

INSPECTION REPORT

BYERS GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Spennymoor

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114070

Headteacher: Mr A W Coyne

Lead inspector: Miss K Manning

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th June 2004

Inspection number: 255690

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:	93
School address:	Wear View Byers Green Spennymoor County Durham
Postcode:	DL16 7PN
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Henderson

Date of previous inspection: May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

With 93 pupils in five classes from reception to Year 6, this is a small school, which serves the villages of Byers Green, Binchester and Newfield. Most of the pupils who live in the outlying villages come to school by bus. Only Byers Green has any form of pre-school facility and many children start in the reception class without having benefited from attending a nursery. Consequently, children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is generally below what is expected for their age. This is not the case with the current reception class, where more children have been to nursery or playgroup.

The area is disadvantaged because of its isolation from the nearest town and lack of facilities, such as shops. In addition to this, it is a place where families move on quickly if they have no established ties to the community. As a result, the proportion of pupils starting or leaving school in each year is much higher than the national picture. This is one of the barriers to learning that the school aims to help pupils overcome. Almost all pupils are British and all speak English as their first language.

Twenty-nine pupils have special educational needs and one of these has a statement of special educational needs. Again this figure is well above the national average. In contrast, a very small number of pupils have been identified as being gifted or talented.

In recent years the school has gained awards for achievement as a result of the good progress made by pupils.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20267	K Manning	Lead inspector	Mathematics
			Information and communication technology
			Geography
			History
			Music
			Foundation Stage
			Special educational needs
			English as an additional language
9511	A Longfield	Lay inspector	
21585	T Kingston	Team inspector	English
			Science
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Physical education
			Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school. Teaching that is mostly good enables pupils to achieve well and standards are high enough in all subjects except writing and information and communication technology. Pupils benefit from a rich curriculum and good links with the community and other schools. They have positive attitudes to learning and are happy in school. There is good leadership from the headteacher and from permanent senior staff and governors. The school achieves all of this at a higher than average cost because of its small size but provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in writing and information and communication technology are below those expected by the end of Year 6.
- Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Most of the teaching is good and consequently pupils achieve well.
- Good provision for pupils who have special educational needs helps them achieve the levels of which they are capable.
- The headteacher leads and manages the school well.
- Though staff value the views of parents and pupils the school does not do enough to seek them in any formal way.
- Governors do a good job on behalf of the school but do not provide parents with all of the information required by law.

The school is more effective than it was at the time of the previous inspection in 1999. The key issues have been tackled rigorously and consequently, provision for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils who have special educational needs has improved significantly. Standards in reading have improved and in mathematics, science and religious education, they have been maintained. Standards in writing have not improved enough and continue to be below average. Lack of consistent and long-term leadership in information and communication technology has resulted in a fall in standards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well. Many children lack the skills and knowledge expected for their age when they start the reception class. However, they achieve well in their first year in school and generally go on to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and standards match those expected in reading, writing and mathematics. Between Years 3 and 6 pupils achieve well in mathematics, science and most aspects of English. They achieve steadily in writing but not fast enough in information and communication technology. In religious education, pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieve well and attain standards that match those prescribed by the syllabus used in local schools. Figures comparing the school's results with other schools are unreliable because of the small number of pupils in each year group and the high number of pupils who have special educational needs or who start the school after the reception class. This is particularly relevant when considering results in English and science that are marked with an asterisk in the following table. These suggest that standards are in the lowest five per cent of all schools but this is not a true reflection of standards or achievement.

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

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’ personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.

Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to come to school. Attendance is improving however last year was below the national average, pupils generally arrive at school on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. There is good teaching and learning throughout the school and the school’s procedures for assessment are satisfactory overall. Teaching is strongest in the Foundation Stage and in reading, mathematics and science. It is unsatisfactory in information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6 because pupils do not have enough opportunities to use computers. Pupils have equal opportunities to make progress with good support for those who have special educational needs and challenging work for the most able. Many first-hand experiences enrich the curriculum substantially. The school has forged strong links with the community and other schools and a sound partnership with parents. The school’s resources and accommodation are used effectively but the fabric of the building is in a poor state. Pupils are cared for, guided and supported well when in school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher has a clear vision of how the school should develop and has been instrumental in the improvements since the previous inspection. Senior staff lead their subjects well. Despite having a heavy workload, the headteacher and staff manage the school well. Governors do a good job on behalf of the school. They fulfil most of their statutory requirements but the current school prospectus does not tell parents of their right to withdraw children from religious education or collective worship. Governors identified this gap through their regular auditing and intend to rectify the situation in next year’s prospectus.

PARENTS’ AND PUPILS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are predominantly happy with what the school provides and very few have concerns that are not dealt with to their satisfaction. Though few are able to help out in schools many get involved by helping their children at home. Pupils are proud of their school and talk animatedly about the lessons and activities that they most enjoy. Parents and pupils said that they would welcome more opportunities to have their views taken into account when decisions are made about the development and running of the school. This is something the school does not do systematically.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in writing.

- Raise standards in information and communication technology by the end of Year 6.
- Agree and implement procedures for gathering parents' and pupils' views about the school.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the school prospectus contains all the information required by law.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well overall and girls and boys achieve at the same rate. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and gain many of the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of reception. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and standards match those expected for their age. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not achieve well enough in writing or information and communication technology.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6, standards fall below those expected in information and communication technology because pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and develop skills.
- Though pupils achieve steadily, standards in writing are prevented from being higher because pupils do not write often enough.
- Good teaching ensures that children achieve well in the Foundation Stage.
- The emphasis given to teaching reading has helped raise standards.

Commentary

1 The school's results in national tests are unreliable for several reasons. The small numbers of pupils in each year group means that one pupil absent can make a tremendous difference to percentages and subsequently to comparisons with all other schools. The above average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is not taken into consideration when comparing the schools' performance with similar schools. Similarly, the high mobility of pupils means that comparisons with what pupils have previously attained are also unreliable because the group taking the tests in Year 6 is not the same one that took the tests at the end of Year 2. These crucial factors explain the schools' poor results against all schools and similar schools and why the schools results are rising at a slower rate than the national trend. They are not a true reflection of a school where pupils make good progress, whatever their starting point.

