The school council plays a very significant role in the school. The councillors' views and concerns are highly respected by staff and governors. For example, they were given the opportunity to meet candidates for the headship of the school, and to express their views confidentially to governors. As a matter of procedure, minutes of council meetings are prominently displayed in the hall, as is the written response from the headteacher to the matters raised. Among the council's recent requests being acted upon by the school is the establishment of a homework club.

11. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated in all areas of school life and participate well in lessons. They are successful in joining in because of the good support they receive from teaching assistants. This support is unobtrusive, but ensures that pupils concentrate and get the most from lessons. They develop very good relationships with their teachers and helpers.

12. Pupils' behaviour in most lessons and around the school is very good. However, behaviour is found to be good overall because in a small number of classes for older pupils, some pupils take advantage of their teacher's difficulties in managing behaviour and consequently, lessons proceed at a slower pace.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.5	School data :	0.0
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

13. Boxmoor Primary School provides its pupils with a good quality of education. The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well. There is a good range of interesting activities and lessons, well suited to the needs and interests of pupils and well enhanced through extra-curricular activities. Provision meets the needs of all pupils regardless of their level of ability or their special educational needs. However, the standards reached by some pupils in some subjects are lower than they might be because of deficiencies in the school's accommodation.

Teaching and learning

14. Teaching and learning are very good in the foundation stage and good in the rest of the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. A small amount of satisfactory teaching of older pupils was seen. Teachers have a good knowledge of pupils' learning and progress and use the information well in planning their lessons. The quality of teaching has improved with significantly more teaching that is good or better. The quality of assessment has been maintained since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers carefully plan lessons, based on a good understanding of what pupils know, understand and can do, with clear learning objectives that have a positive impact on pupils' learning and standards.
- High expectations that pupils will do their best and present their work well, result in pupils taking pride in their work.
- There is good emphasis on reinforcing literacy and numeracy skills while teaching other subjects.
- Good use is made of questioning to check pupils' understanding and make them think carefully about the reasoning for their answers.
- Well informed support staff work effectively with small groups or individuals.
- Teachers' use interactive whiteboards well, motivating pupils as visual demonstrations are used to provide clear explanations that ensure all pupils understand how to finish their tasks successfully and to explain difficult concepts.
- Some lessons for older pupils lacked pace because the behaviour of a small number of pupils was not well controlled.

Commentary

15. Teaching in the nursery and reception class is very good and pupils learn very well. In the rest of the school teaching is overwhelmingly good and pupils learn well. Only for a small minority of older pupils was teaching less than good overall, it being satisfactory. This was because of a less structured way of managing pupils' behaviour in these lessons, which gave a few less motivated pupils the opportunity to misbehave, resulting in a slower pace in the lessons and less learning taking place.

16. The characteristically high expectations teachers have of their pupils work, including how it is presented and written up, were exemplified in two excellent lessons seen in which teachers' motivation of pupils was exceptional and pupils responded by concentrating exceptionally well, working very hard and achieving all of the objectives set for them.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2(7%)	7(23%)	16(53%)	5(17%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

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

17. Throughout the school good use is made of detailed monitoring of what pupils know, understand and can do. The records kept by teachers ensure that subsequent lessons are well focused with clear learning objectives that build naturally on pupils' prior work and well planned to take account of individual pupils' learning needs and the next step each needs to make. Teachers also plan well the contribution their support staff can make to assist those pupils most in need of extra help. Data derived from other sources is also well used. For example, the school identified comprehension as a problem affecting pupils' reading standards in Year 2, and greater emphasis is therefore being placed on developing pupils' comprehension skills. In all lessons care is taken to ensure that opportunities are seized to reinforce pupils' developing literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers are particularly skilful at framing questions that make pupils think not just of an answer but also explain how they arrived at their answer. This helps all pupils in the class to develop their problem solving skills. Planning is very effectively ensuring that the school meets the needs of each pupil, including those who have special educational needs, those who are higher attaining and those who are gifted and talented in particular areas.

18. In all subjects of the curriculum, with the exception of art, geography and music in which too little evidence was available to make a secure judgement, the quality of teaching is good. This results in pupils learning well. Because there has been a significant change in teaching staff in September 2003, with all the teachers in Years 3 to 6 being new to the school, no direct correlation can be drawn between the good quality of teaching seen during the inspection, and pupils' standards in tests in the Summer of 2003.

19. A particular feature of the school is the availability in most classes of computerised white boards. These are used to great effect by teachers to demonstrate what pupils are expected to do, explain difficult concepts, and to illustrate their answers to pupils' questions. Teachers have become very skilled in the use of white boards in a relatively short period of time. For example, teachers were seen "calling up" colour photos from the Internet, that helped pupils understanding of the concept being taught. The use of interactive boards is clearly helping to further motivate pupils. When pupils saw teachers new to the school and to this technology struggling a little, they were only too pleased to demonstrate the use of the boards to the teacher!

20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and the very competent support staff, appropriately modify teaching methods and resources to enable those with special educational needs to make similar progress to other pupils. As a result they learn well alongside their fellow pupils and when they are withdrawn from the classroom in small groups.

21. Parents express the view that teaching is good. They note that teachers expect their children to work hard and deal very fairly with them. They state that teachers provide help as required by pupils and use homework appropriately to reinforce their children's learning. Parents express satisfaction with the progress their children are making.

