

INSPECTION REPORT

CHRIST CHURCH CE CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bootle, Merseyside

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104893

Headteacher: Mr G L Watts

Lead inspector: Sheila Pemberton

Dates of inspection: 26 – 28 April 2004

Inspection number: 255797

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 376

School address: Brookhill Road
Waterworks Street
Bootle
Merseyside
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Reverend T Rich

Date of previous inspection: 27 – 30 April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school, which is bigger than most primary schools, is situated in the Derby ward of Sefton, where families live in much less favourable socio-economic circumstances than many families nationally. It has 172 boys on roll and 179 girls. Twenty-four boys and 27 girls attend the nursery on a part-time basis, two girls and two boys attend the nursery full-time. Children's attainment on entry into school is mostly well below average for their age. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is average. Most have difficulties with their learning in English and mathematics or with managing their behaviour. A below average percentage of pupils have a Statement of their Special Educational Need for physical disabilities and more serious difficulties with their learning. Fewer pupils with minority ethnic backgrounds attend the school than in most primary schools. These pupils come mainly from Asian minority ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils whose first language is not English is higher than in most schools. A relatively high percentage of pupils in last year's Year 6 joined the school in different year groups but mainly from the time they were in Year 4. The school has a variety of awards. It gained the *Healthy Schools Award*, *Activemark* and the *Basic Skills Quality Mark* in 2002 and the *School Achievement Award* in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20810	Sheila Pemberton	Lead inspector	English and history
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31914	Colette Gribble	Team inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology, music and religious education
17877	Christine Ingham	Team inspector	Foundation Stage and mathematics
30277	William Wood	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, geography and physical education.

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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 and subjects	
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	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Very good leadership from the headteacher combines with good teaching and management by governors and senior staff to ensure that pupils' achievement is very good by the time they are in Year 6. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good leadership and effective management bring continuing improvements to the school.
- Good teaching that is based on team work is responsible for pupils' very good achievement.
- The school lacks some of the resources needed to raise standards in information and communication technology (ICT) in Year 6.
- Parents are very pleased with all aspects of the school's provision.
- The school is very careful of pupils' welfare, health and safety and does everything it can to promote very good relationships and positive attitudes to learning.
- Not enough opportunities are available for writing in Years 1 and 2.
- Teachers are not reading frequently enough with pupils to improve pupils' skills.

The school has made good improvements since its last inspection. An improved curriculum is based on programmes of work for all subjects and the skills of English and mathematics are used in many different subjects. Spiritual development has improved and is now good and pupils have become independent learners who confidently express their ideas. The attitudes and attainments of boys in Year 6 have improved. In 2003, they did better in national tests than girls in the school and boys in most schools. Teaching is consistently good. With the opening of a new library, the range, quantity and quality of books are far better than in 1998. Attendance and punctuality are still not good enough but the school does its best to improve them. Standards in ICT are much better in the school but are still not high enough in Year 6.

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	E	C	A
mathematics	D	E	E	C
science	E	D	C	A

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

Pupils' achievement is very good. From very low starting points when they enter the school, many children's attainments remain low at the end of the reception year. In 2003, fewer children than in most schools reached the goals expected for their learning and none did better than expected in reading, writing and some aspects of mathematics. However, with good teaching, children's achievement was good in language and literacy and very good in personal, social, emotional and mathematical development.

Standards in Year 2 in 2003 were well below average in reading, writing and science but average in mathematics. More able pupils did well in mathematics and science but not well enough in reading and writing. Girls did better than boys in reading, writing and mathematics. Because of the progress pupils made, achievement was satisfactory. In this year's Year 2, standards remain low in reading and writing but are satisfactory in mathematics and science.

Standards have risen in mathematics in this year's Year 6 and are now above average. When compared with all schools nationally in 2003, the school added outstandingly good value to pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science between Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are satisfactory in ICT in Year 2 but unsatisfactory in Year 6. Pupils reach good standards in history and very good standards in religious education.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils behave well, work hard and enjoy the very wide range of activities available to them in school. They get on very well with one another and their teachers and have positive attitudes to learning. Although attendance is well below average, the school does all that it can to improve the attitudes towards attendance of a few unco-operative parents.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching is good. This is because teachers consistently expect the high standards of good behaviour that contribute to effective learning. Teachers are very encouraging to their pupils. They offer the strong praise and guidance that helps pupils to do their best. They also expect pupils to work equally hard when working independently or in groups. Not enough opportunities are available for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to practise writing. Throughout the school, reading is not taught often enough to raise standards. The school provides a sound curriculum that is enriched by a very wide range of activities outside lessons. The accommodation is attractive and it provides good space for learning. A good supply of resources adds to pupils' knowledge of different subjects. The only subject lacking a full range of essential resources is ICT. Very good partnerships with most parents add to pupils' security and enjoyment of school. Very positive links with other schools and good relationships with the local community strengthen the good teaching the school provides.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher works closely with senior staff and governors to provide innovative and very good leadership for the school. Well-informed governors fulfil all statutory responsibilities. They have the interests of the school at heart and see it as an important part of the local community. The school's senior managers share responsibility for checking and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. Parents are comfortable about approaching staff with questions or concerns. They think that their children are expected to work hard and do their best. They believe that the teaching is good and that their children are treated fairly and make good progress. Pupils appreciate the way that their achievement is recognised. They like having a say in running the school and feel safe, secure and protected.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing in Years 1 and 2
- teach and assess reading more frequently
- improve provision and standards in ICT in Years 3 to 6.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

By the time they are in Year 6, pupils' achievement is very good in English, mathematics and science. The school has recently raised standards in mathematics in Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising and are above average in mathematics in this year's Year 6.
- Pupils make very good progress in English, mathematics and science from the start of Year 3 to Year 6.
- Achievement is very good in the reception classes.
- Standards are not high enough in writing in Year 2 and reading throughout the school.
- Standards are below average in ICT in Year 6.