2 There are two crucial reasons why standards in information and communication technology match those expected by the end of Year 2, but not by the end of Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, pupils benefit from working in small groups, often accompanied by an adult. This happened in a well-taught lesson where pupils programmed a floor robot to move along a specified route. Working in small groups meant that everyone had a go and made a contribution to the lesson. This is not the case in the larger classes in Years 3 to 6. In one lesson, that was taught satisfactorily fewer than a quarter of the class actually touched the computer because of the activity planned and also because the teacher talked for too long. Following from this, when pupils in Years 3 to 6 have been taught information and communication technology skills they have to wait a long time before it is their turn to practise what they have learned. This is the key reason why standards fall below those expected. The problem is further exacerbated by the fact that the suite of computers is too small to accommodate a whole class and teachers have not worked out a way of using it more effectively.

3 Standards in writing match those expected by the end of Year 2 but not by the end of Year 6. This is largely because pupils do not write often enough to extend these skills sufficiently to do well in national tests. Good teaching ensures that pupils have a sound understanding of the grammar and punctuation needed to match the level expected but their writing is not always varied or interesting and the range is often limited to stories and simple accounts. A weakness of the teaching is that teachers do not promote pupils' writing skills in other subjects often enough. Sometimes this is because they are concentrating on discussion rather than recording. However, in lessons where pupils use worksheets their writing is often limited to the number of lines on the sheet and this inhibits their creativity. In addition to this, pupils' handwriting lacks consistency in style and formation and for some pupils it is good one day and untidy another.

4 Teaching that is consistently good ensures that children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. They benefit from activities that are well matched to their individual needs and achieve well, whatever their starting point. In recent years, most children have not had the skills or knowledge expected for their age at the beginning of reception class. However, they have made good progress in all areas of learning and most have achieved the goals expected by the end of reception. This year, more children than in previous years have benefited from pre-school experience and their attainment was more typical at the start of the year. Their work has been pitched at a higher level to be far more challenging and as a result, many of the children in the current reception class have exceeded the early goals and are working towards the first levels of the National Curriculum in reading, writing and mathematics.

5 Since the previous inspection, teachers have put a lot of effort into raising standards in reading. Training has helped improve the quality of teaching and reading is now taught well throughout the school. Teachers have adapted the National Literacy Strategy to good effect to provide more opportunities for pupils to read to adults and in small groups. Initiatives such as book clubs and authors in school have been hugely popular with pupils, who are keen to talk about their favourites. Parents have been encouraged to play a part by reading with their children at home and pupils' reading journals show that many do so and enter into a 'conversation' with teachers about what their children do well and where they need more help. All of this has paid dividends and helped raise standards so that almost a third of pupils in the current Year 6 are reading at levels above those expected for their age.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.7 (13.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.6 (13.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.7 (15.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 11 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	24.3 (26.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.4 (27.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	23.7 (28.2)	28.6 (28.3)

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

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils gained significantly from the school's good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and for other aspects of their personal development. They respond by behaving well and consequently there were no exclusions last year. Though pupils have positive attitudes to learning, attendance last year was below average. Pupils generally arrive at school on time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's efforts to improve attendance are working.

- All staff are consistent in the way that they promote good behaviour and consequently pupils generally behave well.
- The emphasis teachers place on promoting pupils' social and moral development helps them gain in maturity.

Commentary

6 One of the key reasons why attendance has been below average is that if pupils from the outlying villages miss the school bus it is extremely difficult for parents to get them to school by other means. The headteacher and governors recognise this problem and have worked hard to convince parents of the need to be on time for the bus each day. The headteacher has also extended the strategies used to promote good attendance from all parents. Parents have been reminded of the importance of their children attending school and have been told what they need to do if their children are ill or absent for any reason. The school works closely with the educational welfare officer, who keeps a close check on registers in order to determine any problems in families or patterns of absence. Parents are expected to let the school know if their children are to be absent and if they fail to do so someone from school rings to find out why. These procedures have paid dividends and this year, attendance figures have improved..

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.0%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

7 The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour are effective and most pupils behave well. This is evident in the fact that there have been no exclusions in recent years. Staff, parents and the majority of pupils themselves have high expectations of the standards of behaviour that are acceptable in the school. Parents believe that behaviour is good but know that if their children have problems they can talk about them to teachers or the headteacher. Children in the Foundation Stage learn to conform to the school's rules and this sets the tone for behaviour in other classes. Pupils move around the school in a quiet and orderly manner and their behaviour in the classrooms is generally good. Pupils in the large Year 5 and 6 class behave well because a part-time teacher is employed to make the groups smaller and more manageable. Behaviour in the playgrounds at breaks and lunchtimes is also good and there were no signs of any bullying or isolation of individual pupils. In part this is because the school provides a broad range of games and equipment to occupy pupils' during playtimes. These are very popular, and young children said that they look forward to being older so that they can get their hands on the most sought after equipment.

8 The strong provision for personal development ensures that good opportunities for social and moral development are threaded through lessons and other activities. This results in pupils learning to appreciate the effect of their own actions on others and their own self worth. The majority of pupils show good levels of respect for others, for property and for their environment. They are successfully encouraged to think of those beyond their immediate environment through, for example, their support for charities such as Dr. Barnado's. Pupils' social development is promoted through lessons and the range of responsibilities they willingly take on around the school. Older pupils carry out their duties with confidence and make a valuable contribution to the life of the school. Daily assemblies are a valuable and special part of school life, instilling in pupils a sense of what is important beyond their regular routines. Assemblies focus on weekly themes and draw thoughtful responses from pupils of all ages.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality education for pupils. Teaching is good and an appropriate curriculum is enriched substantially by the numerous first-hand experiences planned for pupils. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory and pupils benefit from good links with the community and other local schools. The ethos of the school is friendly and welcoming and staff take good care of pupils in their charge.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is good in all classes. The school's procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage has improved and is now consistently good.
- Good planning helps teachers overcome the problems of mixed age classes.
- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and pupils respond by working hard.
- Though satisfactory, teachers' marking does not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented are taught well.

