

INSPECTION REPORT

**COLLIERS GREEN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Cranbrook

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118716

Headteacher: Mrs Joyce Nash

Lead inspector: Mr David Whatson

Dates of inspection: 26 – 28 April 2004

Inspection number: 255861

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 Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	111
School address:	Colliers Green Cranbrook Kent
Postcode:	TN17 2LR
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Wooley
Date of previous inspection:	1 st June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Colliers Green Church of England Primary School is much smaller than most other schools. It is situated in a rural setting in the High Weald of Kent. It serves no one village but draws its pupils from the immediate surrounding area. Overall, the economic circumstances are above the national average: the number of pupils entitled to free school meals (0.8 per cent) is well below the national average. There are 111 pupils on roll, of whom 11 are in the Reception class. The number of pupils in each year group varies considerably, so pupils are taught in four mixed age classes. There are more boys than girls; in some year groups nearly twice as many. The school has few ethnic minority pupils and none for whom English is not their first language. The great majority of pupils are of a white British heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average at 16.8 per cent. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need, at 0.9 per cent, is below the national average. Children's level of attainment on entry to the school is above that expected nationally. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school part of the way through their primary education is high in some year groups. The turnover of teaching staff in the last two years has been high, due to retirement and personal bereavement. Religious education and acts of collective worship were not inspected as part of this inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23494	Mr David Whatson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics; Art and Design; The Foundation Stage Curriculum; Personal, Social and Health Education, including Citizenship; English as an Additional Language.
8991	Mrs Pamela Goldsack	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
20832	Dr Mohinder Galowalia	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Information and Communication Technology; Design and Technology; Geography.
23805	Mrs Margaret Lygoe	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; History; Music; Physical Education; Special Educational Needs.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Colliers Green Church of England Primary School provides a good standard of education.

As a result, pupils achieve well and develop good attitudes and standards of behaviour. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses¹ are:

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 because of good teaching.
- In English, mathematics and science, standards at the end of Year 6 are well above those seen nationally.
- There are weaknesses in the provision for children of Reception age.
- The good leadership of the headteacher has brought about significant changes at the school.
- Attendance is above the national average.
- Development planning is not undertaken systematically or focused on school priorities.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour help them to achieve well.
- Many subjects do not carry out assessments on pupils' progress well enough.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school has maintained many aspects of the good provision noted at that time. Pupils' level of achievement has improved, as have standards in many subjects. The accommodation and the coverage of the National Curriculum have also improved significantly.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall achievement at the school is good. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is above that expected and when pupils leave at the end of Year 6 standards are well above those expected nationally. However, the rate of learning across the school is not constant. Although most children in the Reception class will attain the expected goals for their age by the time they start Year 1, many will underachieve in relation to their potential. Achievement is better in Years 1 and 2, and overall pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning; achievement is good in science. In the national tests in 2003 taken at the end of Year 2, results were in line with the national average in reading and writing but lower when compared with similar schools. This is because there were far more boys than girls in this year group. In mathematics results were in line with the national average, and below those of similar schools. Teacher- assessed science results were in the top 5 per cent nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are similar to those attained in recent years. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and capabilities. By the end of Year 6 standards seen during the inspection reflect the well above average test scores of recent years in English and science and show an improvement in mathematics, in which they were above average.

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

¹ The strengths and weaknesses are listed in order of significance.

In recent years standards have fluctuated dramatically at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This reflects the differences in small year groups that have often been affected by high levels of mobility and gender imbalance. Although the trend in performance has kept pace with the improving national picture at the end of Year 6, at the end of Year 2 it has fallen, because there have been nearly twice as many boys as girls and, nationally, boys do not do as well in reading and writing as girls. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress, as do those who are identified as gifted and talented.

Pupils do well throughout the school in personal, social, and health education (PSHE), including citizenship, and standards are above those expected by the end of Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected in Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. By the end of Year 6, standards in history are above those expected and pupils achieve well. In both design and technology and art and design standards across the school are as expected nationally and pupils make satisfactory progress. Judgements were not made in other subjects because of lack of evidence or because they were not seen being taught during the inspection.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, is good; their moral and social development is very good. Pupils' attitudes to the school and their behaviour are good. Attendance is good and punctuality is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good; it is good in Classes 3 and 4². Although there are good elements in Class 2 it is satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory in Class 1. Teaching in Classes 2,3 and 4 is often characterised by very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils, therefore, feel secure and ready to learn. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Because of this, lessons are planned well and build on pupils' previous learning. Planning is best in Years 3 to 6, where activities are more closely matched to pupils of different abilities. Therefore pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress. Pupils work well collaboratively because of their good social skills, and have a good sense of responsibility for their own work because of their involvement in assessing and marking it. Teaching in the Reception class, however, is unsatisfactory. Planning does not provide a structured approach that specifically identifies appropriate tasks for children. Overall, methods of assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory, except in the Reception class, where they are not.

The school provides a good curriculum that meets the needs of most of its pupils, except in the Reception class, where it is unsatisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment through visits and clubs are very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory; there are very good outdoor facilities.

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good and help pupils to learn well. Pupils' involvement in the school's work is good.

The school fosters good links with other schools, with the community and has a very good partnership with parents.

² There are four classes. Class 1 includes pupils of Reception age and some pupils from Year 1. Class 2 includes pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3. Class 3 includes pupils from Years 3 and 4 and Class 4 includes pupils from Years 5 and 6.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is good, with many good qualities, such as her vision for the school and ability to bring about change through teamwork. She, like most members of the strong team she has built, has high aspirations and a sense of purpose, aimed largely at developing independent learners who enjoy their work while maintaining high standards. In many respects this reflects good leadership, but it is undermined by weaknesses in the education provided for the youngest children, and a lack of planning that reflects the school's ambitions and priorities. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with what the school provides, their children's achievements and the very good relationships between home and school. Pupils state that they thoroughly enjoy the wide range of activities and experiences that the school provides for them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of education provided for children of Reception age.
- Ensure that planning for future development, both short and long-term, is systematic and focuses on the school's priorities.
- Develop systems to assess pupils' attainment and track their progress in all subjects of the National Curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Overall, pupils' achievement at the school is good, but it is not constant and children in Reception class do not achieve as well as they could. By the end of Year 6 standards are above the national average. These are reflected in current standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- In Year 6 the 2003 national test results were well above the national average in English and science.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6.
- Children underachieve in the Reception class.
- Science results at the end of Year 2 are exceptionally good and pupils achieve very well.

