

INSPECTION REPORT

BRAMBLESIDE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kettering, Northamptonshire

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 130963

Headteacher: Mrs S Peel

Lead inspector: Margaret Coussins

Dates of inspection: 24th May – 27th May 2004

Inspection number: 255656

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:	270
School address:	Cleveland Avenue Kettering Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN16 9JG
Telephone number:	01536 310680
Fax number:	01536 310681
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr R Whittaker

Date of previous inspection: 9th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Brambleside is an average size primary school for boys and girls aged 4-11 years old. It has 270

pupils currently organised into 9 classes. The school is situated in the centre of a housing estate on the outskirts of Kettering but it also draws pupils from nearer the town. Most of the local housing is owner occupied and the majority of parents are in managerial or professional occupations, many are in the medical profession at the local hospital. The school serves families whose social circumstances are generally more favourable than the national picture. Kettering is a growing town and the school, which was built in 1996, has expanded from 155 pupils at the time of the last inspection and is currently oversubscribed with a waiting list. Extension work is due to begin in October 2004 to provide more classrooms and other facilities. Thirty-six pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and 5 have statements, which is around the national average. Overall, pupils' attainment when they start school is rather better than expected for their ages. The majority of the pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds; forty-four pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, 3 are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. There are no pupils who receive free school meals. The school has the following awards: Schools Achievement Award, 2000; Investors in People, 2001; Schools Curriculum Award and Golden Owl website Award, 2002 and Gold Star Healthy School Award, 2003. Community groups regularly use the school for evening and weekend lettings and there is a Community Room in the school which is used by various groups, for example, Brambletots parents and toddler group.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16084	Margaret Coussins	Lead inspector	English, Religious education, Art, Design and technology
32670	Graham Saltmarsh	Lay inspector	
31192	John Stewart	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology, Geography, History
33149	Moyra Pickering	Team inspector	Foundation stage, Science, Music, Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

e-Qualitas Limited

Langshaw
Pastens Road
Limpsfield Chart
Oxted
Surrey
RH8 0RE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Brambleside is a very good and effective school. When children start school their attainment is generally better than expected for their age. They settle in quickly, enjoy learning and achieve well. By Year 2 standards are well above average in mathematics and writing and above average in most other subjects. By Year 6, standards are well above average overall. In general, pupils achieve very well because teaching and learning are very good so they really enjoy their lessons. Parents and pupils are confident and happy with the work of the school, which is led and managed well. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The results of the national tests in 2003 in English and science were high compared to all schools nationally and very high in mathematics
- Teaching is very good overall, although in a few lessons some pupils have too few opportunities to think and learn independently
- Teaching assistants offer very good support to pupils so that everyone usually has the chance to do equally well
- The curriculum is enriched by the arts and the very good use of information and communication technology (ICT) and a very good range of activities outside of the school day
- Strong leadership by the headteacher and senior staff drives the school's development clearly and purposefully although teaching and learning are not monitored sufficiently by subject co-ordinators
- Pupils are proud of the school and very happy to try to do their best because the school encourages them and cares for them very well
- Pupils are not always given enough information by teachers to help them to see clearly and quickly how to improve their work on a day-to-day basis

Since the last inspection in 1998, improvement has been good. Standards have improved from around average to above average or better. Work is planned well, lessons are well organised and as a result the quality of teaching has improved. Although the school reviews its results and achievements with care, the role of co-ordinators in checking on the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects is not developed fully. Good progress has been made in dealing with some assessment issues although without always focusing on the need for pupils to know exactly how to improve their work.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievement is very good. Achievement is good in the reception year and very good in Years 1 to 6. When children start at school they have knowledge and skills which are generally above those expected, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development and speaking and listening. They make good progress overall in

the reception year and by the time they join Year 1 have reached at least the expected standards for their age and exceeded them in some areas. In Years 1 to 6 pupils achieve very well in English overall although they do better at writing than reading. In mathematics pupils' achievements are very good and standards are well above the national average. In science achievement is good and standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6 although current Y6 pupils are lacking experience in investigative work. Pupils in mixed year group classes achieve as well as pupils in single year groups. Standards in art and design, ICT and religious education are well above average. Pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve very well.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and other personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. The attendance rate is good and most pupils arrive at school on time. The school has very effective procedures in place for promoting regular attendance however more pupils than the national average are withdrawn from school by parents during term times which can interrupt their learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

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

The quality of teaching is very good. Overall, teaching and learning are very good and assessment is satisfactory. Teaching in the reception year is consistently good and builds upon very good relationships between children and adults. Planning for the children's learning is thorough and assessment of their learning is good. Children are happy, confident and make good progress. In Years 1 to 6 teaching is mostly very good or good. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good and they plan interesting lessons. They make very good use of resources, particularly in ICT, which have a significant impact on the standards achieved. Throughout the school, teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The curriculum is good and is significantly enriched through music, art, dance, drama and ICT. There are very good additional activities beyond lessons which add breadth and further interest to pupils' education. Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The school provides good support, advice and guidance and pupils' involvement in the school's work and development is good. Links with parents, the community and other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are good and ensure clear and purposeful direction to the school. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The governance and management are good. The school rigorously evaluates how well it is doing and a range of data is collected and used very well to guide school improvements. There is currently a lack of time for subject co-ordinators to systematically monitor classroom practice.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally very supportive of the school. They make a valuable and significant contribution to fund raising, particularly for ICT resources. The majority feel that their children are making good progress and that the school has many strengths. The range of information given to parents about their children is very good. Some parents had reservations about how well the school seeks their views and takes account of their suggestions but the inspectors found that the school responds well to information gathered from parents. Pupils enjoy school, know they have to work hard and feel secure and happy.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- To ensure that pupils know how they can improve their work
- To evaluate the quality of teaching and learning more rigorously in subjects
- To ensure that pupils are given more opportunities to think and learn independently

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Pupils' achievements are very good overall which is an improvement since the last inspection. This is because they reach well above average standards in some subjects. Children in the reception year achieve well overall in the six areas of learning because teachers have high expectations, relationships are very good and adults give the children the confidence to succeed. In Years 1 and 2, achievement is very good in mathematics and writing because the teaching is very good. In Years 3 to 6 very good teaching ensures pupils continue to achieve very well in mathematics and English, particularly writing and they achieve well in science. Pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve very well throughout the school.

Main strengths

- Children get a good start to school in the reception year
- Overall achievement in English and mathematics is very good and it is good in science
- Standards in writing are better than those in reading
- Standards in ICT, art and design and religious education (RE) are well above those expected
- Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language achieve very well

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.7 (17.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.1 (15.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.3 (17.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (29.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	31.0 (29.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.2 (29.9)	28.6 (28.3)

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

National test results and other performance data

1. The Year 2 results in the 2003 tests were well above the national average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading. The Year 6 results were very high in mathematics and well above average in English and science. These results are an improvement since the last inspection when they were around the national average. Over the past two years results have been well above the national average in all the tests except reading at the end of Year 2, where they have been above average. When compared with results gained by similar schools, (those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals) the picture for mathematics and science is the same for Year 2 and Year 6. The results for English at Year 6 were average, average for reading at Year 2 and above average for writing. When compared

with results for schools whose pupils did just as well in the tests they took when they were in Year 2, the 2003 results for English were average. In all the tests, the percentage of pupils who gained higher levels than expected for their age was higher than the national figure. The percentages were particularly high in mathematics and science. The improved standards are largely because of the generally very good teaching which builds on and encourages pupils' very good attitudes to learning.