Commentary

9 Following criticisms in the previous report, the Foundation Stage teacher and other staff reviewed and changed the curriculum and activities that are offered to children in the reception class. These now match their age and interest far more closely. Each day there is a good balance of structured activities that are led by the teacher and time when children make their own choices from the range planned for that day. Their progress in each area of learning is assessed and recorded meticulously so that the teacher knows where to pitch work to ensure that the most able are challenged and that lower attaining children get the help they need to make good progress.

10 Parents have no criticisms or concerns about their children being taught in classes of more than one year group. This is largely because teachers' planning is good and ensures that pupils are taught at the right level whatever their age. In all subjects, teachers plan work on a two-year cycle, which means that pupils do not repeat any of their topics they study in their second year in class. In subjects such as mathematics, older pupils and the more able are taught more difficult concepts. For example, when pupils in Year 3 were expected to convert quantities to millilitres those in Year 4 were asked to convert their measurements into decimals and fractions. One of the benefits of having two ages in the same class is that younger pupils are often spurred on to greater effort because they want to do as well as their older friends. Teachers use this element of competition to good effect. For example, in another mathematics lesson, pupils in Year 1 were determined to join in with counting in multiples, especially after the teacher told them it might be too difficult for them.

11 Throughout the school, teachers insist that pupils concentrate, listen to what they are saying and follow instructions. Rules such as not calling out answers are reinforced from the reception class onwards, which sets the standard for how pupils behave as they get older. In all classes, pupils are expected to be courteous and listen when other children are talking. Pupils know these rules and say that they think they are fair. This consistent approach to maintaining discipline works well and enables pupils to get on with their work in a quiet and calm atmosphere. This is one of the key reasons why pupils achieve well and make good progress during their time in Byers Green.

12 Teachers keep detailed records of what pupils know and can do and this aspect of assessment and recording is satisfactory. Records of how well pupils perform in standardised and national tests enable teachers to keep a close eye on each pupils' progress and provide useful and detailed information for parents. On a day-to-day basis, pointed questions and

observations help teachers identify any difficulties pupils are experiencing and enable them to adapt or repeat work as necessary. Pupils' work is always marked and praise is given for effort and success. Some of the most detailed marking is in the Year 5 and Year 6 class, where the teacher makes clear to pupils where they have gone wrong and what they need to do to improve. This helps pupils understand and take control of their learning. For example, one pupil in Year 6 said that his personal target was to improve his spelling. However, not all teachers mark work in the same depth. This lack of consistency is something that the headteacher has identified through monitoring pupils' books. Teachers are currently considering a range of innovative approaches to tackle the issue while still regarding recent workforce reforms.

13 A strength of the teaching, throughout the school, is the detail that goes into teachers' planning and the way that they use it to ensure pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have equal opportunities to make progress and the same access to the curriculum. For example, teachers make sure that those pupils who are gifted or talented are given challenging work that deepens their thinking and stretches their imagination. Similarly, carefully planned help and support for pupils who have special educational needs ensures that this group achieves as well as all others.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	20	5	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is good and is enriched by a wide range of first-hand experiences from educational outings and visitors to the school. It caters well for the interests and needs of all pupils and ensures that they build up skills and knowledge from one year to the next. The school has a satisfactory range of resources and teachers and the caretaker works hard to overcome problems with the building to ensure that the curriculum is taught effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has improved and now meets statutory requirements.
- The school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs has improved considerably and is now good.
- An extensive range of visits and visitors inspire pupils and bring the curriculum to life.

Commentary

14 Following criticisms in the previous report, the headteacher, governors and staff worked hard to devise a curriculum that would overcome problems arising from the fact that pupils in two key stages of their education are taught in the same class. With training and support from the local education authority, staff revised the curriculum so that it now takes full account of the areas of learning that are appropriate for children in the reception year. Although the areas of learning are often interlinked, emphasis is given to promoting children's personal, social and emotional development and many daily activities also involve reading,

writing and number work. As a result, the curriculum is now appropriate for the age and interests of children in the reception year and provides them with a range of interesting activities.

15 Training and advice have helped teachers increase their knowledge and understanding of the difficulties faced by the pupils in their care and put this to good effect so that pupils who have barriers to learning are given the means to overcome these whenever possible. Consequently, pupils who have special educational needs now get a good deal from the school. Their work is planned carefully and they each have targets that are aimed at helping them overcome their difficulties. In lessons, their work is adapted to meet their needs, teachers and other adults often give them extra help. Pupils who have special educational needs say that they enjoy their work and feel that they are fully included in all lessons.

16 Pupils benefit from the first-hand experiences they gain from visitors to the school and on regular educational outings. For example, visitors from the local police and fire services help pupils in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 widen their knowledge of the world and gain an understanding of their community. Visitors to the school, such as the Buddhist monks, authors and dance performers help bring the curriculum to life and promote pupils' cultural and spiritual development. Educational outings are extremely popular with pupils of all ages and it is often these visits that they talk about with most enthusiasm. For example, pupils laughed and chuckled as they remembered dressing up in Roman clothes as part of a visit to a nearby fort. Governors and parents feel that educational visits are important for pupils in this school because of the isolation of the village and because it is not possible to hold regular after-school clubs when most pupils have to travel home by bus at three-thirty.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are cared for well. The school ensures their health and safety and teachers provide them with good advice and guidance. Though their opinions are valued by staff there are no formal procedures for letting pupils or parents have a say in matters that are important to them.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know their pupils well and provide them with good advice and guidance about work and personal problems.
- There are not enough formal opportunities for pupils to give their points of view about the school.

