

INSPECTION REPORT

COLEBROOK JUNIOR SCHOOL

Stratton St. Margaret, Swindon

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 126252

Headteacher: Mr N M Vining

Lead inspector: Mr John D Eadie

Dates of inspection: 29th September – 1st October 2003

Inspection number: 255852

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	169
School address:	Towcester Road Stratton St. Margaret Swindon
Postcode:	SN3 4AS
Telephone number:	01793 823057
Fax number:	01793 820341
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Linda Marriott
Date of previous inspection:	1 st June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Colebrook Junior School is situated on the edge of the town of Swindon in a community of largely privately owned housing. Most parents and carers are in work as there is a large car factory nearby, as well as two retail parks. The school gained the Investor in People award in 2000, and is currently being reviewed for this award. It also won the Healthy Schools award in 2001. Most pupils are of white British heritage and all speak English as their first language. Mobility is rather lower than the national average, reflecting the stability of the neighbourhood, although there is a small increase of pupils during each year owing to the school's reputation as a caring establishment. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. Most of these have problems with their spellings or writing, though a significant minority have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Attainment on entry is broadly average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20191	Mr J D Eadie	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Music
9770	Mr J Baker	Lay inspector	
16038	Mrs J Bavin	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Personal, social and health education Design and technology Physical education
28014	Mr P Buckley	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA

Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Colebrook Junior School is a **good school** and provides good value for money. Most pupils are achieving well and standards are rising and are now average. Raising standards has been hindered by a number of recruitment problems over recent years. These problems have been resolved and there has been a stable staff for the last year. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and leadership and management are good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The teaching in the top three classes is good, resulting in the good achievement of these pupils. However, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in the other two classes, although all teaching seen was at least satisfactory.
- The good curriculum is significantly enriched by a wide range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities.
- The systems of assessment, although thorough, do not allow teachers consistently to set short-term achievable targets that pupils understand.
- Standards in ICT are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- The pupils have good attitudes to their school and their work and they behave well.
- There is a very good partnership with parents, most of whom support their children's learning well.

The school has made **satisfactory progress since the previous inspection**. All the key issues from that inspection have been addressed relatively successfully bearing in mind the staffing changes. The least successful has been the one concerning challenging higher attainers. Little progress had been made on this until this year when the proportion of higher levels gained in the national tests rose significantly. Before this year, standards had been improving in line with the national trend.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Pupils are achieving well. For example, the school carries out standardised tests in Year 4 which predict likely levels in the national tests two years later. Many of the pupils currently in Year 6 reached the levels predicted for them while they were in Year 5. Standards have been improving in the last year and are now average by the time the pupils leave, as confirmed by the 2003 national tests results. The table above shows that the pupils in 2003 did not perform as well as those in other schools whose pupils achieved similarly four years previously. A significant number of these pupils excelled themselves in the tests in Year 2 in 1999, performing much better than expected as measured by standardised tests. In fact, if just a few had not performed quite so well in the tests in 1999, the grades in the final column would be C, B, D showing that the school is doing as well as similar schools. This group of pupils also suffered from the staffing problems that the school had. Despite this, statistics show that even these pupils made at least satisfactory progress during their time in the school.

The pupils' personal qualities are developed well. There is **good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** The pupils have good attitudes to their school and their work. They generally behave well, and attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good quality of education. The quality of teaching is good,** and consequently the quality of learning is good. It is better in the top three classes, although some good teaching was seen in all classes. The school provides a good curriculum for its pupils. The curriculum is imaginatively enriched by the wide range of other activities that are organised. The pupils are cared for well, and are given good guidance and support. The school has a very effective partnership with parents. Links with other schools are less well developed although they are satisfactory. There are satisfactory links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher gives good leadership, and is well supported by other key staff. Management of the school is good overall, despite the relative weakness in monitoring. The governing body performs its functions well, giving good support and playing its part in the management of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