Commentary

1. Information from assessment in 2003 indicates that the attainments of many children in the Foundation Stage are either low or very low in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. The attainments of fewer children are typical for their age and none of them reached a higher level than expected in reading, writing, space, shape and measures, knowledge and understanding of the world or creative development. Their achievement is good in communication, language and literacy and very good in personal, social, emotional and mathematical development. While their competency increases at a good rate in speaking, listening and writing, many children are slow to develop the early skills of reading. Attainment on entry into school was much higher at the last inspection. Consequently, comparisons between standards and achievement in 1998 and 2004 are unreliable.
2. Although children's achievement is very good at the end of the reception year, the attainment of a high proportion of them is still very low in reading, writing and mathematics. These low standards are reflected in well below average results in Year 2 in reading, writing and science in comparison with all schools in 2003. Standards were better in mathematics in 2003 and remain at the same satisfactory level in this year's Year 2. Achievement in mathematics is good. Although their spoken language has improved since their time in reception, pupils in this year's Year 2 are still not doing well enough in reading and writing. This is because opportunities to write are limited and all but the most able pupils are not reading frequently enough. Too few pupils reach the high standards they are capable of in reading and writing.
3. Compared with all schools nationally in 2003, the school added outstandingly high value to pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science between Year 2 and Year 6. While standards in English and science were average in comparison with all schools in 2003, they were well below average in mathematics. In this year's Year 6, a far greater proportion of pupils is reaching a higher level than expected in mathematics. As a result, standards have risen and inspection findings indicate that they are now above average. Standards in English and science remain average in Year 6 this year. While pupils' writing is mostly satisfactory for their age, the progress of all but the most able is not as strong in reading through lack of opportunities to read to the teachers.
4. Although the proportion of pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language is higher than in most schools, they all speak confident, fluent English. Consequently, the standards attained by these pupils are the same as those reached by others in their year

groups, and in Year 6 their achievement is very good. Achievement is mostly good for pupils with special educational needs. This is because of the guidance and support they receive in most classes. Standards are satisfactory in ICT in Year 2, but they remain unsatisfactory in Year 6. This is mainly because the school's hardware is unreliable and access to electronic mail that is needed to teach the full programme for ICT is missing. Standards are very good in religious education and good in history. In 2003, the school gained a *School Achievement Award* in recognition of its success in improving its results since 1998.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.1 (14.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	11.8 (13.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.1 (15.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.7 (25.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.5 (25.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.9 (28.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and personal development are good, as are behaviour and their attitudes to work and the school. Very positive relationships underpin pupils' good personal development. These are all areas of improvement since the last inspection. Attendance is poor but the school's efforts to improve attendance are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Teachers have very high expectations of good behaviour and positive attitudes.
- Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to pupils' understanding and respect for others. This marks an improvement since the last inspection.
- Children starting school settle quickly and enjoy learning.

Commentary

5. From their time in the nursery, children quickly acquire positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. Most arrive promptly and settle easily into the school's routines and lessons. They join in all activities and are polite and keen to talk about the school. Pupils are happy to share their opinions and listen attentively to others. These positive attitudes enable them to learn and widen their understanding of themselves and the world around them. Very good relationships at all levels in the school enable pupils to develop maturity and understanding. Pupils gain confidence from the many opportunities teachers offer them to express their ideas and to carry out tasks and responsibilities. Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and social development is enhanced through discussion at circle time, when teachers encourage them to

explore their feelings, and to reflect on one another's ideas and motivations. They enjoy being involved in the school council, either as representatives or by contributing ideas. Pupils know that they are listened to and that their views are acted on.

6. Attitudes and behaviour in lessons are almost entirely good or very good. Pupils listen well, respond eagerly and thoughtfully to questions and concentrate well. When the challenging behaviour of some pupils with special educational needs is managed firmly in lessons, they work steadily and develop self-awareness and discipline. Pupils value imaginative rewards that promote good attendance and personal development, and understand that sanctions are fair. Parents appreciate the way that the school affects their children's values. They think that behaviour such as bullying is rarely experienced but that it quickly investigated and handled firmly by teachers if it occurs. The school has a clear policy for dealing with and eradicating bullying that it shares with parents and pupils.
7. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is consistently good. Opportunities abound in assemblies, lessons, and after-school activities to promote pupils' personal development through the strong Christian ethos of the school. An improvement since the last inspection lies in the opportunities teachers provide for pupils to be responsible for their learning. Teachers encourage them to carry out independent research and investigative work, and become involved in setting their own targets. A new form of personal development, emotional literacy, already provides ideas for discussion at circle time and influences the way that subjects such as history are taught. Because most pupils like coming to school and make friends easily, they learn in a secure atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. As a result of the very high expectations of their teachers, children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress towards the targets for their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils with special educational needs gain confidence in their ability to learn and play a full part in the life of the school with the help and guidance they receive from teachers.

Attendance

8. Attendance is well below average. The school contacts parents on the first day about all unexplained absences, works with the educational welfare officer, and ensures that parents and carers understand their role in supporting good attendance. Low attendance can be explained by a few families who do not co-operate with the school, the number of families who take pupils on holiday during school time, and the school's accurate recording of all unauthorised absence.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.4	School data	0.3
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.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	339	1	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good education. A sound curriculum is enhanced by good teaching and a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teaching has improved through training since the last inspection. This enables pupils to build consistently on their skills and knowledge in many different subjects. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good achievement in Years 3 to 6 is based on consistently good teaching throughout the school.
- Teachers insist on the high standards of good behaviour that contribute effectively to pupils' learning.
- Because of the opportunities teachers provide, pupils are good at working independently and collaboratively.
- Teachers in Years 1 and 2 do not provide enough opportunities for pupils' writing.
- Teachers throughout the school do not allocate enough time to pupils' reading.

