

INSPECTION REPORT

CASTLE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kendal

Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112189

Headteacher: Mrs H Peatfield

Lead inspector: Dr M J Bradshaw

Dates of inspection: 23rd to 25th March 2004

Inspection number: 255732

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	341
School address:	Sedbergh Drive Kendal Cumbria
Postcode:	LA9 6BE
Telephone number:	01539 773633
Fax number:	01539 721812
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Mike Norton
Date of previous inspection:	8 th to 12 th February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has 292 full-time pupils from reception to year 6 and 49 part-time nursery children. The numbers of boys and girls are similar. The changes to the school's roll during the school year are usually quite low. Children usually enter nursery part-time in the September of the year in which they are four-years-old and transfer to reception full-time in the following September. Attainment data show that the attainment of children joining the school in nursery is below that expected for their age, especially in English. All pupils are from a white ethnic background and all speak English as their first language. About six per cent of full-time pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals, a figure which is well below average. The background of pupils is average overall. About 21 per cent of pupils in reception to year 6 have been identified as having significant learning needs, including eight pupils who have a statement of special educational needs; these figures are above average. The school received an Achievement Award in 2001 and the Activemark in 2003. Although there are separate nursery and reception classes, the number of pupils in years 1 to 6 means that the remainder of the school is organised into nine mixed-age classes; three each for years 1 and 2, years 3 and 4, and years 5 and 6.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6169	Dr M J Bradshaw	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Physical education
11096	Mrs M Davie	Lay inspector	
22967	Mrs M Griffiths	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Music Religious education
28014	Mr P Buckley	Team inspector	English as an additional language Special educational needs English Geography History

The inspection contractor was:

Wessex Education Ltd

3 Greenacres
Puddletown
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 8GF

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school gives a **good** quality of education and provides **good** value for money. Pupils enter school with below average levels of attainment but achieve well. In recent years, they have attained mainly close to average levels by year 2, but below average by year 6. However, attainment is now improving and is about average in English and mathematics by year 6. Teaching is good overall, and very good in reception and nursery. The school is very well led.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership of the headteacher is very good; she is well supported by the deputy headteacher.
- Children in nursery and reception receive a very good start to school life.
- Provision for and management of special educational needs are excellent.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' attainment by year 6 is not high enough in science, because the curriculum is not organised well.
- In mathematics, pupils do not always complete enough work, and not all pupils are achieving as well as they could.
- Although attainment is about average in writing, this area of English is not as well developed as reading or speaking and listening.
- Attainment in art and design is well above that expected.
- There are strong links with other schools.
- The personal qualities of pupils, including their behaviour, are very good.
- Very good care is provided for pupils.
- Good systems are in place to identify how well children are doing in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT).

Progress since the last inspection has been good overall. High staff absence limited progress for a period, but improvement has accelerated recently. Teaching is now better and achievement has improved. Standards are rising in English, including in writing. Provision for ICT has improved and standards have risen. Satisfactory progress has been made in improving pupils' presentation of their work. Good procedures have been introduced to follow pupils' progress in all subjects. These are particularly good in English, mathematics and ICT, and they help to ensure pupils who are not making enough progress can be helped. The curriculum provided for pupils is now good. Previous strengths, such as pupils' attitudes, and leadership and management, have been maintained or improved further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Achievement in the school is **good** overall. Children enter the school with standards that are below those expected for their age, especially in English. After an unsettled period, during which junior pupils underachieved, attainment is now improving and pupils now achieve well in response to good teaching and very good leadership. From nursery to year 2 children's achievement is good. It is

satisfactory and improving in years 3 to 6. Children in nursery and reception make good progress and most will reach the goals expected in all areas of learning by the time they start year 1. Good progress continues in years 1 and 2, leading to broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In science, attainment is below that expected by year 2.

Progress in the juniors is satisfactory and accelerating. In recent years, attainment has mostly been below average in English, mathematics and science. However, currently in year 6, standards in English and mathematics are about average. Although attainment in writing is close to the average, standards are not as secure as in reading or speaking and listening. In mathematics not enough pupils are achieving the higher levels. In science, attainment is below that expected. The amount of pupil movement in to and out of the school adversely affected last year's results in year 6. In both years 2 and 6, attainment is well above that expected in art and design and in line with expectations in ICT and religious education (RE).

Children's personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good**. Children have a very good understanding of right and wrong, and they have very good respect for others. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching is **good** overall and very good in nursery and reception. This is leading to good learning in most lessons. Teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and very effectively encourage them to discuss their ideas. They have a good understanding of how well pupils are doing in their work. Members of the support staff make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.

The school provides a good curriculum, which is enriched by a very good range of visits and extra-curricular activities. However, the curriculum for science is not organised sufficiently well. Accommodation is good. This is a very caring school, which looks after its pupils well. Pupils' education is aided by the very good links that have been established with other schools. The school has a good partnership with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **good**. This has ensured the school has coped well with difficulties posed by a high number of staff absences. Leadership of the headteacher and her deputy has led to significant recent improvements. Governance of the school is good. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the school. In particular they feel that their children like school and that they make good progress. They also think teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed. Pupils are very positive in their views of school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in science and ensure the science curriculum is organised more effectively;
- raise standards in mathematics by ensuring that more able pupils are sufficiently challenged;
- ensure that the improvements put in place continue to raise standards in writing.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is good. Children in nursery and reception achieve well and most are likely to reach the goals expected in all six areas of learning. Pupils in years 1 and 2 achieve well, and attainment in year 2 is about average. Mostly satisfactory progress continues in the juniors, and standards in English and mathematics are average by year 6. Standards in science are below average by years 2 and 6. Attainment in art and design is well above that expected in years 2 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in nursery and reception achieve well.
- Achievement in years 1 and 2 is good overall and very good in art and design.
- Attainment in science is below average by years 2 and 6.
- In the juniors pupils achieve satisfactorily overall, and well in English, ICT and art and design.
- Although close to the average, pupils' writing skills are not as strongly developed as those of reading and speaking and listening.
- Children with special educational needs achieve well.