Commentary

1. The number of children entering the Reception class each year varies considerably but is often small; this year it is 11. Children's attainment on entry is above the expected level but, due to limited progress and underachievement, attainment on entry to Year 1 is broadly in line with that expected nationally.

The Foundation Stage

Area of learning	Achievement	Possibility of meeting the expected goal for their age
Personal development	Satisfactory	Most are likely to exceed it
Language development	Underachievement	Most are likely to meet it
Mathematical development	Underachievement	Most are likely to meet it
Knowledge and understanding of the world	No judgement made	No judgement made
Physical development	Satisfactory	Most are likely to meet it
Creative development	No judgement made	No judgement made

2. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about children's knowledge and understanding of the world or their creative development.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.7 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.4 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.8 (18.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The end of Year 2 results in reading and writing in the 2003 national tests were in line with the national average, but well below average when compared with those of similar schools. This was not typical of the previous years, which were well above the national average and reflect a more capable year group, but these results did add to the downward trend in performance of recent years. The general decline is attributed to the presence of a far greater number of boys than girls in the last three years. Although there is less difference in attainment between boys and girls than that found nationally, standards still reflect the national picture; boys do less well in reading and writing than girls. Results in mathematics were above the national average, but below those of similar schools. Pupil mobility in this year group had been high, with a significant number of more capable pupils leaving to enter private education, which was the reason why standards were lower in 2003 than in

2002. Those who sat the national tests achieved satisfactorily. The teacher-assessed science results of 2003 were in the top 5 per cent of the country and reflect the quality of teaching the pupils received in this subject and the emphasis the school places on teaching pupils through practical, independent work. Because of this, pupils achieved very well. Inspection findings indicate that current standards and achievement are similar to those achieved in recent years. Standards in mathematics and science have improved since the last inspection, science significantly so. Over the last few years the overall standards in reading and writing have also been above those noted when the school was last inspected.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.1 (29.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.9 (28.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.4 (27.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were well above the national average in English and science, and above average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, they were well above in English, above in science and in line in mathematics. This year group also experienced a higher than average rate of mobility. In relation to their prior attainment and capabilities, pupils achieved well. Science results were better than the year before due to the school's efforts to raise achievement in this subject by devoting more time to the teaching of science and emphasising practical investigative work. Although standards fluctuate from year to year due to differences in year groups, standards have improved at a similar rate to the national trend. However, the difference in performance between boys and girls varies considerably from year to year and is often different from the national trend. This is because the number of boys and girls in each year group differs greatly from year to year. The effects of this are magnified by the very small number in pupils in some year groups; on occasion as few as five. Standards in English and science are similar to those achieved last year, but they have improved in mathematics; inspection evidence indicates that they are now well above those expected. This is because, following analysis of last year's relative weakness in the mathematics results, it was decided to teach pupils in single-aged classes. The current Year 6 is particularly able; school data predicts some very good results that would demonstrate their very good achievement. Standards in English, mathematics, and science are much higher than those achieved when the school was last inspected.

Other subjects of the curriculum

Subject	By the end of Year 2		By the end of Year 6	
	Achievement	Attainment	Achievement	Attainment
ICT	Satisfactory	As expected	Good	As expected
History	No judgement	No judgement	Good	Above that expected
Art and design	Satisfactory	As expected	Satisfactory	As expected
Design and technology	No judgement	No judgement	Good	As expected
PSHE – including citizenship	Good	Above that expected	Good	Above that expected

5. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are good and they supplement pupils' learning in other subjects well. Pupils' skills in ICT are adequate and are used appropriately in some subjects, such as art and design, to aid pupils' learning. Judgements were not made in geography, music or physical education in Years 2 or 6 or in design and technology and history at the end of Year 2, either because there was insufficient evidence or because lessons in these subjects could not be seen during the inspection.

6. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well in relation to their targets, especially in Years 3 to 6, because teachers in these year groups are highly skilled in meeting the needs of pupils of different abilities. As a result, most of them attain the nationally expected standards in the national tests.

7. As the school identifies gifted and talented pupils and provides well for them in lessons and out of class activities, they achieve well. For example, several pupils in the current Year 6 are following work normally planned for pupils in the first year of secondary school.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils’ attitudes are **good**. Their behaviour and attendance are **good**. Pupils’ personal development, including spiritual and cultural development, is **good** and their social and moral development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils are keen to do well and they thoroughly enjoy their lessons and other activities.
- Levels of attendance are above the national average; punctuality is very good.
- Relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults are very good and contribute to pupils’ confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils behave well and their social and moral development is fostered very well.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to develop multicultural awareness through the curriculum.

Commentary

8. Pupils arrive promptly each morning and their attendance is above the national average. Parents show very good support for the school by complying with its high expectations regarding attendance. Very good punctuality ensures learning starts promptly, and good attendance ensures that pupils do not miss any of their education; this is one reason for their good achievement. The good rate of attendance has been maintained since the last inspection.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

9. All pupils, irrespective of ability or gender, say that they enjoy school and learning; they make the most of all that the school has to offer. They are enthusiastic participants in the many clubs and extra-curricular activities. All pupils are fully included in all aspects of the school. They show a lively interest in school life, behave well and work hard to improve. In particular, older pupils were seen to be very attentive and diligent in their work. However, this was not true of the youngest children in the Foundation Stage, who were not as productive as they could be. Pupils are mature and responsible when working independently in class and they approach their homework seriously.

10. Pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school is as good as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils support the school rules and its high expectations of behaviour. Parents agree that pupils like coming to school and achieve high standards of behaviour. There have been no exclusions for poor behaviour over the last reporting year. Any lapses in behaviour tend to be minor and are quickly and appropriately addressed; a fact confirmed in discussion with pupils and parents.

11. The school’s promotion of pupils’ social and moral development is very good; it builds well on the positive attitudes that pupils bring to school. The school is aware that due to its small size it must be positive in promoting pupils’ personal development. It does this successfully by planning for pupils to work not only in different pairs and groups in lessons, but also with pupils in different classes. A wide range of educational visits is provided that help enrich pupils’ learning and overcome the isolation of being a small rural school. Pupils are trustworthy, well aware of the difference between right and wrong and they clearly understand what is expected of them. A key part of the school’s successful strategy to encourage good behaviour is to ask pupils to reflect and write about what they have done wrong and how they can improve.

12. Pupils' spiritual development is good. They explore opportunities to consider human values and feelings in assemblies and in lessons in PSHE. They display empathy for those in need and fund-raise actively for local and national charities. Pupils are often given the time to reflect on their actions and to evaluate their work and that of others. Those pupils who lack confidence or self-esteem, academically or socially, are continually encouraged by all adults, so that they achieve well.