Commentary

9. Teaching has improved since the last inspection, when it was mostly satisfactory. This is because joint planning, training and teamwork have combined to improve the consistency and quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Good teaching in the nursery and reception classes provides a secure foundation for children's future learning. The staff provide a good range of imaginative activities which make learning exciting and interesting. Teaching assistants make significant contributions to the quality of teaching and learning.
10. Through training, teachers have got a good grasp of how to use the National Literacy Strategy to improve pupils' knowledge and their growing skills in language, reading and writing. They use the strategy effectively to improve pupils' spoken language and increase their vocabularies. What is missing in Years 1 and 2 is teachers' ability to apply the strategy flexibly to the needs of all their pupils. By providing too few opportunities for writing, they are not giving pupils enough

time to practise new skills. Although all teachers are aware that many pupils have little chance to read at home, they are not systematically allocating enough time to read with different groups of pupils or to assess their learning. They lack a structured and cohesive approach to provide challenge to all ability groups.

11. The use of the National Numeracy Strategy has a positive impact on the standards achieved by the time pupils reach Year 6. The strategy is effective because teachers provide lively mental and oral work and carefully match tasks to pupils' varied needs. An improvement since the last inspection is evident in the way teachers organise activities so that pupils learn through investigation and enquiry. Teachers are not using ICT effectively enough to support teaching and learning. They have all received training, plan for the use of ICT and are enthusiastic about its potential. However, poor quality equipment is a barrier to teaching and learning in Year 6.
12. Because of the way that pupils are encouraged to succeed by their teachers, they work hard, happily and enthusiastically. Teachers' good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum leads to lucid explanations and helpful demonstrations of the work. The positive and helpful messages pupils receive from teachers' marking also provides encouragement to improve their work. Through very positive and caring relationships, teachers communicate their expectations of the high standards of behaviour and good attitudes to work that have such a strong impact on pupils' learning. Teachers ensure that pupils behave sensibly when working independently or collaboratively. Pupils' ability to manage their own learning is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
13. Teachers use information from assessment to establish targets to improve pupils' learning. Targets are agreed in discussion with individual pupils. However, in some year groups, variations to the same set of targets are not related closely enough to the needs of different pupils. As a result, they are not providing all pupils with clear guidance to improve their learning. In most lessons, the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good because teachers plan their work with care. The best lesson plans contain activities that are matched closely to the targets of their individual education plans. Additional help from support assistants provides good guidance for pupils with special educational needs. Specialist part-time teachers visit the school to give advice and support for pupils with more complex needs.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	9 (25%)	20 (55%)	6 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The curriculum

The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and it is now satisfactory but good in the Foundation Stage. A very wide range of activities outside lessons enriches pupils' learning. Resources are good and teachers use them well. Accommodation is mostly satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is based effectively on clear objectives for pupils' learning.
- The promotion of pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- A new programme for personal development is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

- A very good range of extra-curricular activities enriches pupils' learning.
- A lack of access to electronic mail means that provision in ICT is unsatisfactory in Year 6.

Commentary

- Curricular planning has improved since the school adopted nationally recommended programmes of work in all subjects that provide the continuity to learning, lacking at the last inspection. Good attention is given to ensuring that all elements of each subject are covered in sufficient depth. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and other national guidance for different subjects are used well to provide teachers with clear information about the most important objectives for pupils' learning and the skills that need to be taught. The consistency of work provided for different classes in a year group results from joint planning by teachers. Short-term planning shows clearly how teaching will be modified to meet pupils' different abilities. A strong feature of curricular planning lies in the school's practical approach to learning and the development of pupils' investigative skills. Cross-curricular links have a good effect on pupils' learning in English, mathematics, science, history, geography and religious education.
- Good provision for personal, social and health education is reflected in pupils' positive attitudes, sensible behaviour and the benefits of belonging to a healthy school. The school is implementing an initiative to develop emotional literacy across the curriculum. The main impact so far can be seen in improved methods of teaching science in Years 3 to 6 and in pupils' achievement. The programme helps staff to take stock and adapt what they do in class through better understanding of pupils' emotional needs and styles of learning. This has already had an impact in lessons in personal and health education, and the school is extending it to ensure that pupils understand the meaning of tolerance. Staff and pupils gain valuable insights into learning, relationships, and social behaviour by increasing their understanding of their own needs and development.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes benefit from a curriculum where effective links are made across all areas of learning through central themes. What makes the curriculum good is its commitment to the use of play as the main approach to learning and as a means to develop children's skills in communication. Because they all speak English fluently, the school has no need to adapt the curriculum for pupils whose first language is not English. Pupils with special educational needs receive good guidance and support to improve their learning. Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs who are taken out of lessons for extra support are working well because teachers make sure that they receive their entitlement to a full curriculum. The curriculum for gifted and talented pupils is widened through a range of special projects.
- Extra-curricular provision is very good. The school ensures that pupils are given a chance to take part in activities that enhance their personal development and widen their experience of life. Good links with the community bring benefits from the visits of groups and individuals such as travelling theatres, a live orchestra, the vicar and sporting bodies. Visits to places of educational interest also enrich the curriculum. A residential visit for pupils in Year 5 makes a very positive contribution to their personal development and strengthens relationships between staff and pupils. The school shows its care for others through charitable fund-raising and invitations for the local community to attend and join in seasonal events.
- There are enough well qualified and experienced teachers to teach all aspects of the curriculum and they are complemented by a satisfactory number of teaching assistants. Resources are plentiful and have improved since the last inspection. Considerable improvements to the accommodation make the school a better place for teaching and learning. While the accommodation for ICT is now good, a lack of access to electronic mail is a barrier to learning for pupils in Year 6.

Care, guidance and support

Care, welfare, health and safety are very good. The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is also very good. Support, guidance and monitoring are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a safe, secure and healthy place for learning.
- Child protection procedures are understood by all staff and work well in practice.
- The school ensures that pupils build trusting relationships with staff.
- Marking provides good guidance for pupils' learning.
- The school is good at inducting new children and pupils into its routines and providing pupils in Year 6 with a trouble-free transition to secondary education.
- The school council gives all pupils a voice in how the school is run.