Commentary

1. In recent years, year 2 pupils' attainment has tended to be close to or a little below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Results have improved since 2000 when they were particularly low in reading and mathematics. Currently attainment is average in reading, writing and mathematics, but below average in science. In recent years, year 6 pupils' results in English, mathematics and science have been rather erratic. They initially improved over the results seen in 1999, but since then have tended to be below average. This year, attainment in year 6 is average in English and mathematics, but below average in science. The school's results in year 6 last year were adversely influenced by the movement of pupils in to and out of the school and, when only pupils who started in year 3 are considered, achievement is much better in English than the overall results suggest. These data indicate better progress in English than in either mathematics or science. In recent years, significant staffing problems, related to illness and maternity leave, have adversely affected the continuity of pupils' education and subsequent results. The improved staffing situation is resulting in more consistent achievement.
2. Children begin nursery with below average skills, particularly in English, but they achieve well because of very good teaching and a curriculum that provides a wide range of challenging activities. By the time they reach the end of reception, most are likely to achieve the goals expected in all areas of learning. They are likely to exceed the goals expected in personal, social and emotional development, and achieve very well in this area.

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	14.7 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.8 (16.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In recent years, results by year 2 show that girls have tended to attain better standards in reading, writing and mathematics than boys. However, there is no significant difference evident at

present. Pupils make good progress in years 1 and 2 and build well on their earlier learning. As a result, by the end of year 2, standards in English and mathematics are about average. In English, reading and speaking and listening develop well and good improvement is evident in writing. In mathematics, attainment is about average in number, shape and measurement. In science, pupils achieve satisfactorily but more able pupils do not do as well as they should. In ICT, achievement is good and pupils in year 2 attain standards similar to those expected. In years 1 and 2, pupils' work shows very good achievement in art and design, with attainment that is well above that expected. In RE, attainment is broadly in line with that expected.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.8 (25.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.3 (26.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.7 (27.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- In recent years, results by year 6 show that boys have tended to perform slightly worse than girls in English. The number of pupils involved is relatively small and no significant differences are evident currently. In the 2003 national curriculum tests, attainment was well below average in mathematics, and below average in English and science. Pupils' achievement has been adversely affected by staffing difficulties. The situation has improved and pupils' achievement in years 3 to 6 is improving and at least satisfactory. Attainment in English this year is about average, but writing continues to be an area that, although close to the average, is not as well developed as reading or speaking and listening. In mathematics, pupils develop sound number skills and attainment is about average, although not enough pupils are achieving the higher levels. Science knowledge and pupils' scientific skills are below average, and the organisation of the curriculum means that too much of the work does not extend able pupils sufficiently. In ICT, pupils achieve well and their attainment by year 6 reflects the standard expected. In years 3 to 6, examples of very good achievement in art and design result in work that is better than that expected. In RE and the small amount of physical education (PE) seen achievement was satisfactory and attainment in line with that expected.
- Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well, due to the sustained support they receive from their class teachers and very well qualified teaching assistants. Close monitoring of pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) ensures that their targets are adjusted frequently, which contributes to the good progress they make and their enthusiasm for school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good and contribute significantly to their good achievements. This is because of the very good emphasis that is placed on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is good and parents ensure that their children get to school on time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are hardworking in lessons and settle to tasks quickly.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good.
- Relationships are very good and pupils work together well.
- Many good initiatives encourage pupils' personal development.
- Attendance and punctuality are good.

Commentary

6. Pupils work very hard in lessons. They settle to their tasks quickly and waste little time getting on with their work. This means that they have good opportunities to practise skills and make progress in learning. In a year 1 and 2 English lesson, pupils who had been enthused about writing poems by their teacher's animated introduction became engrossed in their tasks and made very good progress.
7. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. This is because of the very good provision for pupils' moral development, combined with very high expectations from all staff. Children in the nursery and reception are particularly well behaved and enthusiastic about learning. They are already confident with routines and share and take turns very well. Pupils with special educational needs are fully accepted by all pupils. They work well with their teaching assistants in class or when they are withdrawn for short periods and are fully included in all school and class activities. The school has provided behaviour management training for all adults. In particular, this contributes to the very good behaviour of pupils with special educational needs both inside and out of the classroom.
8. Pupils of all abilities get on well. In lessons they work together well in pairs or groups. They bounce ideas off their 'talking partners', an initiative which not only helps develop speaking and listening skills but helps pupils to learn from their own and each other's views. The playground is happy and well ordered and pupils all know what is expected of them. When asked, pupils particularly mentioned that they like their school because everyone is so friendly. Although a very small number of parents reported that there are isolated incidents of bullying, both they and the children have every confidence that the school will sort these out. There have been no recent exclusions, a significant improvement since the last inspection.
9. Pupils' personal development is very good because of the importance the school places on this aspect of their education. Pupils' involvement in the school council and jobs, such as helping to care for younger children at break times, are helping them to become responsible and aware of the needs of others. Pupils' social development is very good because of the particularly good role models all staff provide and opportunities, such as the residential visits, where they learn to live and work together.
10. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good. Pupils are brought together every day for a period of reflection and prayer. In RE all pupils are learning to value each other's opinions and ideas, such as through their study of Holy Week. Here they were encouraged to imagine how they would feel if they had been present during the events of Easter. They have learned from many multicultural and multifaith themes, including the importance of prayer in different religions. There are good links with the local churches; whose clergy take part in assemblies and occasionally help with RE lessons. Every effort is made to broaden pupils' understanding of multicultural life in Britain. These include visits to different places of worship such as the Buddhist Temple in Ulverston. The respect for cultural diversity continues to be evident in the many good quality displays around the school.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

11. Pupils' attendance is good and above the national average. Pupils are punctual so the school day gets off to a prompt start.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education based on a good curriculum and good teaching. The care provided for the pupils is very good. Links with parents and the community are good, and those with other schools are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in nursery and reception are very good.
- Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- There is good teaching in most subjects.
- Not all teaching challenges more able pupils sufficiently.
- Assessment is very good in nursery and reception, and good elsewhere.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactor y	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	18 (41.9%)	17 (39.5%)	8 (18.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection, with more very good teaching seen. Over three-quarters of lessons featured good or better teaching and this was seen in all parts of the school. Teaching in nursery and reception was consistently very good.