13. Cultural awareness is good and there is a regular programme of visits, visitors and participation in local festivals and events that promotes pupils' knowledge and understanding of the local culture and community. However, as at the last inspection, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to appreciate the differences in religions, cultural heritage and way of life in a multicultural Britain.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good, although there are weaknesses that centre largely round the provision for the youngest children.

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory. It is good in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science, but underdeveloped in many others. Overall, the school provides a good curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, although it is unsatisfactory for children in the Reception class. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. All pupils have access to good levels of support, advice, and guidance. Links with parents are very good.

Teaching and learning

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 because of good teaching.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in the Reception class and children underachieve.
- Good assessment procedures in English, mathematics, and science aid pupils' learn well in these subjects.
- Teachers work hard on developing pupils' independence and build well on their positive attitudes to learning.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory in many subjects and in the Foundation Stage³.

Commentary

14. As at the time of the last inspection, the overall quality of teaching is good. This confirms parental beliefs. However, it is not consistent across the school. Even though good teaching was seen in Classes 2, 3 and 4, the majority of good and very good teaching was in Classes 3 and 4. Consequently, pupils achieve well in these year groups. Most of the teaching of English and mathematics is good, especially for the older pupils, and therefore they achieve well in these subjects. However, teaching in the Reception class is unsatisfactory. Two out of the five lessons seen were unsatisfactory; the rest were satisfactory. Although pupils make reasonable progress they do not achieve as well as they could because of lack of challenge.

³ **Foundation Stage**

The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the Reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also include knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3	12	7	2	0	0

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

15. In Classes 2, 3 and 4 teachers have good subject knowledge and professional expertise in the core subjects of English, mathematics, and science. Lessons are planned thoroughly, with careful attention paid to ensuring that pupils build on what has been learned previously. Teachers know their pupils well, and by deliberately choosing interesting and challenging activities that are delivered at a fast pace, and often in a humorous way, they engage pupils' good attitudes and encourage their desire to learn. As a result, pupils are productive, collaborate well together and learn well.

16. The beginnings and ends of many lessons are good learning experiences for all pupils. At the start of the lesson the teacher clearly shares the lesson's learning intentions with the pupils, and then returns to these at the end of the lesson. Through questioning, pupils are encouraged to assess their own learning, or that of their classmates. They are, therefore, closely involved in their own learning. Instructions and explanations are clear so that pupils make good progress in their knowledge, understanding, and skills. Often, interactive whiteboards are used to good purpose. In many cases, as in the ICT lessons, teaching assistants are deployed well, especially during the main activity, but this is not always true of all assistants at the start or the end of a lesson; they rarely interact with pupils at this time as a way of encouraging pupils' participation in the lesson.

17. Across most of the school there are three particularly noteworthy areas:

- * Marking. In an attempt to involve pupils more fully in their own learning, teachers mark work in great detail. They direct pupils clearly to areas where they need to improve.
- * Homework. This is consistently set across the school and builds well on the learning that takes place in lessons. Homework encourages pupils' good achievement, as they take it seriously and are helped well by parents and carers at home.
- * Because of the high level of care exhibited by staff, pupils said they feel safe, secure, and able to ask for help when in difficulty.

18. Although many of the lessons seen exhibited these qualities, in a significant proportion of lessons teaching was satisfactory. All teachers know their pupils well. In the good lessons they use the results of assessment to provide an appropriate level of challenge and thus pupils achieve well. This is made easier in Classes 3 and 4, where there are pupils from only two year groups. It is more difficult in Class 2, as this covers three year groups. In this class there was, on occasion, insufficient difference in the tasks set for pupils of different abilities.

19. In the very best lessons, the teachers employ a good range of imaginative strategies and instil a sense of curiosity and enthusiasm. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson the questioning, aimed at pupils of different abilities, and the discussion became very intense as both the pupils and teacher drew their ideas and examples from different strands of the mathematics curriculum. The lively pace evident in this lesson, and the science lesson in Class 2 in which pupils investigated the local area, was based on a great deal of practical work and independent thought on the part of pupils. They found this both interesting and challenging and they therefore learnt well.

20. Most teachers have high expectations about the quality and quantity of pupils' work, and this encourages good achievement. However, this is not consistent across the school. Those pupils in Year 1 who are taught in Class 1 have a different experience from those who are taught in Class 2. Because of this, Year 1 pupils who are taught in Class 1 do not achieve as well or attain similar standards to those Year 1 pupils who are taught in Class 2.

21. In many of the satisfactory lessons, including those in the Reception class, some of the activities provided for pupils were too prescribed; pupils did not have the chance to learn for themselves. Pupils were not encouraged to be involved in their learning, as teachers did not ask enough questions or give them the responsibility of choosing materials or equipment. The pace of learning, therefore slowed and, occasionally, pupils became restless and inattentive and did not learn as much as they could have done. In some of these lessons, teaching assistants were not deployed well at each stage of the lesson, sometimes merely sitting with pupils at the beginning or end of a lesson rather than interacting with them. This was very evident in the Reception class where, because of a lack of direction from the class teacher, the level of stimulating interaction between adult and child was limited.

22. In the unsatisfactory lessons in the Reception class children underachieved. They made satisfactory progress, because their own positive attitudes to work prompted their curiosity. However, because of a lack of detailed planning, adult interaction, careful assessment and structure in some of their activities, they did not achieve as well as they could have.

23. Assessment is satisfactory overall. There are some good assessment procedures in English, mathematics, and science. In many other subjects, such as ICT, art and design and music, although individual teachers assess pupils' work, there are no whole school procedures used in the same way to assess pupils' learning or to check their progress. Children in the Reception class are assessed against the stepping stones⁴ and the Early Learning Goals⁵ but this is not done regularly enough to provide sufficient information for the teacher to plan activities for pupils at different levels of development. There is regular and continued observation by both the teacher and the teaching assistant, but this is not closely linked to the completion of a task or a specific learning intention. As a result, many tasks are not challenging, do not build on earlier learning and pupils therefore underachieve.

The Curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum for pupils in Classes 2, 3 and 4, with very good opportunities for enrichment. The curriculum for the Reception children is unsatisfactory. The accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The curriculum is being developed well to make learning increasingly interesting and relevant to the pupils in Classes 2, 3, and 4.
- There are shortcomings in the provision for Reception children and activities are not always suitable for their stage of development.
- Extra-curricular provision and out of class activities are very good.
- Provision for the personal and social education of the pupils is good.
- Provision for individual pupils with learning needs is good.
- Outdoor accommodation is very good.