Commentary

19. The school takes very good care of its pupils and provides a safe, secure and healthy place for learning. Health and safety issues are recognised, recorded and dealt with by a team that includes the headteacher, governors and the caretaker. Child protection procedures are in line with local guidelines and because all the staff are trained to understand and implement them, they work well in practice. The school works closely with all relevant agencies to ensure pupils' welfare.
20. Good relationships contribute significantly to the school's caring Christian ethos, as does the detailed knowledge teachers have of individual pupils, their backgrounds and their needs. Clear feedback from teachers' marking provides pupils with helpful guidance for their learning. Setting targets to improve the learning of individuals and groups of pupils is still at an early stage of development and its impact on attainment in terms of guidance and advice is still too early to judge. The outcomes of planned assessments and careful analysis of profiles in the nursery and reception classes provide valuable information to direct the next stage in children's learning. Teachers have access to clear and helpful information about the progress of pupils with special educational needs.
21. The school works well to introduce children to the routines of the nursery and helps pupils to start their secondary education with the minimum of stress. Home visits are effective in introducing children to the nursery and a meeting for new parents, coupled with informative leaflets and booklets, provide smooth transition to the reception class. Introduction to the secondary school includes two-way visits, curricular links and an exchange of information about pupils' progress. Other pupils who are new to the school are partnered with buddies who help them to feel at ease in lessons and the playground. The school is very good at involving pupils in its development. It regularly seeks and often acts upon the views they put forward through questionnaires, the school council and the ideas they discuss in circle time. Pupils learn valuable citizenship skills through the work of the school council, either in their roles as representatives or by contributing ideas.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with parents and other local schools are very good. Links with the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views about the school.
- The school is committed to keeping parents well-informed about their children's learning.
- Very good links with parents bring a wide range of benefits to teaching and learning.
- Good communication with parents provides them with insights into their children's learning.
- Very good links with local schools and groups increase teachers' expertise and enhance the curriculum and pupils' learning.

Commentary

22. Information for parents is of a high quality. It is varied, colourful and attractive and satisfies all statutory requirements. Annual reports about pupils' progress provide parents with clear information about their children's learning. The school consults parents regularly on a variety of issues and often adapts its approach to meet their suggestions. Parents have the opportunity to talk to teachers about the content of their children's reports in the summer term and are actively involved in lessons and special curriculum evenings. Courses provided for *Parents as Educators* are so helpful and informative to parents that they are always oversubscribed. The school provides clear information about its routines, expectations and teaching methods to help parents when their children join the nursery and reception classes. Although there is no formal association for parents, they are very willing to organise special events and fundraising activities that benefit the school and the wider community. The school makes parents welcome by providing them with a comfortable room where they meet socially for courses and to discuss personal issues. Parents make a helpful contribution to their children's learning when they accompany them on educational visits and fieldwork. The school has a long list of *security-cleared* parent helpers who willingly volunteer to help with events. Teachers make themselves available to talk informally to parents before and after school and all concerns are dealt with sensitively, quickly and positively.
23. The school has good arrangements for communicating with parents whose children have special educational needs. So that they can help their children at home, teachers involve parents who are willing in setting the targets of their children's individual education plans. Parents are also invited to discussions and review meetings to hear the views of staff and other professionals and contribute information about their children's progress. A well-equipped parents' room provides privacy for parents during these meetings.
24. The school has very good links with other schools and agencies to develop the curriculum and for staff training, and to ensure that pupils learn at the right levels. The best examples are the work done with a local group of schools and colleges, which is developing a project for emotional literacy and with a team who support attendance and behaviour. The school's good relationships with its neighbours have helped to reduce the effects of vandalism. It uses the local community as a valuable resource for learning, educational outings and fieldwork. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered effectively through very good links with the church. The vicar leads weekly assemblies and the school holds several services in church every year.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is very good and management is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection and the strongest contributory factor to pupils' very good achievement and strong improvements to the quality of teaching. Governance is good. The effectiveness of the school's policy for promoting good race relations is assessed for its effects, its influence on teaching and the resources that are used.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership underpins all aspects of an effective and successful school.
- Good management is based on the sharing of responsibility for evaluating the school's performance and planning for improvement.
- Good governance is provided by governors who are involved in the school and the community.

Commentary

25. The school is driven by the headteacher's efforts to raise standards, improve the quality of teaching and provide pupils with an effective and relevant curriculum. A very positive indication of this successful leadership is evident in the very high value added to pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science between Year 2 and Year 6 in 2003. Leadership is much stronger than at the time of the last inspection. It has moved from a hierarchical structure to a team-based approach that allows all teachers to develop their skills as leaders in specific areas. This innovation helps to unite the staff in a common vision and with common values. By working together as a team they make strong progress towards achieving the aims of the school.
26. Senior teachers prioritise aspects of teaching and learning that need improvement through checking the quality of teaching in lessons and thorough analysis of the results of national and other tests. They are also responsible for managing the budgets of their subjects and teams. The information gathered from monitoring provides a good basis for establishing targets with teachers and support staff, performance targets for pupils, whole-school objectives for the improvement plan, performance targets for the headteacher and action plans for subject leaders. Working within existing financial constraints, the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. A team approach by staff ensures that many pupils receive good levels of help for their learning and personal guidance. Specialist support is very well managed for pupils who experience behavioural and physical difficulties. The management of the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection. This stems from training and increased expertise brought about by the strong links established between the school and a local Beacon School.
27. What governors share is a sense of responsibility and commitment to improving the facilities and opportunities available in the local community. They see the school as an integral and important part of the community and monitor its work through reports and briefings from the headteacher. Their awareness of issues is also raised through their attachment to different classes that they visit and join for special events. The chair of governors, who is also the vicar, knows what is happening in different aspects of the work of the school. He offers challenge and support to the headteacher and places particular emphasis on the importance of the church in the life of the school. All governors understand the context of the school, fulfil statutory requirements and are aware of the impact of challenging social and economic circumstances on standards and their implications for school improvement.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	954,416
Total expenditure	959,874
Expenditure per pupil	2,520

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	108,8309
Balance carried forward to the next	128,435

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Achievement and teaching are good in the nursery. Improvements since the last inspection include very good teaching and learning in the reception year and very good provision for outdoor activities. Assessment indicates that, when they start school, many children's early attainments are well below average.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of the reception year, children's achievement is very good.
- Teachers in the reception classes have very high expectations of children's ability to work hard and behave sensibly.
- Very good teaching in the reception year provides children with a strong foundation for positive attitudes towards one another and their work.
- Teachers provide an extensive range of interesting practical activities and good quality resources to promote high levels of confidence and independence.
- Some children's restless behaviour results from a lack of organisation in the nursery.