13. Particularly effective teaching in nursery and reception means that children's learning is very good and they achieve well. All staff and helpers give careful attention to developing children's personal and social skills, which ensures very good progress in this area. Planning is thorough and support staff and other adults are used very effectively. They have high expectations of children's behaviour and the amount and standard of work to be produced.

14. Teaching in the rest of the school is good, with examples of very good teaching. The deputy headteacher, for instance, acts as a very good teaching role model. Teaching in most subjects is good. However, in science it is satisfactory and this is also the case for mathematics teaching in the juniors. In some science and mathematics lessons, not enough attention is given to how to challenge more able pupils and hence increase the amount of high attainment. A significant strength of teaching, which helps to ensure good learning, is the insistence on high standards of behaviour. The school operates a 'no hands up' policy, which helps to discourage calling out, allows teachers to choose who should answer and encourages all pupils to be attentive. The consistent application of this policy is very effective and ensures that teachers can involve all pupils in whole class sessions. In the best lessons, teachers vary the tasks well, involve pupils effectively and inject pace into the learning. Good links between subjects also help to make learning relevant. Good use is made of teaching assistants. Teachers are very confident with ICT and make particularly effective use of resources such as the interactive whiteboards to enhance

learning and involve pupils. In lessons that are satisfactory, a further feature could be improved. The pace at which some pupils work is not always fast enough because some teachers do not set specific targets in relation to the amount expected.

15. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and contributes to their good learning and achievement. Teaching assistants work very closely with class teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), in planning for these pupils. From class planning and pupils' IEPs they develop their own planning that includes careful attention being given to what these pupils are expected to learn. ICT is also used well as another strategy to consolidate pupils' learning. Gifted mathematicians in year 6 have opportunities to join pupils at a local secondary school to extend their skills; these sessions have successfully developed these pupils' knowledge of probability.
16. The quality of assessment and its use are good. This aspect has improved because of the deputy headteacher's very good management of the area. Throughout the school, marking is generally good; it often contains detailed comments to celebrate good work and to give guidance on the next steps needed. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of how they can improve. Assessment in nursery and reception is very good. It covers each of the areas of learning and includes a very effective mix of formal and informal observation and recording. This builds into a comprehensive picture of each child. In English, mathematics and ICT, there are good whole-school procedures for assessment and following pupils' progress. Each pupil is monitored carefully and variations in performance noted. Increasingly, these data are being analysed using appropriate ICT programs so that the school can quickly identify pupils who are not making as much progress as predicted in relation to the targets set. The school uses a range of assessment procedures effectively to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. In addition, pupils are becoming increasingly involved in assessing what they know. This strategy is often used well when new topics are started so that teachers can modify their plans to meet pupils' needs. In science, assessment is satisfactory, but assessment of knowledge is better than that of skills, which is not well organised.

The curriculum

The school provides a good broad, balanced and enriched curriculum that ensures all groups of pupils have the opportunity to learn and to make progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a wide range of curricular opportunities.
- The science curriculum is not organised to best effect.
- The curriculum for children in nursery and reception is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Expertise from within and outside the school is used very well to enrich the curriculum.
- Extra-curricular activities extend pupils' social, physical and artistic skills.
- The curriculum prepares pupils effectively for later stages of education.
- Very good training opportunities have been provided for non-teaching staff to meet the needs of the curriculum.
- Opportunities for physical education in the school hall are limited.

Commentary

17. The school provides a broad range of worthwhile curricular opportunities by having a curriculum that meets national curriculum requirements and those of the locally agreed syllabus for RE. There is a very good curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes that is well matched to their needs. The school is currently looking to develop the curriculum further, including considering ways to make more links between different subjects. Pupils in years 1 and 2, following a visit from a theatre company, have been preparing a performance of a shadow

puppet play. This gave opportunities for designing and making puppets, painting pictures to illustrate the happy and sad moods of the characters in the play and creating music as background effects. Links have been developed between history and design and technology when pupils in years 5 and 6 made World War II Spitfires and also with art and design, when they considered the work of an artist, Henry Moore, from the same period of history. The development of the science curriculum has been adversely affected by the lack of a co-ordinator. Although national curriculum requirements are met in science, the curriculum is not planned effectively and it limits the opportunities for high attainment and the development of scientific skills.

18. The school has used outside expertise to enrich pupils' experiences. People from the local community have been well involved with history when they shared their experiences of World War II with pupils from years 5 and 6. Provision for art and design is very good and during a creative arts week there were visits from African drummers and other artists in residence, which gave pupils many exciting opportunities to improve their own skills. Provision for sporting activities is very good also and there have been opportunities for participation in football, tag rugby, netball and basketball and other after-school activities have recently included dance, drama, choir, juggling, German and chess. These are well attended and much enjoyed by the pupils. A number of visits give pupils firsthand experience in different areas of the curriculum such as visiting Kendal Castle, Grizedale Forest and Eden Camp. Pupils in years 3 to 6 have opportunities to go on annual residential visits, which include outdoor and adventurous activities as well as a focus on geography.
19. The provision overall for pupils with special educational needs is very good, reflecting the school's desire to help all children succeed and the well-planned approach to special educational needs. Pupils' IEPs have very clear targets that staff, children and parents understand and that staff use well to plan each pupils' work. Pupils are mainly taught with their classmates, but receive some teaching in small groups or individually to support their individual needs; these strategies are very effective.
20. The pupils are well prepared for moving through the school and also on to secondary education. There are a number of curricular links, such as in science and design and technology, which provide good continuity between the primary and secondary stages of education. Teachers visit from local secondary schools to work with pupils in year 6 on various projects, such as in design and technology and science. This is helping prepare pupils for their transfer to secondary education.
21. The low ceiling in the school hall and lack of fixed apparatus mean that opportunities for PE in the school hall are limited. However, the school has successfully sought to improve the facilities for PE with the provision of an outdoor adventure area. Members of the non-teaching staff are well qualified to meet the needs of the curriculum as a result of a very good range of training opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