⁴ Stepping Stones:

These are the steps taken to reach each Early Learning Goals.

⁵ Early Learning Goals

Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

Commentary

24. There has been a substantial improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection. Shortcomings in ICT, art and design, design and technology and music have been tackled successfully. Pupils now have full access to the National Curriculum in these subjects. The school has successfully implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and standards have risen.
25. Effective links between subjects make learning coherent, relevant and often fun. The school is responding imaginatively to its vision of implementing the recently published primary strategy 'Excellence and Enjoyment'. For example, an exciting local topic for Class 3 on smugglers captures pupils' interest. The school also uses the rich rural environment very effectively to increase pupils' understanding and appreciation of science and art.
26. Although the curriculum for children in the Reception class does cover each area of learning, it does not take into account the detailed statutory guidance for this age group sufficiently. Planned activities are not accurately matched to the varying needs of the children, and this limits learning. Some activities lack structure and purpose, while other planned work is unsuitably complex for children in the Reception Stage.
27. The school offers a rich variety of additional activities. Classroom learning is enriched by the study of French and by a variety of visits and visitors; pupils also enjoy a residential visit in Years 5 and 6. Pupils have very good opportunities to take part in a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs. Their experience is further extended during 'special' subject weeks, workshop activities and outdoor projects, when they work with visiting experts and with parents. Such activities not only bring an element of fun to their learning but also provide good opportunities to inspire gifted and talented pupils.
28. Provision for pupils' PSHE is good, both in terms of planned lessons and throughout the school day. Personal and social education is implicit in most class lessons. The school council has introduced pupils to the concept of democracy, and shared activities such as the outdoor projects extend their sense of community. Sex education and drug misuse are covered well with the help of external agencies and the school nurse.
29. There is good equality of access to the curriculum. The school identifies and provides well for gifted and talented pupils so that they achieve well. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is good overall. Problems are identified early and advice is sought where relevant. In Years 3 to 6 in particular, activities are varied well to cater for pupils' individual needs. Through careful planning between teachers, difficulties associated with planning for classes with different year groups are generally overcome well.
30. The accommodation has improved significantly since the last inspection, partly because of strong financial support from parents, and is now satisfactory. Outdoor provision is very good, but the classrooms and the hall are small.
31. In many subjects resources are good. When additional ones are needed for a specific purpose, for example in art and design, parents are very forthcoming with their contributions. Resources are particularly good in ICT and have added considerably to pupils' achievement. In most cases the good knowledge and experience of teachers in relation to the National Curriculum and pupils' needs and abilities ensure that pupils receive a good all-round education. However, this is not true of the Reception class, where there is insufficient knowledge and understanding of how to implement the statutory guidance for this age, especially in a mixed-age class. There is a reasonable number of support staff and on most occasions they are deployed well.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good and help pupils to learn well. All pupils have equal access to a good level of support and guidance for their personal and academic development. The involvement of pupils in the school's work is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The arrangements for health and safety, child protection and pastoral care are good.
- The family atmosphere of such a small school ensures that staff know each pupil very well and value them as individuals.
- Pupils receive good support and guidance for their personal and academic development.
- The school provides a secure and attractive learning environment in which pupils feel safe and confident.
- Pupils' views are regularly taken into account and their ideas valued.

Commentary

32. As at the time of the last inspection, the arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety from the Reception class to the end of Year 6 are good. Child Protection procedures are firmly established, with good records of concerns and appropriate filing. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, parents stated their belief that the school is safe and secure.

33. Because the school is small, all the staff know the pupils well, and pupils trust them to provide help when needed. Pupils state that they feel teachers help them when they need it in lessons. Because of the open atmosphere, pupils ask questions confidently, and this helps to promote their good learning. The great majority of pupils state that there is an adult to go to if they are worried at school. Those interviewed were very happy and positive about their school.

34. Very good relationships and ethos are very effective in settling in new pupils, despite the high level of pupil mobility in some year groups. There are good links with the local secondary school and these help pupils to transfer with ease. Contacts with the many pre-school facilities and arrangements for induction into the Reception class are adequate.

35. Although monitoring systems relating to pupils' personal development are mainly informal, teachers have a clear idea of their progress and give good guidance on how to improve. This ensures that all pupils' needs are appropriately addressed and especially well for pupils with learning difficulties. The achievements and personal development of pupils are regularly celebrated, with good work, behaviour or attitudes to others being rewarded during assemblies. This reinforces the school's aim to value achievements highly.

36. There are good procedures to assess pupils' attainment and to check on their progress in English, mathematics, and science. Targets are set and reviewed regularly and pupils are closely involved in the process. Because of this, pupils, especially the older ones, know their targets, what level they have reached, where they need to improve, and how to do so. The system is effective in involving most pupils and has a positive effect on what pupils are able to achieve. Assessment procedures and target setting are not as well developed in all subjects, but pupils still receive good academic guidance from their teachers through detailed marking of their work.

37. Teachers always listen to pupils and value their comments. Opportunities during lessons and the school day to discuss their work and their feelings are frequent. Pupils' ability to express themselves well and their self-confidence ensure that these times are well used. The school council is another forum in which pupils' views are expressed, many of which have been effective in bringing about changes within the school, such as when they were consulted on the changes to the outside space.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **very good**. Links with the community and other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Parents make a very significant contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home.
- Parents are provided with good information about school life and how well their children are doing.
- Good links with the community add well to learning opportunities.

Commentary

38. The school is highly regarded by parents. The school values its very good links with parents and welcomes their views and opinions. Mindful of its unique, rural location, the school has successfully established itself as a community composed of pupils, staff members and families. Parents are enthusiastic supporters of the school and of their own children's academic progress. They raise considerable amount of funds, provide essential support for many practical activities within school and reinforce the school's arrangements for homework well. All this contributes to pupils' good achievement. The significant links with parents noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.

39. The information provided to parents about the school is good. Newsletters are issued regularly, and their friendly format maintains the school's family atmosphere. The outdoor notice board for parents is updated daily. An overall view of the curriculum is issued for each class every term and this gives parents a good idea about what their children will be studying and how they can help them at home. Pupils' end of year reports have improved since the last inspection and now meet statutory requirements. Overall, they are satisfactory; the most detailed information is provided on English and mathematics. The reports on progress in other subjects tend to be brief and descriptive about what pupils have covered rather than informative about how well they are doing.