Commentary

28. By the end of the reception year a significant number of children make good progress towards the goals established for their learning in personal, social and emotional development. This strong progress represents very good achievement from the low and very low levels of attainment demonstrated by many children on entry to the nursery, particularly in the area of emotional development. This is the result of the very high expectations of the staff particularly in the reception year. At the start of lessons, children are visibly excited and keen to start work on a wide range of well-planned and imaginative activities. Children in the nursery clearly enjoy coming to school and quickly gain the confidence needed to try out new things such as exploring with tools and toys in trays of soil, sand and water. When asked to join a larger group however, children in the nursery take a long time to settle down. A significant number also fail to follow rules for sitting down and listening quietly to their teacher. This is partly because staff are not applying these rules consistently and sometimes ignore unacceptable behaviour. The problem is also exacerbated by the larger numbers of children in the nursery and a lower ratio of adults to children than in the reception classes. When a whole class comes together in the reception classes, children behave extremely well because they know what is expected and teachers are skilled at keeping their attention.
29. Teachers are good at developing children's confidence and independence as learners. In the nursery, discussions during circle time help children to express their feelings and also to listen to others. A typical feature of independent learning in the reception classes was evident when a group of girls used the outdoor area to organise their own role-play. With high levels of confidence and independence, they divided the tasks amicably and with little discussion as they set up a *café*. They were clearly good friends who enjoy working together. This strong feature of provision for personal and social development stems from the way that teachers encourage children to make their own decisions, to socialise with others and to take care of their own needs. Children show a good sense of responsibility when using and tidying up equipment. For example, children in reception take great care when filling and emptying trays with water without any help from their teachers.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers in the reception classes place high priority on improving children's skills in listening and spoken language.
- Listening is not developed effectively in the nursery when children work together in a large group.
- Teachers' planning for language and literacy is good and is integral to all activities.
- The early skills of writing are promoted very effectively.
- Teachers provide too few opportunities for many children to become confident beginner readers.

Commentary

30. Although achievement is good, the attainment of a significant group of children is below the level expected at the end of the reception year. However, at the end of the reception year, about half the children are on line to achieve the targets for their learning. This represents significant achievement. When children join the nursery, a high proportion is unable to communicate clearly and many use a very limited range of vocabulary. To remove this barrier to learning, teachers immerse children in a wide range of activities that improve communication by prioritising the use of spoken language. A good example of this strategy was evident in reception when a teacher used excellent resources to engage children in retelling the story of *Handa's Surprise*. The teacher encouraged children to use their own words to re-tell the story. While they all thoroughly enjoyed the activity, many children who listened attentively and were enthralled by the resources made little contribution to re-telling the story. The main and clearest responses came from a small group of confident speakers. When the teacher in the nursery opened a large package containing snails, she successfully generated discussion and introduced children to many new words. Children were captivated as they handled and examined the snails and the teacher skilfully developed the discussion in small groups. When the whole group works together, this positive picture changes and many children in the nursery are inattentive. This happens because many of them find it very hard to concentrate for extended periods of time and are unable to sit quietly and listen to their teacher.
31. Children become increasingly aware of the purposes for writing through imaginative and well-planned activities and the availability of a wide range of materials. Opportunities to write are everywhere in the reception classes and often without prompting, many children use their growing knowledge of letters and sounds to record their ideas and activities as a matter of course. While providing models of the way that writing works, teachers use children's ideas, words and phrases as captions for writing to strengthen their understanding of the purpose and the need to write. Teachers are very aware of differences in the school between the standards achieved by boys and girls and take steps to develop boys' interest in writing. Enthusiasm for writing is clearly evident in the extensive range of children's work on display and their willingness to write.
32. Teachers develop the early skills of reading by generating children's enthusiasm for a wide range of books. The involvement of parents in reading with their children in the library and at home contributes to the development of these skills. However, the opportunities teachers provide for teaching reading are considerably less frequent than those provided for writing. Mostly, children are grouped to read with their teacher on a weekly basis and this is not enough to develop the skills of all but the most able children and those who read very regularly at home. The absence of a diagnostic approach to teaching reading means that teachers are unsure of the levels of children's attainment and are not planning ways to increase their progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is very good.
- Teaching is mostly very good with some excellent features.
- Teachers make good use of outdoor facilities to extend children's mathematical development.
- Because all activities are relevant to children's interests and needs, they make a strong impact on their learning.

Commentary

33. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. As a result, children learn at a very good rate and their achievement is very good. However, because of the very low starting point of many children on entry into school, a significant proportion of children still have some distance to go before achieving the goals expected for mathematical development at the end of the reception year. Of the remainder, a few children will be ready to start work in the National Curriculum and others will be closer to the standard expected for their age. Teachers provide activities that are planned to ensure that children make good progress with their learning. They focus great attention on ensuring that all activities are relevant to children's interests and challenging to their differing needs. Consequently, children find the tasks teachers provide both achievable and highly interesting. In this way, teachers successfully develop children's knowledge and understanding of mathematics. They also take care to create imaginative settings where children use the skills of mathematics in engaging ways.
34. Very good organisation and use of time ensure that children are constantly motivated to learn. Teachers make very good use of the areas outside the classrooms to extend the range of opportunities, resources and activities available for mathematical development. For instance, large wall-mounted chalk boards and the frameworks for games such as hopscotch help children to recognise numbers, count, add and record their own scores.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