Care for pupils is very good and helps them to feel happy and safe. Pupils are given good advice and guidance as a result of checking their academic and personal development. Their involvement in the work of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All members of staff know pupils very well, provide a high level of care for them and have very good relationships with them.
- In most lessons, the work pupils are given meets their individual needs well.
- Procedures for health and safety and child protection are very effective.
- Very good links with other agencies ensure that pupils get the extra help they need.

Commentary

22. Teachers know pupils very well. They check their progress carefully and make sure that the work they are given is adjusted to meet their personal needs in most subjects, although this is less evident for more able pupils in science and mathematics, especially in the juniors. This usually means that they work in groups on tasks that are suited to their abilities and sometimes that they work with extra adult support. In English and mathematics, the school organises teaching groups well so that they reflect pupils' levels of attainment from the three mixed age classes in each pair of year groups (years 1 and 2, years 3 and 4, and years 5 and 6). At times, however, not enough is expected of the more able pupils in the mathematics sessions. Well-trained teaching assistants are used very effectively both in lessons and in small group work. Parents feel welcome in school and appreciate that staff make themselves available to discuss any worries or concerns they have about their children's progress.
23. Pupils of all ages are happy in school and they say there is little they would change. This is because all members of staff establish very good relationships with them from their earliest days at the school. This is evident from the big smiles and enthusiasm on the faces of children as they come into the nursery and reception class. They are confident because of the very good induction systems and ongoing contact with parents, which ensure their needs are well known. These contribute significantly to how well they settle and parents say they are pleased with the arrangements made for when their child first starts school.
24. Older pupils feel well supported and say that they can turn to any adult for help. Meals supervisors are an important part of the support structure and have very good relationships with pupils of all ages. They ensure that the dinnertime is well organised and relaxing. Pupils who have very specific support needs outside of lessons are treated with a high level of understanding and care, which helps them to get the most out of their day and fit in with routines. Pupils with special educational needs are very well known to staff, are closely monitored, and receive very good support and guidance. At annual reviews, in addition to the SENCO, the class teacher and the teaching assistants make a contribution.
25. Regular health and safety checks are carried out to make sure that pupils are working in a safe environment. Procedures to deal with accidents and emergencies are thorough. The headteacher is designated responsible for matters concerning child protection issues and is very knowledgeable in this field. She makes sure that all the other members of staff are aware of their responsibilities. Very good links with the health services and other support agencies ensure that pupils who need it get extra help, for example from the educational psychologist or speech therapist.
26. The school council provides the pupils with good opportunities to make their views known and they are pleased that their ideas are taken seriously. They were very involved in helping to design the adventure playground, making sure that everyone's views were taken into account. Pupils are very pleased with the final design and use it regularly.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Every effort is made to include parents in their children's education and the links the school has with them are good. Links with the community are good and links with other local schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with parents contribute significantly to pupils' good achievements.
- Most information for parents is well presented and informative, but the year-end reports are not personal enough with respect to achievement in subjects.
- Very close links with other local schools contribute significantly to pupils' academic and personal development.

Commentary

27. The school makes every effort to involve parents in their children's education. It gives them good quality information by way of newsletters, formal consultations, curricular information and workshops. Parents are often invited to class assemblies and to all productions, and show a lot of support for these events. However, the number of parents who attend curricular workshops is disappointingly low. Those who do attend report that they find them very useful. Whilst parents have been consulted about specific issues, such as school meals, a formal consultation that was planned for this term was postponed because of the inspection. This is one area in which parents feel the school could do more.
28. The Friends Association is made up of a small, dedicated group of parents who organise fundraising events that are well supported by the parent community. The summer and Christmas fairs are the main events and the money raised has been instrumental in helping to develop the adventure playground. This is used at playtimes and occasionally as part of PE lessons to compensate for the lack of specific equipment that cannot be used in the hall due to its unusual shape.
29. Parents get plenty of information about their child's learning targets and how well they are doing. However, the year-end reports are not as helpful as they could be. Too much of the information they contain about subjects is too similar for different pupils and some of them contain too much educational jargon to make them easily understood. A small number of parents also feel that the language used in some of the information that goes home, such as homework, could be more straightforward. IEPs of pupils with special educational needs are regularly reviewed and always shared with parents. Parents speak highly of the provision and value the cooperation that the school provides.
30. The headteacher meets regularly with other headteachers of local primary schools and an outcome of these very good links is an upcoming combined music project for the pupils. There is also very strong liaison with a local secondary school to which the majority of year 6 pupils transfer. Pupils benefit from visits to the school to take part in technology lessons, sport afternoons and to attend productions. This means that when they do transfer to this much bigger school, they are already familiar with the site and some of the staff and feel confident.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher's leadership of the school is very good. The leadership and management of staff with responsibilities are good, as is the governance of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and her deputy are dedicated to achieving high standards and promote this well within the school.
- Good management has ensured that the school has coped well with the difficulties posed by the high number of staff absences.
- The management of special educational needs is excellent.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and use their own expertise effectively.
- Finances are well managed and the school evaluates its spending carefully.

