

INSPECTION REPORT

BURTON CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Burton, Christchurch

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113789

Headteacher: Mr John Welsh

Lead inspector: Mr M Burghart

Dates of inspection: 4th - 6th May 2004

Inspection number: 255685

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	278
School address:	Campbell Rd Burton Christchurch Dorset
Postcode:	BH23 7JY
Telephone number:	01202 482588
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Malcolm Surman
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a large village school in Burton near Christchurch in Dorset. There are 278 pupils on roll in ten classes. Apart from a mixed reception and Year 1 class and a Years 1 and 2 class, all classes contain pupils from single age groups. The school has a well above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. No pupil requires extra help for having English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving at times other than in reception or from Year 6 is above average. During the inspection one teacher was on maternity leave and her class was taken by a temporary member of staff on a short term contract. Despite good progress made in the local pre-school group the attainment of children on entry to reception is below average and for a significant proportion well below average. The school received achievement awards from the DfES in 2002 and 2003 for achievements in national tests for eleven year olds. In common with other primary schools locally the school is in a falling roll situation and is much smaller than in 1998. Following the last inspection the school was refurbished and extended. The 'new' building, with a capacity of 360 pupils, was opened in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20865	Mr M Burghart	Lead inspector	English, Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Art and design, Design and technology.
9487	Dr F Hurd	Lay Inspector	
22578	Mr G Jones	Team inspector	Science, Information and communication technology, Religious education, Special educational needs
20671	Mr J Palethorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics, Music, Physical education.
27180	Mrs E Whiting	Team inspector	Geography, History, Personal, social and health education.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with a variety of very good features where pupils, especially the high proportion of those with special educational needs, often achieve very well. There is a strong commitment to personal as well as academic development and the school's ethos is very good. Staff make a very good team because relationships are very good and planning is effective. As a result of very good leadership and management the school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is very well run.
- The learning environment is very good.
- Support for special educational needs (SEN) is very good.
- The school takes very good care of pupils who respond with very good attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils achieve well because teaching is good, and frequently very good.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (reception) is very good.
- There are very good links with the community.
- Religious education has too low a profile in the timetable.
- The leadership of some curriculum areas needs further developing.

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in 1998. All key issues continue to be addressed with significant improvements achieved in the quality of the learning environment and provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Developments to planning and assessment are having positive effects on teaching and learning and pupils' achievement. The refurbishment of the school has had dramatic effects on the quality of education provided.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

The table appears to show that standards have been maintained at a satisfactory level over a three year period. What it does not show is that considering below average attainment on entry, well above average special educational needs and above average turnover of pupils, pupils are achieving well and in many cases very well. Standards for those currently in Year 6 where SEN levels are twice as high this year compared with last are unlikely to be as good, but in real terms achievement is better. Improving provision for pupils in Years 1 and 2 has raised standards for pupils aged seven especially the more able. Standards are good in art and history throughout and good in geography at the end of Year 2. There was too little evidence to make judgements in design and technology, music and physical education. Standards are broadly satisfactory in religious education (with some weaknesses), and satisfactory and fast improving in ICT. Children make very good progress in reception with the exception of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development (where a significant proportion starts well below average). Most children are on line to meet the Early Learning Goals in all required areas before joining Year 1, with notable success in personal, social and emotional development. Overall pupils' personal development is good. Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are all strengths. Pupils' very positive response to the school contributes to the calm atmosphere. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with clear strengths in moral and social provision. The school successfully encourages pupils to show

initiative and develop their independence. Although unauthorised absence is above average as a result of holidays taken in term time the overall profile of attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides pupils with a good standard of education. The curriculum is very good overall being broad, mostly balanced and relevant to pupils' varying needs. Provision for SEN is very good and efforts to provide better challenge for higher attaining pupils are raising standards, notably (but not exclusively) in Years 1 and 2. Highlights of the curriculum include literacy, numeracy, provision for the Foundation Stage, ICT and physical education. Teaching is good with very good and occasionally excellent features. This has very positive effects on pupils' learning and achievement. All of the 55 lessons observed unannounced were at least satisfactory with almost three in every four good or better. Nearly three lessons in ten were very good, with three lessons excellent (featuring English and maths). Teaching is judged very good in reception and is consistently good in literacy and numeracy. Mixed age classes are managed well and teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the overall quality of teaching. Relationships, support for SEN, perceptive questioning and very good pupil management are all highlights. Areas still in need of further development are in the pace of some lessons and in always providing suitable challenge.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and the management of the head are very good. His level headed approach in an excellent partnership with the deputy provides stability and is at the centre of the very good teamwork of staff. The head ensures that the school has very clear educational direction and that management is very effective and that the school is very well run. The governance of the school is good with particularly strong involvement in establishing the new building and monitoring finance. Subject leaders play a good part in management of the curriculum with notable success in English and maths. Although assessment is now judged good in most areas, aspects of monitoring and evaluating are still elements for development in the role of subject leaders.

PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have positive views of the school. They are most pleased with teaching, induction arrangements and expectations. Their main concerns are over bullying, aspects of communication, how the school reports pupils' progress and how it seeks parents' views. Inspectors did not find bullying to be a problem, but do see that aspects of communication could be improved. Overall links with parents are judged good. Most pupils enjoy school. They are pleased with its caring ethos and are confident that there is always someone to turn to with a problem.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

This school is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses. The following issues are what inspectors see as being the most important things to do to further improve:

- Raise the profile of religious education, ensuring that sufficient time and effort are devoted to the subject to be certain that all requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are fully met.
- Develop still further the monitoring role of subject leaders.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils reach broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science aged seven and eleven. Their achievement is good, and for many pupils even better. This is because attainment on entry is below average and a well above average proportion of pupils has special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school pupils achieve well, and in many cases (particularly involving pupils with SEN), very well.
- Standards are at least satisfactory in all subjects that were observed, and good for seven year olds in art, geography and history, and for eleven year olds in art and history.
- Children in reception reach the expected Early Learning Goals in all aspects except communication, language, literacy and mathematical development. They make rapid progress and 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	15.6 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.6 (14.8)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.0 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 57 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	26.9 (27.4)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.7 (27.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.9 (28.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 41 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Although standards appear average from the results of national tests in English, mathematics and science for pupils aged eleven, and in English for those aged seven, the school's real strength is in getting pupils to achieve well and frequently very well. Records show good value is added to most pupils' education over their time at the school. Governors and staff believe that the above average mobility, where more pupils leave Years 3 to 6 than join, is due to uncertainty over secondary education. The school is about a mile from the county border and parents have a choice from this point of view. This has in recent years seen some of the more able pupils withdrawn from the school before Year 6 national tests with a negative impact on the school's performance.