The curriculum

22. The curriculum provides a good range of opportunities that meet the needs of all pupils and caters well to their interests. It meets all statutory requirements and ensures progression in pupils' learning. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend their learning and interests through extra-curricular activities. The accommodation, which is unsatisfactory, adversely affects the standards some groups of pupils achieve. Resources for learning are good, except in the nursery, where they are satisfactory. The quality of the curriculum has improved throughout the school since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good adaptation of the curriculum helps pupils reinforce their literacy and ICT skills.
- The curriculum is well adapted to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those who are physically disabled.
- The curriculum in nursery and reception is very good, and meets children's needs very well.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities including sports and arts.
- "Faculty Week" addresses the interests of pupils in a highly motivating manner.
- The school has good learning resources.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory, particularly in the nursery, Year 1 and in relation to ICT.

Commentary

23. The school makes the very best use possible of its accommodation. However, the building suffers from many problems that limit the progress pupils make, particularly in some classes and some subjects.

24. Accommodation for the nursery children is poor. The nursery is housed in an old demountable building, which despite the teacher's best efforts at keeping it bright and colourful with high quality displays, is difficult to keep at a usable standard. Because the school hall, which is

across the playground from the nursery, is used for physical education, children have to change in the hall rather than their own classroom. This results in clothing being in the way during lessons in physical education. The arrangement by which a private nursery uses the school's nursery building for a lunch club and each afternoon restricts the impact of the very good teaching in the nursery class. The nursery teacher has to vacate the room immediately the children leave at lunchtime, to make way for the private nursery lunch club and is unable to work in the classroom, for example, on displays or preparation for the next day's activities. This detracts from the quality of work and hence from children's learning. There are also issues and sometimes disputes about the ownership of resources and the right to display children's work on display boards. For example, the school recently had to purchase an additional digital camera for the nursery after the right to use the existing one was disputed. The current arrangements with the private nursery are greatly disadvantaging the nursery children in the school.

25. The pupils in Year 1 use a classroom that is the only means of access to another classroom and lessons are often disturbed by pupils walking through. Year 1 makes good use of the fiction library, which is an extension of the classroom. It is, for example, the only area where pupils can sit together on the carpet for whole class sessions because the remainder of the room is too long and narrow. Because it is an extension of the classroom, the library is inaccessible to other classes during lesson time, without further disruption to Year 1. This is clearly a problem in a school where reading comprehension has been an issue.

26. Learning resources are good overall. Among the strongest features of resources is the availability in most classrooms of an interactive white board. These are used very well. It is, however, difficult for lessons to be executed in which all pupils have the opportunity to practice using their ICT skills. Teachers' ingenuity and planning often overcome this problem, but at a price. For example, a very good geography lesson was seen in Year 6 in which pupils had to use the Internet to research rivers – and produce a multi-media presentation. In order to do so, some pupils were working in the classroom, some in the Year 5 room while those pupils were swimming, and some in the non-fiction library area. Each pupil could only spend half the lesson on a computer, and the supervision of pupils and availability of the teacher to answer pupils' questions could not be as effective as it would have been in a single computer suite.

27. Areas of the school, such as the hall, were very cold. Despite this, children from the nursery stripped to their underwear for a physical education lesson. Documentation shows that in summer the hall and classrooms are far too hot. Attempts have been made to introduce air-purifiers and conditioners, but in the confined space of classrooms, this creates too much noise for lessons to proceed while they are switched on.

28. All of these deficiencies detract from the otherwise good curriculum with its varied and interesting activities, and prevent pupils making the progress of which they are otherwise capable. The curriculum is well planned, meeting all the requirements of the National Curriculum and including religious education. Great care has been taken to ensure that opportunities are created and used to reinforce pupils' literacy and ICT skills when ever possible. Many subject managers are new to their role, but the curriculum has never the less been efficiently monitored to ensure it is being effectively taught. A particular feature, "Faculty Week" enables all pupils to develop their interest in particular topics, such as books, citizenship or science, as the whole school spends a week on project-based work. This increases pupils' enjoyment and motivation, and helps them to achieve well. Staff, parents and some pupils themselves, provide a good range of extra-curricular activities, enabling pupils to further develop their learning while enjoying their interests.

29. The curriculum for pupils in nursery and reception is particularly well developed. It demonstrates a very good understanding of how young children learn, and provides them with a wide range of activities that meet their needs, fire their imaginations and cater for their interests.

30. The overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All pupils, including those with statements of special educational needs are well integrated. The school makes full use of outside support agencies and takes all opportunities to use their expertise and advice to the full. The

curriculum is well adapted to take account of the particular needs of pupils with special educational needs, including those who are physically disabled.

31. A significant minority of parents expressed the view that the range of available extra-curricular activities was insufficient. This was not borne out by inspection.

Care, guidance and support

32. As at the time of the last inspection, the school cares for its pupils well. It fulfils its legal duties in respect of health and safety and strives to provide a safe and inclusive environment. It skilfully promotes the academic and personal development of its pupils and provides very good quality support and guidance for them. The school very effectively involves pupils in its work through the school council.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good use is made of the school council to provide pupils with a voice in the running of the school.
- Good use is made of the “Achievement Tree” to motivate and promote personal development.
- Pupils have access to well-informed support, advice and guidance, linked to assessment and raising standards.

Commentary

33. The school cares for its pupils well and parents confirm that their children are well looked after. It fulfils its legal duties in respect of health and safety and strives to provide a safe environment. Child protection procedures are in place and a member of staff over-looks the support provided, including for its most vulnerable pupils. Pastoral support is good and most pupils confirm that they feel at ease approaching a known adult in school to discuss their anxieties, although some older pupils are still building relationships with their teachers, who are new to the school, and would be more hesitant in approaching them. Classroom bases have been re-organised to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with special educational and physical needs and the school promotes healthy eating well.