Commentary

31. The headteacher provides strong and caring leadership and a commitment to raising standards in all aspects of the school's work. This has contributed to the good overall improvement since the last inspection. All members of staff support her very well. There is a strong sense of teamwork where all adults work together for the benefit of all pupils. Good management has

empowered co-ordinators to develop their subjects although the high number of absences has reduced the impact. This has had a particularly detrimental effect on the development of science. Subject co-ordinators monitor planning, teaching and pupils' performance in their subjects well. This is particularly strong in English and mathematics, where weaknesses such as aspects of writing, subtraction and the need to meet the needs of more able pupils have been recognised and remedial action taken. The deputy headteacher has made a very effective impact on the curriculum and assessment in the short time she has been in post and has quickly developed a very good working relationship with the headteacher.

32. The management of special educational needs is excellent, reflecting the shared commitment and vision of the headteacher and the SENCO in ensuring these pupils make good progress and feel a full part of the school. Accessing outside expertise and providing professional development for teachers and teaching assistants ensure that these pupils receive the best support available within a very well managed budget. The SENCO has very well organised procedures for planning and monitoring special educational needs and this contributes to pupils' good progress. The commitment that all members of staff show to involving all pupils fully contributes strongly to the very good ethos of the school.
33. The well-informed and committed chair of governors is only recently in post and there are several new governors all of whom are enthusiastic and currently undergoing training. They benefit from the experience of the vice chair, who, over many years, has been responsible for the very good improvements to the buildings. The governing body has recently been restructured into committees for planning and to evaluate how well the school is doing, but this has had insufficient time to impact on the review of standards. Initiatives such as 'governor of the month' focus on aspects of the curriculum, and all co-ordinators have presented a report on their subject to the governing body. Spending decisions focus on raising standards, and the services of an external schools financial consultant is well used by the governing body to help set the budget and monitor spending. The budget has been carefully managed to create a reserve, which is being used to improve consistency for pupils during the teacher absences and to maintain the smaller, single year group reception classes. The balances carried forward will be reduced to less than one per cent by March 2005.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	683,713
Total expenditure	701,128
Expenditure per pupil	2,056

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	66,916
Balance carried forward to the next	49,501

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in nursery and reception is very good.

34. Although children begin nursery with below average skills, they achieve well because the teaching is very good and the curriculum provides a wide range of challenging, stimulating activities that is very well matched to their needs. This provision is very well managed, and the children's progress is carefully monitored. A favourable number of experienced adults ensure that children are kept purposefully busy and there is opportunity for their individual needs to be met. The deployment and contribution of support staff are very good. Parents are provided with clear information about starting nursery and moving on to reception. This process is handled sensitively ensuring that children settle confidently into new routines. The improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between children and adults are very good.
- The children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions from an early age.
- The daily routines offer security and lead children towards increasing independence.

Commentary

35. Most children are on course to reach or exceed the goals expected in this area of development by the end of reception. All staff work hard at promoting very good relationships with children and, as a result, all children are happy, relaxed, and benefit fully from the wide range of activities provided. They come into their classes happily and quickly settle into the daily routines. Children in the nursery understand that they have to put their name in the box to show that they have arrived at school. When necessary, teachers and support staff correct the children firmly but gently, supporting self-esteem. Consequently, children quickly learn the correct way to behave. The high expectations of the staff and the opportunities given to the children through the very good teaching enable them to make very good progress. Children in the nursery understand that they have to take turns when they play on the giant caterpillar. Older children in reception have learned to co-operate well and happily build a 'stickle brick' model together.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is used to develop children's language skills, and teaching is very good overall.
- Strong emphasis is placed on the teaching of early reading and writing skills.

Commentary

36. Most children are on course to attain the goals expected by the end of the reception year. Children develop speaking and listening skills well through many opportunities in the daily class routines. In the nursery, they enjoyed trying to name the different vegetables that were going into the

vegetable soup that they would make later. Reception children talked about the sunflower seeds that they were growing; listening carefully to one other's comments.

37. Very good attention is given to the development of writing skills. The very good teaching is characterised by knowledgeable adults and well-organised and appropriate activities that motivate children. All adults reinforce early writing skills and there is a good supply of paper, pencils and crayons available for children to use. Teachers are good role models as they write for the children and there are opportunities for children to write independently such as when making birthday cards for a party or using a computer program to write about their sunflower seeds. Higher attaining children in reception are beginning to write independently. In response to the teacher's gentle encouragement, they are confident about trying to spell simple words for themselves.
38. The development of reading skills has a high priority. There is a very good programme of teaching sounds accompanied by songs, stories and movements to reinforce them. All children are encouraged to take books home to share with their parents. Careful records are kept of each child's development so that appropriate help can be given to move children on. There are many opportunities for children to listen to stories and to enjoy looking at books.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults question children very well and use a wide variety of activities to support learning.
- The very good quality teaching emphasises the correct use of mathematical vocabulary.

Commentary

39. Most children are on course to reach the goals expected by the end of reception because of the very good teaching. Many opportunities are provided for counting. Nursery children count how many tyres are in the pile in their outdoor play area and enjoy singing counting songs such as 'Five Currant Buns'. Children in reception currently run a 'garden shop', selling and counting out the packets of seeds and flowers carefully. They have recently made a class graph to show which is their favourite fruit and know that the highest column shows that melon is the most popular.
40. Adults' consistent use of correct mathematical vocabulary means that children also confidently use the correct words. In reception, children learned the meaning of the word 'subtract' in a practical context using coloured cubes. There are good resources, such as board games, large number tracks, and objects for sorting and counting. Planning for mathematical development is carefully matched to children's different abilities, so that all are well challenged.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in these three areas is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a wide range of imaginative and enjoyable activities that promotes very good learning.
- The outside area is attractive and well resourced to stimulate learning.
- Very good teaching means that most children will reach the expected goals by the end of reception in all three areas of learning.