2. Results in maths for seven year olds were well below average compared with all and similar schools, and results in reading and writing were well below similar schools. However, similar school comparisons at this age are based on the school's eligibility for free school meals. As in many other schools where there is no county meals service Burton suffers because some parents see no need to register. This has the effect of making such comparisons unreliable.

3. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are reaching standards expected nationally for these ages in English, maths and science. There is much improved performance of higher attaining pupils who are far more likely to achieve above average levels than in previous years. Improvement is most marked for seven year olds. However, Year 6 average point scores are unlikely to show improvement this year because of a much higher proportion of pupils with SEN in the year group.

4. Standards in other subjects are at least in line with national expectations with strengths in art, geography and history for seven year olds, and art and history for eleven year olds. A particular success is in ICT where much improved provision and teaching are having good effects. Here pupils are now performing at levels consistent with national expectations compared with below these in 1998. No judgements could be made about standards in design and technology, music, and physical education due to lack of evidence. In religious education standards are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. However, they are restricted by lack of emphasis on the subject.

5. Children in reception achieve very well in response to very good provision. Most will reach the expected Early Learning Goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development, and exceed the goals in terms of personal, social and emotional development before joining Year 1. Because children often start education with below average communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills (notwithstanding signs of good progress in local pre-school groups) they do not generally reach all the goals in these aspects by the end of reception. However their performance represents good, and for a significant minority very good, achievement making a very good start in the first year at the school.

6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well across the school. For example, in the Year 6 classes in the last national tests, a significant minority obtained the expected national levels in English, mathematics and science. Most of these pupils entered school with significantly low levels of ability and made very good progress over time. The school has recently started to look at pupils who show above average ability. It is preparing to provide rather more for these pupils in order to ensure that they too reach their potential.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is good, being above national averages. Punctuality is good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good overall, and excellent in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils really enjoy being at school and expect to find their work interesting.
- They work well independently and collaboratively, and willingly accept responsibility.
- They are noticeably confident and articulate.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.6	School data	1.2
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.

7. Authorised absence is below the national average, whilst unauthorised absence is above. This latter figure is mainly due to parents taking their children on holiday during term time, usually

because personal circumstances make it difficult for them to do so during the summer. Apart from this, parents and carers make good efforts to ensure children attend school regularly and arrive on time. The school has good procedures in place to monitor attendance, and promotes its importance effectively to parents.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	277	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

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

8. Behaviour is nearly always managed to a consistently high standard, in line with the school's stated aims of mutual respect and courtesy. Pupils are courteous and friendly, move sensibly around the building, and nearly always concentrate well in class. Playtimes, when toys are available in the playground, and clubs run at lunchtime, are happy and well ordered. Pupils are aware of their targets in literacy and numeracy, and are eager to learn. They respect the feelings and beliefs of others, and even the youngest have a very good understanding of what is right and wrong. The only occasions when less than satisfactory behaviour was observed was during lessons where the attention of a minority of pupils was not fully engaged by the teaching. These occurrences were of a minor nature.

9. Pupils with special needs show good, and often very good, attitudes to their work. They get on well with their support staff. These attitudes contribute positively to the progress pupils make in their work.

10. The previous inspection report judged spiritual, moral, social and cultural education to be satisfactory overall. The quality of provision has improved and is now good. The collective acts of worship meet legal requirements, and include opportunities for reflection. Assemblies observed included sensitive issues that were handled with skill and were well matched to pupils' attainment. There were many opportunities during lessons observed, for pupils to react with awe and wonder. These included Year 5 pupils using the outside environment to link nature with art. Pupils in Year 3 were astonished and delighted at the images created using 'logo' to create patterns in ICT. Appreciation of dance and drama was provided through the creative use of workshops linked to history and geography.

11. The school lives up to its ethos of care, respect and responsibility on a daily basis, encouraging discussion about social and moral issues through regular use of circle time. Moral education is addressed through high expectations of behaviour and the very good role models that staff provide. The curriculum ensures that pupils have opportunities to learn about cultures and faiths other than their own, whilst ensuring that they gain a good understanding of western traditions in art, music, religion and literature.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides pupils with a good standard of education. The curriculum is very good overall being broad, mostly balanced and relevant to pupils' varying needs.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good, with very good and occasionally excellent features, and as a result pupils learn and achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is judged very good in reception.
- It is consistently good in literacy and numeracy.
- Mixed age classes are managed well.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the overall quality of teaching.
- Relationships are very good and pupils are very well managed.
- Support for SEN is a strength of the school.
- Assessment procedures are much improved and are judged as good.
- The pace and challenge of a minority of lessons could still be improved.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (5%)	13 (24%)	25 (45%)	14 (25%)	0	0	0

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

12. All teachers were observed teaching unannounced on several occasions by a variety of inspectors. All had at least one good lesson, and nine very good. Three teachers accounted for the excellent lessons.

13. Teaching in reception is very good (particularly in the single age class) because work is well planned to provide a very good balance between more formal lessons, and learning through structured play. Relationships are excellent and there is an atmosphere of trust and consideration which has a superb effect on children's personal development.

14. Literacy and numeracy are consistently well taught because planning is good and assessment is well used to analyse strengths and weaknesses before setting targets for improvement, and where necessary, modifying the curriculum. A good example of this is in the introduction of guided reading time in all classes from Years 1 to 6 to overcome deficiencies in reading identified in a review of pupils' achievement.

15. Good teaching is very securely rooted in the very good relationships common throughout the whole school. Pupils are listened to and are not afraid to make mistakes and learn from them. Parents' concerns over mixed age classes are not well founded for provision is planned and delivered effectively to ensure that all pupils receive their full entitlement and enjoy the same opportunities. The topic work approach is used well to promote humanities in terms of geography and history, although it is less successful in providing opportunities for teaching religious education.