40. The headteacher and her deputy play leading roles in enabling pupils to take part in local events, such as music festivals, and to use additional facilities offered by local schools. This is further strengthened by participation in sporting events with other local primary schools. There are good links with the local church, where assemblies and the school leavers' service are held. There are very good links with the local secondary school through a range of activities and contacts that start in Year 5. This effective link is very productive and means that learning is enriched for pupils in Class 4 and that the transfer between the two schools is less stressful. Arrangements with local schools and colleges also supplement the delivery of the physical education and ICT curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The management of the school and its governance are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The headteacher has a clear vision, a sense of purpose and high aspirations.
- There is a strong team of adults with a shared vision of 'Enjoyment and Excellence'.
- The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- Development planning is not undertaken systematically or focused on school priorities.
- Governors do not sufficiently challenge or monitor the school.

Commentary

41. The current headteacher has been in post for two-and-a-half years. Like her predecessor, her leadership is good; a view strongly endorsed by many parents. The headteacher's vision is based firmly on her knowledge of the school, its pupils and the most recent educational guidance. Since her appointment she has built a strong team, many of whom share the same vision of maintaining high academic standards while presenting learning as fun. As the headteacher and staff have a good knowledge of the curriculum for pupils aged five to eleven, this vision is successfully being translated into practice. In their own teaching, both the headteacher and her deputy act as good role models on how to pass this vision on to others. This has helped bring about many of the improvements at the school commented on so positively by parents during the pre-inspection meeting. However, this sense of purpose and these high aspirations are not being transferred into the provision for children in the Reception class, as the level of knowledge and understanding of the curriculum for young children and how to teach them is limited at this level.

42. As the school is so small and time is limited, much of the monitoring of its performance and effectiveness is undertaken informally but successfully due to the good teamwork of the small staff. Their knowledge of the school is used well, and the headteacher and her deputy have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and how these may change in relation to the ability and gender balance of different year groups. They, like their colleagues, are responsive and meet these changes well, striving continually to raise achievement. The school's focus on priorities in science and mathematics in the past has improved achievement. As a forward-thinking school it has also provided appropriate additional resources and training for ICT. This has greatly improved provision as well as pupils' achievement. Staff training, as well as the school's systems to improve the performance of staff, has also been used well to bring about these improvements and meet individual needs. In an attempt to overcome some of the difficulties faced by a small school where there is not an expert for every area, the headteacher has employed external agencies and consultants in an attempt to improve the school's effectiveness, for example in the Foundation Stage. However, the plans to raise achievement, improve specific areas of the school's provision, and generally fulfil the vision are not clearly communicated in the school's long or short-term development planning, and in some cases this has hindered improvement and made it difficult to evaluate the impact of any changes.

43. The potential impact on pupils is at the centre of all financial decisions, and the school seeks best value for money in its spending. It has used its available resources well to further educational aims. This is evident in the decision to employ an additional teacher so that mathematics could be taught in single-aged classes. However, the lack of both short-term and long-term development plans that reflect the school's priorities means that there is no strategic financial planning linked to the school's priorities or vision. The school has, however, been prudent in maintaining a large carry forward that is intended to minimise the disruption caused by high pupil mobility and varying sizes of year groups. Although the school has a low unit cost and achievement is good overall, there are pockets of weakness (namely the Foundation Stage), so that not all the money the school receives is wisely spent.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	271,418.00
Total expenditure	271,331.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,444.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	28,988.00
Balance carried forward to the next	27,967.00

44. The governing body makes a satisfactory contribution to the leadership of the school. Governors have supported it well in many of its improvements, especially those related to the accommodation. They are aware of the school's strengths and the difficulties faced by being such a small school and of how the school is attempting to overcome them. Although a few key individual members, particularly the Chair of Governors, question the school well and hold it to account, this is not done regularly by most members. The governing body fulfils all of its statutory duties.

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

SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **unsatisfactory**.

45. All children, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress but **they underachieve** in relation to their capabilities. Children enter the Reception class in either September or January. Arrangements for induction are adequate and result in a smooth transition to Reception from home. Parents are pleased with these arrangements. Currently there are eleven children in Reception; this number can vary considerably from year to year. Many children have experienced some form of pre-school provision. The school has recently made contact with a few of the pre-school groups. Overall, children's attainment on entry is above that expected for their age, especially in their personal development and in their spoken language, but many underachieve because of weaknesses in the quality of teaching, assessment and the curriculum. Internal accommodation, although adequate, is not well used; there are good facilities for outside work. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator does not have a secure knowledge of how to deliver the statutory guidance for the Foundation Stage, especially as children currently in Reception class are taught with pupils from Year 1

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision in personal, social, and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Supportive relationships encourage children to be confident and happy.
- There is little planned structure in this area of learning.

Commentary

46. It is likely that most children will exceed the expected level by the end of Reception because of satisfactory teaching. The opportunity for younger children to work with older pupils in a mixed-age class helps them to understand what is expected of them. Because of this and the good attitudes with which they start school, many settle to tasks sensibly and behave well. The warm, family atmosphere generated by the good ratio of adults to children, and the caring attitudes of all adults, encourage children to be happy and confident. Children make satisfactory progress because of the ethos of the school, although there is little formal structure given to this area of their learning. Children have many opportunities during the day to play and work together. There was little specific reference to the relevant stepping stones being covered in the short term planning for these activities and few specific or regularly recorded assessments in relation to this area of learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The provision in communication, language, and literacy is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children do not achieve as well as they could.
- Expectations are too low.
- There is insufficient talk and discussion between adults and children.
- Assessment procedures are not detailed enough.

47. In many aspects of this area of learning most children will meet the expected learning goals at

the end of Reception. Most children are attentive and speak with confidence when playing with other children or talking to adults. Children recognise and say many of the sounds that letters make; a few children know the sounds that two letters make when joined together. Most children enjoy books and handle them with care. They know many of the most common conventions of reading, have a good sight vocabulary and a reasonable number of methods of reading new words and they understand a story. Children make reasonable progress in these two areas because there is an appropriate amount of time for them to engage in conversation and because reading skills are regularly taught. In addition, there is great parental support, for example through parents hearing their children read at home. However, teaching is unsatisfactory because in relation to their prior attainment and capabilities many children underachieve. This is because:

- * Teachers and teaching assistants do not regularly talk to the children in a way that encourages them to explain themselves, engage them in meaningful conversations or extend their play.
- * The teaching of reading skills is undertaken in noisy and cramped conditions inside the classroom. As a result, these sessions are not as productive as they could be and follow-up activities do not challenge children to build on their knowledge.