Commentary

41. Very good planning and teaching successfully give children valuable experiences for finding out about and appreciating the world around them. Children in both nursery and reception confidently use the computers in the classroom and know how to control the mouse. Children in reception have learned to print their own work from the computer. During the inspection, nursery children made vegetable soup, which gave them opportunities to learn names of vegetables that were new to them and they enjoyed smelling and tasting them. Children in reception have recently visited the local church and learnt the names of different parts of the church.
42. There is a wide range of planned opportunities both outdoor and indoor. The provision for outdoor play is good with a variety of activities available. Nursery children pushed prams and wheelbarrows and were developing good awareness of the space around them. Reception children confidently climbed on ladders and beams in the school hall. Indoors, teachers provide many opportunities for cutting, shaping and building to improve children's skills in handling different materials and tools.
43. The good range of activities provides children with many opportunities for developing creative skills. Children's artwork is attractively displayed and, in the nursery, they have recently enjoyed making three-dimensional rockets from recycled materials. Reception children have painted pictures about keeping healthy, such as pictures of children skipping. They enjoyed 'painting' pictures using a computer program. Children in both reception and nursery enjoyed singing and joined in enthusiastically and tunefully.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good, and as a result pupils' achievement is good.
- The school's introduction of initiatives to improve writing has contributed to raising standards, which are now close to average.
- Recent very good leadership by the temporary co-ordinator has had a positive impact on the standard of teaching.

Commentary

44. In recent years, year 2 pupils' attainment has been average in writing and below average in reading. In 2003, it was average in both reading and writing. Since 2000, attainment in reading has improved significantly and in line with the national trend in writing. In 2000, year 6 results were average overall, but they have declined since then and been below average. This downward trend was arrested in 2003. Attainment in reading has been much better than for writing. In recent years, pupils' progress has been adversely affected by staffing difficulties. Attainment is currently about average in both years 2 and 6. In year 6, writing is now close to the average, while attainment in reading and speaking and listening is more secure and clearly average.
45. Features of good teaching were the sharing of what pupils were expected to learn with the class at the start of each lesson, and opportunities for pupils to decide how good their learning had been by the end of the lesson. Opportunities for short, paired discussion before answering a question allowed pupils time to think and develop their speaking and listening skills. Both these contribute to the good achievement of pupils in lessons.

46. The most significant improvement in the good overall provision in English is in pupils' writing, where standards are now rising rapidly and pupils are achieving well. The school, from the analysis of national curriculum test results, has identified the strengths and areas for development in writing. The acting co-ordinator has initiated a writing project, so that pupils have a regular opportunity to develop and improve their writing skills. The local education authority literacy consultant has provided good support. Writing assessment books have been introduced throughout the school to follow pupils' progress through examples of work, which are clearly commented upon to help pupils improve. These are beginning to have an impact in helping teachers set realistic pupil targets, although not all the work produced is then matched to the standards and levels expected within the national curriculum. This means that pupils are not always clear of how they are to improve to reach, or exceed, the level expected. However, the development of marking of each other's work by pairs of pupils and self-assessment is increasingly seen in pupils' work and is having a positive effect on raising standards. Older pupils in particular discussed and explained the structure and organisation of their persuasive writing in a year 5 and 6 lesson. Pupils compared the key features of two examples of persuasive writing by considering the use of emotive language, complex sentences, questions, and facts and opinions. Their understanding, and the subsequent changes, particularly in the use of connectives to improve their own sentence structures, showed good achievement in the lesson.
47. A reorganisation of the school's reading material, that includes pupils' individual reading books and the group reading materials, is well focused on raising standards by sharing targets with pupils and parents and providing progression through the school. New planning and recording formats for guided reading are beginning to impact on the teaching of reading. Pupils enjoy their reading and regularly read to adults, both at home and at school and this contributes to their good achievement.

English across the curriculum

48. Literacy has been well developed through pupils using their writing skills to support work in other subjects. In history, years 5 and 6 pupils wrote letters imagining they were evacuees during World War II, and in RE they retold Bible stories. Word processing skills are used to help pupils draft and edit work and to write letters and poems.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well by year 2.
- Pupils are not always required to complete enough work and more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Pupils have very good attitudes in mathematics lessons.
- The subject is very well led.
- Assessment of pupils' work is good and the information used well.

Commentary

49. In recent years attainment by years 2 and 6 has generally been below or well below average. In 2003, it was below average by year 2, and well below average in year 6. However, attainment in year 2 has improved since 2000. In contrast, year 6 pupils' attainment has fluctuated from year to year, but shown little change overall. Pupils' progress has been adversely affected by staffing difficulties. Provision is improving however and standards are rising. Attainment is currently about average in both years 2 and 6.
50. By year 2, pupils have made good progress in developing numerical skills, including multiplication. They explain well strategies for adding nine or eleven. By year 6, pupils achieve

satisfactorily as the result of sound teaching and suitable coverage of all areas of mathematics. They show a satisfactory level of competence in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Throughout the school, ICT is used well to support learning in mathematics and teachers encourage pupils to use their knowledge to solve 'real life' problems. In each of the pairs of year groups, pupils are grouped in to sets (setting) in three classes based on their attainment levels. Setting is helping teachers match work more closely to pupils' needs, and is especially effective for lower attaining pupils. However, not enough thought is always given to how to challenge more able pupils. This limits the amount of high attainment. In some cases, although generally accurate, pupils' speed of working limits the amount of work completed. Gifted mathematicians have the opportunity to be taught for a few lessons at a local secondary school. This is having a positive impact on their understanding of the rules of probability.

51. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good and very good teaching. It is generally good in years 1 and 2. Two strong features are the insistence on good behaviour and opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas during whole-class sessions. Pupils respond well to these situations and show very good attitudes. Relationships are positive and pupils behave very well; this aids learning. In a particularly good year 2 lesson, the teacher made learning fun because of the use of relevant games that helped to develop addition skills. In years 5 and 6, the effective use of an interactive whiteboard and computers aided learning, for instance when pupils were drawing angles accurately using a protractor. This they did well, but not all could measure angles consistently and did not recognise the errors when reading from the wrong end of the protractor. On occasions such as this, teachers do not encourage pupils to consider the strategies used and to reflect on the likelihood of an answer being correct. Similarly, there is not enough emphasis given to expecting sufficient work to be completed or challenging more able pupils.
52. The co-ordinator is having a positive impact on the subject and leads it very well. Monitoring activities are giving a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Assessment is well organised and the information used well to assess pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The monitoring by the co-ordinator and the analysis of pupils' work, including in national curriculum tests, have led to the recognition of the need to focus more carefully on the development of pupils' subtraction skills and to extend the challenge for more able pupils. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. After a period of little progress, good improvement is now taking place.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Good use is made of pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects. In science, from an early age, pupils measure and record simple data, such as the distance travelled when a model car was rolled down a slope over different materials. In ICT good use is made of spreadsheets to calculate, for instance, the cost of party foods. Mathematical problem-solving using ICT is also well developed, such as when investigating the maximum area of a field when enclosed by a given amount of fencing.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy science and demonstrate good attitudes and behaviour.
- Curricular planning, which is unsatisfactory, limits the impact of teaching and hinders learning.
- Staffing difficulties have meant the leadership of science has not been adequate.

Commentary

54. In the past two years, pupils' attainment in year 6 has been below or well below average, having fallen from an average figure in 2000 and 2001. Attainment is currently below average in both years 2 and 6. The staffing difficulties that the school has experienced and the lack of subject leadership have hampered progress. The temporary, part-time co-ordinator has a good awareness of the current problems and that progress since the last inspection has been inadequate.
55. In all lessons, pupils behaved very well and showed high levels of interest and concentration, and this aided learning. Most are keen to learn about science and enjoy being involved in practical activities, such as when pupils in years 1 and 2 examined plants that had been grown in the light and dark. In this very good lesson, the teacher very effectively reminded pupils what they had done to make their investigation fair and provided resources such as magnifying lenses for the examination of the plants. They behaved well and became fully involved in the activity. Whilst most teaching is satisfactory, its impact is limited because of the lack of detailed curricular guidance. The school uses national guidance but its interpretation depends largely on individual teachers. Although the range of topics studied ensures satisfactory coverage of the national curriculum, the order of topics and the detail do not aid progression in learning. This affects both the development of pupils' knowledge and skills. The planned work is not always challenging enough and this limits the amount of high attainment by year 6. Although pupils' skills are broadly in line with those expected, they are not extended to the interpretation of results or information that are new to the pupil or the planning of an investigation to answer a scientific question. Pupils' work shows that, in many lessons, insufficient attention is given to how to extend and challenge able pupils. In contrast, suitable support enables pupils with special educational needs to make sound progress. Sound assessment procedures are in place but the assessment of pupils' skills is not satisfactory or sufficiently rigorous. Most pupils' work is marked, but there are occasions when scientific inaccuracies are uncorrected, such as that we have day and night because the Earth goes around the sun.
56. Examples of the good use of mathematical skills include measuring the distance travelled by a vehicle down a ramp and the drawing of relevant bar charts. There are other good examples of recording measurements, but the value of presenting the data on a graph is not extended enough, as pupils get older. In a year 5 and 6 lesson, however, good use of ICT was made to introduce presenting data linked to the rate of dissolving using different stirring regimes on a graph.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achieve well because of good teaching.
- Very good resources, including interactive whiteboards, aid learning.
- Good procedures are used to identify how well children are progressing.
- ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects.
- Very good subject leadership and management have contributed to raising standards.

Commentary

57. By years 2 and 6, standards of attainment in ICT are comparable to those attained nationally and pupils' achievement is good. Teaching is good throughout the school and ICT is well integrated into classroom activities. Resources are very good and include interactive whiteboards, good numbers of computers in each classroom and a suite of laptop computers. These resources are used very effectively, the interactive whiteboards in years 5 and 6 being integrated into many lessons. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below those expected by year 6 and teaching was satisfactory overall.

58. The school's effective integration of the teaching of specific skills in dedicated ICT lessons for each class and the use of these taught skills during the following week is successful. Pupils in years 1 and 2 demonstrated good learning as they took turns to enter data and create a picture graph of the methods of transport used to get to school. Their control of the computer mouse was secure. Older pupils learn to use ICT for word processing, spreadsheets, the use of databases, the Internet and data handling. In a well-taught lesson, which moved on at a good pace, pupils in years 3 and 4 successfully raised questions to interrogate a database about insects and other small animals. They knew how to use the database to ask the right questions. The teacher also successfully made pupils consider the value of using the database to create a graph rather than doing the process manually. A good lesson in a year 5 and 6 class concentrated on the use of a spreadsheet to solve a mathematical problem related to the possible area of a field using a constant perimeter. This led to the representation of the data graphically. In all these lessons, pupils were confident, behaved very well and applied their knowledge successfully. A minor weakness that occurs on some occasions is that too much information is given for some pupils to remember before they try it out on the computer.
59. The regular use of ICT resources by teachers to aid learning acts as a very good role model for pupils. They are helped to see the value of ICT and regularly use their skills during the day. Good assessment procedures have been developed and are used consistently to identify pupils who need additional practice to consolidate their skills. This is an important improvement. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well. He has ensured that all teachers are confident to use ICT in their own teaching as well as in specific ICT lessons. His monitoring and support have helped to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and to provide appropriate help to overcome problems. He has successfully managed the development of a range of ICT resources, which meet the needs of the school well, without the need for a dedicated ICT suite. This has helped to ensure the use of ICT in many subjects. Good links with a local technology college are also having a positive impact on provision and available resources.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. ICT skills are used well to develop learning across the curriculum. Its planned use within the school day and in many subjects is a success in recent developments. Regular use of ICT supports learning in mathematics, such as the use of a program for measuring the size of angles using a protractor or, for younger pupils, multiplication questions. The success of this approach is because the ICT used is central to the mathematical learning. Good use of ICT in English is evident in tasks that include some word processing. In a year 1 and 2 class exceptional displays demonstrate the high quality use of ICT in art and design. Pupils examined work by a range of artists, such as Piet Mondrian and Jackson Pollock, and medieval woodcuts, and then produced work in these styles using an art program. A digital camera was used effectively in display work linking art and design with history through word processing the story of evacuees and the artwork of Henry Moore.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