A high proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire and these showed that parents are happy with the school. Those parents who attended the meeting confirmed these views. The pupils generally have positive views of their school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning by applying the monitoring and evaluation of these areas more rigorously.
- Improve the recording of assessments so that teachers are able to share with pupils and colleagues exactly what it is that pupils know and can do and plan the next stages of their learning.
- Raise standards in information and communication technology.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils are achieving well during their time in the school and are reaching average standards, except in information and communication technology (ICT) where standards are below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well, particularly in the top three classes.
- Pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to use computers, so their achievement in ICT is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

1. As can be seen from the table below, standards achieved have improved significantly this year and are now broadly average in all three subjects. This is largely due to the more stable staffing structure that the school has had for the last year. The statistics kept by the school show that the group of pupils who took the tests in 2003 achieved well, particularly in their last year. The group who took the tests in 2003 were less affected in their final year by the staffing problems that the school had suffered, though there had been some disruption to their achievement in earlier years. A particularly pleasing aspect of the achievement of this group of pupils is the bigger proportion of higher levels gained in the tests. This is due to initiatives that the school has put in place to address the weakness of challenge for higher attainers.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (26.5)	27.1 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.5 (26.1)	27.1 (26.7)
Science	28.3 (27.8)	28.7 (28.3)

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

2. The achievement of the pupils in the top three classes is better than that of those in the other two classes. This achievement is judged on the progress that the pupils have made and whether their achievements are as high as they should be, bearing in mind their capabilities. The higher achievement in the top three classes is due to the better quality of teaching in these classes. Although achievement in the other two classes is not as good, it is still at least satisfactory. The high proportion of parents who returned their questionnaires agreed that their children are achieving well. There is little difference between the achievement of pupils of different groups. For example, the school has addressed the weakness noted at the time of the last inspection, and higher attaining pupils are now achieving as well as their classmates. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well. They benefit from the strengths in teaching alongside their peers as well as good quality support from teaching assistants. There has been little difference between the achievement of girls and boys in the national tests in recent years.
3. Although achievement in English is good overall, there are some variations between the various aspects of the subject. The school has targeted reading and achievement in this area has improved significantly. There are now measures in place to raise achievement in writing. However, the school has not yet put in place procedures to raise standards of speaking and listening and achievement in this aspect of English is only satisfactory.

- The school recognises that standards in ICT are still below average as measures to improve standards in this subject have only recently been put into place. The school has now wisely invested in specialist support for ICT and some good work was observed in lessons. Achievement in religious education is average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes are good. Behaviour is generally good. Attendance is good and the vast majority of pupils arrive punctually. Provision for the pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good attitudes to learning and the behaviour of most pupils helps them to achieve well.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are good. This is the result of the caring ethos of the school and the good example set by the staff.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good because there is a good range of opportunities to develop their qualities within the school and through outside activities.
- The pupils do not always take sufficient care of their environment.
- Attendance is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.4
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

Commentary

- The pupils show good attitudes to learning in most lessons. Nearly all listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. This is the result of good teaching where teachers maintain a high level of interest and set appropriately challenging tasks which ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to achieve well. However, on a very few occasions, where teaching fails to hold pupils' attention throughout the lesson and develop their interest, attitudes to learning and behaviour are not so good and pupils make little progress. Virtually all parents who responded to the questionnaire confirmed that their children liked school and that they are being encouraged to become mature and independent.
- Standards of behaviour are good in the classroom and around the school including the playground, where pupils play harmoniously together. All pupils discuss and agree class rules and are fully aware of the high standards expected and insisted upon by most staff. The pupils with special educational needs, including those with behavioural difficulties, appreciate the support they receive. This is evident when they work hard individually or in small groups because they trust the teaching assistants who work with them. They also have the confidence to participate fully in whole class question and answer sessions. This is because their experience tells them that their contributions will be taken seriously.
- The caring ethos of the school results in pupils knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. No signs of aggressive behaviour were seen but incidents of unacceptable behaviour do occur occasionally and resulted in two temporary exclusions last year. The school has very effective procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour, for example, appointing pupils as 'Helping Hands' and running anger management courses for potentially disruptive pupils.