48. Due to unsatisfactory teaching, it is unlikely that many children will meet the expected goals in writing by the end of Reception. Many children's ability to write, draw or colour in a picture is limited; the result is often poorly formed or untidy and is below that expected for their age. Few undertake independent writing. Many children make unsatisfactory progress and underachieve because:

- * Expectations are too low; children are expected to copy or trace what an adult has written for them, and poorly presented work is too readily accepted.
- * Independent writing activities are not well structured; the topics being written about are not meaningful or relevant.
- * Children are taught to form their letters correctly but progress is limited because this is not regularly reinforced when writing in other areas of their learning.
- * Notes of the children's achievements are not specific to particular steps that children have attained in their learning, nor are they used to identify what children need to learn next.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Many children underachieve.
- There is insufficient structure and challenge to children's learning.
- Assessments are insufficiently detailed and are not used to plan the next step in a child's learning.

49. Teaching is unsatisfactory as there is insufficient structure and challenge. The needs of the more capable children are often met by teaching them with older children. However, due to a lack of assessment, the activities planned for most of the other children are not appropriate for their capabilities or their prior attainment. Activities, such as learning a nursery rhyme to do with counting, were too easily accomplished. There is a lack of detail in the planning to build on prior learning or to direct the teaching assistant into meaningful and sustained conversations with the children aimed at extending their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Opportunities to reinforce basic numbers during the day are not fully used. Therefore, although many are likely to attain the expected goals for their age at the end of Reception, a few will not. In relation to their attainment on entry and their capabilities many children underachieve.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The good outdoor accommodation and resources encourage children's physical development satisfactorily.

50. Children make satisfactory gains in their physical development and many are likely to achieve the expected goals for their age at the end of their Reception Year. This is because the teaching is satisfactory. In the one lesson observed, children made appropriate progress as their teacher provided opportunities for them to evaluate their own work, as well as that of others, and improve upon it. However, the children benefit from the good outside space attached to the Reception classroom, and use this very good space at break and lunchtime. There is ample space for them to run around, and a wooden adventure playground, purchased with the help of parents, enables them to develop many skills safely.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

51. There was insufficient evidence to make overall judgements about the provision for **creative development** or **knowledge and understanding**. The activities seen, discussions with children, staff and an analysis of teachers' planning and children's work indicate that each of these areas of learning is covered, but the activities are not always relevant or meaningful to Reception-aged children. Planned activities are often based around the needs of pupils in Year 1. There was little adaptation to the needs of younger children and on occasions their particular needs were not even identified in the lesson plan. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, for example, a sense of time was to be promoted through a study of the Great Fire of London, but in discussion children could recall very few facts of this event or demonstrate a secure understanding of the past. Although many children have an appropriate level of skill in using tools such as scissors, activities such as making a moving picture using a level was strongly directed by the teacher; children were not encouraged to think independently, be creative or learn from their mistakes. In addition, during some activities that focused on geography or science, some children undertook 'Child Initiated Learning' (CIL). This meant that they missed out some areas of learning, as they chose, or were directed to, activities outside the classroom. These rarely had any direct bearing on what was being taught inside and, in some cases, were neither meaningful nor relevant. As these activities had no planning or limited assessment, children underachieved, as they did not build on their earlier learning. For example, in their morning CIL session, two children spent their morning throwing a ball to each other; they did almost the same activity in the afternoon.

52. There was no judgement about provision for children of Reception age in the last report and therefore no judgements about improvements since the last inspection can be made.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in all areas of English are well above average by Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- Good teaching in Years 3 to 6 enables pupils to make good progress.
- Some Year 1 pupils make better progress than others in their writing, because their teachers' expectations are different.
- Effective long and short- term development planning for the subject is not well established.
- Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to read and write in most subjects.

Commentary

53. Results in the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 6 were well above average when compared with results nationally and with those of similar schools. The results over the past few years have generally been high, and current standards in Year 6 are well above the expected level in all aspects of English. In relation to their previous attainment, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well. Results in Year 2 in reading and writing were average compared with all schools, but well below average compared with similar schools. Over the past few years there has been a downward trend in results achieved in Year 2. This can, in part, be explained by the composition of the groups taking the tests. Last year, for example, there were more boys than girls in the group, with boys following the national trend of scoring less well than girls at the age of seven. Inspection evidence indicates that the decline has been arrested, and school assessment data indicates an improvement in the expected test results this year. Currently, standards in Year 2 are average in reading and writing, but above average in speaking and listening, and all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress in relation to their earlier attainment and capabilities.

54. By Year 6 almost all pupils read and write confidently. Speaking and listening skills are very good. Most pupils have a good working knowledge of Standard English, and their writing is grammatically correct. Punctuation is increasingly accurate and they develop a good understanding of writing for different purposes. However, careless spelling mars some written work. Pupils read competently and can justify their opinions about events and characters by quoting from the text.

55. Teaching in Classes 3 and 4 is good and this is the major factor in maintaining high standards. Lessons are well planned and interesting and teachers have high expectations. Pupils achieve well because teachers challenge each individual to do his or her best. Marking of written work is very good. Teachers give very clear written comments on how pupils might improve their work. Praise and encouragement are accompanied by guidance which pupils are expected to read and acknowledge. Pupils are successfully involved in evaluating their work. All pupils have targets for improvement which are specific to them as individuals. At the start of each lesson teachers share the lesson's objectives with the pupils and ensure that they understand what is expected in each activity. High attaining pupils are challenged to improve, while lower attainers are given good support. Teaching in Class 2 has many good qualities, but there is sometimes insufficient challenge in the work set for pupils in this class which spans three different year groups.

56. Standards by the end of Year 2 are similar to the nationally expected levels in reading and writing, but above average in speaking and listening. Most pupils speak clearly and confidently, and converse readily with adults. Year 2 pupils have very positive attitudes to reading and they are given good support at home. Their understanding is good, and they are able to answer questions about their books. Although pupils are taught to work out new words by using their knowledge of sounds,

some Year 2 pupils find this difficult. This limits their ability to read unfamiliar text, and they struggle with words which Year 2 pupils are expected to read. During Year 2, lower attaining pupils make good progress in their written work, and they achieve well compared with the start of the year. Average and higher attainers make steady progress, but at times are not fully challenged because the activities planned for pupils of different abilities are not always suitably different. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. There is some inconsistency in teaching for the Year 1 pupils, who are taught in two different classes. Progress in writing is slower for the group who work with the Reception children, compared with good progress for those who work with Year 2. The teachers do not share the same good expectations.