34. Effective arrangements exist for the induction of new pupils. These include a special lunch for parents and children. Children joining the reception class have good opportunities to spend time in school, along side their parents, and to get to know their teacher.

35. Very good provision is made for pupils’ personal development. It includes strategies designed to raise self worth and celebrate the efforts and achievements of the individual child. The school’s Achievement Tree is valued by pupils who receive awards with pride. Achievement assemblies are thoughtfully managed by teachers, to promote the spiritual, moral, social and academic development of their pupils. For example the colour of the leaves pupils receive for their tree signify specific attributes such as gentleness, honesty and concentration. The school council is developing well and provides pupils with very good opportunities to become involved in the work of the school and to have a voice in how it is run. Council members have mature attitudes and embrace the opportunities the school provides to represent other pupils and suggest improvements to school routines. For example, the school council has been effective in extending some sporting activities to younger pupils and has asked for the introduction of a homework club. The council has also provided opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative in school and this is demonstrated by a regular dance club run by girls in Year 6. The school values pupils’ views highly. For example, minutes of the School Council are prominently displayed as is the headteacher’s written response to pupils’ suggestions.

36. Pupils’ individual education plans are used well to address academic and behavioural problems. Teachers remind pupils frequently about their targets and how they should work towards them.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

37. The school's links with parents, the community and other schools have improved since the previous inspection and are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works very well with parents, enabling them to support their children's learning.
- The school has very good links with the community, enhancing the curriculum and promoting learning.
- There are good links with other schools and colleges, promoting the pupils' achievement.
- Systems for seeking the views of parents are effective but because of their newness are not yet well entrenched in the school's procedures.

Commentary

38. The pre-inspection meeting and parent questionnaire indicate that many parents are now happier with what the school provides for their children and the way in which it works with them. The start of this academic year has seen changes in school with a new acting head teacher and new teaching staff in Years 3 to 6. Some parental dissatisfaction was expressed relating to a perceived shortage of extra-curricular activities and the extent of the school's communications with parents. Neither of these concerns is confirmed by inspection and both the range of extra-curricular activities and the communications are judged to be good.

39. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents are now a strength of the school although systems to seek parents' views are still developing and have not yet become entrenched. Parents are delighted with the appointment of the acting head teacher and her friendly approach to them and their children. The school gives parents plenty of information about the work their children do in school and about forthcoming events. School reports provide clear information on pupils' achievements, the standards they have reached and the effort pupils have made, and they provide parents with an opportunity to contribute their own views on their child's progress. Parents work as volunteers in school, assisting teachers and supporting the children's learning. Examples of parent helpers contributing well to pupils' progress during the inspection were science lessons in Years 1 and 2.

40. Parents make good use of reading diaries to communicate with teachers about the homework their children have done. The school has held few workshops for parents but recent meetings to explain national tests and the numeracy strategy have been very well attended.

41. The school's association makes a significant impact on the social development of pupils through functions which foster family and community activities. Funds raised by the association help significantly to improve the learning resources in school.

42. Links with the local community are very good and help to support learning. For example, pupils visit local places of worship such as temples and synagogues as part of their multi-cultural studies and numerous visitors to school extend pupils' understanding of the wider community and their knowledge of the subjects they study. For example, local veterinary surgeons came into school to judge the annual pet show, whilst work on communications and reading in Years 5 and 6 is enhanced through the involvement of staff from a national telecommunications company.

43. Links with local secondary schools are reciprocal and strong. The school welcomes students from the high schools to work with their children and the high schools help to provide very good support in areas of particular interest. For example, pupils are able to enjoy drama workshops, sporting opportunities and music classes. They are able to build relationships with tutors and pupils from other schools in the area. These arrangements have a positive effect on the transfer to

secondary school of pupils in Year 6. In addition, ex-pupils are encouraged to return to school and the school maintains an active interest in their personal achievements and progress.

44. Parents are well informed on the progress of their children with special educational needs. Contacts made are both formal and informal and can be initiated by either staff at the school or by the parents. The targets pupils are working towards are fully shared with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

45. The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The acting headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by the governing body, which carries out all its statutory requirements well. Senior staff manage their areas of responsibility well. Overall, the leadership and management of the school has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is excellent commitment to ensuring that the school provides well for all its pupils.
- The excellent role model provided by the acting headteacher and senior managers has resulted in a very strong team in very little time.
- There is a very clear vision of what the school is trying to achieve, this being very well linked to school development planning and budgeting.
- The acting headteacher and senior managers provide very good leadership and manage the school well.
- Governors are well informed and play a good role in shaping the school's development. They carry out all their statutory duties well.
- Because all teachers in Years 3 to 6 are new, this is having an adverse short-term impact on the leadership and management of some subjects.

Commentary

46. It is as a consequence of the very good leadership provided by the acting headteacher, and the good support received from senior colleagues and governors, that the school has coped well with its recent change of leadership and with the influx of a large number of newly appointed teachers.

47. The acting headteacher, who was previously the deputy headteacher and has been appointed to become the headteacher, provides very strong and effective leadership. In a very short period of time she has succeeded in developing a strong senior management team, which includes one new member of staff and a strong and effective team of teachers and support staff. Consequently, essential aspects of the management of the school, such as ensuring that the school meets the needs of each individual pupil, have been maintained during a time of great change. The acting headteacher provides an excellent role model, being hard working, sensitive to the needs of all and an excellent motivator of staff and pupils. Senior managers take their lead from the acting headteacher, and they too are excellent role models for all in the school community. Most parents express the view that the school is well led and managed.

