

INSPECTION REPORT

CROMWELL PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Huntingdon

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 132071

Headteacher: Mr Nigel Battey

Lead inspector: Mrs Joy Richardson

Dates of inspection: 13 – 14 October 2003

Inspection number: 255920

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Cromwell Park Primary School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	134
School address:	Cromwell Park Primary School Parkway Hinchingsbrooke Park Huntingdon
Postcode:	PE29 6JA
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr Ramon Wilkinson
Date of previous inspection:	Not previously inspected

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school opened in September 2002 and now has 134 pupils in five classes from reception to Year 6. It expects to reach its full size of 210 pupils in seven classes by 2006. Pupils come mainly from the new mixed housing estates around the school, but some come from further away. The mobility amongst pupils is fairly high because of parents with short-term contracts at the local hospital, and because pupils have joined the school during the year as it has continued to expand. Almost a quarter of pupils come from a diversity of ethnic minority backgrounds. Seven pupils speak English as an additional language, and a few are at an early stage in acquiring the language. The school has 18 pupils with special educational needs, including five who have statements related to severe difficulties. Attainment on entry varies widely, but it is above average overall in the year groups which have started in the school's own reception class. The school has been designed to make use of innovative modern technologies for renewable energy, and for supporting pupils' learning.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6676	Joy Richardson	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Religious education English as an additional language
1166	Rosemary Hussain	Lay inspector	
32136	Lesley Brookes	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education Foundation Stage curriculum
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a young and vibrant school which gives pupils **a very good education**. The school has come a long way in a short time because of the vision and drive of the governing body and inspirational leadership by the headteacher. Pupils are very well taught. They love the school and achieve well. The school gives **good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school provides an excellent climate for learning, in and beyond the classroom.
- Lessons are exciting and imaginative, fostering a wide range of skills.
- Pupils achieve highly in science and in information and communication technology.
- Standards in writing are not as good as they could be, but the school is working on this.
- The school breeds confidence in pupils, caring extremely well for each individual.
- Excellent use is made of information and communication technology to extend learning.
- The learning environment for the youngest pupils is not yet fully developed.
- The school is at an early stage in providing for gifted and talented pupils.
- The school's partnership with parents and the community is exceptionally strong.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools	similar schools
	2003	2003
English	C	C
mathematics	B	A
science	A	A

*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.*

Pupils' overall achievement is good. The children in reception are well on course to achieve and in many cases to exceed, the early learning goals for this age. In Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 to 6, standards are average in English, though better in reading than in writing, and above average in mathematics. Pupils are achieving well in English and mathematics, building on their prior attainment. They are achieving very well in science and information and communication technology.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils have excellent attitudes to school and they behave very well. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The teaching is very good. Teachers' knowledge, enthusiasm and enjoyment of their work are reflected in pupils' confidence and interest in learning. Pupils learn very well because skills are taught thoroughly and imaginatively, ensuring that pupils understand. Pupils make a good start in reception in all the areas of learning. The use of space and resources in reception is not yet fully developed to stimulate exploration within independent activities, though plans are in hand to enhance the outdoor play area.

The school provides a broad curriculum, cultivating pupils' all-round skills in and beyond the classroom. The use of information and communication technology runs seamlessly through the curriculum, but writing skills are not worked on enough within other subjects. Pupils enjoy and learn from the well-designed outside environment and gain much from the wide range of clubs and special events. The school is rapidly becoming a central focus within the life of the community. Parents are very actively involved with the school, and the strength of the home-school partnership is very beneficial to pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is very good. The governing body has been outstandingly effective in bringing the school into existence, shaping its character and setting its sights high. The headteacher provides highly skilled leadership, making ambition achievable by harnessing the efforts of staff and pupils in shared and rewarding endeavour. The deputy headteacher, phase and subject leaders are all helping to lead the school forward. The school is very effectively managed to achieve the best for pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall, parents are highly satisfied with the school. They are pleased with the teaching and praise the high quality of leadership and management. They value the breadth of education the school provides and the welcoming atmosphere which helps pupils to settle in rapidly. Pupils are proud of the school and appreciate their teachers. They like the new building and its fittings, though some would like more play-equipment. The school is very responsive to the views of parents and pupils and this reinforces the sense of community. The school has been quick to take steps to improve communication with parents over homework and parents are pleased about this.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Pursue higher standards in writing, developing skills within work across the curriculum.
- Further enrich the learning environment for children in reception.
- Develop provision and challenge for gifted and talented pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' overall achievement is good. Children in reception are on course to exceed the early learning goals set nationally for this age. Standards, in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6, are average overall in English, though better in reading than in writing, and above average in mathematics. Pupils throughout the school are making good progress in all subjects, building on their prior attainment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work in reception is laying strong foundations for later learning.
- Pupils are not doing as well as they could in writing, though this is improving.
- Pupils achieve very well in information and communication technology throughout the school.
- Older pupils achieve high standards in science.