16. Other notable highlights of teaching are in:

- Very good open ended questioning which encourages pupils to answer on the basis of reason. As a result pupils learn to express themselves and understand that their opinions matter;
- Learning objectives made clear at the start of lessons and then referred back to at the end to gauge progress;
- Pupils being well managed with the minimum of fuss so that behaviour is very good and staff can concentrate on teaching;
- Teaching and learning assistants make a strong and significant contribution to the overall quality of teaching. They are well briefed and give very good support to teachers and pupils.

17. The teaching of pupils with SEN is very good overall. There is very good liaison between support assistants and class teachers and planning is of a high order.

18. The quality of assessment is good. Subjects are assessed independently and procedures are managed well by class teachers. Units of work have expectations built into them, groups of pupils are tracked, and all pupils have targets. Individual education plans are in place for pupils with special educational needs. Information from assessment of pupils' learning is used directly in planning. Marking helps pupils to improve their work. The use of 'once a month' books to record pupils' progress by keeping examples of work over time, very effectively demonstrates to all concerned how pupils are improving.

19. The very good relationships between staff and pupils allow informal as well as formal assessment. The self-confidence of pupils is instrumental in moving their learning forward. For example one child in a Year 3 class felt able to ask publicly for the teacher's explanation to be repeated so that she understood it completely. Good, clear explanations by teachers and the willingness they show to listen to pupils at length, provide the necessary climate for continual assessment of pupils' learning. Less able pupils are well supported by good quality input from teaching assistants. Class teachers value the contributions made by all groups in well organised plenaries at the end of lessons.

20. At the moment, the leadership team takes responsibility for assessment throughout the school. Procedures for structured assessment are not all clearly identified. The school recognises the need to formalise these, so that accurate monitoring, involving subject leaders across subjects and year groups, provides clear evidence of progress.

21. Aspects which even in this good profile of teaching could still be improved are in raising the pace and challenge of learning in a minority of lessons: for example in some Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 sessions.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good, enhanced by good provision for extracurricular activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The broad and balanced curriculum promotes high achievement.
- Planning is detailed and comprehensive.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Personal development is promoted well in many ways.
- The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented very effectively.
- The topic approach provides good links between subjects, and a coherence to the curriculum.
- There is a well planned programme for visits and visitors.
- The accommodation is very good and resources are good.

Commentary

22. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. Policies and schemes of work are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary. Particularly good progress has been made in information and communication technology, in the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and in the Foundation Stage. These are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, and on pupils' achievement. Long term plans clearly show how teachers intend to build progressively on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. They indicate where there are natural links between subjects that are explored through a topic approach, providing a range of connected experiences. For example, in the Years 3 and 4 topic on Ancient Greece history is covered well, geography looks at modern Greece, in art pupils make prints and Greek vases, in ICT pupils research and download text and graphics (combining the two) and literacy is used in reading and writing. However, the profile of religious education within the curriculum is underdeveloped.

23. Pupils with SEN access all elements of the National Curriculum and religious education. They are provided for very well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, where there is a significant element of extra support given. In Years 3 to 6, whilst there is no difference in the quality of support, there is less of it, thus these pupils receive good provision.

24. Pupils are able to develop their personal skills through a planned programme of activities and discussions, usually in circle time. This is supplemented in various other ways including, assemblies and visits. This makes a good contribution to the very good attitudes and behaviour displayed by the pupils at all times, and to the very good relationships evident throughout the school. Pupils value this work, particularly those in Year 6, who feel that it helps them with their problems. Outside specialists are used when necessary, such as the police for drugs education and the school nurse for sex education.

25. The school provides a number of activities which enrich the curriculum. Many pupils attend a range of after-school and lunchtime activities that develop a range of skills, including social and interpersonal. There is a number of planned visits and visitors to extend pupils' experiences, and these are incorporated well into the curriculum. For example, to support their work on Ancient Greece, Years 3 and 4 pupils have a drama day on Greek Markets and Myths, and Years 5 and 6 take part in a river study to support their work on rivers, rocks and soils. Regular art days are very popular with pupils and staff. The annual residential visit provides very well for pupils' social development.

26. The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum is good, and specialisms, such as physical education and music, are used well. The effectiveness of the support staff makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The very good accommodation now provides an attractive and stimulating learning environment. Overall, the quality and quantity of resources is good. It is very good for ICT, but areas for development include history and geography, tuned percussion instruments for music, and better library provision.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, guidance and support is very good overall, and excellent in the Foundation Stage. The provision of pupil support and guidance is very good. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction arrangements for pupils are good overall, and very good in the Foundation Stage.
- The extent to which each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in the school is very good.
- The arrangements to ensure the health and safety of all who work in the school are very good.

Commentary

27. The extraordinarily calming and welcoming atmosphere of the school is immediately apparent on entering the building, and was remarked on by parents, governors, pupils and staff during the inspection, as well as by the inspection team themselves. The quality of the welcome given to young children joining the reception classes is exceptional. The school works closely with local pre-school care providers, and makes every effort to learn as much as possible about its pupils before they arrive. Pre-school children visit to join in play and storytime activities, and staff make home visits when appropriate. Parents are warmly encouraged to get involved with their children's schooling. Pupils joining the school after the Foundation Stage (and mobility is comparatively high) settle in very quickly: staff found it difficult to identify particular induction routines, but the welcoming nature of the school is plain.

28. The quality of the relationships in the school was apparent during the inspection: relationships between adults and children were seldom less than good, and generally very much better. Pupils are

confident that they can identify an adult who would help them with their problems: one teaching assistant has an additional formal responsibility to provide confidential emotional support when requested. Parents and pupils spoke with appreciation of the support given during family bereavements or serious illness. Teaching and non teaching staff work hard to provide support tailored to individuals: the support for pupils with special educational needs is very good, and that for more able pupils is currently being developed. Every child in the school takes part in public performances.

29. Pupils with SEN are well screened following entry to the school and many of their needs are noted at an early stage. With about 1 in 3 pupils having SEN, this has become a barrier to raising standards for a significant number of pupils. However, due to very good care and guidance, the vast majority of these pupils will go on to achieve very well considering their educational problems.