48. The Foundation Stage is very well led. Planning is detailed and comprehensive forming a sound basis for the very good provision for children of this age. There is a very clear vision for future developments and a commitment from the team to make sure children achieve well. The impact of the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is, however, diminished by the longstanding contractual arrangements with the private nursery that shares the use of the nursery building and resources.

49. The leadership and management of special needs provision is good and pupils make good progress. Good quality policies, procedures and practices related to all aspects of special needs provision are in place. The school's procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs

work well, and arrangements for monitoring and recording their progress are thorough. There are constructive links with outside agencies and with specialists who work with the school to support pupils. All statutory requirements in regard to special educational needs provision are fully met.

50. The school's finances are well managed. Reserves of funds, which had, at nine per cent, been high, are now at six per cent and are being well used to develop the school's accommodation through the creation, for example, of an ICT resources and technician's room and additional storage space, as well as dealing with staff development, which is of a high calibre. Performance management is very well developed and integrated in to the school's planning, resulting the very good staff development enhancing the quality of provision throughout the school. Given the amount of money the school spends each year, the quality of teaching provided and the academic and personal progress pupils make, the school is judged to be providing good value for money.

51. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and plays an active role in helping to shape the school's development. Governors are well informed, knowledgeable about education, proactive and supportive. They carry out all their statutory responsibilities well, including the recent adoption of a race equality policy and its ongoing monitoring.

52. The acting headteacher, governors and senior staff are all very aware of the deficiencies of the school's accommodation, and have tried hard to find ways to overcome them despite the limitations of the buildings themselves and the restrictions caused by long standing contractual arrangement.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	550253	Balance from previous year	50460
Total expenditure	561576	Balance carried forward to the next	39137
Expenditure per pupil	2339		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and has improved since the last inspection. It is now a strength of the school. There is a newly developed outside play area, which extends the opportunities for play. The nursery, which had only just been introduced at the time of the previous inspection, is now established and offers very good part-time education. However, the effectiveness of the nursery is limited by the accommodation problems described earlier. Children transfer from the nursery to the full-time reception class in the autumn or spring terms depending on their ages. In both classes there is a good balance between adult led and child-initiated activities resulting in children gaining in confidence and independence. A well enriched and varied curriculum, very good planning based on very good assessment of what children know, understand and can do, and very effective teaching methods result in children achieving well. Assessment is thorough and constructive, being very well used to determine and meet children's individual needs. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. However, in all aspects of children's learning, this improvement has been too recent to be reflected in the overall progress children make. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very supportive relationships are established so children feel very confident and happy.
- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's development, and the majority of children are in line to exceed the expected goals by the end of the year.

Commentary

55. Most children start nursery and reception with above average skills in personal and social development. Children in both classes are happy and eager to learn. As a result of very good teaching they are familiar with and responsive to classroom routines such as giving courteous replies when the register is taken and keeping to the rules about the number of children who can be in the home corner at any one time. The staff are very good role models, listening closely to what children have to say and showing that their contributions are valued. Very supportive relationships result in children feeling very happy and secure. Children accept they must listen when someone is speaking. In the reception class all children have planning diaries which they complete before they work on activities of their choice. The value of the diaries is that having negotiated with each other about their tasks, children have to think about and be accountable for what they have done, This makes the children more aware of their achievements. The diaries are helpful to staff who check that all children gain a full range of experiences. Further good development of personal independence is seen in children's increased ability to select activities and resources, take turns, tidy away their own equipment and do helpful jobs around the classrooms.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to promote children's language skills so children progress well.
- Teaching is very good and children achieve well in this area of learning.
- Computer programs are used effectively to encourage imaginative written work.

Commentary

57. Children arrive at the nursery with above average communication skills. They progress well in both classes and indications are that the majority of children are on course to exceed expectations in this area of learning. All staff take every opportunity during activities to develop children's vocabulary through probing questions and consistent insistence that children listen to the contribution of others. Time is used effectively for children to talk about anything that might be special, reception children being keen to ask each other questions about their toys, holidays and families. Good opportunities are given for imaginative play. During the inspection the structured play theme was 'space' and a delightful space station was set up complete with flashing light, silver suits and boots, oxygen cylinders (made from fizzy drink bottles) and a control centre. This provision motivated children very well and gave rise to lots of imaginative conversation.

58. Parents support their children well, encouraging interest and familiarity with storybooks. Nursery children make a good start in developing literacy skills as they pick out their own names for self-registration and enjoy the regular library sessions when they sit on special cushions and talk with adults about pictures and words in their storybooks. Reception children associate words with meaning and enjoy the wide range of stories read to them; they listened attentively to *I Want To See The Moon*, aware of the significance of the title and author. In both classes resources and equipment are well labelled so children become familiar with words in the environment.

59. In the nursery, children have their own place mats for snack-time. These have a dual purpose so that the children happily consolidate their early writing skills as they trace over their names on their mats with their fingers before snacks arrive. Children in the reception class learn to write their own stories, the majority already forming recognisable letters. As a result of guided writing sessions they are confident to write up to three sentences with higher attaining children using full stops and capital letters. Children make good progress in expressing their thoughts through writing, some able to write simple words correctly and others able to spell phonetically. The teacher is rightly proud of the imaginative responses children give, for example 'I found an alien. I got some rock and gave it to him and he threw the rocks at the baddie' and from another child 'I went to Jupiter and saw a friendly alien'. Adults provide children with well-designed sheets to write on that are lined and contain picture frames; these help children to understand the importance of tidy presentation and to take pride in their work. Good use is made of computer programs to encourage children to talk imaginatively and adults to record their stories. When printed these stories give children a good sense of achievement and encourage them to create more stories.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

60. Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of computer programs to develop children's ability to count and calculate
- Teachers plan a wide range of opportunities to promote children's mathematical development
- Children achieve well.