Commentary

17 One of the benefits that pupils gain from attending a small school is that teachers get to know their pupils extremely well. Sometimes, pupils remain with the same teacher for two years or are taught by the same teacher in another year group. As a result, the relationships between teachers and pupils are good and are characterised by mutual respect and liking. Teachers are able to talk comfortably with pupils about issues that upset them, such as bullying or arguing in the schoolyard. Pupils say that they know who to go to if they are unwell or have a problem and parents say that they feel that their children are happy in school and are treated fairly by staff. Though bullying has happened in the past it has generally been dealt with to the satisfaction of parents and pupils say that teachers and lunchtime supervisors do not tolerate it. Throughout the school, teachers keep an appropriate range of assessments and records of pupils' progress and use these to set targets for pupils, including those who have special

educational needs or are talented academically. In the Foundation Stage, staff keep records that show how children are progressing towards the goals expected by the end of the reception. As one of the areas of learning is children's personal, social and emotional development staff have a clear idea of the extent to which children gain confidence and independence.

18 Teachers always listen to pupils' points of view in discussions and when they are chatting informally. But, as with parents, there are no formal systems or procedures whereby they can give their view and know that it is helping the school make decisions that are important to them. However, once again the headteacher and governors recognise that this is an area for development and there are plans to establish a school council next term.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Pupils benefit from the good links that the school promotes with other schools and the local community and from the satisfactory partnership it has with parents.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does not always seek the views of parents in a formal way.
- Close links with other local schools help pupils make the move smoothly to the next stage of their education.
- Teachers make good use of the community to help pupils learn.

Commentary

19 In the past, the school has asked parents for their views about important issues such as bussing pupils to school. However, this has been done informally, sometimes by parent governors seeking the views of other parents before and after school. Though meetings with parents are held twice a year, these focus on their children's progress and not issues concerning the school. All parents are welcome in school if they have concerns or their children are encountering problems and the parents of pupils who have special educational needs are always invited to meetings when their children's progress is being reviewed. The main problem with these arrangements is that many parents cannot get to the school easily because they live in one of the other villages served by the school, and public transport is infrequent. Parents have said that they would welcome a greater involvement in the work of the school and governors have identified this as a key priority in the coming year.

20 The school has fostered close links with a local playgroup, which operates in the village. Before children start in the reception they are visited in their nursery by the class teacher, so they see a familiar face on their first day. During this visit the teacher gathers records of what each child can do and information about their backgrounds, which is shared with staff when necessary. All of this means that children settle into school easily and soon learn its routines and systems. At the other end of the school, pupils in Year 6 go to visit their secondary schools whenever this is possible. Teachers from the secondary school that most pupils transfer to, visit Byers Green and bring units of work that help pupils bridge the gap between Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils complete these in Year 6 and take them to their new school. These procedures work well and pupils say that they are confident about making the move and already have a good idea of what life in secondary school is like.

21 The school's strong links with the community have a positive effect on pupils' learning. It provides a rich supply of resources to support and enrich learning. For example, pupils visit places of interest, such as the church, the brickworks and the quarry as part of their work in history, geography and religious education. Members of the community visit the school to share their skills and experiences. Pupils from Years 1 and 2 talked at length about a visit by Buddhist priests and remembered many facts about the religion and lifestyle because the experience had brought the subject to life for them. Similarly, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were highly animated in their descriptions of the design and function of different structures after a visit by local engineers and said that the work had been 'great fun.'

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher leads the school well and it is managed effectively by permanent staff who have responsibilities for subjects or aspects of its work. The governance is good overall but there is a breach of statutory requirements in the information that they provide for parents.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff have improved since the previous inspection and are now good.
- Firm direction from the headteacher has helped the school improve at a good rate since the previous inspection.
- Through systematic monitoring most co-ordinators have a clear view of how the school should develop.

- The governors' annual report to parents does not contain all the information it should by law.

Commentary

22 Taking a lead and inspiration from good practice they have seen in other schools and from training provided by the local education authority, the leadership and management of the school is stronger and more effective than it was at the time of the previous inspection. The crucial factor in this is the way that the headteacher manages the performance of staff so that issues of relevance to the school and its key priorities for development are at the heart of its work.

23 The headteacher has taken a firm lead in tackling each of the key issues identified in the previous report. Setting a good example, he took on the oversight of the school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs and ensured that it now meets all of the guidelines in the Code of Practice and that this group of pupils are given all the help they need to achieve at the same good rate as others. The effective delegation of key roles in the school's management ensured that assessment procedures improved and that all staff used the school's approach to discipline consistently. This has had a marked effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The headteacher supported senior staff as they introduced radical changes to the way that the curriculum was taught in the Foundation Stage. This has had a significant and positive impact on standards and achievement of children in the reception year. The strategies that he used to bring about change took into account the fact that, in a small school, staff have a heavy burden of responsibilities and that the previous report had left them with a lot of work to do. Good leadership has helped the school achieve this while maintaining high levels of staff morale and a strengthened sense of team spirit.

24 The school is managed reflectively by all of the permanent staff. Staff monitor the quality of teaching and learning and keep a close eye on the curriculum and the work in pupils' books. Together with a close analysis of the results of national and other standardised tests this has enabled senior teachers to identify gaps in the teaching and learning or in the curriculum. As a result, standards in reading and writing have improved and in mathematics and science they have been maintained. It is only in information and communication technology, where the school has been without experienced leadership that standards have fallen. However, the headteacher and senior staff have already identified this as an area for development in the coming year.