30. The school makes good use of the health and safety support services provided by the local education authority (LEA). Governors carry out a site risk assessment termly, using the LEA checklist, and LEA risk assessment procedures are used before all offsite visits. The site is secure and the school has very few problems with vandalism. There is a rolling programme of first aid training for staff, and all staff are regularly briefed on child protection procedures. There is a designated medical room and all staff are made aware of pupils with serious medical conditions.

31. All pupils are encouraged to be independent and take on responsibilities from their first days in school. As they grow older, they often debate issues such as bullying and friendship in circle time. Staff respect their opinions, and pupils themselves are confident that their views matter. However, there is no formal channel such as a school council through which pupils could both put forward suggestions or criticisms, and plan activities such as charitable fundraising.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is good overall. Links with the community are very good, and links with other educational establishments are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school plays a significant role in village life.
- Procedures to deal with any complaints or concerns are very good.
- Parents are very supportive of their children's learning.
- Twenty per cent of the parents returning the Ofsted questionnaires felt: the school could do more to consult parents; did not deal firmly enough with bullying; and did not feel sufficiently well informed about their child's progress.

Commentary

32. Despite the proximity of Christchurch, Burton remains very much an independent community with many organisations and activities, and the school is very much a village school. Villagers expect to attend school events (as do many past pupils and their parents), and the church fete is held in the school grounds. The school has close links with all three village churches, representatives of whom regularly take assemblies. Pupils regularly visit local sheltered accommodation to entertain residents, or interview them about their lives. Most pupils live in the village, join Cubs or Brownies, or play in the village football teams. Several of these activities are run by governors and parents. The chair of governors commented that 'everyone in the village always knows what's going on at the school'.

33. Ofsted questionnaires showed that parents believe teaching is of a high standard, induction is well managed and that the school has high expectations of its pupils. The findings of the inspection team confirm all these views. About a dozen parents help regularly in class: these, and members of the very active parents' association committee felt that staff welcomed their comments and suggestions and that they were used as a means of informally gauging parental opinion. However,

the school has not made use of formal large-scale techniques for this purpose, such as questionnaires: this may explain parents' concern over this issue. The inspection team found that bullying occurs very seldom and is dealt with quickly and efficiently: it finds no evidence to support some parents' views. Parents receive a wide range of information about school life. The prospectus is attractively designed and fulfils statutory requirements. The governors' report to parents is currently being redesigned.

34. The school's website is well used, and newsletters are sent out by 'pupil post'. The standard of curriculum information is particularly good. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory overall. However, in some instances they report only on the curriculum covered in particular subject areas, and not on the progress of the child. Reports do not indicate whether pupils are performing at, above, or below the standard expected for their ages, and it may be that this is why some parents feel they would like more information. Staff are very approachable and do their best to get to know their pupils' families. Parents are invited to special events whenever possible.

35. The school has satisfactory arrangements in place for the transition of Year 6 pupils to the comprehensive school which most pupils attend. The headteacher is the secretary of the Christchurch Schools' Pyramid, and played a central role in organising the very successful art project in which all schools participated in 2003. Local primary schools regularly organise joint sporting events, and it is intended that subject leaders should begin to meet together to share expertise.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of the leadership, management and vision of the headteacher are all very good. There is a strong group of key staff, who, along with governors, provide good support for the headteacher.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision of the needs of the school and its development.
- All staff share his vision, leading to a good collegiate atmosphere and consistency in planning, teaching and care.
- The reflective and flexible approach to management has enabled the school to modify its curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils.
- The school has done well in recruiting and retaining a good team of teachers and is preparing to look at their individual workloads in the near future.
- Some subject leaders could take more of a lead in monitoring their subjects in areas such as monitoring teaching and keeping up to date with data from tests.

Commentary

36. The leadership and vision of the headteacher are very good and these have been major factors in consistently raising levels of achievement in the school since the last inspection, when leadership and management were judged as 'satisfactory'. The school has received two national achievement awards for its work. The key senior managers in the school share the headteacher's vision and through very effective teamwork ensure high quality teaching and learning take place. The very good management inspires a sense of commitment, purposefulness and calm throughout the school, to provide the most appropriate education for all pupils. Detailed planning, monitoring and assessment in English and mathematics, in particular, ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are very well provided for.

37. The governing body is effective in supporting the headteacher in a critical but supportive manner. It has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Many governors have an active involvement in the school.

38. There is a very high commitment to providing equal access to the curriculum for all pupils. To this end the school is currently looking at ways of improving the situation for its most able pupils. The

headteacher leads by example and inspires confidence in staff and parents, with the majority of the responses to the Ofsted parents' questionnaire agreeing that he leads and manages the school well.

39. The staff have a reflective approach to their work and are open to innovation and change. For example, they have recently had installed several overhead data projectors which show the teacher's computer images on a large whiteboard. Staff have already begun to use these successfully in classes, rather than waiting until the inspection was over before they began!

40. The co-ordination of SEN is very good. The special needs co-ordinator is very experienced and a very good manager. Staff are well deployed and give very good support which represents very good value for money. Tracking of pupils' progress is well managed and a range of adults provide views on this. Outside agencies are very well utilised, both for advice and to support the accurate categorisation of pupils' needs. The new special needs governor has already visited the school to get acquainted with the systems in place.

41. Some subject leaders have not yet had the opportunity of observing their subject in action in other classes, neither have all leaders of English, mathematics and science had clear opportunities or advice on examining the data surrounding the annual national tests. These are areas for further development.

42. Through effective performance management procedures and continuous professional development, the profile of teaching is good with many instances of very good and excellent teaching. At the same time the headteacher and governors have managed the recruitment and retention of staff very well and will soon be looking at the various roles that teachers play in order to agree an equitable division of tasks.

43. The school manages its difficult financial position very well and the administrative officer supports the staff through her efficiency. Good care is taken when ordering goods and services to ensure that best value is obtained. For below average spending the school gives very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	659374
Total expenditure	662063
Expenditure per pupil	2082

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	13092
Balance carried forward to the next	10403

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in reception (the Foundation Stage) is **very good**. Children make rapid progress from a below average start when they first begin education because teaching and support is very good. Children in both classes are well provided for.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are introduced to school very successfully and swiftly adapt to daily routines.
- They play and work very well together indoors and outside.
- Children respond extremely well to opportunities to take initiative and show independence.
- Teaching and support are very good.