61. Neither geography nor history was a major focus during the inspection. The school has a two-year rolling programme of study in history and geography to accommodate the mixed age classes. This gives good coverage and develops pupils' skills progressively. A good range of visits, including a residential visit for older pupils where they study the local river as it flows into the sea, contributes to their learning. Two history lessons were seen during the inspection. The teaching was good and both lessons contained good elements to promote speaking and listening. In a year 5 and 6 lesson pupils worked on a short script of a scene set in World War II, becoming increasingly confident with their words and actions. In a year 3 and 4 lesson groups worked together to interview a Spanish invader and an Aztec inhabitant, asking why the Spanish invaded and why the Aztecs allowed them to. The answers reflected pupils' good understanding

of the relatively short-lived period of the Aztec civilization. In both these lessons pupils worked very well collaboratively.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good curriculum provides comprehensive coverage of major world faiths.
- Teaching is good.
- Leadership of the subject is good.

Commentary

62. Standards are in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' work and talking with them show that they have good knowledge of some of the main religions of the world and make links between religious ideas of different faiths. Pupils in year 6, for example, know that prayer is a feature of all religions that they have studied and that religions have their own 'holy books' such as the Bible for Christians and the Qu'ran for Muslims.
63. Teaching is good and sometimes better. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and through well-led discussions and suitable questions provide plenty of opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a lesson with years 5 and 6, the teacher led a useful discussion on the impression that Jesus made on different groups of people involved in the Easter Story, such as the priests or the crowds who welcomed him into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Through this discussion, pupils were beginning to develop an understanding of how different people who met Jesus felt. Younger pupils in years 3 and 4 were also discussing the Easter Story and the teacher gave good opportunities for them to reflect on how Jesus would have been feeling as he carried his cross to the top of the hill. This gave pupils an insight into key beliefs in Christianity.
64. Staffing difficulties limited the opportunities for progress following the previous inspection. The current subject co-ordinator demonstrates good leadership and is establishing procedures for assessing pupils' progress in the subject, which was a recommendation in the previous inspection report. She has clear vision for the subject and knows what needs to be done to improve it further.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education

There were limited opportunities to observe lessons in these subjects. Talking with pupils, looking at their work and teachers' planning indicated that standards in music and design and technology are broadly average and in art and design they are well above average. In the one lesson seen in PE attainment was average.

Art and design

65. The colourful and exciting range of art and design work on display immediately attracts the attention of a visitor to the school and this suggests that provision in this subject is very good. Pupils have very good opportunities to experience batik, painting, observational drawing, printing and sculpture. Pupils in year 2 have had opportunities to paint sunflowers and irises in the style of Van Gogh and have carefully mixed the paints to produce the right shades. Year 6 pupils have used graphite, charcoal and chalk to produce pictures in the style of Henry Moore. Teachers' planning is focused appropriately on the development of skills and to enable pupils to build on

previous learning. Activities such as a creative arts week gave pupils firsthand experiences of art and design activities. Years 1 and 2 are currently involved in producing a shadow puppet play following a theatre workshop. The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership and gives art and design a very high profile in the school. There has been very good improvement in art and design since the previous inspection.

Design and technology

66. Discussions with pupils indicate that they have developed a good understanding of the design process, including the need for evaluation of their designs and products. Pupils in year 2 have recently been designing moving vehicles, which they have tested on different slopes. After learning the rhyme 'Ding dong bell, pussy's in the well', they designed a well, using pulley mechanisms. Year 6 pupils have been making models of World War II aeroplanes as part of a history topic.

Music

67. Only one lesson was seen when pupils in year 2 were using percussion instruments to create happy and sad sounds for their shadow puppet play. They clearly had a good understanding of how music can contribute to mood. Pupils sang tunefully and enthusiastically during assemblies, showing very good enjoyment.

Physical education

68. Only one PE lesson was observed. The dance lesson, which linked to the history topic of the Aztecs, was well taught, with good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work. Their performance was at the level expected. The co-ordinator has led the subject very well and developed good assessment strategies, which were required in the school's successful application for the 'Activemark'. A good range of extra-curricular activities, including more unusual opportunities such as line dancing, juggling and basketball, contribute to the development of pupils' skills. The hall has a sloping roof, so that at one end the height is low, and lacks fixed apparatus. These limit aspects of PE, such as the development of upper body strength. In order to overcome this, the school has designed and built an adventure area outside, which is used for planned lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education and citizenship

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils take part in circle time discussions and PSHE lessons.
- Very good links with other agencies contribute to pupils' personal development.

Commentary

69. No judgement can be made about teaching and learning as only one 'Circle Time' discussion was observed during the inspection. However, all pupils receive regular lessons in personal, social and health and citizenship education and from 'Circle Time', during which they have the opportunity to discuss their feelings with their teachers and classmates. Pupils learn about their role in the community through the school council and the opportunities that they are given to take on responsibility. Year 6 pupils help the infants both with their lunch and at playtime. Pupils find out about the dangers of substance abuse by visits to health education initiatives, such as the 'Life Caravan'. Sex education is focused on relationships and taught with the help of the school

nurse. The police service talks to pupils about a wide range of issues ranging from 'stranger danger' to substance abuse.

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