35. Insufficient teaching was observed to make a judgment about attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world. Curriculum plans and classroom displays indicate that all elements of this area of learning are covered in good depth. In a lesson in the outdoor area, a teacher in reception used an African story most effectively as the starting point of work about the purpose of maps. The children, with guidance from their teacher, created a large map to reflect the route of *Handa's Journey*. Their learning was reinforced through a successful strategy where the teacher used the map as a prompt for role-play about the journey.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

36. As no lessons were observed in physical development it is not possible to make a judgment about attainment. Included in the daily planning of teachers in the nursery and reception classes is the use of the outdoor area for physical activity and some time to use the space and equipment in the infant hall. Small groups of children in the reception classes achieve good levels of dexterity in the use of small tools and equipment because they practise regularly to use them safely. In display, for example, the skilful and accurate use of scissors is evident in some of the work.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

37. Too few lessons were observed to make judgements about standards, teaching and learning in creative development. However, role-play is equipped with high-quality resources that have a significant impact on children's enjoyment of the activities provided. Teachers often intervene in role-play to ensure that it is purposeful and challenging. Creative development is fostered

effectively in art where the work on display reflects children's ideas and representations. Some colourful paintings of wild animals reflect good control of different-sized brushes and children's ability to mix their own colours. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for children to explore a range of materials. As a result, children who worked with clay for the first time learned how to change its shape and form because they were taught to explore the material before being asked to produce a finished piece of work.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of pupils in Year 6 is very good.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is mostly good and offers strong encouragement for pupils to do their best.
- Teachers are good at improving pupils' vocabulary and spoken language.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have too few opportunities to develop the skills of writing.
- Pupils throughout the school are not reading often enough to their teachers.

Commentary

38. Good teaching based on the effective use of the National Literacy Strategy ensures that pupils make very good progress between Years 3 and 6. Teachers throughout the school go to great lengths to improve pupils' vocabulary and their spoken language. Communication improves at a good pace from Year 1 to Year 6 as a result of the many opportunities teachers provide for discussion during lessons in large and small groups and between pairs of pupils. Teachers place good emphasis on ensuring that pupils make accurate use of the vocabulary of different subjects. This strategy improves pupils' learning and increases their confidence in expressing their views and in responding with accurate vocabulary to teachers' questions.
39. While many pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in increasing their knowledge of the names and sounds of letters, teachers are not providing them with opportunities to use this knowledge frequently enough to improve their writing. As a result, few pupils reach high standards in writing in Year 2 and far too many pupils make slow progress in developing their skills. Writing increases in a good variety of different forms between Years 3 and 6. A legacy from the earlier lack of regular writing lies in the inaccuracy of many pupils' spelling and careless mistakes with simple points of punctuation. Although many classrooms contain word books and dictionaries, many pupils are not using them on a regular basis to improve their spelling. Teachers' marking, however, offers pupils strong encouragement and advice for improving their work. While teachers throughout the school are competent in teaching reading, pupils' progress is not as strong as it could be if teachers read with them in groups on a more frequent basis. Teachers also lack the records needed to keep a clear view of pupils' progress in reading and what they need to learn next. To compensate for the slow development of some pupils' reading, the school makes good use of the skills of volunteers who read with individual pupils every week.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

40. Pupils' spoken language is developed effectively in many different subjects and situations. The writing of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not developed in a wide range of forms in all of their work. Pupils in Year 3 to 6 make good use of a variety of writing in subjects such as science, history, geography, design and technology and religious education. While pupils in some classes use computers to write and to access information, the use of ICT is not making a strong impact on pupils' work in English.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A high proportion of pupils reach a good standard in mathematics by the time they reach Year 6.
- Achievement is very good.
- Teachers provide a good range of in-depth work across different aspects of the subject.
- Teachers in Years 1 and 2 place strong emphasis on practical activities to promote pupils' understanding of mathematics.
- Teachers provide high levels of challenge for pupils in Year 6.
- Most pupils bring an enthusiastic approach to the subject.
- The time pupils spend sitting on the carpet is too long at the start of some lessons.
- Less able pupils do not always complete their work in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

41. Since the last inspection the school has raised standards in mathematics. The teaching is much better and provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge and skills.
42. Pupils' achievement in all aspects of the subject is so good that they are working within the expected range for their age by the time they reach Year 2. Pupils' progress continues to accelerate between Year 2 and Year 6 because of good and often very good teaching that is based in teachers' high expectations. Their achievement is mostly very good. Lower standards in Year 6 in 2003 did not indicate a significant weakness, but a year group with fewer more able mathematicians. In 2004, the school is well on course to show a significant improvement in standards with an increased percentage of pupils achieving high levels in the subject. This stems from recent arrangements for teaching and learning in Year 6 that provide closer attention to the needs of pupils of different abilities and an extended challenge for more able pupils.
43. The emphasis teachers place on practical activities in Years 1 and 2 builds on the methods teachers use in the Foundation Stage and is a key factor in improving provision for mathematics. A good example of this emphasis developed pupils' understanding of ordinal number in Year 1 when the teacher asked them to identify the position of items on shelves in a *garden centre* and to name the position of animals lined up in the sand tray. More able pupils confidently named the positions of people in a queue up to tenth. While lessons start briskly enough with all pupils working on oral and mental activities, sometimes teachers spend too much time on this part of a lesson and consequently, pupils begin to lose concentration. Less able pupils are not always given enough time to finish their work and this factor slows their learning.
44. In Years 3 to 6, teachers' confident use of the National Numeracy Strategy makes a significant contribution to raising standards. While the pace of many lessons is brisk, teachers make sure that pupils have time to think and to explain and explore their ideas. In a good lesson in Year 6 that focused on solving problems by extracting data from tables and charts, quick-fire questions, the teacher's skilled use of an interactive whiteboard and the opportunities provided for pupils to explain their reasoning ensured that they succeeded with the task.
45. Good teaching in mathematics is reflected in pupils' written work. Pupils' books demonstrate how all elements of national guidelines are covered in considerable depth. They also contain many examples of planned opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems. The significant amount of work pupils produce points to the way they are encouraged to work and high levels of concentration in lessons. In Year 6, pupils' work is

accurate, presented with care and demonstrates strong interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Marking is of a high standard and gives pupils good advice for improvements to their work and positive comments that recognise their efforts.