57. Leadership and management of the subject are good, and the co-ordinator leads by example. Improvement since the last inspection is good and standards in Year 6 have risen significantly. Although the co-ordinator formulates an annual action plan, longer term development planning has not yet been established and the short-term plans do not always reflect the school's or the subject's priorities. The provision for English has improved since the last inspection due to the training and structure provided by the National Literacy Strategy.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to use literacy skills in all relevant subjects. Pupils competently use reference books and the Internet for research. They have very good opportunities for extended writing, for example in history and religious education. The school makes satisfactory use of its computers and pupils have the opportunity to word process their work, and to prepare effective multi-media presentations.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 because of good teaching.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above those expected.
- Some Year 1 pupils make better progress than others because the teachers' expectations are different.
- The tracking of pupils' attainment and good quality marking are used well to help pupils learn.
- Pupils' very good attitudes contribute positively to their good achievement.
- Both long and short-term planning is not sufficiently focused on the subject's priorities or the school's vision.

Commentary

59. Results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were above average when compared with all schools and in line with those of a similar nature. In relation to their prior attainment, pupils achieved well, but not as well as they did in English and science. The difference in attainment between boys and girls was broadly similar to that found nationally. In the last year standards have improved and are now well above those expected, and similar to those in English and science. The improved results and good achievement are due to:

- * The school's efforts to raise achievement by teaching mathematics in single year groups.
- * A good emphasis on the use of investigations and problem-solving activities in lessons.
- * Improvement since the last inspection, when standards were in line with the national average, has been good.

60. Test results in 2003 at the end of Year 2 were above the national average and in line with similar schools. In relation to their earlier attainment pupils achieved satisfactorily. Although there was a large group of boys in this year group, the difference between the attainment of boys and girls was less than found nationally, due in part to the large group of boys achieving above the national average. Current standards are in line with those expected and most pupils achieve satisfactorily.

61. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well, especially those in Years 3 to 6. This is because these pupils' needs are better met in single-aged classes. School data indicates that all pupils currently in Year 6 are likely to achieve the expected level. Gifted and talented pupils also achieve well, as their needs are clearly identified, and they are challenged well through good teaching.

62. The quality of teaching and learning is good. However, pupils achieve better in Years 3 to 6 than they do in Years 1 and 2. This is because in Years 3 to 6 the range of ability in the single-age classes is easier for teachers to plan for than in Class 2, where there is a mixed-age class. Throughout all classes, however, relationships are very good. This helps to create a positive environment in which pupils want to learn. All teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it. Fast-paced and well-structured lessons are built on teachers' high expectations. Pupils' good attitudes ensure that lessons are productive. Many good activities, especially those that revolve around the whole-school priority of developing pupils' independence, are well developed. These include much practical and investigative work which help pupils to learn well. This also encourages pupils' good social development, and they work well collaboratively. There are good assessment arrangements. Teachers' planning is often well informed by the frequent analysis of pupils' work. Teachers provide pupils with targets based on what they need to do to improve, and this is very well emphasised by very good marking. Teachers mark in great detail, directing pupils on how to improve and engaging pupils in a mature dialogue. This greatly increases pupils' sense of responsibility for their own learning and leads to good achievement. The frequent setting of homework extends pupils' classroom learning well. Parental support for this is also good.

63. There is some inconsistency in the teaching of Year 1 pupils who are taught in two different classes. Progress is lower for those who work in Class 1 because the teachers of Class 1 and 2 have different expectations. The quality, quantity and presentation of work in Class 1 are lower than in Class 2.

64. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and leads the subject well. She has a clear vision of raising achievement while encouraging pupils to enjoy the subject and become independent learners. However, initiatives to meet this vision are rarely identified in either short or long-term development planning. The long-term vision is not, therefore, clearly communicated and the impact of recent changes, such as single-age classes, cannot be evaluated thoroughly. Teachers have been given the opportunity for professional development and there is a satisfactory amount of monitoring in terms of analysing pupils' work and teachers' planning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. There is an appropriate range of opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills and knowledge in other subjects, for example data handling in science and timelines in history. Interactive white boards are used well to aid pupils' learning, although pupils' own use of computers is more limited.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards at the end of Year 6 and Year 2 are above those expected.
- Pupils' scientific enquiry skills are very well developed.
- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- Very good attitudes and behaviour help pupils to achieve well.

Commentary

66. The school's science results in 2002 at the end of Year 6 were well below the national average. The school responded well to this sudden dip and made science a focus for improvement. Staff training, especially in relation to the teaching of scientific enquiry, which is also related to the school's efforts to raise pupils' independence, has proved successful. National test results in 2003 for pupils in Year 6 were well above the national average. They were above average in comparison with similar schools and in comparison with their attainment in Year 2. These pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieved well. Their good literacy and numeracy skills helped their achievement. Girls performed significantly better than boys in both 2002 and 2003, a pattern still present in the current year group, as there are nearly twice as many girls as there are boys. Inspection evidence indicates that standards remain well above those expected. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, since standards then were in line with the national average.

67. Teacher-assessed standards at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were very high when compared with both the national average and that of similar schools. Pupils achieved very well in this subject, better than they did in reading, writing and mathematics, because of the quality of teaching. Pupils in Class 2, including those with learning difficulties, are continuing to achieve well. However, current standards are only above those expected, because this year group is not as capable.

68. The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. The key elements of this are as follows:

- * The good use of questioning stimulates interest and clarifies pupils' ideas.
- * Challenging work and high expectations lead to rapid gains in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- * Due to good relationships, pupils behave well and are confident in asking for help.
- * The effective use of resources, including the interactive whiteboard, enables pupils to grasp ideas quickly.
- * Detailed marking encourages pupils to take responsibility for their learning and learn from their mistakes.
- * Good assessment procedures are used to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and to set targets.
- * Well-planned practical activities provide a strong foundation for developing investigative skills and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of science.

69. Occasionally, teaching is very good and pupils make significant progress. This was evident in a very good lesson in Class 2 on changes in the local environment and natural habitats caused by seasonal change. The very good questioning and the provision of challenging work for pupils of different abilities ensured that pupils were purposefully engaged, had fun and learned well.

70. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Detailed analysis of pupils' performance is undertaken, but the subject leader has a relatively weak grasp of the quality of education and pupil achievement, especially in Years 3 to 6. The good achievement in these year groups is promoted by the good team work and subject expertise of the staff in these classes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good leadership has brought about improvements in provision.
- Pupils achieve well due to good teaching and effective use of good resources.
- Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress are not developed fully.
- The use of computers in other subjects is limited.