Foundation Stage (reception classes)

2. Children achieve well during their reception year. Very good arrangements for starting school ensure that children settle well and are confident and excited by their learning. Personal, social and emotional development, mathematical and speaking and listening skills are above average when children start school and skills in other areas of learning are average. Staff assess the level at which the children are learning so that activities can be planned to build on their skills in all areas of learning and make good progress. Early skills in reading and writing are taught in well-structured lessons. Children enjoy stories and books and have lots of opportunities to write for different reasons, however, the pace of the teaching of sounds is slow and children do not have a secure knowledge of letter names. They use their knowledge of sounds to help them write but are less able to put sounds together to help them read.

English, mathematics and science

3. Pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is very good. It is good in science. By Year 6 pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good so they are articulate, confident and engaging speakers. Most are confident, willing writers in English lessons and when writing in other subjects. By Year 6 most read with confidence, fluency and expression however, the depth of their understanding of more complex texts is weaker and standards in reading are not as high as those in writing. In mathematics, numeracy skills are well above average by Year 6 and many pupils have a good grasp of calculating percentages, ratio and proportion and problem solving. In science, pupils have good subject knowledge but less experience of investigative work in Year 6.

Information and communication technology, art and design, religious education and physical education

4. Standards in ICT, art and design and RE are well above expectations. In each case, a combination of very good teaching and leadership in the subject are the main reasons for the pupils' success. In ICT, the investment in resources and continuing training to keep teachers up-to-date mean that pupils are confident users of ICT and use their skills very well to help them learn in other subjects. Pupils have very good basic computer skills and can log on, select appropriate applications and save their work as a matter of course. Older pupils work with spreadsheets, import and manipulate images and explain the techniques they use. In art and design, pupils work with a wide range of different art forms using 2D and 3D materials. Displays around the school are of a high quality and generally linked to work in other subjects as in Egyptian art as part of a history study. Pupils take pride in their very good achievements in art. In RE, pupils have a good knowledge of different spiritual and religious ideas from major world religions because the curriculum is well planned and good links are made with other subjects. For example, art and drama are used effectively to teach about the lives of Saints and the Hindu story of Rama and Sita and pupils' knowledge of the Ten Commandments is developed by good links with the school rules. Standards in physical education (PE) are above expectations. Pupils work well with partners in gymnastics with good control and co-ordination and develop good ball control skills. Pupils make the most of after-school sporting and dance activities, which they enjoy and which help them achieve well in PE.

Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language

5. Pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress towards targets set for them because of the very good support given during lessons and work which is well matched to their needs. Teaching assistants give very effective help to these pupils during lessons and

when they work with them in small groups. For example, in a literacy lesson, a small group of pupils completed activities successfully because the teaching assistant repeated the instructions given by the teacher and then wrote down the pupils' ideas and comments so that they made a real contribution to the lesson. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language achieve very well because of the support given by the school. For example, in a mathematics lesson, a pupil who is at the early stages of learning English achieved very well because the teaching assistant made sure the mathematical language of shape and space was understood by using key word cards. In another lesson, a pupil had the support of a bilingual adult to translate what the teacher was saying so that he could join in the lesson.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, relationships and behaviour are very good. The school fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths

- The ethos of care, trust and respect underpins positive attitudes to learning
- Pupils' moral and social development is very good and this is coupled with very good cultural and spiritual understanding
- Extra-curricular activities enrich and broaden life and learning at the school

Commentary

6. Pupils' attitudes to school life are very good. They show thoughtfulness and concern towards each other. They respond well to staff expectations as to how they should behave so behaviour is very good. Pupils with special educational needs also show very good attitudes to their work. Even those pupils who have behavioural difficulties settle quickly and get on with their tasks very well. Any occasional lapses in acceptable behaviour are very well managed by the staff with a minimum of fuss and the pupils clearly respect and appreciate this. No pupils were excluded in the last year.
7. The good levels of attendance reflect the pupils' very positive attitudes to school and the effectiveness of the school's policy to promote regular attendance. Most parents clearly make an effort to ensure that their children attend school well and arrive punctually although more pupils than the national average are taken out of school during term time, which interrupts their learning.
8. Personal development is very good. Pupils are mature and sensible, considerate of the feelings of others and attentive and absorbed during lessons. They behave well obeying simple yet clear "Golden Rules" based on courtesy and mutual respect. They are encouraged to reflect on their actions and how they might affect others. Pupils are very confident and outgoing, they are demonstrably proud of their school and are anxious to express this when given an opportunity to do so. Visitors receive a warm welcome into the school community. Pupils are eager to take on small responsibilities, which they carry out with pleasure and care.
9. Children in the reception year show very positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is very good as a result of the very good support systems in place that positively reward children's efforts. All staff offer consistent support to children at every stage of their life at the school.
10. Spiritual and cultural development is very good. Themes and thoughts are discussed at assembly and in class. The curriculum ensures a good understanding of Christianity and other world religions. Varied trips and activities support pupils' appreciation of other people's beliefs and traditions effectively, for example, a visit to a local temple gave pupils first hand knowledge in their study of Sikhism. The wider curriculum also supports learning in a multi-cultural society very effectively. The display of work for the school's International Week celebrates people from other lands, their art, customs and culture and shows what the pupils have learnt. Another display shows the school's work with African music. Pupils are very pleased when they see art and displays being viewed by a visitor, they are keen to talk about their own work and contributions.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.0%
National data	5.4%

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.5%
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 school provides a very good education for its pupils which enables them to achieve very well. Teaching and learning are very good overall. The curriculum provides a good range of experiences and opportunities and is significantly enriched through ICT, music, art, dance and drama as well as a very good range of activities outside of lessons. The curriculum is planned well to include pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, but does not always include enough challenging work for the more able pupils. There are good systems in place for tracking pupils' attainment over time but the use of assessment on a day-to-day basis to let pupils know how they can improve their work is underdeveloped. Pupils receive very good care and good support for their personal and academic development. The school has very good links with parents, other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. It is good for children in the reception year and generally very good in Years 1 to 6. Teaching is very good in English and mathematics and good in science. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' have very good subject knowledge, clear aims and make lessons interesting and enjoyable
- Teaching in ICT is very good and has a very good impact on teaching and learning in other subjects
- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour and very good relationships between adults and pupils support learning effectively
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning
- Assessment does not always inform teachers' planning or pupils so that they know how they can improve
- Sometimes pupils are not given enough scope to work independently

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2.5%)	19 (47.5%)	14 (35%)	7 (17.5%)	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.