Commentary

44. Provision in this aspect is a particular strength. Because teaching and support are very good children soon settle into school life and respond extremely well. There are many opportunities in structured play activities to explore relationships and learn how actions affect other people. Children understand the importance of being considerate and how taking turns is fundamental to living successfully in a community. For example children observed using large construction equipment outdoors shared and waited patiently whilst others experimented with building blocks. Before the end of the session children began working together to solve problems and all enjoyed the beginnings of teamwork. The more able demonstrated early skills of leadership and initiative in choosing materials, whilst all children 'playing outside' showed healthy signs of independence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children, many of whom have limited experience of communication skills, make rapid progress.
- Although some children will not reach the Early Learning Goals in this area before they leave reception, all achieve well and begin to use literacy skills effectively in all areas of learning.
- Teaching is very good.

Commentary

45. Teaching very successfully makes use of all activities to promote children's involvement in using language to express themselves and explain what they are doing. For example in an excellent circle time when children told others their news, all listened very well to the 'speakers' talking about costumes and equipment they used for activities at home. Particularly good fun were explanations of what Peter Pan would do, and how to go skateboarding! Such activities are a natural introduction to role play in themed areas such as the Three Bears House where children and staff explore language, very effectively extending vocabulary.

46. Early skills of reading and writing are introduced very successfully. All efforts to try to decipher familiar sounds and words from big book stories are very effectively praised. Children are

encouraged to commit ideas to paper, initially in simple marks and pictures which soon become recognisable as words. By the end of reception most children can read and write simple words starting with their names, with more able children doing better than this. However as many children have low starting points in communication skills (despite good achievement and in some cases very good) this makes it difficult for them to reach the nationally expected levels before they join Year 1.

47. Provision is equally successful in both classes, with older reception children benefiting from early work on the literacy strategy with those in Year 1. Support for those with special needs is well founded on very good assessment, and support is very effective in helping children to achieve well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Although some children will not reach all the recommended learning goals in this aspect, provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress making good use of practical opportunities to learn to count, add and subtract.

Commentary

48. A variety of practical opportunities are on offer which encourage children to count: for example through rhymes and stories and matching games. Children learn to add and subtract by counting on and back, and sorting games and activities such as jigsaws and simple weighing promote the use of mathematical comparative language such as smaller and greater than. Children make good progress, and although many will not reach the Early Learning Goals in this aspect, achieve well.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities every day for children to find out about the world about them, learning through a good mix of formal and play activities.
- Children are introduced to the skills of simple control of computers and tape recorders.

Commentary

49. There are good links with both literacy and mathematical development whilst children expand their knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, children make very good progress in language skills when talking about their lives, journeys and the local village. Skills are further enhanced by joining in with Years 1 and 2 finding out about the Great Fire of London in topic work. Carrying out surveys of 'What's in your lunchbox?' and learning to display data on a block graph are very good introductions to information and communication skills, as well as all children regularly using computers. Children follow simple programs designed to prompt reading and counting skills. Most children can operate the class listening station to listen to stories, and all have seen, and some used, the school's digital camera.

PHYSICAL AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical and creative development is **good** and still being improved with better facilities for outdoor play activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good, regular opportunities for children to practise physical skills and learn to appreciate what their bodies can do.
- Children are taught how to express themselves and given good opportunities to do so.

Commentary

50. There are strong links between opportunities to develop physical skills such as cutting, drawing, painting and sticking with being creative. Children are successfully encouraged to make choices of tools and materials to produce their own work. For example children use wax crayons and chalk to make rubbings of different textures of bricks and tree bark.

51. There are good examples of good and very good progress in how children control writing implements to 'write' and illustrate their own accounts of 'Goldilocks'. Practice in handling small pieces from jigsaws and construction sets, and learning to manipulate malleable materials like play dough have very positive effects on children's awareness of what they can do with their hands.

52. The school makes good, and still improving, use of outside space to give children experience of balancing, riding and climbing. A new climbing trail is in the last stages of completion and will further add to the already good quality of facilities.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**, with very good features in the use of target setting to bring about improvements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve at least well in English throughout the school.
- The school's decision to focus on reading and writing is paying dividends with marked improvements in standards in reading, and steady improvement in writing.
- Teaching of literacy is consistently good.
- There is room to develop library facilities further.

Commentary

53. Standards as measured by national tests in Years 2 and 6 were average in 2003 and have been so over a period of years. However, consideration of the well above average proportions of pupils with SEN and generally below average levels of attainment when children first begin education, leads to the judgement that pupils achieve well. Those with SEN often achieve very well with some reaching national expectations for their ages.

54. Results for 2004 are likely to show marked improvement in reading and writing for Year 2 as a result of the school's big push in these areas. Much better planning and use of assessment to set targets, and support pupils towards reaching higher levels, have supported consistently good teaching. Throughout the school pupils show good progress in developing speaking and listening skills and by the end of Year 6 many are confident and articulate.

55. Results in Year 6 in 2004 are unlikely to match the previous year because nearly half of the year group have special educational needs. However, teacher assessment indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher than average level, Level 5, this year will be the same as in 2003. This is a considerable achievement, brought about by systematic support in lessons and in additional booster classes targeted at moving pupils forward.

56. Throughout the school teaching is consistently at least good. Teachers and support staff make very good use of questions designed to draw pupils of all abilities into discussion and get them to express and explain their opinions. For example in an excellent Year 6 lesson because of high quality teaching virtually all pupils joined in a debate about the merits of a particular BMX bike, making very good links between speaking and listening and what became persuasive writing in very concise form. Progress was rapid, achievement very good, and pupils' response excellent. Included in the many strengths of teaching are:

- Learning objectives made very clear so pupils know why they are completing work;
- Good marking which not only encourages but sets targets for improvement;
- Good assessment (much improved) which means teachers can judge not only pupils' performance but the success of their teaching;
- Good use of the National Literacy Strategy to support planning;
- Very good consideration of pupils' special needs by providing work which, notwithstanding common starting points, can be completed at different levels.

57. In all lessons observed pupils were actively involved and clearly appreciated that their comments would be listened to and considered. This makes a significant impact on personal development and on the school's caring ethos.