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	151	1	0
White – any other White background	6	1	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	6	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

8. The pupils do not always take sufficient care of their environment and improvements in this are being encouraged through the Environmental Club and through initiatives such as awarding a gold cup weekly to the class with the best kept cloakroom in the upper school. Pupils work well together in groups. For example, in a Year 3 religious education lesson, pupils worked well together in agreeing the rules for a game involving the Ten Commandments.
9. Most staff give a very positive lead in engendering good relationships, for example, by giving praise and encouragement at every opportunity as well as acting as good role models. The School Forum gives pupils from all classes the responsibility of representing their classmates and using their initiative. Pupils also take responsibility through a wide range of duties such as acting as 'Helping Hands' in the playground, helping set up in the hall for assembly and running the Tuck Shop.
10. Spiritual awareness is developed through assemblies and through the curriculum, particularly through music, singing and the creative arts. The school's ethos, together with personal, social and health education lessons, instils good moral values and social behaviour. Pupils' awareness of their own culture is developed with the creative arts and the locality.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is very well enriched by extra-curricular activities, and the provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. Links with parents are very effective.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good. Consequently the pupils learn well. Teaching and learning are better in the top three classes of the school than in the Years 3 and 4 classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good individual targets are set for the pupils in English and mathematics.
- The teachers' management skills are very good in the top three classes, though not always good in other classes.
- The teachers are good at encouraging their pupils and ensuring that all are included in all aspects of lessons.

- The teachers have good informal knowledge of what their pupils can do and marking is generally good, but these assessments aren't always recorded in a way that teachers can use to plan for the next stage of learning.

Commentary

11. All of the very good teaching observed was in the top three classes and these pupils are learning very well. Teaching in these classes is often enthusiastic and purposeful, therefore interesting and engaging the pupils. The less successful lessons, whilst still satisfactory, sometimes lack this purpose and energy. The pupils' learning is therefore rather slower in these lessons. A positive aspect of the teaching throughout the school is the encouragement that the teachers give their pupils. This ensures that the pupils are keen to try hard. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire said that their children are expected to work hard.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	15	9	0	0	0

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

12. The teachers set good individual targets for their pupils' improvement in English and mathematics. Parents were enthusiastic about these as they are reviewed and set at the termly meetings for parents. Pupils attend these meetings and are therefore involved in the process. The teachers' marking is often good, taking due note of the targets set and helping the pupils to see how they can improve. Although a great deal of assessment is carried out and the long-term progress of pupils is checked on well, the recording of assessments in the shorter term is not done in a way that makes it easy for teachers to see what it is that pupils need to learn next.
13. The teachers in the top three classes have very good management skills. They create a calm and orderly working environment, with high standards set both of behaviour and expected work. The pupils rise well to these expectations and work hard. On occasions in Years 3 and 4 these standards are not so high. Inappropriate behaviour is less successfully dealt with and the quality of learning drops. Teaching for the pupils with special educational needs is good because teachers know and encourage the pupils well. This is helped by mostly clear and specific targets in individual education plans. The pupils with special educational needs benefit from the school's increased emphasis upon practical work which helps them to develop their understanding, without literacy difficulties inhibiting their learning. The higher attainers are being challenged effectively, particularly in the top three classes. The teachers almost always ensure that there is work available for their particular needs and these pupils are therefore learning well.

The curriculum

The school provides a good, broad curriculum. It is inclusive, meets statutory requirements, provides many worthwhile learning opportunities and is effective in promoting pupils' personal, social and health education. Opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular provision are very good and contribute to the pupils' personal development. The accommodation and resources are good and contribute to the quality of pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good range of extra-curricular activities and number of visits and visitors to the school enrich the overall provision.
- Good accommodation, although the classrooms are small, resources to support all subjects and good quality teaching assistants help teachers provide a stimulating curriculum.