Mathematics across the curriculum

46. By making good use of mathematics as part of their work in other subjects pupils begin to understand the practical applications of their mathematical knowledge and skills. Teachers have established well-planned links between mathematics and science, history, geography and design technology. Although links exist between mathematics and ICT, unreliable hardware often inhibits their development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching has improved standards in science since the last inspection
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well in scientific investigation and experimentation.
- Teachers establish good links between pupils' learning in science and in other subjects, but they are not making enough use of ICT to extend pupils' knowledge of science.
- Leadership provides a very clear focus for improvement to the subject.
- Assessment in some classes is developing too slowly.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and behave well.

Commentary

47. Standards have improved as a result of good teaching, careful planning and the effective management of issues identified at the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to use scientific language more readily. Through skilful questioning, they are taught to think and speak in a scientific way. In Years 3 to 6 in particular, pupils enjoy lively and stimulating lessons. These pupils now make satisfactory progress when their attainment is compared with national expectations. Teachers now provide increased challenge for more able pupils as well as work that is matched closely to the needs of the less able.
48. Most pupils enjoy experiments. Group work is organised well and includes tasks that extend pupils' knowledge and promotes co-operation when they carry out fair tests. Pupils in Year 1 were transfixed when they learned through role-play that plants have leaves, stems, roots and flowers. This was because the teacher provided excellent resources for pupils to use as they took turns at guessing and dressing up in *props* which eventually combined to make a giant sunflower. They watched in wonder and delight and by the end of the lesson, accurately named all parts of a plant. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show increasing skill as they conduct experiments that measure pulse rate with sensors and weight in *Newtons*. They achieve good results that test their scientific knowledge and learn that some tests produce anomalies. Most lessons extend pupils' learning by linking science effectively to mathematics, literacy, personal, social and health education and ICT. In other lessons, teachers are not making enough use of ICT to develop pupils' knowledge of science or to record scientific evidence.
49. Leadership of science is very good. It is evident that teachers have increased their confidence in the subject as a result of guidance and support from the co-ordinator. There is still work to be done in making sure that assessment is carried out consistently in all classes and that progress is steady across the school. In discussion, pupils say that they enjoy science and look forward to lessons because carrying out experiments makes them *feel like scientists*.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic learners who are interested in computers.
- Teachers have improved their skills in ICT as a result of training.
- Although there is thought and planning for ICT in other subjects this is not implemented consistently throughout the school.
- Because the school lacks access to electronic mail all aspects of ICT are not taught to pupils in 6.

Commentary

50. Standards are satisfactory in Year 2, but are lower than expected in Year 6. The school has made considerable progress towards improving the quality of its provision for ICT since the previous inspection. However, the unreliability of some important resources makes it difficult for pupils to cover all aspects of the subject and achieve satisfactory rates of progress. Although attainment is higher in Year 2 than it was in the previous inspection, it has not improved sufficiently by Year 6 owing mainly to problems with resources and pupils' earlier lack of experience of the subject.
51. All pupils have access to computers and an increase in training means that teachers are more confident about their own skills and are able to provide pupils with clear, helpful direction. As a result, pupils of all abilities are developing skills with computers and making progress. However, this progress is not capitalised on by the provision of more consistent and varied opportunities for these skills to be used and developed in a wide range of other subjects. Moreover, teachers are hampered by their obvious concerns as to whether or not the computers will work and this inevitably results in a reluctance to use the equipment.
52. Pupils in Year 2 have acquired a range of competencies that enable them to exchange and share information. Teachers provide opportunities for them to do this in different ways, for instance, through text, graphs and pictograms. They have, however, limited opportunities to use computers to find things out. Pupils are developing an understanding of how computers can help them in their work. For example, they find and exploit information from pictorial evidence and have satisfactory knowledge of how to log on, save, retrieve, and print their work.
53. Teaching is satisfactory and teachers ensure that there is sufficient focus on the acquisition of skills as pupils move through the school. There are good examples of the use of ICT to create multi-media presentations in Year 6. Pupils in Year 4 use programmes effectively to give commands and make predictions. By Year 6, pupils are confident users of keyboard and mouse. They produce graphs from given data and use computers to write, change font, size and colour. CD-ROMs are used for research into various subjects, though this is done on a fairly limited basis. Pupils lack sufficient experience of using the technology for Internet research and interpreting information. They share resources amicably and co-operatively and are keen to develop their skills.
54. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management in ICT and ensures that teachers are aware of all elements of the subject in the programme of work.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

55. ICT is not used effectively to increase pupils' learning across the whole curriculum. Although teachers are aware of how ICT should be used and build this into their planning, their efforts are often frustrated by the daunting prospect of using unreliable equipment. Good practice was observed in Year 3, for example, where pupils enjoyed using a *Viking Quest* program to extend their understanding of history. In Year 5, pupils use PowerPoint sensors to measure the rate of their pulses.

HUMANITIES

GEOGRAPHY

56. Although only one lesson was observed, evidence about the quality of the curriculum was gathered from teachers' planning, work displayed, discussions with pupils and a cross-section of written work. Teachers plan their work thoroughly and the co-ordinator ensures there is progression throughout the school. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 make good use of stories and the locality as a focus for study and to help promote and enhance learning. In Year 3, pupils study weather and climate. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are introduced to enjoyable strategies such as brainstorming and group discussion to make their learning interesting. An example of the effective use of these strategies is evident in a study about water purification that teachers have linked to a wider study of a developing country.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**.

- Teachers use a good variety of approaches to gain pupils' interest in the subject.
- Good links between history and literacy add to the quality of pupils' learning.
- Strong leadership and management are based on the co-ordinator's drive to improve standards.
- Resources are effective in bringing the subject to life.