11. Teachers plan lessons very well to provide interesting and stimulating activities which motivate and inspire pupils to learn well. They map out what pupils will be doing each day and explain what they should aim for in particular lessons. Most lessons begin with a lively whole-class session in which teachers check what the pupils already know from previous lessons and introduce new work to build on their skills and knowledge. For example, in a very good Year 1/2 literacy lesson on writing riddles, the teacher's use of the interactive whiteboard at the beginning of the lesson reminded pupils about what they had already learnt about how riddles were written. They moved on to writing their own riddles in "lift the flap" books which the teacher had made. This resource and the fact that the class knew that pupils from another class would be the readers of their work, had a significant impact on the enthusiasm of pupils and the standard of their work which was very good.

12. ICT is used very well making a significant contribution to the very good quality of teaching and learning overall. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils were investigating ways to describe and formulate rules for patterns. Teaching was very good as pupils were challenged through very good questioning, excellent practical activities and very good use of the interactive whiteboard and websites resulting in very good achievement and well above average standards. Teaching in ICT is very good because of the significant focus the school has given both to training and resources. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good and they use ICT very well as a teaching resource in many other subjects. Standards are well above average and as a consequence pupils use their ICT skills very well. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson looking at the habitats of living things, the teacher's introduction was enhanced by a very good PowerPoint presentation and pupils demonstrated their competence in using ICT and the Internet for their own related research.
13. Teaching in religious education (RE), and art & design is very good with an example of excellent teaching in art in Year 5. The teaching in this lesson was excellent because of the teacher's expertise and impressive subject knowledge. Pupils were encouraged to use their imagination and creativity to the full when exploring wire as a medium for sculpture. The teacher skilfully questioned pupils, prompting them to think, experiment and solve problems, without over directing the activity. The lesson was absorbing, fun and challenging and health and safety issues were thoroughly addressed. Pupils were engrossed, determined and clearly understood what they were doing and for what purpose. They had time to reflect and evaluate what they were doing throughout the lesson and their achievement was excellent.
14. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and always try their best with the tasks they are given. They pay attention and want to be involved in lessons. For example, in a music lesson, Year 5 pupils listened very carefully to complex instructions for playing tuned percussion instruments and asked sensible questions to make sure they knew what to do. They were determined to succeed in the task and even though they did not get it right first time, were sensible enough to talk about where they had gone wrong and how they could do better. As a result, pupils were successful and the standard of their playing was high.
15. The trust and respect between pupils and adults play a large part in encouraging pupils' very good attitudes to learning and the very good achievement they make. Pupils of all abilities, know that their views and opinions are valued by teachers and teaching assistants, which makes them confident and happy to ask questions if they are unsure about what to do. An example of this secure relationship was in a Year 2 literacy lesson where pupils were writing information books. A child who was frustrated by his lack of success said to his teacher, "I know it's not right, I'll tell you what I've done, what I think is right and you can tell me where I'm going wrong".
16. Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils' learning. They work well with teachers, often playing a valuable role in whole-class sessions by helping particular pupils to get the best out of the teaching. In the music lesson described above, a teaching assistant with expertise in music, directed the lesson while the teacher questioned and provided challenge. The teacher and teaching assistant worked very well as a team to get the best from the pupils so that they achieved well. Teaching assistants more regularly work with small groups of pupils or individuals. For example, in an ICT lesson in Year 2, it was the teaching assistant's support which helped a less able group to succeed with their work on graphs. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson on shape and space, a teaching assistant helped a pupil who was learning English, by providing key word cards to help understanding and as a result, the pupil achieved as well as the rest of the class in the mathematics.
17. The school has effective systems for assessing pupils' attainment and assessments in English, mathematics and science which help teachers to track pupils' progress over time. Teachers'

day-to-day assessments, including marking, are not consistent enough across the school to provide all pupils with a clear understanding of how they can improve their work or what the next steps are. At its best, which is the case in many classes, marking and talking to pupils about their work, is always positive about what pupils have done, lets them know how well they have achieved the specific aims of the lesson and informs them as to how they can move forward.

18. In the few lessons where teaching was satisfactory, but had weaknesses, the main faults were concerned with the lack of opportunity for pupils to work independently. This was particularly so for more able pupils in these lessons. Although the standard of work was good, they were not always encouraged to think things out for themselves and apply problem solving and investigative techniques in their learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson on solving equations, all pupils were given one strategy to use whereas several pupils and particularly the more able, were more than capable of formulating their own methods of working. As a result, opportunities for discussing, explaining and justifying their mathematical thinking and were limited and they did not achieve as well as they could.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. It provides a good learning opportunities for pupils to help them achieve very well. There is very good provision for curricular enrichment including a very good range of extra curricular activities. The quality and range of learning resources is good. The accommodation is good and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively but the size of the hall restricts the range and quality of indoor PE activities, particularly for the older pupils.

Main strengths

- The use of ICT across the school supports other subjects very well
- The school provides very good support for learning outside of the school day
- The curriculum is significantly enriched through music, art, dance and drama
- The skilled support staff is a strength of the school
- The curriculum is mapped out clearly which helps to ensure thorough coverage of the National and Foundation Stage Curriculum

Commentary

19. Children in the reception classes benefit from a good curriculum, which provides an interesting range of activities that meet the needs of the children well. The outdoor provision is good and is used well to support children's development across the areas of learning. In Years 1 to 6, the good curriculum is well supported by cross-curricular activities and topic homework and fully meets statutory requirements.
20. Many lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to support learning in other subjects. Throughout the school ICT is used particularly well to reinforce and enrich learning. In a Year 5 class pupils used the Internet most effectively when challenged to research the habitats and needs of endangered species. Reception children were supported in using a data-recording programme to graphically describe a traffic survey. All teachers have access to laptops and interactive whiteboards, and use these very well in their lessons.
21. The curriculum includes significant enrichment through the arts. In a planned International Week each class studied a different country, exploring the culture through all areas of the curriculum including art, music and dance. This provided pupils with a rich creative starting point and the experience was further enhanced through planned visits and visitors.
22. The curriculum is adapted well to the needs of pupils with special educational needs, helped by careful planning in lessons. Teaching assistants work very well with class teachers to ensure

that pupils with additional needs have every opportunity to enjoy the planned learning. Care is taken to ensure that pupils with English as an additional language receive appropriate support; both teaching assistants and teachers work well together to support these pupils' developing language skills.

23. The school offers a wide and exciting range of extra-curricular activities, and this, in turn, enriches the whole curriculum. Activities include a very good range of sports, music and other clubs. Of particular note is the very good school choir, which has won acclaim both locally and further afield. A good proportion of the pupils take part in the various extra-curricular activities provided, and they offer particularly good opportunities for pupils to develop their individual interests and talents in music, art, dance and sport. The skills learnt and practised in the school's clubs contribute to the pupils' good achievement in lessons. For example, the opportunities to take part in creative activities outside the school day contribute to the high standards achieved in subjects such as art.
24. The school benefits from good accommodation in an attractive setting. However, the small hall can restrict the range and quality of indoor PE activities, particularly for the older pupils. Due to its design the school building is often uncomfortably hot during fine weather.
25. There has been good improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection. Clear planning builds on previous work and ensures that pupils have access to all aspects of the National Curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Provision of support, advice and guidance is good and successfully raises pupils' academic and personal achievements. The school involves pupils well in its work and development.