- Although satisfactory, the planning for history and geography is not sufficiently clear to guide teachers to develop the pupils' skills systematically.

Commentary

14. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular sporting and creative activities, a strong environmental club and participates fully in local schools' events. Parents who sent in their questionnaires agreed that the school provides a good range of interesting activities. Visits and visitors to the school make a significant contribution to the curriculum. Theatre visits, such as to the Old Vic in Bristol, and a day out in the Savernake Forest are enjoyed by all pupils. The pupils in Years 4 and 6 benefit from residential visits that have environmental and outdoor adventurous aspects. The recently introduced creative arts afternoon for the whole school that involves the use of teaching assistants, who can use their expertise and make the groups smaller, enables pupils to benefit from a wide range of experiences. All this means that pupils are motivated and interested and work hard. This enrichment is as a direct result of the leadership of the school and its commitment to providing a stimulating curriculum.
15. The grounds and the school are spacious for the number of pupils, but the classrooms are small, particularly, for example, for pupils' investigative work in science, so hindering better achievement in this subject. The school is very well resourced in all subjects, with most being stored centrally. A spacious hall, library, computer suite and the room for withdrawing small groups, support pupils' learning well. It also makes possible the opportunity for creating a greater number of maths sets than the number of classes and is invaluable in accommodating the creative arts activities. The outdoor environment has been improved considerably in the last few years with the addition of a woodland area, play equipment, pond and butterfly garden. There has been a recent increase in the number of support staff and experienced staff are skilled and committed to improving their qualifications. The pupils with special educational needs have good access to the curriculum. Teachers and teaching assistants are acutely aware of pupils' individual needs and respond flexibly in order to meet them. This results in valuable specific work, such as a programme for improving physical co-ordination, for selected pupils.
16. History and geography are taught alternately in termly units. This means that there are sometimes long gaps between units in each subject. For example in the spring term this year there was only history taught. The length of time between topics in this subject and geography is therefore too long for the pupils to retain any thorough knowledge of the skills mastered by the time they next meet the subjects.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides pupils with good support and guidance and involves them well in the work of the school and its development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good promotion of pupils' healthy and safe living ensures pupils' wellbeing.
- There are very good child protection procedures.
- All staff know pupils and their families very well and give pupils good support and guidance in their personal development.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is good and helps pupils to mature and use their initiative.

Commentary

17. The school pays close attention to the pupils' health and welfare and has achieved the Healthy Schools award. The pupils' healthy and safe living is very well promoted through the personal, social and health education programme which is enriched by talks by outside specialists including the school nurse, the road safety officer and a dietician. Also the 'Life Education' mobile classroom visits the school and gives multi-media presentations on aspects such as exercise, personal hygiene and drugs abuse.
18. The member of staff responsible for child protection is suitably trained and other members of staff also attend training courses. All members of staff are fully aware of child protection procedures and their importance. The school has good relationships with other agencies. Pastoral care is the responsibility of class teachers who, together with support staff, know their pupils and their families very well. Since this is a small school, staff also know all the pupils well and share their knowledge, which ensures that pupils are well supported and guided on their personal development. The good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically. The pupils with special educational needs write the learning targets set for them in their own words. However, they are still very much guided as to what to write by the teachers. Therefore, opportunities for the pupils to determine and be involved in what they should be learning are not fully exploited.
19. The pupils are involved in the development of the school through the school forum which has representatives from each class and meets twice a term to discuss suggestions from their classes. Their initiatives have resulted in improvements to the playground and the toilets and the introduction of 'Helping Hands'. Pupils are also involved in improvement through the environmental group which has recently established a butterfly garden. All pupils' views are sought at the start of each year when they discuss and agree their class rules.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and satisfactory links with the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are well informed about the school and very well informed about the curriculum and their children's progress.
- The good contribution parents make to their children's learning at school and at home makes a positive contribution to their achievement.
- Parents are very satisfied with nearly all aspects of the school.
- There are close links with the infant school regarding transfer but very few curricular links.