Commentary

57. Teachers are good at gaining pupils' interest in history. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, the teacher gave pupils clear ideas of the appearance of London at the time of the Great Fire by comparing it with pupils' ideas about the appearance of the city at the present time. Similarly in a lesson in Year 6, the teacher emphasised the way that images of popular musicians have changed since the 1960s by providing pupils with a vast array of photographs and information from a visitor and other sources. The use of contemporary art is a further means that teachers use to enliven pupils' knowledge of the past. While pupils in Year 2 were entertained by the wigs and ornate clothes of wealthy men in the seventeenth century, they learned to appreciate changes in fashion and how appearance provides clues to people's status.
58. Strong links between literacy and history extend pupils' skills in both subjects. After studying portraits of Tudor monarchs, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed making notes in pictorial form to record their ideas. They were clearly aware of the benefits and pitfalls of this form of note-taking and learned to use it to their own advantage. When the same pupils used sets of photographs to form hypotheses about the Beatles, the teacher drew their attention to the skills they used. She reminded them of the way they reach conclusions about texts in literacy and how this activity compares with the use they made of the photographs. The teacher in Year 2 extended pupils' knowledge of information books by guiding their reading of an enlarged text. While reading a text about England during the reign of the Stuarts, the teacher conducted a session of questions and answers to ensure that pupils retained knowledge of the sequence of events surrounding the Great Fire.

59. Leadership and management of the subject are effective. The co-ordinator brings a strong personal interest to the work in history that is reflected in high standards and the quality of teaching and learning. While resources are good and interesting to pupils, the co-ordinator is constantly seeking ways to increase them to bring the subject to life. Lists of useful websites are provided for teachers but there is little evidence of the use of ICT in pupils' work. An example of the way the school encourages pupils' enthusiasm for the subject is evident in the way a theatre group was used to provide pupils with a historical mystery to solve.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's positive ethos enables pupils to reach high standards in religious education.
- Teachers have considerable expertise and confidence in the subject.
- Thorough planning and assessment are now much more effective than at the last inspection.
- Management of religious education is very good.
- Teachers develop links with different subjects to enhance pupils' understanding and tolerance of world religions.
- Church leaders make good contributions to teaching and learning.

Commentary

60. Since the last inspection, teaching of the locally agreed syllabus has improved and is now very effective. Pupils respond very well to the climate of tolerance and respect for self and others that supports the school's programme for personal and spiritual development. This, in turn, creates a setting for pupils to learn about world religions in a very positive way across a range of subjects. For example, when pupils learn about an Indian village in geography, they also study Hinduism to improve their knowledge, tolerance and understanding of world faiths.
61. Teachers are confident when teaching pupils about world religions. They plan and assess lessons jointly, under the guidance of a very effective co-ordinator. Other well-qualified teachers provide advice and gather a range of artefacts to support pupils' learning. They develop very caring attitudes towards one another that are reinforced by the clear, joyful messages about Christianity that they are given in assemblies. Church leaders are regular visitors to the school. They provide helpful guidance for pupils' learning and often lead assemblies. Displays, books and photographs of religious events and celebrations support the evidence from lessons of good, and sometimes very good, achievement.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART and DESIGN

62. Not enough work was observed to make judgements about standards or about teaching and learning in art and design. Teachers' planning, resources and the range of activities within and beyond lessons suggest that the curriculum is at least satisfactory. Pupils' work adorns the walls in open spaces and classrooms and ranges from painting to prints and collages that contain natural and man-made fibres and use resources from the art of other cultures. It is evident that pupils are learning to develop their creativity. Their displays and artistic creations are valued and pupils discuss their work with pride and understanding. Pupils also visit art galleries and attend after-school clubs to improve their skills. Plans are in place to develop pupils' creativity by holding an art week later this term.

DESIGN and TECHNOLOGY

63. There is not enough evidence from lessons to make a judgement about teaching, learning or standards. However, teachers' planning and samples of pupils' finished work coupled with discussions with staff and pupils show that provision has improved and is now satisfactory. Pupils' design books and models show that a wider range of processes is now being taught. Management of the subject is now effective. This has also contributed to improvements in the subject since the last inspection.

MUSIC

64. There is not enough evidence to make a secure judgement about standards or the quality of teaching and learning. In the one lesson observed in Year 4, pupils focused on the difference between pulse, beat and rhythm. They recalled previous work on singing while clapping and skipping in readiness for a performance for others in their class. Pupils were enthusiastic and showed skill in listening, recalling and using a technique for repeating a rhythm. The teacher showed good knowledge of music and made the lesson enjoyable and rewarding. As a result, pupils showed confidence when performing. At the climax of a lively and interactive lesson, pupils listened, with their eyes closed, to *Chanson de Matin* by Elgar, and were transported to a serene and peaceful place as it ended. A lack of live music detracts from the quality of singing in assemblies and although instrumental tuition is available from visiting specialists, it has recently been reduced. To increase pupils' enjoyment of music the school has organised visits from an orchestra and other musicians.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

65. As only one lesson was observed, there is not enough evidence to judge standards or teaching and learning. Teachers' planning confirms that the co-ordinator has ensured that a programme of work for the whole school provides pupils with all essential elements of physical activity in gymnastics, dance and games. Pupils also take part in sporting activities with other local schools and enjoy a good range of activities outside lessons to extend their interest and knowledge of sport. The school was successful in gaining the *Activemark* for pupils' involvement in sport in 2002.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

66. Both of the lessons observed were in Year 3 and Year 4 and covered different aspects of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Consequently, there is not enough evidence from other year groups to make a secure judgement about standards or teaching and learning. In a very good lesson about what makes a health-promoting school, pupils showed good knowledge of food that is good for their growing bodies and the reasons why water is readily available for them during all lessons. They made very helpful suggestions about improvements that they thought should be put before the school council to add to initiatives that gained the school the *Healthy School's Award* by making it an even healthier place. In a good lesson in personal education in Year 3, pupils demonstrated their growing empathy for the needs of others. By putting problems they encountered in their daily lives before the group, pupils came up with very good ideas for resolving what appeared to be unsolvable difficulties.

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	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
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	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
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).