Main strengths

- Staff take very good care of pupils' well-being
- Pupils are well supported as they move through the school
- Pupils' ideas are listened to and their contributions are valued

Commentary

26. The high standards of care identified in the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils are provided with a very caring and supportive environment. All staff know their pupils very well who in turn know that they are important and matter as individuals within the school community.
27. Child protection procedures are comprehensive and effective. The school has good links with other agencies and is ready to work closely with them on the rare occasions that matters of concern arise.
28. Pupils and their parents who are new to the school receive excellent induction information and supportive admission arrangements.
29. Both in the pupils' questionnaire and subsequent conversations with them during the inspection pupils confirmed that they felt that there was always an adult that they could turn to if they were worried about anything at school. They know that bullying will not be tolerated and there was little evidence that it existed. The school is in the process of developing a school council to ensure that the views of all pupils can be considered equally. However, pupils already know that their views matter and that they are listened to carefully. Pupils are already involved in agreeing school and class rules and are encouraged to think of ways to improve life at school even further.

30. The school works in the best interests of pupils with special educational needs to safeguard their welfare and promote their development. All staff consider pupils' individual needs at all times to ensure they are fully involved in all aspects of school life.
31. Thorough maintenance ensures that the building and school equipment are safe. Accidents are rare, and any problems or difficulties relating to safety in the school are immediately addressed. Due to the single level design of the school and in particular the metal clad roofing material used in its construction, the school becomes uncomfortably hot at times especially during the spring and summer. Staff and pupils cope very well with this problem and the school does all it can to manage the conditions in classrooms.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership with parents, the local community and other schools are very good. This has a positive impact on the achievement of the pupils. Parents appreciate the quality of information that the school provides.

Main strengths

- Parents are very positive about the school and appreciate the support it offers them and their children
- Links with the community enhance and enrich the school's curriculum very well and provide valued support for some local initiatives
- Parental support to the active "*Friends of Brambleside School*" significantly benefits the school

Commentary

32. Staff work very hard to involve parents into the life of the school and in supporting their children's learning. Parents are actively involved in helping the school, on visits and various school functions and activities. There is a well-attended parents and friends association which works hard to raise funds for resources. The local community are involved in a wide range of fund raising initiatives and social events to support the school.
33. There is an open door policy for parents to discuss any matters of concern with the school. New parents are invited to an informal evening meeting to meet each other and to introduce the staff. Parents are particularly pleased with the pre-school home visits for the new reception intake. During the inspection, parents expressed a high level of satisfaction on the way they were kept informed about the school in general and their children in particular. They are given a wide range of information in the school brochure. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with life in the school, diary dates and any other useful information. School reports to parents are helpful and give an opportunity for parents to comment. At present there is no space on reports for pupils to set out their own personal future goals and targets. However the school has recently started a self-evaluation document for pupils to complete in class expressing their thoughts and future aims based on the reports to their parents.
34. The school values its partnership with parents highly and genuinely welcomes parental involvement in all aspects of school life. Parents are routinely consulted about future developments and a questionnaire is used to give the senior management and governors a regular picture of parents' perceptions of the school. There is a Home/School agreement which all parents are expected to sign when their children start school. The school holds a variety of information evenings during the year; these include, progress, curriculum, sex and relationships education and secondary transfer meetings. The school also has its own website which provides additional current information to parents. Parents really appreciate and enjoy the chance to come to Friday Assembly to join in what is a special event for everyone in the school.

35. Very good links with the community include those developed through performances by a very talented school choir at music festivals, in churches and for the elderly. Interesting visitors, for example, the mayor, sporting personalities and artists, have added rich, real life interest to pupils' experiences.
36. Parents, staff and pupils make a continued and substantial contribution to The Children's Leukaemia charity and this year sponsored a young runner in The London Marathon who was also raising money for this cause. The school has a well-established relationship with SATRA (Shoe and Allied Trades Research Association). This business organisation visits the school for trial fittings for new ranges of children's shoes and makes a useful donation to the school fund for the privilege.
37. Links with the five main local secondary schools are very close and secondary teachers attend the school to arrange sample lessons and to introduce pupils to their new school. Relationships between the respective headteachers and staff are particularly warm, strong and productive and transfer procedures are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance of the school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher and senior managers have a very clear vision and ambition for the long-term development of the school
- Monitoring of teaching and learning by subject leaders is inconsistent
- Performance management systems are very effective and linked to school improvement
- The governing body is very committed to the school and is aware of its strengths and weaknesses
- School finances are managed very well

Commentary

38. Governance of the school is good, overall. The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties. Governors are very supportive of the school, are very well informed of its strengths and weaknesses and are involved in monitoring and reviewing policies. However, although the governors provide a good oversight of the school and meet annually with subject coordinators to monitor progress, they are not, at present, as proactive as they and the school would wish. A system to link governors with subjects is starting in the near future after previous year group links were found to be less successful than hoped. Governors are involved in planning for the future direction of the school and are well organised into committees with clear understanding of their roles. Committees hold regular meetings and report back to the whole governing body to keep them informed of developments. However, although they do offer challenge to the school about its improvement, their role as a critical friend is underdeveloped.
39. The headteacher leads very well with a very clear view of how the school should improve. Senior staff support her very effectively and all staff share her commitment to improvement and view of what needs to be done to raise standards. The style of leadership is reflective and open and all staff and governors are involved in strategic planning for school improvement. There are regular opportunities to share ideas during staff meetings. Teaching is monitored by the head teacher so she is clear about the quality of teaching and is taking steps to provide support in areas identified as needing improvement. The school is very inclusive and provides very effective support for physically disabled pupils, those with learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language. The school has very good knowledge of the effectiveness of strategies to improve numeracy and literacy and the curriculum is reviewed regularly. As a result, there is a very clear vision to improve links between subjects with a current focus on ICT.