25 Governors fulfil most of their statutory requirements, such as having and implementing a race equality policy and promoting equality of opportunity for all. However, in changing and updating the school prospectus they have omitted to include information about parents' right to withdraw pupils from collective worship or religious education lessons. This oversight does not detract from their governance, which is good overall. This is evident in the fact that they have already taken steps to remedy the situation.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	338,485	Balance from previous year	3,880
Total expenditure	317,395	Balance carried forward to the next	24, 970*

Expenditure per pupil	3,173
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26 * Governors keep a close eye on the school's finances and have set aside a larger than normal sum of money to try and keep up with work on the rapidly deteriorating fabric of the buildings. They also see maintaining levels of staff as a high priority for spending, especially with mixed age and in some cases mixed key stage classes.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

27 Good leadership and management have helped the school's provision improve considerably since the previous inspection and it is now good. The rich curriculum now meets statutory requirements and teaching and learning are good. As a result, children achieve well.

28 This year, many of the children in the reception class had previously attended a local playgroup or nursery for two or three mornings a week. Consequently, at the start of the year their attainment in reading, writing and number was more closely matched to what was expected for their age than in previous years. Having achieved well during their time in the reception class many have now exceeded the expected goals in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics and are working towards the first levels of the National Curriculum.

29 Only four areas of learning were inspected in depth. The areas relating to children's creative and physical development were sampled. This was done by looking at work on display, observing a small number of activities and talking with children.

30 Children have daily opportunities to develop **physical** skills when they play outside at break and lunchtimes. As a result, children have a good sense of balance and control. They rarely bump into other children when running around the yard and playing chase games and they skip, jump and hop competently. In lessons, children are taught to hold pencils, paintbrushes and scissors correctly and most handle these competently.

31 **Creative** development is promoted through the frequent opportunities that children have to paint and draw, sing and make music. Children use collage techniques to make models of mini-beast and other creatures they have studied. They have used a computer programme to create pictures of colourful and exotic looking fish and natural materials such as shells to make seaside pictures. In assemblies and through the day, children join in enthusiastically with singing and have favourite songs and rhymes.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching helps children develop positive attitudes to learning.
- Children learn about the importance of friendship and work and play harmoniously in partnership with others.

Commentary

32 The time spent in playgroup was not enough to give children the social skills and confidence typical for their age when they started school. However, good teaching ensures that they achieve well. By the end of the reception year, most children achieve the goals that they are expected to reach. One of the main reasons for this is that adults treat children with respect and kindness. They listen to what children have to say about themselves and their work and value their comments and answers in lessons. When children have tried hard or succeed at doing something for the first time they are praised and when struggling they are

given help. Children flourish under these conditions. They are keen to explore new activities and have sufficient confidence and self-esteem to take the initiative in games and to offer their opinions in discussions.

33 With good leadership from the co-ordinator, adults working in the Foundation Stage expect children to work and play together in harmony. Children say that they enjoy school and that other children are friendly. They know the rules of the classroom and playground and take care not to break these because they see that they are sensible. For example, they know how many children can work in the role-play and mathematics areas and stick to these rules. When waiting their turn in lessons children are patient and at playtime they share equipment such as hoops, bats and balls. These initiatives have helped raise standards since the previous inspection.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching of the basic skills of reading and writing helps children achieve well.
- Improved procedures for assessing and recording what children can do have helped raise standards.

Commentary

34 The strategies used to develop children's reading and writing skills are effective and ensure that all achieve well. A good deal of time is spent ensuring that children know the sounds of letters, which helps them with reading and writing. As a result, average and higher attaining children made a good stab at reading words such as 'crab' and 'think' by sounding out the letters. The teacher plans many opportunities for children to write each day. Some of these are informal but help children see that writing is an everyday activity. For example, children wrote out travel tickets in their imaginative play.

35 Following the good leadership and example of the co-ordinator, staff in the Foundation Stage now use a wide range of procedures to assess children's attainment when they start and leave the reception class. The teacher puts this information to good use to set a starting point for reading and writing work at the beginning of each term; something that is necessary because children's attainment on entry varies significantly from one year to the next. This year, children have been set challenging tasks so that lower attaining children read at the levels expected for their age while others are working towards the first level of the National Curriculum. They read simple texts and use picture clues and letter sounds to read unfamiliar words. Similarly, most children have exceeded the goals expected for writing. They write independently and are beginning to use full stops and capital letters in their sentences.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching of number helps children exceed the goals expected for their age.

- Children develop mathematical language through games and everyday activities.

Commentary

36 One of the main reasons why children achieve well is that they are constantly made aware of numbers. Many daily activities involve counting and children like this best when they get to use 'big numbers'. In lessons, the teacher frequently challenges children to count to 20 or add beyond ten. Most do this accurately, though lower attaining children still need help by touching each object as it is counted. The teacher provides number lines and cards to enable children to see which numbers are greater or less than others and as a result, most children order them correctly and add by combining two sets of objects. A small number of children still write their numbers the wrong way round but the teacher often asks them to have another go or copy the numbers on the wall so that a second attempt is more often right.

37 Good leadership has led to considerable improvements to the curriculum. One of these is that much of children's mathematical language and understanding is developed through games and in the day-to-day operation of the classroom. For example, through practical weighing and measuring activities children learn to use the terms 'smaller' and 'heavier'. After throwing beanbags into a hoop they used the vocabulary 'inside' and 'outside' and some children used terms such as 'almost' and 'about'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn a lot about other cultures and periods from visitors to the school.
- They extend their knowledge of the world through educational outings.

Commentary

38 Teaching in this area of learning is good and consequently children achieve well. Many have a fairly limited knowledge of the world beyond their immediate homes and families when they start school but the rich and lively experiences that are provided in the Foundation Stage enable most of them to achieve the goals expected by the end of the reception. Children talk animatedly about the monks who came to talk to them about their Buddhist beliefs and religion. Their drawings of Buddha are detailed and they know where he lived and how he believed in one God. Similarly, through recounting his own boyhood holidays at the seaside, a visitor to the class helped children appreciate the differences between holidays in the recent past and now.