Commentary

61. Children achieve well and most exceed the targets expected of them by the end of reception. Teachers and support staff encourage children to join in with a wide range of counting activities. At registration in the reception class children count how many are present and then compare with the numbers from the previous day. One of the first daily activities in each class is to review the weather chart so children learn to sequence numbers and the days of the week, and learn the names of the months of the year. A sense of time is introduced when nursery children examine the Advent calendar and eagerly look forward to Christmas. Very good teaching in the reception class, typified by lively pace helped children to appreciate repeating patterns, recognise 'doubling' and understand odd and even numbers. Opportunities are frequently taken for children to sing number songs and count for fun; the topic of 'space' was ideal so children could enjoy counting back from ten and twenty down to zero and 'blast off'. Displays in the nursery show children learn colour names and the names of simple shapes. When they go into reception their knowledge of shape is extended to include three-dimensional shapes such as cubes and spheres with easily accessible displays well-labelled to remind children of what they have learned. Good use is made of computer programs for children to investigate and consolidate their understanding of patterns, shape and symmetry.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

62. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching or of standards reached because insufficient lessons were seen that dealt with this aspect of children's learning. Children have regular access to classroom computers and are able to select, click and drag and drop pictures and numbers when they make pictures or play number games. Photographs show nursery children celebrating Chinese New Year, making bread rolls, sandwiches and toast, indicating that the curriculum is broad and provides a good range of activities. Reception children learn about celebrations for Divali and have access to the well-resourced discovery table where they can investigate torches, colour filters, prisms and kaleidoscopes to broaden their understanding of the world around them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

63. Provision for children's physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching that challenges and motivates children to do their best in physical activities.
- Very good planning includes a good range of indoor and outside activities to support children's physical development.
- The separation of the nursery from the hall in the main building presents problems, limits the effectiveness of the provision and restricts children's progress.

Commentary

64. Children arrive in nursery with above average physical skills; they achieve well and are on course to exceed the expected goals at the end of the reception year. Since the last inspection a new outside play area has been developed and is proving to be a useful facility. For example, children are now able to use wheeled toys and to plant spring bulbs in their garden area. Nursery children are in a separate building and have to go into the main building for their physical education lessons. The arrangements are not ideal, children have to use the toilets in the classroom and then get on their coats and hats before leading over to the main building, during the inspection it happened to be raining which added to the difficulty. Children then had to undress for their lesson in the hall which, as it was a Monday morning was very cold. Despite the inconvenience staff were very successful in motivating children to use the large equipment, making good progress in controlling their movements, gaining confidence in jumping, balancing and climbing. Reception children are adept in their threading activities and enjoy making repeating patterns with a range of differently

coloured and shaped beads. This physical activity helps them understand mathematical patterns. There are daily opportunities for children to explore construction kits and building games, developing increasing control as they do so.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

65. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning in creative development because insufficient lessons were seen that dealt with this aspect of children's learning. Very good opportunities are provided for imaginative play through provision for role play such as in the clothes shop and space station. Displays, photographs and teachers' planning show good opportunities for children to mix colours, paint, cut and stick to make pictures and to use musical instruments. In the reception class children are able to take advantage of the well-chosen computer programs to make illustrations match their stories.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

66. Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Planning to meet the needs of individual pupils is good.
- Standards in writing through out the school are well above average.
- Standards in reading are not as high as other aspects of the subject because of weaknesses in pupils' comprehension skills.

Commentary

67. The good quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection. Overall, standards in the current Year 6 are above average. This is lower than the standards achieved by Year 6 pupils last year because this year's Year 6 pupils are less able than their predecessors. Good leadership and management ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. There is a clear vision for development. All pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve well with a high proportion attaining levels above the national average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average throughout the school, whilst standards in writing are well above average. Standards in writing are due to the teachers' good knowledge of the literacy strategy and because writing skills are taught and applied very well in subjects other than English. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

68. In speaking and listening, pupils are encouraged to make contributions and express their opinions and do so articulately. Questions posed by teachers encourage and challenge pupils to develop their speaking skills. Older pupils communicate ideas and opinions fluently, showing increasing confidence and maturity.

69. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading and by Year 6 the majority are enthusiastic and independent readers. They discuss characterisation well. For instance, following the reading of an extract from *Why Whales Came*, pupils in Year 6 recognise that the main character is a 'loner' and use text to support their views. Both teachers and support staff give good support and encouragement to pupils with special educational needs and their progress is monitored well. Their achievement is good and they develop a range of strategies to help them to read. Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 are lower than in other aspects of English, and were below the national average in 2003, because of some pupils' difficulties with comprehension. This weakness was identified by the school, and a greater emphasis is being placed on its teaching.

70. Writing is a very strong area of the curriculum. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understand the purpose of guided writing and how to teach it. Writing skills are reinforced well throughout the curriculum, so pupils write with purpose, for instance when writing in history or labelling diagrams in science. Pupils are taught to organise their writing and are supported well by, for instance, the use of examples ensuring that they develop very good independent writing skills by the end of Year 6.

71. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers and assistants work very closely together, making good use of the wide range of appropriate resources. The best lessons are very well managed so that no time is wasted and pupils are interested and enthusiastic learners. Pupils achieve less when the pace of the lesson is slow. Very good use is made of careful open questioning to encourage pupils to express themselves and as a check to understanding. The review time at the end of lessons is used very effectively and helps teachers to confirm and extend what

pupils have learned in addition to celebrating achievement. Assessment in English is good. Pupils are aware of what they must do to improve through the use of constructive marking and very clear targets.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

72. The use of literacy across the curriculum makes a significant contribution to the high standards achieved in writing. Writing skills are reinforced in most lessons and are made more interesting when, for example, pupils are encouraged to use ICT. Speaking and listening are encouraged in all subjects, whilst reading for information and understanding is a feature of subjects such as science, history and geography.

MATHEMATICS

73. Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils learn and achieve well because of good teaching.
- Excellent teaching in Year 6 results in pupils achieving very well in mathematics.
- Teachers have high expectations that work will be well presented and pupils take pride in their efforts.
- Recent changes in teaching staff have resulted in inconsistent teaching for some older pupils.

Commentary

74. Since the last inspection, standards in mathematics have improved and in the 2003 national tests they were well above the national average. Current standards in mathematics in Years 2 and 6 are above average, pupils in Years 2 and 6 being slightly less mathematically able than their predecessors. In the 2003 national tests the majority of pupils in Year 2 and over eighty percent of pupils in Year 6 reached the expected standard. About half of seven and eleven year olds achieved higher levels. Overall the school does well for its pupils, with all groups making good progress and achieving well. Pupils who have special educational needs, well supported by teachers and learning support assistants, achieve as well as their classmates. Boys and girls make similar progress.

75. Since the last inspection the school has worked successfully to raise standards in mathematics and national test results show pupils' attainment to be consistently well above that in other schools, and in line with the improving national picture. The good improvement since the last inspection includes all teachers making sure that higher attaining pupils in their classes are fully challenged and achieve well in lessons. The use of computer technology is a further improvement, and teachers are making good use of interactive white boards to explain difficult concepts such as digital and analogue times or plotting co-ordinates in four quadrants need to be explained.

76. Most pupils enter the school with above average mathematical understanding. As a result of lively teaching with a good range of practical activities balanced with mental calculations these standards are maintained and pupils' understanding is enriched. Well structured lessons mean that pupils in Year 2 build on their earlier experiences of making shopping lists and giving change from fifty pence, when they investigate simple money problems. They gain a very good understanding of number, counting on and back, following number sequences and rounding two digit numbers to the nearest ten. Through well-planned practical activities pupils use standard and non-standard measure when they predict and check the size of classroom objects. They progress well, knowing the names and properties of a range of two dimensional shapes, understanding the concept of half-full and applying this knowledge to halving numbers such as ten, twenty and thirty. Good opportunities are given for pupils to improve their understanding of data handling by collecting data through class surveys, recording it on tally charts and using computer programs to display their findings in graphical form.

77. The pupils' good foundation for their learning is developed well in Year 3 to Year 6. The emphasis on predicting or estimating an answer before making the calculation is continued. Consequently pupils in Year 5 are confident and enthusiastic in using and explaining their reasoning when they use positive and negative numbers and Year 6 pupils are alert and attentive as they grasp the concept of translating the orientation of trapeziums on a quadrant. Pupils in this year group investigate probability, interpret and produce graphical information and build on their knowledge of shape to calculate areas of compound shapes. Their standards are high and they achieve well in a broad range of well-planned mathematical activities. In Year 6 the teaching of mathematics is excellent, and while there has been insufficient time for it to be reflected in pupils' standards, pupils are achieving very well.

78. Teaching is good. The recent appointments of new teachers explain inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in some classes, mainly because of weaknesses in the management of some pupils' behaviour. The overall good teaching results in the pupils having positive attitudes to the subject and achieving high standards. The leadership and management of mathematics is good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

79. Pupils use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and consequently appreciate the practical uses of these skills. For example, in English, analysing and producing a bar chart to show their favourite Jacqueline Wilson novels, in art and design, using right-angled isosceles triangles to make abstract patterns and tetrahedrons to make a Christmas display, and in a science investigation, using tally charts to show the lengths of forearms.

SCIENCE

80. Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A strong emphasis throughout the school on investigative work results in the maturity, confidence and independence shown by older pupils in their science activities.
- A high level of commitment by parent volunteers helps teachers to organise interesting and challenging activities for pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils' enthusiastic response to the varied and challenging curriculum results in them achieving well.
- The subject manager is newly appointed and has not had sufficient time to make an impact on the subject management.

Commentary

81. Pupils achieve well in science. In the 2003 national tests, pupils in Year 2 achieved standards that were above the national average, while the standards of pupils in Year 6 were well above the national average. Nearly a quarter of the Year 2 pupils and over half the Year 6 pupils achieved higher standards than those expected for their age. Pupils now in Years 2 and 6 are in line to achieve similar standards as a result of the good quality teaching that encourages investigation, discussion and decision making. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls, they all achieve well including those with special educational needs. Lessons are well planned resulting in all pupils including higher attaining pupils achieving well.

82. Overall, the quality of teaching of science is good. In the lessons seen during the inspection teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. However analysis of pupils' work shows that over time, teaching is consistently good in all classes and pupils achieve well. Lessons are planned carefully and learning objectives shared with pupils enabling them to focus on the task at hand. The pace of good lessons helps pupils to maintain concentration and appropriately challenging questions

ensure the involvement of all. Pupils are encouraged to explain their predictions and record their final conclusions meeting the teachers' high expectations of presentation. Marking provides pupils with good insight into how their work can improve and pupils know if they need to review their work. Teachers know their pupils well. Good relationships help to foster an atmosphere in which pupils feel secure. As a result pupils enjoy their lessons and achieve well.