40. Leadership by subject leaders is satisfactory, overall. Some subject leaders are not influential enough in driving up standards because they have had too few opportunities to evaluate lessons. As a result, they do not have a clear enough view of areas in which pupils are achieving well and areas that need to improve. Subject leaders always share information from training courses which has a positive impact on the quality of teaching overall. This is because teachers try out new ideas and broaden their range of teaching styles. This is particularly evident in RE and the links with art and design and in teaching strategies to improve reading. Leadership in art and design, ICT, RE and special educational needs are very good. Improvements have been made since the last inspection.
41. Management is good, overall. Performance management systems are fully in place and targets for all staff, which are linked to the school improvement plan, are reviewed regularly and are effective in the drive to raise standards. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and relationships are very good. All staff have a responsibility and have good access to courses and professional development, both in school and externally. Systems to track pupils' achievement are established and the school monitors the performance of different groups of pupils carefully. All staff have received training in analysing pupils' performance data. Induction procedures for new staff are good and they are supported before they take up post as well as having a mentor once in school. The school has good links with initial teacher training.
42. Financial management is very good and the purchase of goods and services shows clear links to the school improvement plan. Spending on ICT in the past year has been the priority and is having very good effect on achievement. The Local Education Authority (LEA) audits the budget and the governors' finance committee compile a half-termly report so that they can keep the governing body well informed. The policy of best value is well used to ensure that the school receives very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	607,879
Total expenditure	593,034
Expenditure per pupil	2,377

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	12,820
Balance carried forward to the next	14,845

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

43. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (reception year) is good. Levels of attainment in personal, social and emotional development, mathematics and speaking and listening skills are above average when the children enter the reception classes, while attainment in the other areas of learning are around or just above average. Children achieve well throughout the reception year. They enter Year 1 with attainment that at least matches the six early learning goals expected of children of a similar age, and sometimes exceeds them, particularly in mathematics, personal, social and emotional development and verbal communication skills. Strengths in the provision have been maintained since the last inspection, and have improved in terms of the quality of focussed teaching.
44. Children achieve well because the quality of teaching is consistently good in all areas of learning. However, sometimes not enough is done to promote independent learning through giving the children further opportunity to select resources for themselves. Children in the mixed reception and Year 1 class have access to an appropriate play based Foundation Stage curriculum.
45. All adults have high expectations of the children and teachers work very well with teaching assistants to ensure good provision. The adults support the children's play and development well by good intervention and questioning that extends and enriches learning. In both classes the children now have the opportunity to learn in an outdoor play area, with reasonable resources.
46. Planning for the children's learning is thorough. Assessment of their learning is good. There is a careful analysis of the children's skills when they enter the class and teachers make good use of school records and the Foundation Stage Profile to record the children's subsequent progress. Both the teachers and teaching assistants make useful notes from their observations of the children's achievements in all areas of learning. This helps them to ensure that the children make good progress.
47. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Very comprehensive planning has been developed since the last inspection, and this ensures that there is a full coverage of the curriculum and that work can be planned at the correct level for each child.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on track to exceed the goals for their learning by the end of the reception year
- The children have settled very well, are confident and excited by their learning
- They play well together, and are very good at taking turns and sharing
- The children listen very attentively to their teachers
- Circle time*, class and group discussions give the children good opportunities to think about their own and others' feelings
- There are not enough opportunities for children to select different resources for themselves

**where pupils sit in a circle and takes turns to listen, speak and discuss issues*

Commentary

48. All children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is very good and there are high expectations of the children held by all adults. The safe and welcoming environment provided by the reception team has

enabled the children to settle well and they listen carefully to what their friends have to say. In a lesson that included circle time children were sensitively encouraged to consider the qualities that make a good class member. They were able to do this very articulately. When using equipment, including outdoor wheeled toys, they share well in a friendly way, and some use sophisticated negotiating skills when needed. The encouraging approach of the teacher and teaching assistants and their careful management of whole class sessions enable the children to behave well, be attentive and learn. Children sustain concentration well on allocated or self-chosen tasks. However, there are sometimes too few opportunities for the children to select resources within an activity. For example, children were not encouraged to seek out resources in the classroom to support their independent writing.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good opportunities for children to practise their speaking and listening skills
- Most children can write their name accurately
- The children are making good progress in knowing their letters and sounds, but too few know the names of letters

Commentary

49. The children benefit from well-structured lessons that teach them the sounds that the letters of the alphabet make. However, letters are introduced rather slowly over the period of the year and some children only know the names of letters through the Letterland characters. Children are encouraged to write in a variety of different and interesting contexts for example, in the role-play area. Most children form letters appropriately and are aware of capital letters. Many children are aware of full stops and the more able use them with some accuracy in their own writing, forming words into coherent sentences with either accurate or very plausible spellings. Achievement is good and over a half of the children will achieve the national goals for writing at the end of the reception year.
50. Children enjoy stories and books, which they handle well. They listen well to whole class stories, join in enthusiastically with repeated phrases and predict well what will happen.
51. Children are very confident in speaking and many have a wide and mature vocabulary. Following a practical investigation with ramps and cars, a child confidently reported to the class that 'by putting the ramp in a higher place the car will travel faster'. Teachers support speaking and listening well with questions that require extended answers.

Mathematical development

Provision for mathematical development is very good.

Main strengths

- Most children count accurately to 10 and recognise the numbers, while a significant group work well with larger numbers
- Children confidently use and understand a range of mathematical language such as one more or less, and recognise and name squares, triangles and cubes
- Teachers plan a wide range of relevant and interesting activities to support and extend learning, including the very good use of ICT

Commentary

52. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Staff plan interesting activities that help to develop both mathematical and language skills. For instance, a teaching assistant extended children's understanding of tallying and recording practically by using large building blocks in the outdoor play area. Opportunities to play with mathematical toys and equipment are helping

the children's learning. In a bead threading activity children showed that they could count accurately, recording numbers well. Some children could explain, using the beads, what one less or one more of a given number is. Staff support learning well and sensitively guide children in the correct formation and orientation of numbers. Because children are excited by their mathematical learning, they bring many aspects of their learning to their independent play. In the role-play area children were using tallying to record colour pencils, and a group looking at shapes were making choices using appropriate mathematical names. Children's achievement is very good and by the end of the reception year most will achieve the expected standards, with about a third working within the National Curriculum for mathematics.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

Main strengths

- Good use is made of ICT to promote learning
- Planning is creative and ensures that children have a wide range of experiences

Commentary

53. Teaching and achievement are good. Children have many opportunities to use computers, both in the classroom and in the main school computer areas. Computer programs are well chosen to support particular areas of learning and enable children to make good progress in, for example, choosing and reading words and letter recognition. Children develop very good mouse control and are able to use a range of applications and programmes very effectively. Children show great interest in the imaginative, planned activities that help them to find out about their world. A group investigating different surfaces on which to run their cars realised that the bumpy corrugated paper slowed them down. 'It's like the bumps in the road outside my grandma's house...my dad has to make the car go slowly' said one child. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children will meet the early learning goals expected of them.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is good.