39 One of the initiatives that has come about as a result of the co-ordinators good leadership is that children benefit from the first-hand experiences gained from educational outings. For example, a visit to a butterfly farm motivated children to watch the life cycle for themselves and they have a number of caterpillars living in a corridor. Children are following the progress of these very closely and when asked, they explain the next stages of the cycle until the butterfly finally emerges.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Though satisfactory, the teaching of writing is not strong enough to ensure that most pupils reach the expected level by the end of Year 6.
- Good teaching of reading ensures that pupils achieve well.
- Standards in speaking and listening have improved since the previous inspection.

Commentary

40 Though teaching is good overall, the teaching of writing is satisfactory. Pupils make steady progress from one year to the next and achieve as well as can reasonably be expected. From Year 1 onwards pupils are expected to write for a range of purposes and use correct grammar and punctuation. Consequently by the end of Year 2, standards match those expected. Pupils' writing contains interesting vocabulary and thoughts and ideas are developed into passages that are correctly punctuated with capital letters and full stops. Their handwriting is consistent in size and of a sound quality. Over the next four years, pupils continue to make steady progress with grammar, punctuation and spelling but do not write for a wide enough range of purposes or in sufficient length. This results in a significant proportion of pupils working at levels that are below those expected for their age. However, good leadership and management from the co-ordinator means that this gap in teaching has already been identified as a priority for work in the coming year.

41 An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs linked to reading and writing and this prevents standards from being higher. The school makes good provision for pupils who have special educational needs in reading or writing. They are frequently taught in small groups, where they benefit from good teaching by well-qualified teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils follow a carefully planned programme of work aimed at helping them overcome their barriers to learning. The activities are interesting and pupils are keen to take part because they enjoy having the extra attention. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 persevered with reading and remembering the position of some fairly difficult words because they were keen to win a game. Though this group of pupils achieve well they do not often reach the levels expected for their age and this is one of the reasons why the school's results are not rising at a faster rate.

42 Throughout the school, teachers are good at teaching reading and most pupils reach the levels expected for their age. Following training in how to promote reading skills, teachers ensure that pupils read every day. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught a range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 say that they enjoy reading and talking about texts and books. As a result of this type of work pupils make inferences from the text and skim through it competently to find the bits they want to talk about. Pupils in Year 6 talked knowledgeably about the setting, plot and characters of the books they were reading and empathised with characters. This happened when pupils talked about the trauma that a character might feel when being reunited with his family after a war. One of the reasons why pupils achieve well in reading is that they are expected to read by themselves and at home. Many pupils take a book home to read with parents every night. Parents and pupils write in a

reading journal and these are popular. When asked, parents said that it is a good way of keeping in touch with the teacher, especially if getting into school is a problem. Pupils like them because they know that their teachers are interested in their opinions and because they like to show off how many books they have read.

43 The teaching of speaking and listening is good and helps pupils gain confidence and widen their vocabulary as they get older. Teachers are relentless in their attempts to promote discussion in lessons. Sometimes this is between pairs of pupils, for example, when they have to discuss a character or plot briefly with a partner. On other occasions, pupils answer thought provoking questions posed by teachers. This was done well in a lesson where pupils in Year 1 retold the story of Jack the Giant Killer and included considerable detail as a result of the teacher's prompts. Teachers also provide opportunities for pupils to speak in larger groups such as during assemblies and in school concerts. The older pupils say that they get a little bit nervous sometimes but that they enjoy taking part.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44 Pupils make good use of their reading and speaking and listening skills in other subjects. They read books, articles and Internet web sites to research facts in history and geography and read instructions on worksheets in a number of subjects. Many lessons involve question and answer sessions or discussions when pupils are expected to give their points of view and where they talk about their work. Pupils do not put their writing skills to the same good use. Though they write in many subjects it is rarely at length and this is one of the reasons why standards fall slightly below those expected by the end of Year 6.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching helps pupils gain a quick mental recall of numbers.
- Pupils are taught to recognise patterns in numbers and this ensures that they achieve well.
- The leadership and management of mathematics have improved since the previous inspection and are now good.

Commentary

45 Teachers make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to plan lessons that are generally a fair balance of whole-class teaching and time to practise and consolidate what they have learned. Throughout the school, the first part of each lesson is devoted to mental arithmetic. These sessions usually involve all pupils in answering questions, counting and calculating and solving problems. They are pretty brisk in pace and pupils of all ages enjoy pitting their wits against the teacher or older pupils. For example, pupils in Year 1 tried very hard to join in with those from Year 2 who could recite the three-times table easily. Teachers use white-boards effectively, to check that pupils have got the answer right, and in the Year 3 and 4 class, the teacher used a marked stick to help pupils convert litres to millilitres and back again. These strategies are effective and ensure that most of the pupils in Years 2 and 6 are working at the levels expected for their age. In Year 2 they recall two, five and ten-times tables and add and subtract accurately. By the end of Year 6 they solve problems using a range of mental calculations.

46 Throughout the school, teachers have a thorough knowledge of how to teach the basic skills of mathematics. This is evident in the emphasis given to pattern and relationship in number. From Year 1 onwards, pupils are taught to look for patterns in number that will help them extend their learning. For example, pupils in Year 1 were helped to spot multiples of three by marking them on a number grid and subsequently using the pattern to work out the next multiple rather than counting on in threes. This worked well; pupils quickly grasped the idea and said that they had enjoyed the work because it was fun. In another good lesson, pupils in Year 5 were challenged to think about the value of each digit before ordering large numbers. They said that the work made them 'think quickly to get the answer right' and they clearly enjoyed the practical task of moving pupils and cards into ascending and descending order.

47 Since the previous inspection, the co-ordinator has been monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in a more rigorous and systematic way. Teachers' planning is checked in order to ensure that tasks match the needs of pupils of different abilities and ages. The work in pupils' books is monitored closely in order to ascertain whether the curriculum is broad enough and the co-ordinator observes other teachers at work. In addition to this, the results of national tests are analysed in order to identify any gaps in teaching or learning. These strategies are effective and have helped maintain standards. They also ensure that teachers have a true picture of how pupils are doing, which is important in a school where national comparisons are largely unreliable because of the small number of pupils in each year group.