Commentary

1. Pupils who took the national tests in 2003 in Year 6 and Year 2 had been in the school for a year or less and the number in each year group was small. The school has taken great care to analyse these results and to learn from them, while recognising that they give only an interim picture of the school's performance and should be interpreted with caution because of the small numbers involved.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.4	15.7
writing	11.4	14.6
mathematics	14.0	16.3

There were 10 pupils in the year group.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0	26.8
mathematics	28.2	26.8
science	30.9	28.6

There were 14 pupils in the year group.

2. Results in 2003 were above average overall in Year 6, but low overall in Year 2. However, the information available about pupils' prior attainment in other schools indicates that most pupils in both year groups made satisfactory progress in achieving these results. Although the numbers are too small to analyse in terms of patterns, the school has identified the need to focus on reading and more particularly on writing, giving particular attention to the achievement of boys. It is already enhancing its approaches to work in English in ways which are leading to greater success. Standards are still slightly below average in writing, though average in reading, and there is clear evidence of improvement.

3. In Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6, pupils are achieving well and making good progress in all subjects. Pupils are doing very well in information and communication technology throughout the school, as a result of its very effective use across the curriculum. Achievement is high in science in the older years because pupils are very well taught and they learn to think and to investigate scientifically.
4. Pupils with special educational needs, those from an ethnic minority background, and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well because of the careful attention given to their individual needs.
5. Pupils in the reception class are on course to achieve, and many to exceed, the early learning goals for this age in all the areas of learning. This strong foundation, and the school's rigorous monitoring of progress in each year, mean that the school is now well set to develop and sustain good standards of achievement throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils are happy and want to come to school. They enjoy excellent relationships with others. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' excellent attitudes have a very positive effect on their learning.
- The school has high expectations of behaviour and fosters excellent relationships.
- All pupils are valued equally, regardless of their race, background or ability.
- Pupils are confident, co-operative and responsible as members of the school community.

Commentary

6. Pupils' excellent attitudes are evident in their thirst for learning and eagerness to succeed. The school emphasises that learning is a shared experience to be enjoyed. This atmosphere permeates lessons and activities beyond the classroom. Pupils show remarkable thoughtfulness to each other and take pride in being part of the school community. This comes from the inspiration of the headteacher and, in turn, the staff who all provide excellent role models.
7. Most pupils are very attentive in lessons. They behave very well, obeying the simple class rules, based on politeness and respect for others, that they have devised themselves. Pupils are confident and outgoing, giving a very warm welcome to visitors and offering to help without any prompting. They are keen to take on responsibilities and carry them out with maturity. High standards of behaviour are underpinned by the staff's high expectations and a valued reward system in which the headteacher and all staff are fully involved. The school's values are appreciated and supported by parents. Pupils are justly proud of their school and they know that their contribution matters.
8. Relationships are excellent as a result of the friendly and supportive atmosphere generated by the headteacher. Parents say the school is like one big happy family. There are few disputes and pupils are very caring towards each other. When asked what they would do if someone was being bullied, pupils replied, 'We don't know because it doesn't happen, it's not allowed'. At lunchtime pupils enjoy each other's company and look out for each other. The school fosters a spirit of co-operation and pupils work very well together. All pupils are valued equally, regardless of their race, background or ability. The school's mission statement is 'quality through equality' and this ambition is reflected in practice throughout the work of the whole school community.