58. The leadership and management of the subject leader is good. She has a good awareness of strengths and weaknesses: for example she knows that resources such as dictionaries could still be improved, and that there is a need to make more of library provision. The subject leader's role would be further developed by having more time available to observe other staff teaching English and to evaluate the impact of new initiatives.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. There are many opportunities for pupils to use and develop their English skills in other subjects. This is very effective in terms of discussions: for example in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and in research and account writing in humanities and science. Learning to express themselves and explain preferences and opinions supports pupils' personal development very effectively and makes a significant contribution to the school's ethos. Very good use is made of writing and research skills in topic work in geography and history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are achieving very well.
- The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented.
- There is good use of information and communication technology as a teaching aid.
- There are good systems in place for monitoring, assessment and tracking pupils' progress.
- Teaching is good throughout the school.

Commentary

60. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 is in line with national expectations for pupils of these ages. Bearing in mind the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, especially in Year 6, this means that in order to reach this level, pupils are achieving very well for their ability. There is a big improvement since last year in the performance of the higher ability pupils in Year 2.

61. Lessons are now planned in line with National Numeracy Strategy recommendations. There is a clear structure to each lesson, and lesson objectives are made known to pupils. The emphasis on mental and oral work at the start of the lesson is having a positive impact on pupils' quick recall of mathematical facts.

62. Teachers frequently use computer programs to assist them in their explanation and demonstration of the key teaching points. These are used very effectively, and in seconds, they can display diagrams that would have taken many minutes done by hand. For example, in one Year 6 lesson, the teacher was able to put colour in and out of a number of squares to demonstrate square number patterns. There are programs available for pupils to use to support their learning. Whilst these programs are used on occasions, this is an area for further development.

63. Pupils' work and progress is checked regularly. A 'key objectives' assessment is taken every half term, and this, together with end of year tests, shows the levels pupils have reached. This is tracked against pupils' expected progress, so that pupils who are underachieving can be identified and remedial measures put in place. This information is used to group pupils so that appropriate, challenging work can be set. This is usually very effective, but there are occasions when insufficient attention is paid to challenging higher ability pupils.

64. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers are very secure in their knowledge and understanding, and are clear with their explanations and demonstrations, especially when using the computer. There are very good relationships, and working in pairs or small groups contributes well to pupils' mathematical and social development. One lesson was described as "a buzz of activity". Most lessons proceed at a good pace, with plenty covered in the time available. However, on occasions this is not the case, particularly with the introduction to the lesson, and pupils get off to a slow start.

65. The subject is well led and teachers are well supported. However, there is no recent, detailed action plan indicating how the subject is to be taken forward.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. There is evidence of mathematics being used across the curriculum in many ways. Most notable is the use of graphs of one kind or another to display data that has been collected. For example, Year 2 pupils show the types of houses that they live in using hand drawn block graphs, and computer generated pie charts.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science by the end of Year 6 were satisfactory in the 2003 national tests, in spite of one in five pupils having special educational needs.
- Teaching was good in the lesson seen and equally good in the evidence of previously completed work.
- Achievement is good by the end of Year 2 and often very good by the end of Year 6.

- The co-ordination of the subject is good.
- Work on investigations has been the subject of a recent initiative and standards are improving.
- Assessments in science are in place but still require further development, as does the subject leader's knowledge of data from tests.

Commentary

67. The inspection found that standards were broadly average in the lesson seen and in the scrutiny of previously completed work. This matches the standards noted at the last national tests in 2003. This was accomplished with over twenty per cent of pupils receiving support for their special needs, and shows good achievement for most, and very good achievement for a significant minority of pupils. Currently, almost half of the pupils in Year 6 are receiving support for their special educational needs; as a consequence, the outcomes of the 2004 national tests may well not be as positive. However, it is likely that achievement of the majority of pupils will still be good. Pupils with special needs, receive good and sometimes very good support. As a result, they often make very good progress and achieve very well. Children's language skills on entry to the school were below average. The fact that many of them reach the national standard for their age shows the success of teaching linked with the very good attitudes of pupils to the subject.

68. In examining previously completed work, it is evident that the teaching of science is good, as it was at the last inspection. The single lesson, seen in Year 6, confirmed this. Here the lesson was well prepared and presented. Good use was made of ICT as the teacher used the computer projector to demonstrate seed dispersal. A good range of fruit had been assembled for pupils to examine; leading them to gain an understanding that seeds can be very different and can be dispersed in a number of ways.

69. The subject leader has led the subject well since being given the task two years ago. He has developed the curriculum well and noted that the development of investigational skills was a priority. He has gone part way to remedying this and will follow up discussions with further work during this year. At the same time, he has made progress in the development of an assessment programme, noted as a negative issue at the last inspection. The current system of assessment feeds into report writing and planning, but has a little way to go before it is consistently used throughout the school.

70. A further issue at the last inspection was the lack of use of mathematics and ICT within science. With the development of numeracy and the good development of ICT across the school, this picture is beginning to change. Mathematical skills are now more frequently used in investigations to complete tables, charts and graphs, whilst ICT is not yet fully integrated into the subject. With his growing experience of leading science, it would now be appropriate for the subject leader to have better access to test data, so that he might check strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning as noted in the national tests. At the same time, further access to results would allow him to make comparisons with previous years' work in order to chart the overall progress made in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been significant improvements since the last inspection.
- Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6, with some elements of work at Year 6 being above this level.
- Teaching is good overall.
- The subject is very well managed.
- The school gets good value for money from its investments in hardware and software.

- The school has begun to make progress in its use of ICT across the curriculum. This should now be developed further.

Commentary

71. Standards in ICT were unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Currently standards in both Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations, with some aspects of the communication and information handling strands of the subject being carried out at a higher level. This points to a significant improvement since the last inspection.

72. The major reason for this improvement has been the leadership and management of the subject leader during the intervening years. In-service training and very good personal support has been responsible for raising the quality of teaching, so that nearly all teachers are confident in their own abilities to teach the broad range of operations and strategies in the subject. Teachers themselves have accepted change and the improvements in hardware with great enthusiasm. Class data projectors, which project work from a computer on to a large class screen, for teaching purposes, have only just been installed, but just a week after installation teachers had put them to use.