Main strengths

- In timetabled PE lessons, the children show good controlled movement
- Children have good opportunities for outdoor play that extend their learning and allow for boisterous play

Commentary

54. The children use space well, both in PE lessons and outdoors. In planned PE lessons they move around the room with confidence and pleasure, showing good awareness of space and each other. They show good control and co-ordination of their bodies when balancing, skipping and jumping. Teachers support learning well by demonstrating skills, giving praise and allowing time for children to improve their performance. Children are very confident using climbing apparatus, and are aware of safety issues, for example, jumping and landing safely. Children have good opportunities for extending play in the outdoor area. They drive their toys well, without bumping into each other and continue with activities they have begun indoors. All children use pencils, crayons, glue and scissors accurately and safely. Achievement is good and by the time they enter Year 1, most children will meet the early learning goals expected of them.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn to experiment and become confident with a range of media
- They use their imagination well in role-play
- When using creative media there are too few opportunities for children to select resources for themselves

Commentary

55. Children have good opportunities to develop their creative skills through planned tasks such as drawing, painting and model making. They enjoy cutting and sticking. However, learning is sometimes restricted by a limited range of materials, for example, when painting their models of vehicles children were given no choice on brush sizes nor the opportunity to mix their own colours. Children greatly enjoy role-play in the well-planned 'space ship' and good links are encouraged with other areas of learning, such as communication, language and literacy. For example, one child described how he had set the controls to visit the land of the dinosaurs. Two other children joined the play and described very imaginatively the 'wild things' they could see out of the window. Achievement is good and by the time they enter Year 1, most children will meet the early learning goals expected of them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above the national average by the end of Year 6
- Writing is taught well throughout the school
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good
- Standards in reading are not as good as those in writing

Commentary

56. The results of the national tests in writing at the end of Year 2 have improved since the last inspection and are well above average when compared with all schools nationally and above average when compared with similar schools. Results in reading have improved compared with all schools and remain average compared with similar schools. Results in English at the end of Year 6 have improved and are well above average compared to all schools although remain average compared to similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is higher than the national average. Achievement is very good overall because of the very good quality of teaching in the subject, the use of ICT which inspires and motivates pupils and work which is interesting and meaningful.
57. Pupils speak very confidently and express themselves clearly, their attainment is very good and standards in speaking and listening are well above average. Pupils have good opportunities to speak in different contexts, for example, presenting their work to the rest of the class and sharing ideas as well as talking together to complete various tasks. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils prepared a poem to recite to the rest of the school as part of their work on performance poetry. Pupils of all ages listen very well in lessons to their teachers and each other. Their responses to questions put by teachers are thoughtful and considered showing maturity and control of an increasingly sophisticated vocabulary. Teachers promote speaking and listening very well in lessons and as part of personal development. Role-play and drama activities help develop speaking and listening skills and extend pupils' vocabulary. Teachers and support staff provide good role models.

58. Standards in reading are generally above average but not as good as standards in writing. By Year 6 most read with confidence, fluency and expression, however, the depth of their understanding of more complex texts is weaker. The school has identified the need to improve reading further and has appropriate actions and targets in place to achieve this. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils learnt about the structure and purpose of non-fiction texts. The teacher provided a very stimulating introduction to this very well planned lesson and made very effective use of resources including ICT. Throughout the lesson, the teacher reminded pupils about the purpose of the task and at the end led a discussion on what they had learned. As a result of the very good teaching, standards and achievement were high and excellent links were made between reading and writing. Pupils' early reading skills are developed well through lots of shared reading activities.
59. Standards in writing are well above average as a result of a whole school focus on raising attainment in writing. Pupils enjoy writing and write for many different reasons and in different styles, but always with a clear purpose, which helps them achieve well. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils planned their poetry writing as part of a series of lessons on performance poetry. They had very good knowledge of the structure, rhythms and language from their previous work and applied this knowledge very well to their own writing and produced work of a very good standard. Drama is used very effectively as a stimulus for creative writing and the impact of this is seen in the improved quality of pupils' work, particularly in the richness of their vocabulary. Handwriting is good by Year 6 although expectations for fluency in joining up are not consistent and high enough for younger pupils. Standards in spelling are good.
60. Teaching and learning are very good. In the best lessons, teachers plan exciting, interesting work for pupils and then use a range of different strategies to ensure that pupils can learn well including those with special educational needs. Teachers make sure that pupils understand the purpose of lessons and what they are expected to achieve. Pupils' very good behaviour is a significant factor in their very good achievement in English. For example, in a Year 4 class, the teacher was able to work intensively with a group on their reading. The activities planned for the rest of the class were absorbing and challenging and pupils worked well together without needing constant intervention from the teacher. In a less effective, although satisfactory poetry lesson in Year 6, pupils were not given sufficient opportunities to use their knowledge and explore the poet's meaning for themselves in the first instance. Although standards were good, pupils, particularly the more able, did not achieve as well as they could.
61. Targets are set for pupils which mean they know what they are aiming for. Teachers mark work regularly, or talk to the younger pupils about their work, and often let pupils know what they can do to improve; however, this is better and more consistent in some classes than in others and where it is lacking, pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. Teachers manage teaching assistants very well and the quality of their support has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
62. Resources for English are good overall although there are not enough sets of quality books which are needed to meet the activities planned to improve reading standards. The library is a small but attractive area which is maintained by a teaching assistant who teaches library skills to classes. The subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have an action plan for future developments in the subject. They have not yet had opportunities to evaluate lessons to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. The use of pupils' language and literacy skills across the curriculum is very good and has a positive impact on learning and standards in other subjects. For example, links with ICT are strong and pupils are competent readers of computer texts including instructions and web pages. Specialist subject vocabulary is used with understanding and accuracy for example in art and design, mathematics and religious education. Writing skills are used very well in a range of subjects, for example to record results of investigations in science and mathematics and diary writing linked to work in history on the Tudors.

MATHEMATICS

Overall provision for mathematics is very good.

Main strengths

- Standards are well above average throughout the school
- The overall quality of teaching ensures that pupils achieve very well
- The use of information and communication technology is having a very good impact on achievement
- Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory

Commentary

64. In the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 results were well above the national average for all schools and very high in comparison with similar schools. Results in national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were very high compared to the national average and well above those for pupils in similar schools. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve very well, throughout the school.
65. Standards seen in the inspection, both during lessons and in children's books, were well above average. For example, pupils in Year 2 use standard units when measuring length and have good knowledge of the properties of 2D shapes. They use number operations accurately when solving problems, using numbers up to 3 digits and involving missing numbers. Pupils in Year 4 have very good knowledge of the properties of 2D and 3D shapes and use correct vocabulary very confidently. Numeracy skills are well above average in Year 6 and the higher attaining pupils calculate percentages of quantities, use ratio and proportion accurately, solve problems involving brackets and use inverse operations to check answers.
66. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning are very good. There are many strengths in teaching which contribute to pupils gaining new skills and understanding. Teachers have very good knowledge and plan lessons with clear objectives and progressions that enable pupils to learn very well. Teachers explain new strategies to solve problems very well and enhance pupils' understanding by asking them to devise and describe their own strategies. Relationships are very good, pupils are managed very well and, as a result, they display very good attitudes and behaviour. Teachers, in most lessons, challenge pupils to think for themselves and ensure that tasks are suitable for all pupils. Teaching assistants work very effectively with individuals as in a Year 4 class when a pupil for whom English is an additional language was provided with key word cards to aid understanding. However, teaching in Year 6 has been disrupted by teacher absence for two terms and, although pupils learn new strategies, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to try to solve mathematical problems for themselves using a range of strategies. The use of new technology, such as very good use of interactive whiteboards, is having a positive impact on standards as well as pupils' concentration and enjoyment of mathematics.
67. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. Three members of staff currently share the role of co-ordinating the subject. Teaching, learning and pupils' progress are not, presently, being monitored consistently. Work is marked regularly but teachers do not consistently help pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Resources are good and well used.
68. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards have improved and the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is better.