Commentary

20. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, the governors' annual report, half-termly newsletters and frequent other correspondence. Information to parents about the curriculum includes a very good outline in the prospectus, termly curricular information and curricular evenings held in the autumn and spring terms. The parents' consultation evenings are held each term and include discussing and agreeing targets so parents have a clear picture of what their children have to do to improve. The very good annual reports indicate what pupils can do, their progress and their targets for improvement. Parents are also welcome to discuss concerns at any time and the school contacts parents if they have any concerns. Teachers make sensible use of the termly consultation evenings to keep parents up to date with any special provision for, and the progress of, pupils with special educational needs.
21. Parents provide very good support on trips and visits and particularly with swimming. They also raise substantial funds for the school through the Colebrook Friends' Association. The vast

majority of parents support their children with homework and leaflets such as 'How can I help my child with maths?' enable them to provide support at other times.

22. A very high proportion of parents responded to the questionnaire, which is a clear indication of their support for and interest in the school. The vast majority felt comfortable about approaching the school.
23. Pupils transfer happily from the adjacent infant school. During the latter half of the summer term infant pupils visit the school on several occasions for assemblies and playtimes. Year 3 teachers liaise closely with the infant school and discuss the needs of each pupil, including pupils with special educational needs. However, there are very few curricular links and this inhibits the continuity of pupils' education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher leads the school well and is well supported by his deputy and other teachers with leadership roles. The school is well managed and governed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good shared commitment to do the best for the pupils.
- There is a very good shared vision, which is at the heart of the school improvement plan.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning hasn't been sufficiently rigorous.
- Co-ordinators for English and mathematics give good leadership and manage their subjects well.
- The governing body are involved well and have clear views of strengths and weaknesses.

Commentary

24. The headteacher has a very clear sense of vision and purpose, which he communicates well and it is thus shared. A very good example of this is the school improvement plan. At a training day, staff and governors had set out the vision for the school. This forms the basis of a very individual and effective improvement plan. As well as this plan there is a four year strategic plan, which enables the governors and management within school to plan ahead well. The improvement plan is effective in focusing the school on the most important issues for development. For example, the current plan contains detail on how the school has raised standards in literacy and numeracy over the last year and what needs to be done next to continue this progress. These action plans for literacy and numeracy demonstrate the effectiveness of the co-ordinators for these subjects. They have a very clear idea of the way forward for their subjects. The plan is monitored well by governors, who challenge well.
25. Although the school has carried forward a sizeable sum into the current year, there are good reasons for this. In order to improve security and the look of the school, the school decided to replace all the windows. The authority paid for some of this work, and the school had to find a significant sum from its own budget to fund the remainder. There has also been some care taken with the budget to ensure that the current number of teachers can be funded for a further year. These two items explain most of the carry-forward figure below.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	449 576	Balance from previous year	39 113
Total expenditure	384 431	Balance carried forward to the next	65 145

26. The governing body is involved well, not only in monitoring the school's progress, but they also keep a watchful eye on many aspects of the school. For example, the curriculum committee looks at targets and the analysis of national test results in order that they can report back to governors on the effectiveness of action taken to improve standards. Governors are attached to subjects so that the co-ordinators have a link to the governing body. The governors change subjects each year so that all subjects have the opportunity of being watched by governors who have more time to come into school. Although they fulfil statutory requirements regarding health and safety, the governing body do not have an active 'hands on' involvement in health and safety matters. Governors have a very clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
27. Management within school is good. The office is managed efficiently, along with the day to day running of finances. This enables the headteacher and other staff to carry out their leadership roles with the confidence that routine issues are in good hands. Although there is a good plan of monitoring of teaching and learning, this has not been totally effective in eliminating inconsistencies in teaching. Part of the reason for this is that in recent years a significant part of the headteacher's time has been taken up with resolving recruitment and staffing issues.