73. Teaching is good overall, with teaching in three lessons being very good. In these particular lessons, full use was made of the wide range of ICT facilities, including the information centre room, laptops, digital cameras and the overhead data projectors. Lessons were very well prepared and tasks challenged pupils to put to use their knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were using Internet search engines to explore information about the Olympics. This made them draw from previous experience and put it to use in a literacy setting. Considering their low level of language skills on entry to school, their skills were above average and pupils showed a disciplined approach to their tasks. Pupils' very good behaviour gave positive support to progress.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. The school has made strides in linking other subjects with ICT. Most successful, to date, are literacy, numeracy and art. Year 5 pupils were seen manipulating text as they explored excerpts from the Twits by Roald Dahl. Very good support was given to all ability groups and as a result the lesson was dynamic, had great pace, and supported very good achievement. In a different Year 5 class, linked to art, pupils make good use of an animation program. They used it very creatively, having received clear instructions and demonstrations. Their mouse and keyboard skills were of a high order. The subject leader realises that there are other subjects which could benefit from such links and his action plan shows that he is preparing to tackle this during the coming year.

HUMANITIES

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and in line with expectations at the end of Year 6.
- Some resources are in need of improving.

Commentary

75. The previous report identified satisfactory attitudes to geography. Thorough planning and cross curricular teaching has altered this, and pupils now enjoy the subject. The approach to geography is

based on research and field study. Evidence from a scrutiny of work and of the teachers' plans, shows a full, varied and interesting range of topics. This was particularly evident in the various good quality displays around the school, covering countries and cultures.

76. By the end of Year 2 pupils can make and interpret simple maps and follow directions using basic geographical vocabulary. For example a study of the local environment has provided the opportunity for pupils to visit the village and compare changes in the immediate vicinity. A new play area, changes in street lighting, and new kerbs, have provided evidence of these changes and pupils in Years 1 and 2 were able to discuss the impact they have made on their safety. Appropriate use has been made of aerial photographs of the school to make comparisons about improvements in the area. Resources such as sets of photographs of the village and photographs of pupils' houses, add an interesting dimension to learning. In a Year 2 class, pupils designed advertising leaflets to sell their own homes, and a creative display of an estate agent's window provided a real example of services in the area and how they work. Pupils know about types of domestic buildings and can talk about their features.

77. In Years 1 and 2, history, geography, design and technology and ICT are linked together within a shared area. Buildings created by pupils provide an opportunity for pupils to role play topics. The roamer (a programmable toy) is programmed to visit areas such as shops on a pupil made floor mat. Older pupils were keen to explain that they had made this mat as part of their topic work and were pleased to see it being used by younger children. Differentiated tasks enabled all pupils to participate, some with the support of the teaching assistant, who engaged the children in discussions about their findings.

78. In Years 3 to 6, pupils identified services on a map and were able to use a colour coded key. The use of 'response partners' for discussion gave pupils confidence, and a homework folder containing information about the village of Burton, was packed full of contributions.

79. Standards in geography are above expectations at the end of Year 2 and in line with what is expected at the end of Year 6. An area for development in provision is in improving resources.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils enjoy history.
- Resources for some aspects of history are too limited.

Commentary

80. Only one history lesson was observed during the inspection. Displays, work scrutiny and a comprehensive portfolio of work show that history is studied using investigation and a range of visits and visitors, and that standards are above expectations. Drama and re-enactment of historical events make lessons exciting and real. A cross curricular approach to learning combines stories, plays and design and technology. Creative and informative displays of the Great Fire of London include digital images of drama workshops where pupils have investigated social history around significant historical events. Good emphasis is placed on pupils' understanding of primary and secondary sources of evidence. Pupils benefit from interesting and challenging tasks that are supported effectively by a good range of pictures and artefacts. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 for example were encouraged to use their senses to identify the uses of artefacts such as a washboard, butter pats and a lantern. This was greeted with some excitement and captured pupils' imagination. Pupils learnt well.

81. Teachers have good subject knowledge and prepare their lessons well. A scrutiny of work showed that pupils utilise their literacy skills by writing in depth and often in the first person, across a range of history topics. Teachers place an effective emphasis on pupils' understanding of the passage of time. They accomplish this through a range of well planned and well resourced practical experiences. Good use is made of research skills.

82. Older pupils have studied the Second World War. Descriptive writing of life in an Anderson shelter and written accounts of feelings and emotions around the sound of air raid sirens, showed the high level of expectations from teachers. Sensitive marking added to the quality of the work produced.

83. History and geography are well managed by the same subject leader, and planning has been adapted to fit with the school scheme of work. However, resources for some aspects of history are too limited. The subject leader recognises the need to supplement these as part of her action plan.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

Provision in religious education is satisfactory but with some unsatisfactory elements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of work seen in lessons were satisfactory but there is little evidence of a systematic development of skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject.
- There is not enough balance between discussion, drawing and writing within the subject.
- Religious education has a low profile and status in the school.
- Assemblies and acts of worship provide pupils with useful knowledge and understanding about Christian and other faith issues.

Commentary

84. Although standards of work seen in the lessons during the inspection were in line with those expected of pupils of this age group, there was little evidence of the systematic development of the subject throughout the school. This showed a drop in standards since the last inspection. The school has tried to include religious education as part of its general topic approach; as a result the work is often made to fit the topic, rather than having its own natural place in the curriculum.

85. Over the last few years, since the last inspection, the school has needed to focus on the development of literacy and numeracy and more recently ICT. As a result, the place of religious education has been undermined, with some lessons being very short. During these lessons, because of time constraints, very many of them have functioned as opportunities for discussion and often very little else. Whilst this is an important element of a lesson in religious education, there is currently insufficient balance between discussion and recording. In some classes, pupils have contributed to class books, on such topics as Hinduism. Where this has happened, the end product is a useful summary of what the class has learned, but pupils have no record of their own learning in their own books. In some classes, work in religious education is found between work on history, geography and other subject areas. This lessens the impact of the work, makes a view of pupils' progress difficult to judge, and makes learning fragmented.

86. Apart from one or two notable exceptions, the profile of religious education is too low, as is its status, when one judges the level and quality of displays in the school. Other subjects, which should have the same time allocation as religious education, such as design and technology or art, have much better displays and more time allocated to them.

87. Teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory with some good features. In a Year 5 lesson, the subject leader showed good subject knowledge and made good use of ICT to enliven the lesson. In spite of her good questioning skills, several pupils were off task and attitudes to the work were just satisfactory.

88. When discussing religious education with a group of pupils from Year 6, they had little knowledge of other religions. They knew about baptisms, a recent topic, and noted that they “learned more about religious education in assemblies than in lessons” as the “vicar tells us”.

89. The subject leader is aware of the weaknesses in the subject and needs the support of all her colleagues if the situation is to be remedied quickly.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN

Although few lessons were observed there is sufficient evidence to show that provision in art continues to be **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above national expectations.
- Pupils achieve well and are learning to express themselves.
- Art is used well to support other subjects.

Commentary

90. Pupils reach above expected standards in art throughout the school and achieve well. They show enthusiasm and obviously try hard to produce good work and express themselves. This continues the good situation reported at the last inspection and represents improvement in terms of work in three dimensions where intentions to develop pupils’ awareness of sculpture are beginning to have positive effects.

91. Too few lessons were observed to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. However evidence from pupils’ work and from staff records points to the good provision reported in 1998 having been maintained.

92. The subject is planned well and effectively managed to provide a balance of developing skills, appreciating the work of other artists, and to encourage pupils to make choices of materials and techniques to produce original work.

93. Art is used well to support other subjects: for example in Years 1 and 2 illustrations of the Fire of London, and Year 5 book jackets for Roald Dahl stories. There are excellent examples of observational drawings of houses by Year 1 and reception. Very good use is made of themed events such as art days to raise the profile of the subject and give pupils the chance to use skills and techniques to produce finished work of their own ideas. Good portraits of Tudor figures, detailed drawings of different stages of Egyptian ‘mummification’, and paintings of King Midas are all examples of the success of such provision.

94. Good use is made of ICT to create and edit designs and there is strong evidence that pupils are encouraged to study and try out the styles of famous artists. Years 1 and 2 sunflower paintings after Van Gogh are of very good standard, and Years 3 and 4 patterns following Mondrian principles are very effective.

95. Overall art makes a positive contribution to pupils’ personal and cultural development as well as proving a good tool to support work in other curriculum areas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

It was not possible to see any DT lessons but a scrutiny of planning, records and examples of pupils' work indicates that provision is **satisfactory**.

Commentary

96. As no DT lessons were observed no formal judgements can be made about standards and the quality of teaching, but from evidence available it is clear that the school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils have opportunities each term to work together to create designs, plan what they need to do and choose materials and techniques. There are good examples of Years 5 and 6 exploring axles and using electric motors to make their wheeled vehicles move. Their evaluations of how successful they had been show good consideration of ways in which improvements could be made.

97. Records show that pupils in each year complete projects on a regular basis and follow the design process. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 record their ideas and evaluations in a book dedicated to design and technology. Work in the subject is used to support other curriculum areas: for example to create different types of food relating to topics studied in humanities.

98. Pupils report that they enjoy making things and discussions show that they are given opportunities to choose appropriate materials and methods.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A new scheme is being implemented successfully.
- The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic.
- Teachers' confidence is improving.

99. Too little was observed in music to make firm judgements about attainment. The singing heard was in tune and in time, particularly when singing a hymn in two parts. However, there was little enthusiasm or commitment to singing, especially from older pupils, which had a negative impact on their performance.

100. The subject leader has introduced a new scheme of work. This covers the requirements of the National Curriculum, and is very well structured and resourced. It gives added confidence to those teachers who approach music teaching with some trepidation. The scheme, together with support from the leader, is helping to raise the quality of teaching and learning. The two lessons observed were both taught well. There was plenty of activity, pupils enjoyed their work, and made good progress.

101. The subject leader has the knowledge and expertise to help other teachers. Much of this is done informally, and is successful. However, observing others, or teaching alongside them, would give further help. There is a range of opportunities for pupils to take part in extra musical activities and to perform to others. There are lessons for recorders, guitar, flute and clarinet, and a choir. Performance opportunities include, assemblies, concerts and taking part in local arts projects. There is a good range of musical instruments available, although there are too few tuned percussion instruments. Another CD player would avoid two teachers wanting one at the same time!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good curriculum in place.
- Teaching is good.
- The subject is without a leader.

Commentary

102. Too little physical education was observed to make an overall judgement on attainment. However, gymnastics in Years 1 and 2 looks strong, where pupils show good control of their movements, and records show that there is a strength in swimming, with nearly all pupils leaving the school able to swim 25 metres or more.

103. The curriculum shows good coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum. There is good provision for extracurricular activities, with pupils taking part in competitions with other schools. Good attention is given to swimming, enabling pupils to make good progress.

104. Most of the observed teaching was good. Teachers are keen and confident, and teach skills effectively. Good attention is given to health and safety, although sometimes more consideration should be given to pupils wearing appropriate clothing. Teachers realise the benefit of pupils being kept active with plenty of practice. This enables pupils to work hard and make good progress. Queuing at apparatus in gymnastics should be discouraged, and more challenging games skills could be given to the more able pupils. The subject was left in a healthy state by the last leader. This, together with the abilities of the current staff, means that provision in the subject is good. However, it does need leadership to monitor what is happening, and to take the subject forward.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- PSHE make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.

Commentary

105. Discussions with staff and pupils, together with a review of teachers' planning, confirm that the school considers personal, social and health education as an important part of its work. A well planned programme runs throughout the school. Opportunities for pupils to develop their personal and social skills are woven into all curriculum areas. There is a consistent approach to the positive management of behaviour, which raises confidence. The school provides a caring and supportive ethos that promotes academic and personal development. Pupils are taught about basic life skills and have well developed interpersonal skills. They help to establish class rules, and circle time is used well to resolve conflict. Assemblies contribute to an understanding between right and wrong and inclusion for all pupils is a good feature of the school.

106. Classroom procedures are well established with children taking responsibility for each other. For example, when one Years 1 and 2 class visited the local area to examine changes in their environment, they helped each other with coats and waited patiently for the line to be ready. Older pupils responded well to visitors in school, using their very good social skills to ask pertinent questions and to listen patiently to the answer given.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