Commentary

71. The many appreciable and forward-thinking improvements in the provision since the time of the last inspection have been due to good leadership. They have enabled the school to overcome judgements that included low standards and unsatisfactory teaching and progress. Resources are much improved. There is a good range of high specification computers that allows pupils to have regular access to ICT to practise and to use their skills. In addition, every classroom is now equipped with an interactive whiteboard. Gaps noted in the curriculum at the time of the last inspection have been filled, using these new resources. Staff, in line with the subject's development, have had training that has improved their knowledge and understanding of how to teach ICT. Because of this, the quality of teaching is good and pupils, irrespective of gender or ability, make good progress and attain standards in line with those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are not yet above those expected, as pupils are making up for the weaker ICT provision of recent years.

72. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject. They use it effectively for explaining work and ideas, and engage pupils in productive learning. They make effective use of resources, including using interactive whiteboards to display key information, such as sharing the learning intention of the lesson. This is always returned to at the end of the lesson and pupils are encouraged to assess their own learning. Teachers deploy support staff well and effectively include all pupils in each aspect of the lesson. Lesson planning is good. However, in some lessons all pupils start with the same task. This is because procedures to assess and track pupils' skills are not well developed and teachers therefore do not have the necessary information to prepare work for pupils of different abilities.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. The use of computers in other subjects is inconsistent. It is good in English, geography, and history and satisfactory in art and design. In other subjects, it has not been fully developed.

HUMANITIES

74. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on the provision for **history**, since only one lesson was observed in history. Because of timetabling arrangements it was not possible to see any **geography** being taught. However, discussions were held with pupils, co-ordinators and teachers, and teachers' planning and pupils' books were analysed.

75. In history and geography teachers' planning and pupils' books indicate that the pupils have access to the full curriculum. The school is now developing the curriculum in an exciting way to make it more relevant and interesting to pupils. A Year 3 and 4 history topic is based on local links with smuggling. Thus, a topic that both motivates and excites pupils is planned to develop pupils' historical as well as geographical skills. Links with other subjects are used very effectively and skills learned in English are put to good use. Pupils use reference books and the Internet for research, and some carry out research at home. The school uses visits, people, and places effectively to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in history and geography. Because of this, and pupils' good literacy skills, standards in written work in Year 6 are above those expected and pupils

achieve well. Although teachers do assess pupils' attainment and track their progress, there is no consistent system used across the school in either subject.

76. As this is a voluntary aided school **religious education** was not inspected.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. No overall judgement can be made of provision in music, art and design, design and technology and physical education, as only one lesson was observed in each subject. Inspectors held discussions with teachers, spoke to parents and pupils, and examined pupils' work, teachers' planning and assessment, and school documents.

78. Due to the good leadership of these subjects, significant improvements have been brought about since the last inspection. These co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have worked together effectively as a team to overcome the gaps in the provision and the unsatisfactory progress noted at the time of the last inspection. The co-ordinators have provided up-to-date policies and schemes of work that ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum, and suitable guidance is given to ensure that pupils develop their skills and understanding steadily.

79. Work currently displayed on walls indicates that standards in **art and design** are in line with those expected in Years 2 and 6 and pupils make steady progress. There are numerous links with visiting artists, places of local interest and whole school events, such as mosaic-making, that enrich the curriculum and aid pupils' learning. Gifted artists are identified at the school and were well provided for in the lesson seen and during the art club. In **design and technology** standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with expectations and achievement is satisfactory. Good links have been made between design and technology and other subjects. For example, pupils in Class 4 have investigated different types of shelters. They used the knowledge gained to plan and design effectively their own shelters in the fashion of a Tudor house.

80. Since the past inspection the school has improved the facilities for **physical education**, largely as a result of excellent parental support. An all-weather surface offers a very good space for outside games activities. The hall remains too small for gymnastics and dance lessons. The school has worked to resolve this difficulty. A visiting specialist teacher from the local sports' college now teaches gymnastics to pupils in Class 4. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular sporting activities. Provision for swimming remains good and standards are above average. All pupils learn to swim in the school pool before they reach Year 3.

81. In **music** pupils now have full access to the required curriculum, although aspects such as composition are not as well developed as other areas. Music is used well to stimulate pupils' interest and concentration. In an art lesson, the playing of music during the lesson created a spiritual atmosphere in which pupils' productivity and concentration were very good. Pupils sing well in assemblies. There is a good range of extra-curricular opportunities and pupils take part in local music festivals. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and given good opportunities to use their skills.

82. In most of the lessons seen in these subjects, teaching was good and in the lessons themselves all pupils, irrespective of gender or ability, made good progress. Good learning was promoted because of the very good relationships. Pupils felt comfortable seeking advice and guidance and were mature and sensible enough to act upon it. The lessons' learning intentions were always clearly shared with pupils. This gave each lesson a sharp focus and the pupils the opportunity to reflect and assess on their own work at the end of the lesson. Teachers' planning is good, often referring to the specific skills to be taught. This, and their good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they taught, ensured their explanations were clear and correct.

Pupils therefore learned well. When the teaching was very good it was because the teacher, through her own passion and expert knowledge, developed an activity and created an atmosphere in which pupils worked very productively in silence for nearly 40 minutes. The task consisted of copying and reversing a line drawing that had been placed before them upside down.

83. Individual teachers assess their pupils in each of these subjects to enable them to identify those pupils who may need support or challenge. This is often dealt with by providing more adult staff. There are few planned activities for pupils of different abilities. The lack of whole school systems also means that it is difficult to track pupils' progress over time.

84. Although ICT is used in subjects such as art to undertake research in relation to famous artists, there are few opportunities for pupils to use their knowledge and skills of ICT in other subjects.

85. The co-ordinators are implementing the school's vision of 'Enjoyment and Excellence' by building meaningful and relevant links between different subjects. Through informal monitoring, most have a reasonable knowledge about how their subjects are being delivered, but their short-term development plans do not always relate to the school's priorities. This makes evaluating the impact of any changes in provision difficult to measure. Due to a lack of strategic planning, co-ordinators do not know when their subject is to be reviewed. This hinders the school's ability to channel its resources to meet its most pressing priorities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. As only one lesson of PSHE was seen during the inspection it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision. However, teachers' planning was examined and discussions held with staff and pupils.

87. Pupils' PSHE is promoted well in a variety of ways within the school. Most importantly, it permeates the culture of the school, and the development of pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence is paramount in all of the school's work. In this, it is successful. Pupils are treated with respect by all adults and, learning by example, they respect each other. Relationships between adults and pupils in the school are very good, affording good role models for pupils. Relationships developed between pupils are similarly positive.

88. Pupils also have a formally taught lesson of PSHE each week. These lessons cover a good range of topics, and include attention to sex and relationships education and the misuse of drugs.

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	4
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	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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