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

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing have improved in the last year and are in line with the national average.
- The impact of leadership and management of the subject is good, but has been restricted by less than rigorous monitoring of teaching.
- The pupils' speaking and listening skills are not as well developed as other aspects of the subject.

Commentary

28. The pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6. Reading is systematically taught throughout the school, and a good stock of books is readily available in each classroom. The pupils in Year 3 heard reading were confident and accurate, rather than fluent and expressive. Comprehension skills were not as well developed and in one example the pupils tackled difficult words well, but had no idea of their meaning. Year 6 pupils read confidently and discuss characters and plots and make predictions about how the book might develop. Most have good skills to use when selecting new books. The library is an attractive area and pupils know how to use it for research. The school provides good support for parents to help their children read through literacy evenings and the home school reading log. The pupils' written work is well presented and good marking, that indicates areas for development and improvement, contributes to the pupils' improved standards. During the inspection, literacy lessons for the three mixed age classes for older pupils focused on writing play scripts, and all showed a clear progression and suitably high expectations for all pupils.
29. The co-ordinator has been thorough in analysing test results, maintaining pupils' data, and the local authority literacy consultant has been used well to support teachers in levelling pupils' work against National Curriculum criteria. However, teaching has not been rigorously monitored, and teaching of literacy in Years 3 and 4, while satisfactory, is not as good as that in the other classes. In lessons seen in Years 3 and 4 the pace and challenge was not as stimulating as that in the top three classes. The pupils in one lesson were largely passive, with only a few answering, with opportunities missed for all to be involved by using white-boards, for example. Time targets were not always clear in these lessons and some pupils were still finishing their written work during the review session at the end of the lesson. In another lesson the pupils were not well managed, calling out answers, and some pupils not working consistently at the set task slowed the pace and this resulted in only satisfactory progress.
30. Teaching is good and standards have improved in the last year. Teaching in the top three classes is often very good. The teachers give pupils good opportunities to use their speaking and listening skills in lessons through whole class and smaller group activities, but there is no planned programme to develop these skills. As a result, standards achieved in speaking and listening, although average, are not as good as in the other aspects of English. The pupils tend to answer questions in class with a few words, frequently not in a sentence, and with mixed tenses, and they are not often encouraged to develop their answers. The teachers do not always encourage pupils to speak with clear diction and pronunciation, and use the grammatical structures of Standard English.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

31. There is good use of pupils' writing skills in work in the humanities and pupils are confident in making notes and using information and communication technology to word process their work, and the older pupils use the library well for research. However, opportunities are missed to develop the pupils' speaking skills in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are achieving well, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Teaching is good overall, though often only satisfactory in Years 3 and 4.
- The subject is well led.
- Mathematics sessions are sometimes too long and lack pace.
- The arrangements for setting and target setting are effective in raising achievement.
- Not enough use is made of ICT to support learning.

Commentary

32. The pupils are reaching average standards by the time they leave. Particularly gratifying has been the increased proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in the national tests this year. Standards are better in number work than in problem solving, although both are in the average range. The co-ordinator has carried out some very detailed analysis of the results of the national tests which revealed the relative weakness in problem solving. A scheme was put in place last year to address this and standards were better in this area in the tests last term. The co-ordinator has refined the analysis and specific areas of problem solving are being targeted this year. The result of this work was seen during the inspection with pupils working well at problem solving.
33. The quality of teaching is good, particularly in Years 5 and 6, though there are some inconsistencies for the younger pupils in the school. Part of the reason for this is the extended time that is allowed for numeracy sessions. In some lessons the teacher expands the material to fill the time, spends too much time talking and the pace of learning slows. One of the positive influences on pupils' learning is the setting arrangements that have been put in place. Good use is made of other teachers, the part-time co-ordinator for mathematics and the headteacher, for example, to reduce the size of groups so that more attention can be given to individual needs. This is particularly effective in meeting the needs of the lower attaining pupils. It also allows the higher attaining groups to speed on and tackle challenging work. A further benefit to the pupils' learning is the good target setting arrangements that are in place. The pupils have clear targets set, which are reviewed regularly, in discussion with their teachers and parents. The teachers often mark work with these targets in mind and pupils can readily see what it is that they need to do to improve. However, this marking is not then translated into clear records of what the pupils have achieved, so it is not so easy for the teachers to plan clearly what it is that pupils need to learn next.