83. In Years 1 and 2 well-planned lessons including a wide range of practical activities were successful in progressing pupils' learning. Pupils in Year 1 began to understand that forces such as water and wind can cause movement. They learned that the amount of force varied the speed or distance moved, by blowing bubbles and the fins of paper windmills that they made. Year 2 pupils grasped the idea of a fair test as they predicted and investigated if height, length, width and surface would make any difference to the distance a car would travel when moved down a ramp. The success of both these lessons was due in part to the volunteer parents who ably supported the teachers in making sure that these practical activities did not lose focus and all these younger pupils participated well in the collaborative activities. This commitment to investigative work continues throughout the school with Year 6 pupils relishing the task of investigating the impact of air resistance on their home-made 'spinners'. A particular strength in this lesson was the ability of the teacher and learning support assistant to stand back and allow independent work, pupils benefited greatly from the chance to recognise their own mistakes and reassess their experiments.

84. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory progress in developing the subject. The curriculum is broad with an appropriate emphasis on practical work. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical experiences of graphs, charts and tables to help recording. The newly appointed subject manager has a clear vision of what needs to be done to further improve standards but has had insufficient time to make an impact on the subject management.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement in the use of new technologies by teachers.
- The quality of teaching and learning have improved and are now good.
- Good use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects.
- Skills development is limited by problems with the school's accommodation.
- Assessment procedures are only recently introduced, and past teaching has not always accurately addressed pupils' individual needs.

Commentary

86. Standards in ICT are as expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average at the end of Year 2 and 6. The improvement has been achieved by developing resources, teaching a broad and balanced programme based on good curriculum guidelines and training teachers to increase their subject knowledge and confidence.

87. Since the last inspection the standard of pupils' work has improved and is satisfactory overall. The resources for ICT are much improved and are good. Although resources have been improved the limited availability of computers in some rooms results in too few opportunities being available for pupils to practise their skills. Teachers, however, make good use of the computer resources they have in classrooms to support skills learning and the use of ICT as a learning tool in other subjects. As a result, pupils have a positive and mature attitude to the use of ICT. Although the curriculum meets all requirements, the teaching of how to program robotic toys so that they perform intended movements or how to make simple computerised control mechanisms is not yet as

advanced as other parts of the curriculum, but is developing well. This limits pupils' overall standards.

88. The quality of teaching is good overall, enhanced as it is by good use of interactive whiteboards by teachers and pupils. This constantly reinforces pupils' learning. Although teachers know the broad areas that pupils have studied, because assessment procedures have only recently been introduced, skills development has hitherto been less well tracked. This has meant that work was not always accurately matched to the pupils' needs. Pupils throughout the school are enthusiastic about their work. They support one another well when they encounter difficulties and they always behave well.

89. The co-ordinator is new and has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for further development in provision for ICT. Assessment is beginning to be used to monitor standards in the subject, as well as to identify those pupils who are achieving above and below the expectations for their age. The school is well aware of its obligations to pupils about safety and security when using the Internet, and takes appropriate measures to prevent its misuse.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

90. Pupils are given many opportunities to use ICT in other subjects. They are enthusiastic about the use they make of computers. They talk with animation about how they have created presentations to show what they have discovered in geography. Pupils draft and redraft written work and enhance text, create graphs in mathematics and use the Internet for research. ICT is used well by pupils with special educational needs. Pupils benefit greatly by being given the opportunity to use the interactive classroom white boards in almost every lesson. The use of ICT for data handling in science is underdeveloped.

HUMANITIES

91. Only one lesson was seen in **geography** and insufficient evidence is available to give an overall judgement about teaching and learning in this subject.

92. In the one lesson seen in Year 6, on the topic of rivers and erosion, teaching was very good resulting in very good progress during the lesson. Pupils achieved very well and their standards were higher than would be expected for their age. This was because the teacher had excellent subject knowledge and provided an exceedingly well-planned lesson that motivated pupils; they concentrated and participated fully in the very well-managed activities. They understood that streams move quickly and rivers try to reach the sea. Pupils were exceptionally proficient in using PowerPoint skills to make presentations and used the Internet with ease transferring pictures, text and diagrams to their own work.

History

93. Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in the subject, because teaching is good and pupils are well motivated.
- Good opportunities are provided for older pupils to research topics independently.
- There are good cross-curricular links so pupils enhance their literacy skills through history.

Commentary

94. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and achieve well because teaching is good and teachers provide interesting work for them to do. Pupils in Year 1 enthusiastically compare 'then and now' when they look at the differences between homes in Victorian times and nowadays. After

listening carefully to their teacher they are able to appreciate the difference made by the introduction of electricity and tapped water. As a result of the good use of resources by their teacher pupils understand some of the differences in family life as a result of the changes in housing over the past hundred years. Good planning links the topic well with design and technology, pupils using their planning and design skills to make a display of houses reflecting 'then and now'. By the end of Year 2 pupils are achieving the expected standards. They have developed an appreciation of the contribution made by famous people such as Florence Nightingale, Mother Teresa and Mary Seacole and their impact on society. In good links with literacy, pupils brainstormed what they know about Guy Fawkes, and used speech bubbles to record Guy Fawke's reasons for wanting to blow up Parliament and King James' reasons for giving the death penalty.

95. Year on year the pupils benefit from imaginatively planned lessons. They study the Greeks and write personal reports about the 'agora' (Greek market) and study farming, entertainment and religion in Roman times. Combining their knowledge of Roman life with literacy skills, Year 4 pupils write imaginatively about 'Gladiator Glory' and 'Chariot Clash'. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils have progressed well. Their wide range of work based on World War 2, including Internet research, imaginative writing based on the blitz, biographical study of Anne Frank and map work showing where major battles took place is of high standard and above the expectation for pupils of this age.