Mathematics across the curriculum

48 Pupils put their mathematical skills to good use in other subjects. For example, they use charts, tables and graphs in science, measure quantity and length in design and technology and create time lines in history. Pupils have only limited opportunities to extend their mathematical skills by using computers, though this does not prevent standards from matching those expected.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because much of the work involves testing, experimenting and investigating.
- By questioning pupils, teachers help deepen their scientific thinking.
- Teachers have high expectations that pupils will record their scientific observations and findings neatly.

Commentary

49 One of the main reasons why standards match those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6 is that science is taught well. From Year 1 onwards, much of the work planned is of a practical nature and involves experimenting and investigating. For example, pupils in Year 1 learned about forces of push and pull through experimenting with cars on a ramp. The benefit of this practical approach was further illustrated in a very effective lesson in the Year 3 and 4 class. Pupils were very keen to investigate which vegetables snails preferred to eat and set

about devising experiments to test this with great enthusiasm. Led by the teacher, they worked collaboratively and discussed ideas, shelved the impractical and the over-complex and arrived at a corporate decision, which took into account variables and the necessity to make the test fair. This approach is applied consistently throughout the school and it is clear from the work in pupils' books that by the time they reach Year 6 most pupils are able to carry out a fair test effectively, consider a range of potential variables and identify key factors to consider. Pupils say that they enjoy experimenting and investigating very much and particularly like findings things out for themselves.

50 Throughout the school, teachers are good at asking the right sorts of questions at the right point in the investigation. In most lessons teachers ask pupils to explain their predictions and be precise about what they think will happen in a scientific test or experiment. Pupils in Year 1 had to think hard before they realised that the surface of the ramp had an effect on the speed with which the car rolled down it and so did the force of the push. In their questioning, teachers prompt pupils to use the correct scientific vocabulary. As a result, pupils in Years 1 and 2 use terms such as 'predict', 'test' and 'observe' when explaining their experiments. Older pupils use language such as 'photosynthesis' in their work on life processes and 'transparent' and 'opaque' in their work on physical processes.

51 Good leadership and management identified the need for pupils to record their work systematically in order to help them think sequentially and logically. This is something that all teachers do well. From Year 1 onwards, pupils are expected to use clearly labelled diagrams or pictures and simple written accounts to record their findings.

52 As they get older, pupils write accounts that give substantial detail about their predictions, the methods used and the findings. They often use charts, tables and graphs to communicate their findings, but rarely make use of computers to do this. Teachers' high expectations result in most pupils producing work that is neat and well presented and when asked pupils remember what they have done and talk about it enthusiastically.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Gaps in pupils' knowledge of information and communication technology mean that standards are below those expected by the end of Year 6.
- Though teachers make good use of computers to promote the learning of pupils who have special educational needs, other pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not given enough opportunities to use information and communication technology and this aspect of teaching is unsatisfactory.
- Standards have fallen because the school is without a permanent co-ordinator to provide leadership and management.
- Satisfactory teaching helps pupils in Years 1 and 2 attain the levels expected for their age.

Commentary

53 By the end of Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of how to use a word processing program to draft and publish their work. They use familiar menus and features of the program competently and the work that is on display and in books is generally well presented and attractive. They are also reasonably secure in their knowledge of how to use a paint program to produce designs and pictures. However, there are significant gaps in their knowledge of how to communicate information as spreadsheets or gather, interrogate and interpret information from databases or sensory equipment and their knowledge of how to combine a range of media is limited to adding pictures and sounds stored on the computer to text that they have written. Though this does not have any adverse affects on standards in mathematics or science it is one of the key reasons why standards are below those expected in information and communication technology. When asked, pupils talk sensibly about using the Internet safely, though they are unsure how to use electronic mail. These gaps are largely what prevent standards from matching those expected for their age.

54 Pupils who have special educational needs benefit considerably from using information and communication technology. Throughout the school, teachers make regular and effective use of programs aimed at promoting pupils' learning in English and mathematics. In some classes, pupils get daily opportunities to work on these specialist programs and this contributes to the good progress that they make with reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who have special educational needs say that they look forward to working with computers, especially when the program is in the form of a game or challenge. Other pupils do not get the same frequent opportunities to use computers in classes. Pupils say that they sometimes, have to wait a long time between turns at using computers and it is this lack of regular practice that prevents them from remembering what they have previously been taught. For example, pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 have been taught to gather sensory information but when asked, could not remember how to do this.

55 In the past, the leadership and management of the subject have not been strong enough to maintain standards. The temporary co-ordinator has been instrumental in keeping the small computer area filled with useful displays and attractive examples of pupils' work but has not had the chance to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and consequently weaknesses in both have not been identified. In addition to this, lack of innovative or strong leadership mean that teachers have not kept pace with advances in technology or been able to

put the school's resources to better use. In some lessons, computers are not used at all and this is a waste of a valuable resource. The school lacks the space or funding to provide a suite of computers and governors and staff are aware that this is a problem that needs to be overcome if standards are to rise. This unsatisfactory state of leadership and management is likely to improve next year when the headteacher takes on the role of leading the subject.

56 In Years 1 and 2, teaching that is generally satisfactory and sometimes good, helps pupils reach the standards expected for their age. Pupils know how to open and use the school's software and save their work. They use a word processing program to publish their writing and poetry and create attractive and colourful pictures and designs using a paint program. In a well-taught lesson, pupils were challenged to programme a floor robot to write numbers on the ground. With plenty of help from adults, pupils practised and then planned the instructions on paper before trying them out on the robot. As a result, most pupils spotted mistakes in length, direction and size of angle and were able to amend their instructions in order to achieve the result they wanted. Pupils said that this was a 'great activity' and they worked hard to get it right.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57 Although it is increasing, at present pupils make only limited use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. When directed, they use computers to write or create pictures and they say they particularly enjoy lessons where teachers use computers, such as when pupils in Years 5 and 6 found out about the mummification process by playing a computer game. However, pupils have few opportunities to use other information and communication technology, such as digital cameras in their work.