Mathematics across the curriculum

34. Mathematics is used satisfactorily in other subjects, and there is some good use for example in science and geography, where data is presented using graphs. Although ICT is occasionally used well to support learning, opportunities are often missed.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Older pupils are making good progress.
- There are good regular opportunities for pupils to learn through practical work.
- Information about pupils' learning is not used fully to raise standards further.
- Classrooms are too small for pupils to conduct a full range of scientific investigation independently.

Commentary

35. The school has rightly focused on raising standards in English and mathematics. This means that science has not received the same attention. Nevertheless, over the last year teaching and standards have improved to reach average levels. Most pupils reach expected levels of scientific knowledge and understanding during Year 6, with a growing minority exceeding these. These standards are similar in all aspects of the subject. Teaching has improved because teachers have updated their planning to include greater challenge for more confident pupils and more opportunities for practical work. These developments mean that the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues raised by the previous inspection.
36. The classrooms for the pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are cramped. As pupils get older and bigger the impact of this on their work in science becomes more pronounced. The lack of space creates greater difficulty for teachers and pupils. It inevitably limits opportunities for pupils to work independently on a wide range of practical investigations and experiments, though the teachers try hard and generally successfully to overcome these deficiencies. The co-ordinator for the subject has a realistic appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses in science. She has rightly identified that in order to raise standards further the school needs to organise existing information from assessments. Currently information exists that is not used consistently and fully to detect patterns in pupils' progress and evaluate what the school is doing.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory but improving.
- The appointment of technician/support teacher has been effective in raising standards.
- There is a good range of equipment.
- The pupils have good word-processing skills and are competent in using the computers.
- There are no effective systems for assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Some good use is made of ICT in other subjects.

Commentary

37. Standards have improved since the last inspection. They were described as being well below average then and are now below average. The school has invested in a set of laptop computers as they had no room for a suite of computers until this term. This has been effective in allowing pupils to use computers. The laptops are now in a spare classroom as a suite, and with the appointment of a specialist technician/teacher, who is supporting very well, the pupils are now beginning to make good progress. Each class is timetabled for sessions other than their ICT lessons in the computer room, enabling skills to be used in subjects such as English and mathematics. Each classroom has at least one computer as well and some of these are used

well to support learning in other subjects. Two lessons were observed during the inspection and the very effective support of the technician/teacher ensured that the quality of teaching and learning in both of these lessons was good. However, not all lessons are supported by the technician/teacher. The headteacher, who is co-ordinator for this subject at present, is leading the subject well. For example, the employment of the technician/teacher has been a good investment and the setting up of a permanent suite has enabled the pupils' skills to be developed more effectively.

38. The pupils have good skills in word-processing and can present their work attractively. They are confident in using the computers, being able to handle menus and load and save work at will. There are limited opportunities for the pupils to work at control and monitoring as yet, and standards in these areas are well below average. Plans are in place for this to be addressed. The specialist is in the process of producing an updated system of assessment, so that there are clear records of what skills each pupil has mastered.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

39. Some good use is made of ICT in other subjects. For example, the Internet has been used as a research resource in geography. Some good work was also observed during the inspection, where pupils were using computers to support their learning in mathematics. However, this area is presently still developmental although the school has plans to address this.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in detail, and history and geography were sampled. Two geography lessons were seen and in these lessons the teaching was satisfactory. No lesson in history was seen. In both history and geography the curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education benefits from close links with the local church.
- Religious education plays an important part in the pupils' understanding of other cultures.