Mathematics across the curriculum

69. There are good opportunities for pupils to use mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, links with ICT are very strong. Mathematical vocabulary, especially that involving spatial awareness and patterns, is well used in physical education and art. In science and design technology, pupils measure quantities and capacity. In geography they use scales and grids when learning about maps.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very high standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6
- Higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not offered enough of a challenge to achieve higher standards
- Pupils are well supported in using precise and appropriate scientific vocabulary
- Pupils enjoy science, concentrate well and work very hard
- Very good links are made between science and other curriculum areas, particularly ICT

Commentary

70. In 2003, results in national tests at the end of Year 6 were well above average when compared to schools nationally. When compared to other schools whose pupils attained similar standards in Year 2, standards are also very high. This shows good improvement since the last inspection. From the work seen during the inspection, pupils continue to achieve well. Pupils decide independently on appropriate approaches to an investigation, understand the importance of fair testing and record observations in chart and graphical forms. However, due to the long-term illness of the Year 6 teacher, pupils have not had as much opportunity to experience investigative work. The subject knowledge of Year 6 pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, exceeds national expectations. Of particular note is the very good achievement of pupils with special educational needs, all of whom achieved at least the national expectations in the 2003 tests.
71. Standards in science at the end of Year 2 are above average. The results of teacher assessments were well above the national average, but were below average at the higher levels when compared to similar schools. This is because work is not always closely linked to the pupils' ability and there are limited opportunities for able pupils to extend their learning independently through recording their observations and ideas. Pupils are, however, well supported in gradually building the skills required to carry out an investigation, and their scientific knowledge is good. Since the last inspection the school has put into place effective long term planning which has contributed to the pupils' good achievement.
72. Teaching in science is good. In lessons where teaching is good or better, teachers' good planning and clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils, and the swift pace, ensure that pupils are productive and meet the challenges set. The work builds on what pupils have learnt before and on links to other subjects, for example, English and mathematics. Teachers encourage accurate use of scientific vocabulary and use ICT well to support learning. They have good questioning techniques, and use pupils' responses to reinforce and extend learning well. There is a good investigative approach to work particularly in Years 3 to 6.
73. Pupils enjoy their science lessons and work extremely hard and productively, particularly when there is a practical input or the opportunity to use ICT. Work is usually of high quality. Following a "PowerPoint" presentation by the teacher, Year 5 pupils used the Internet to research the habitats and needs of endangered species in order to recreate, through models, a similar environment. This led to an understanding of the interdependence of living things. Year 4 pupils enthusiastically planned an investigation to test how well different soils retain water,

showing a very good understanding of the principles of variables and fair testing. During lessons, because they are fully involved, pupils concentrate well and work very hard. Their achievement is good.

74. Science is well led and managed and good improvements have been made since the last inspection, particularly in terms of the provision of good long and medium term planning for the subject and the resulting rise in standards. There are also some interesting links between science and ecology being developed through a teacher's interest in re-cycling. However, due to the long-term absence, through illness, of the co-ordinator, there has been a lack of monitoring that would have identified that Year 6 pupils have recently had limited opportunities to experience investigative science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above expectations
- The impact of new resources is very good, resulting in ICT being used very effectively to support pupils' learning in other subjects
- There is a very clear vision and ambition to improve
- Teachers have very good knowledge and plan progressive tasks which ensure that pupils achieve very well
- Monitoring of teaching, learning and pupils' progress are not well developed

Commentary

75. Pupils' skills and knowledge are well above expectations overall. Standards seen in a Year 2 lesson were above average and pupils were achieving very well. Pupils know how to log on, choose the suitable application to input, and save their data in order to produce graphs, which are then interpreted. They can all programme a floor turtle to instruct it to follow a route around a play mat.
76. Pupils continue to achieve very well in Years 3 to 6, so that, by the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. Pupils have better developed skills than expected. For example, in Year 4, pupils use different functions and formulae when using spreadsheets and are able to input and rearrange data. In Year 5 pupils have very good keyboard skills and knowledge of writing procedures for a design, including the use of variables. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they are confident when using different applications to present their ideas in different forms, for different purposes. For example, they use their very good knowledge of drawing, importing and manipulating images and write interestingly produced instructions for younger pupils so that they can learn the same techniques.

77. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers have many strengths and ensure that pupils gain skills and apply them in well-planned, purposeful and independent tasks. Objectives and expected outcomes are shared with pupils so that they know what they are about to learn and are aware of the criteria for success. Questions are challenging and tasks are suitable for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive very good support from teaching assistants and, consequently, achieve as well as their peers. Teachers, who have very good knowledge and personal skills, make effective use of the interactive whiteboard to enhance learning. Relationships are very good and pupils are managed very well so that they show very good attitudes and behaviour and work well together in pairs and small groups.
78. Leadership is very good and the subject is well managed. There is a very clear vision for improvement and the school is ambitious to emulate excellent practice that they know of in other schools. The curriculum is fully in place and the subject leader has audited provision and is reviewing the scheme of work. The subject leader and the very effective ICT manager are very good role models who give very good support to teachers through INSET and curriculum advice. As a result, teachers' confidence has improved which has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Resources are very good and the newly equipped computer suite offers very good accommodation.

ICT across the curriculum

79. Links with other subjects are satisfactory overall and strong in some subjects, particularly mathematics, science and English. Teachers use the interactive whiteboards effectively in many subjects to make learning enjoyable and purposeful.

HUMANITIES

80. During the inspection no lessons were observed in geography or history and so it is not possible to judge overall provision in these subjects. On the evidence of work sampled, work displayed around the school, discussions with pupils and subject leaders, both subjects are taught fully and the breadth and depth of study is good, but it was not possible to make a judgement on standards.
81. In **history**, class teachers assess standards and record them in the school system but, at present, the progress and achievement of pupils is not monitored effectively. Leadership and management are just satisfactory at present. The role of the subject leader is clearly understood and identified developments include improving the assessment procedures and monitoring teaching and learning more formally and rigorously. The curriculum is well organised with long-term plans clearly evident and teachers use national plans in order to support learning effectively.
82. In **geography**, pupils' work is analysed but subject leadership at present does not involve rigorous enough monitoring of pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching. The schemes of work are fully in place, resources are clearly identified to support learning and websites are suggested for research. The international week is a very good opportunity for pupils to focus their studies on different countries in each class and then share their ideas with other pupils. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is very good.

Main strengths

- Teachers' subject knowledge is very good
- There are good links with other subjects
- Standards are much better than those expected by the locally agreed syllabus
- Leadership is very good

Commentary

83. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. RE makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural

development and pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs and respect those of other people. Standards are well above average expectations because the subject is very well taught and teachers are successful in making lessons relevant and meaningful to pupils. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about the `Ten Commandments by linking and comparing them with the school's Golden Rules. The teachers in these lessons ask thought provoking questions, promoting thinking skills and pupils respond extremely well to the challenges presented to them.