HUMANITIES

58 Religious education was inspected in depth. Geography and history were sampled by looking at pupils' work in books and on display, observing a very small number of lessons and talking with pupils about their work.

59 **In geography** pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop geographical skills by following the travels of 'Barnaby Bear'. They describe the physical features and climate of the places studied. For example, they know that it is hot on the equator and that it is generally cold at the top of a mountain. They have studied Greece in some detail and write about its place in Europe, the capital city and the island of Crete. In Years 3 to 6, pupils study Ordnance Survey maps and are familiar with keys and compass points to help them do this. They use the correct vocabulary to describe how magma is pushed up through a mountain and erupts as 'scalding lava' that eventually cools and turns to ash.

60 Pupils say that they enjoy learning about **history** and the past and take great delight in talking about the facts that interest them, such as Queen Victoria eating a lot of sugar and consequently having black teeth. In Years 1 and 2, pupils write at length about the Great Fire of London and how Samuel Pepys buried his precious diaries so that they would not be destroyed in the flames. They know about the work of Florence Nightingale and can compare hospitals at the time of the Crimean War with those of today. In Years 3 to 6, pupils study the Roman civilisations and describe what the ancient Roman soldiers and women wore as clothes and jewellery. They have a good understanding of why the Romans invade Britain. Their grasp of why Henry VIII had some of his wives beheaded is more vague, though they know that one of his daughters became the first Queen Elizabeth. It is when they are talking

about Victorian England that pupils become most animated. They are eager to recount the horrors of young children working as chimney sweeps or in lead mines and discuss the different lifestyles of the rich and poor of the Victorian era with real enthusiasm.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a thorough knowledge of how religion affects peoples' lives.
- Fascinating resources and interesting visitors bring the curriculum to life.
- Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development.

Commentary

61 Consistently good teaching has helped maintain standards since the previous inspection. One of the main reasons for this is detailed planning, which ensures that pupils learn about the major world faiths of Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and Sikhism and develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development at the same time. Pupils learn about the similarities and differences in religions, such as that some religions share a belief in one God, though the name may differ. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards continue to meet those prescribed by the syllabus used in local schools. Pupils know many facts about the religions they study and talk eloquently about religious festivals, stories and deities. They are taught that all religions are special to the people who believe and follow them and know that one of the common themes of religions is that they all have special people, books and places. This approach to teaching is effective and promotes tolerance and respect for the views of others in pupils.

62 There are very effective, eye-catching and exciting displays around the school and in classrooms. These displays, the wealth of enthralling artefacts and visits made by the vicar and two Buddhist monks not only enriches the lives of the pupils but brings the curriculum to life. For example, pupils in Year 2 remembered stories from the Bible that had been told by a visiting priest.

63 Teachers respect the culture and traditions of others and pass this positive attitude on to pupils. They provide valuable insights into religious beliefs, moral values, feelings and behaviour through the rich variety of resources and the effective use of video.

64 Religious education makes a significant contribution to the development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. This was evident when pupils in Years 3 and 4 were captivated by the research they made into the five symbols of Sikhism. Following their research and with considerable skill, the teacher sought to promote pupils' cultural development by comparing religious symbolic clothing to that of a Cub Scout's uniform. Pointed and sensitive questioning helped pupils to recognise that symbols may be an outward sign of beliefs but it is actions and attitudes towards others that show to everyone who we really are.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65 The subjects of art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were sampled. This was done by looking at displays and photographs, observing activities and talking with pupils about their work.

66 Throughout the school, teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to explore, investigate and make pictures and models in **art and design** lessons. The creative and exciting use of textiles and natural materials in making pictures, wall hangings and sculptures is a particular strength of the art and design curriculum. Pupils collect impressions and try out ideas and pencil techniques in sketchbooks and say that they enjoy drawing and painting very much. Their work is displayed attractively on walls and displays and helps to make the school an attractive place in which to learn.

67 In **design and technology**, pupils say that the best lessons involve designing and making models. They are less enthusiastic about evaluating models once they are completed but, with prompting, are willing to consider how they could be improved. They use an increasing range of tools as they get older and use a range of techniques to join materials. Work on food technology is linked to the school's programme for promoting healthy eating and diet so that the links with the science curriculum are strong.

68 Pupils say that they enjoy singing and making **music**, particularly when it is for school concerts. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to play percussion instruments and sing enthusiastically. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to recognise the pentatonic scale and compose short pieces of music using these notes and tuned percussion instruments. When prompted they sing softly and sweetly and clearly have favourite songs. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils use musical notation when composing and know the time values of crochets, quavers and semibreves. A small number of pupils are taught to play violin by a music specialist who visits the school once a week. Pupils in Year 6 say that they sometimes drop this tuition because they would rather take part in sports activities. This subject promotes pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development well.

69 When asked, pupils said that they enjoy the work they do in **physical education** and are particularly keen to go swimming. In addition to the very popular swimming, the school follows a broad programme of work, which includes games, gymnastics, athletics and dance. Girls and boys take up sports such as football and netball and are eager to pursue these at weekends.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

70 This subject was sampled by talking with pupils, observing assemblies and circle times and by looking at the programme planned for pupils.

71 Teachers view pupils' personal development as a high priority and for this reason introducing a structured programme of work is one of the school's key priorities for the current year. In part, this is because many children have limited social skills when they start school. However, promoting children's personal development begins in the Foundation Stage and is something that continues in lessons and assemblies for pupils of all ages. Each class has some time each week when pupils get together to talk about issues that are of importance to them. Pupils in Year 6 visit a health and safety carousel where they learn about the misuse of drugs and alcohol and are guided towards making decisions and choices about healthy living.

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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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