Commentary

40. Although little teaching was observed during the inspection, that seen was good. The lessons seen and the pupils' response in these lessons indicate that the impact of religious education in the broad curriculum is good. Pupils have a secure knowledge of Christianity and of a number of other faiths. Their achievement in religious education is good throughout the school.
41. Work effectively focuses on learning about and from religious and human experiences. The principle focus is the teaching of Christianity, but some other faiths are studied in appropriate depth. Pupils are taught to identify similarities and differences between their own beliefs and those of others. There is an expectation that pupils will respect the opinions and beliefs of others and this is evident in pupils' everyday behaviour, and in a religious education lesson when pupils explored the symbolism of light in Christianity and Hinduism and then focused on a candle to reflect and meditate. Their work in religious education plays an important part in their understanding of different cultures and there is a good range of artefacts to support teaching in the subject and the development of teachers' knowledge of world faiths. The pupils' understanding of the importance of the church in Christianity and in the community is enhanced by the close links that the school has established with the local church.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

None of these subjects was a focus of the inspection, and all were therefore sampled. No lessons were seen in design and technology or music. The teaching observed in art and design was good and in physical education it was satisfactory.

42. A limited amount of art and design was observed during the inspection, so valid judgements on the quality of teaching, achievement and standards are not possible. However, a range of activities was seen during the creative arts afternoon and these showed a wide range of opportunities. For example, some pupils were working with clay, others were sketching a still life, whilst others were experimenting with marbling effects. The use of teaching assistants to take various groups and share their expertise and enthusiasm is effective during these sessions as it enables groups to be kept small and so all get better opportunities. The system of groups rotating every two weeks ensures a wide range of experiences for the pupils.
43. The relatively new co-ordinator for art and design has recently started building up a portfolio of work which demonstrates some good quality work. The display of pupils' work, properly framed, in the foyer raises the profile of the subject. The pupils get the opportunity to work with visiting artists, for example, during the Arts Week, which gives them yet further good experiences.
44. Design and technology was not a focus of the inspection and no evidence was gained regarding the quality of teaching and learning. However, the school ensures that the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. This was reflected in displays of the pupils' work in Years 3 and 4 and in photographs and samples of work from the pupils in Years 5 and 6. The limited amount of work seen included planning and evaluations to the standard expected for the pupils' ages.
45. No class music was seen during the inspection, so valid judgements on standards, the quality of teaching and learning and achievement are not possible. However, there was ample evidence of the range of opportunities enjoyed by the pupils. For example, a CD of the production from last term showed enthusiasm and good achievement in performance skills. The pupils had written the script for this production with the music composed by the headteacher. During the inspection a range of instrumental tuition was taking place. A number of pupils learn the violin, woodwind and brass and there are good recorder groups.
46. The school covers the required elements for physical education. The teachers have produced plans that link dance to other subjects through topics such as 'The Rainforest'. For the most part this is helpful to pupils although it sometimes becomes too contrived and some pupils feel too self-conscious to work properly. During the inspection there was an example of good teaching of gymnastics. This lesson was successful because it was well planned to build on previous work and tangibly develop pupils' skills every few minutes. The pupils appreciated this, enjoyed meeting new challenges and during the lesson worked at a level of skill exceeding expectations for their age.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

PSHE was sampled by studying the programme of work and talking to the headteacher.

47. The headteacher successfully leads this part of the curriculum. Consequently, planned work includes opportunities for the pupils to discuss issues such as tolerance, diversity and racism. Efforts are made to help pupils use their own experience in order to extend their ideas and formulate views. However, the school is very aware that true personal development for the pupils is about more than planned lessons. All staff, therefore, seek to ensure that the ethos of the school constantly backs up work in specific lessons.
48. There are numerous examples of the school enriching this part of the curriculum. These include, for example, an 'environment' club and opportunities for pupils to work towards 'Junior Citizenship' awards. While some projects have an inbuilt evaluation system, and staff judge

how well others have gone informally, the school does not systematically and rigorously evaluate all its work.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
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	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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