84. The links between RE and other subjects are strong, particularly with art and literacy. In a Year 4 lesson pupils were learning about the life of Saint Francis and looking at various illustrations and paintings before making their own first draft of a design for a triptych. The teacher used stimulating resources, including use of the interactive whiteboard, which depicted St Francis's life story and the pupils were very knowledgeable about the special qualities he possessed. The teacher knew the subject very well, pupils worked with great interest and enthusiasm and as a result standards were high in the RE and art aspects of the lesson and pupils achieved very well. Drama also plays an important part in the RE curriculum, for example, when pupils re-enact the Hindu story of Rama and Sita. Pupils develop a good knowledge of other religions as seen in displays around the school and an International Week held earlier in the year helped pupils focus on customs, traditions and faiths in other countries successfully. The subject is well organised by the co-ordinator who has very good subject knowledge, a clear plan for developments and provides very good leadership.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

Provision in art and design is very good.

Main strengths

- Teaching and learning are very good and standards are well above those expected
- There are strong links with other subjects
- The subject is enhanced by visitors to school and extra provision outside the school day

Commentary

85. Teachers have very good expertise and this, together with their enthusiasm, has helped to raise standards which have improved well since the last inspection. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are well above the expected level. For most pupils, including those with special educational needs, overall achievement is very good. Very good links are made with other subjects, for example, exploration of Egyptian art forms linked to a history study where pupils made masks. They demonstrated many aspects of their learning in art and history for this work, including expertise in drawing portraits and specific use of colour, shape and pattern. Pupils use their previous knowledge and apply their skills very well and their work is of a high standard.
86. Art and design has a high profile in the school and the curriculum offers pupils opportunities to work with a very wide range of materials and forms including clay, textiles, embroidery, sculpture, photography, and art work generated by ICT. The school holds an art week where each class has a focus on the life and work of an artist inspired by a particular painting, which helps raise pupils' awareness of a range of technique and form. Artists visit the school to work with pupils. Art displays around the school show pupils' good knowledge of other cultures as well as an awareness of environmental issues.
87. Teaching is very good. In an excellent lesson based on a theme of Birds in Flight, pupils were experimenting with wire to form sculptures using their imagination and creativity to the full. The teacher skilfully questioned pupils, prompting them to think, experiment and solve problems, without over directing the activity. The lesson was absorbing, fun and challenging and health and safety issues were thoroughly addressed. Pupils were engrossed and determined and

clearly understood what they were doing and for what purpose. They had time to reflect and evaluate their work throughout the lesson and their achievement was excellent.

88. A significant strength is very good leadership and management of the subject, which results from the skills and expertise of the art co-ordinator. The curriculum is planned very well and includes participation in national and local exhibitions and projects as well as out of school activities, which all help to generate interest and enthusiasm for the subject. The co-ordinator has a very clear vision for development in the subject which is linked to whole school improvement. Work is monitored but teaching and learning are not observed.

Physical education

Provision for physical education (PE) is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good coverage of all the areas of the PE curriculum
- There are very good opportunities for pupils use their PE skills in after-school clubs
- Pupils work well together during lessons and build good skills
- In some lessons pupils are given too few opportunities to evaluate and improve their performance

Commentary

89. Pupils reach good standards in PE by the end of Years 2 and 6. The school has good inclusive strategies to ensure that physically disabled pupils are fully involved in both PE lessons and after-school sports clubs.
90. In the best lessons observed, where teaching was good, high expectations of work and behaviour ensured that pupils worked hard throughout lessons and achieved well in the skills taught. In a mixed Year 1 and 2 gymnastics lesson, pupils moved with imagination, control and co-ordination and co-operated well with a partner. They were able to transfer new skills learnt safely and confidently onto large apparatus. In a Year 2 games lesson pupils built good ball control skills and were able to catch, bat and trap balls. Good teaching points and support from a teaching assistant ensured that pupils understood how to improve their performance. However, in most lessons pupils were given too few opportunities to evaluate and improve their own performance in this way.
91. There is a very good range of after-school opportunities in sport, which include football, netball, cricket, dance, line dancing and gymnastics. Both boys and girls are involved in these after-school clubs. Pupils take part in inter-school matches and activities, and a group has performed dance at a local theatre.
92. The co-ordinator has developed the role of physical education and sport well within the school by providing training for staff, ensuring that pupils have adequate timetabled PE lessons in order to fully meet the demands of the National Curriculum fully and checking to ensure that the pupils' skills improve as they move through the school.
93. Resources for PE are good and the large playing field is well used for outside activities. However, the size of the hall restricts the range and quality of indoor PE activities, particularly for the older pupils. Teachers are very conscious of safety in this situation.
94. Only one lesson was seen in each of design and technology and music and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision in these subjects. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement on standards, but from work sampled, work displayed around the school, discussions with pupils and subject leaders, the breadth and depth of study is good in both subjects.

95. In **design and technology**, discussions with pupils showed that they are enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy their work. From the work available during the inspection and photographs and plans of previous work, it is apparent that pupils have appropriate opportunities to make, try out and consider how to improve their designs. In the lesson seen, Year 1 pupils were completing previously designed models of vehicles linked to a wider topic on transport. Pupils had their designs in front of them as they worked and many could comment on the differences between the design and the model. Their evaluations showed a good understanding of what they had learned from their experiments and gave appropriate constructive comments about how they would change things the next time to improve their work. Good links are made with other subjects, for example, a display of musical instruments made by pupils included plans for the designs and the relative success or otherwise of the musicality of their instruments.
96. In **music** very tuneful singing was heard in assembly. In the music lesson observed teaching and learning were very good, with a musically talented teaching assistant working alongside the class teacher. In the lesson there were very good opportunities for pupils to appraise and compose music, using an Indonesian Gamelan composition as a stimulus. Pupils expressed great enjoyment of their music and knew how to handle and play instruments correctly. Music has a high profile in the school and the school choir has won acclaim both locally and further afield. Curriculum enrichment includes clubs for recorders and visiting tutors provide a range of instrumental tuition. The planned scheme of work for music is good and there are opportunities for pupils to take part in 'Theme Weeks' that allow them to listen to and compose music from different cultures and times.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

97. The school has a strong, well-planned personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme and provision is very good. Lessons are planned to include discussion times which help develop pupils' awareness of the feelings and needs of others. They participate enthusiastically and confidently, making their voices and opinions heard whilst respecting those of others. Specific requirements in relation to health, sex education and drug education are met and teachers respond very well to personal and social issues as they arise. The very good ethos of the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible and show respect for others. The participation in the Healthy Schools Partnership helps pupils learn about healthy eating and the consequences of poor eating habits. Aspects of citizenship are included in PSHE lessons. For example, in "circle times" pupils discussed the formation of a school council, what it is for and what its function might be. In two very good lessons, very skilful questioning by teachers elicited thoughtful, mature, intelligent responses by pupils who are thinking beyond their own likes and dislikes to the good of the whole school. PSHE is co-ordinated and woven into the overall caring ethos of the school and is generally in evidence across the curriculum.

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