Religious education

96. Only one lesson was seen in **religious education** and insufficient evidence is available to give an overall judgement about teaching and learning in this subject.

97. Pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity. For instance, in one assembly many pupils were aware that it was advent and some knew what this meant. In discussion with pupils it is clear that there is a good understanding of the events leading up to the birth of Jesus. Evidence from pupils' files show that they have been introduced to key features of the world's main religions.

98. In the one lesson observed in Year 6, explanations were clear and questioning was used well to motivate and encourage thoughtful responses. An interactive whiteboard was well used to project a portrait from the Internet of Jesus as *the light of the world*, prompting an articulate and interesting discussion.

99. The curriculum is based securely on the local agreed syllabus and is broad based and relevant to the pupils. The provision is enhanced by regular visits from faith groups and by experiencing different cultures and beliefs through visits within the community.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

100. Only one lesson was seen in **art and design**, and no firm judgement can be made on pupils' standards or achievement. The curriculum is broad and interesting and pupils throughout the school report they enjoy the subject.

101. Work seen around the school and in the one lesson observed suggests that the subject is taught regularly with topics that reflect the elements of the National Curriculum. Displays support pupils' cultural appreciation; pupils use the work of known artists to inspire their own work and build their skills as they progress through the school. Younger pupils base their self-portraits on the work of Van Goth and Rembrandt. Year 3 pupils learn to appreciate the intricacies of Islamic art and older pupils develop their techniques when they produce observational and still life drawings, paint and make more sophisticated collage. Teaching was good in the lesson seen in Year 6, including the use of the digital camera for pupils to capture the idea of movement to be used in collage.

102. No **music** was observed during the inspection; therefore no judgements are possible. Currently the school does not have a subject specialist for music. The school has recognized that

the current provision needs review and, in the absence of a specialist, are seeking Local Education Authority advice. Music is extended through class and whole school performance and recorded music is used in dance lessons and assemblies. Some pupils have the opportunity to play instruments, receiving tuition from a visiting teacher. The development of teaching skills in music has been identified as an area for improvement in the school development plan.

Design and technology

104. Provision in design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and pupils learn well.
- Pupils take pride in their work.
- Standards in design and technology are above average.

Commentary

105. In the lessons observed teaching was good. Pupils are clearly motivated by the broad range of activities provided. For instance, the display of slippers designed and made by pupils in Year 6 shows care in the good range of materials chosen and the care taken in making the prototypes. Pupils are able to identify design faults and speculate on ways in which the products might be improved. Teachers use questioning well to enable pupils to think about products. For instance, pupils in Year 4 talked about designs for purses, describing the connection between use and user. In Year 2 pupils maintained high levels of concentration whilst using their good range of skills when making glove puppets. They tried, and many succeeded in threading needles and joining pieces of felt using simple tacking stitches. Pupils work well in groups cooperating and commenting positively on each other's work.

106. A satisfactory programme for design and technology is in place and the school is well resourced. Since the previous inspection, good standards have been maintained.

Physical education

107. Although three lessons were observed, these were all dance lessons. Consequently, insufficient evidence is available to judge the quality of teaching or standards in physical education as a whole. Pupils identify this area of the curriculum as one that they enjoy. They particularly appreciate the opportunities to participate in team games and are enthusiastic about the competitions in which they are involved. Good use is made of the school's accredited coaches for football and netball. All pupils have good opportunities to participate regardless of gender, ability or race.

108. In the best dance lessons teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and high expectations. Both pupils and teachers wore appropriate clothing and teachers were vigilant in ensuring that pupils had good regard to safety. In one very good lesson the enthusiastic and structured approach of the teacher and the use of inspiring music ensured pupils developed linked routines well, using space, shape and movement. Pupils were encouraged to reflect upon their performance and think about ways they could improve. Demonstrations by both teachers and pupils were used well to show skills.

109. On site facilities are good and resources and equipment support the curriculum well. The school has close links with a local secondary school, which has Sports College status and is enabling the school to broaden the physical education curriculum. Additionally, healthy living is promoted through work on healthy eating and a full physical education programme is supplemented by extra-curricular activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

110. Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good** as is provision for citizenship.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school places a very strong emphasis on helping pupils to become mature young people ready for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils learn well the benefits of healthy life styles.
- Through effectively and sensitively delivered sex and relationships education, pupils develop a good understanding of relationships and their value in life.
- Pupils have an exceptional awareness of the meaning of citizenship and act as responsible members of the school society.

Commentary

111. The school is very successful in helping pupils to develop personally. Healthy living, physically and emotionally, are emphasised through the stress placed on a good diet, such as through the school's no sweets policy, and teaching about family and relationships. The dangers of drug misuse are sensitively taught in the context of how to remain healthy. All pupils are given the opportunity to learn about the changes that happen to them, as they get older. Sex education is dealt with very sensitively, with boys and girls learning together, but older pupils also having the opportunity to learn more in single gender classes.

112. Class discussions are well used to provide the opportunity for pupils of all ages to talk in a safe and protective environment, about themselves and the things that worry them. When necessary, matters of concern to teachers such as an incident of unacceptable behaviour, are discussed to reinforce pupils' understanding of right and wrong.

113. Pupils develop a very strong sense of community and citizenship through the very effective use of the school council. Every pupil spoken to during the inspection knew of the council, its work and achievements.

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	1
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	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the acting headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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