9. Pupils' moral development is very good because they learn to consider the consequences of actions on others and to develop self-discipline in distinguishing right from wrong. Social development is also very good because the school's ethos is based on caring and sharing. Several parents commented that their children's confidence and self-esteem had increased significantly since being at the school. Pupils are taught to be responsible members of the school and wider community. They are delighted when asked to do duties and take their involvement in decisions about the school very seriously.
10. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. The emphasis on environmental awareness has resulted in a sense of awe about the natural world around them. Assembly themes and opportunities for reflection show how spiritual teaching should be followed through into actions day to day. Cultural development is good with visits to sites of cultural interest, the welcoming of visitors and the sharing of music and sport with other schools. Multicultural understanding is promoted in many ways through religious education, music, dance and appreciation of the different nationalities and cultures represented in the school. For example, pupils readily recalled movements, and the meanings behind them, from an Indian dance they had been taught by a parent and had performed at the summer fete.
11. Attendance is above the national average. Pupils are very punctual to school and quickly settle to work on arrival. There have been no exclusions since the school opened.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.8
National data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.2

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black African
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
93	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
8	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
5	0	0
1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is very good overall. Pupils learn very well because they are taught to think and to take pride in what they can achieve. Assessment is good, giving pupils and teachers a clear view of strengths and weaknesses in learning, and its use is continuing to develop.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a strong teaching team which is knowledgeable and enthusiastic.
- Teaching is frequently stimulating and imaginative, generating excitement in learning.
- Teachers use resources very well to help pupils understand.
- Teaching encourages pupils to think and to be responsible for their work.
- The learning support for pupils with individual needs is very effective.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	14	10	1	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 school has built a very effective staff team who clearly enjoy their work and are committed to sharing and extending good practice in teaching. Teaching is thorough and systematic so that basic skills in literacy and numeracy are well established from the start. Learning is built step by step and this is supported by very good planning.
13. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic, and innovative in their readiness to try new approaches. They use resources creatively in their teaching, seamlessly incorporating the use of the interactive whiteboard to make points visually. They keep pupils involved and actively thinking, varying the pace of activities and balancing listening with doing. Teaching is stimulating and interesting, drawing on pupils' experiences and generating thoughtful and lively discussion.
14. Teachers have a very good understanding of how pupils learn and they listen to their views. This helps pupils to feel in charge of their own learning. They confidently make decisions, for example about the use of materials in practical tasks. They explore and compare different methods when tackling problems, in mathematics, science or design and technology. Pupils take stock for themselves of how well they understand what they have been taught and readily seek further help from teachers.
15. Teachers mark work thoroughly, often giving pupils very clear guidance on how to improve and targets to work towards. They are very alert to how well pupils understand and they adapt their teaching to give more help where needed. Assessment is good and continuing to develop so that information from reviewing pupils' work and analysing test results is increasingly guiding teaching and learning. 'Progress books' are being introduced this term to keep a regular check on the progress being made in writing.
16. Learning support assistants work very effectively with pupils who have special educational needs so that they are able to participate fully within the class, and to succeed in their learning. Teachers are alert to the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language, liaising

very effectively with parents, and closely monitoring the progress being made. As a result, pupils of all language backgrounds learn effectively.

17. The range of attainment is wide in the mixed age classes and teachers take account of this in their planning. Pupils of all ages and abilities are challenged well in Years 5/6, and this is helped by splitting the class for some sessions. The school is developing its provision for gifted and talented pupils, with a view to providing further extension and enrichment in and beyond lessons.

The curriculum

Provision is very good. The school provides a very wide range of purposeful curricular opportunities that caters for the needs, aptitudes and interests of pupils. Pupils build on their learning as they move through the school, in lessons and in activities beyond the classroom.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The well-designed environment adds to pupils' learning and enjoyment of school.
- The school's imaginative use of technology enhances the curriculum.
- Extra-curricular clubs, visits and a wide range of visitors enrich opportunities for pupils.
- Very good provision is made for personal, social and health education, including citizenship

Commentary

18. An inclusive curriculum, which is responsive to pupils' diversity, covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum, and areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. It offers a full range of opportunities to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with a home language other than English, or new to the country, enabling them to achieve well and to develop skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school.
19. The curriculum is reviewed regularly and the school is working to increase effective links between subjects. Subjects such as literacy and history frequently complement each other, although writing skills are not yet being consistently developed across all subjects. Pupils apply the skills they have learned in information and communication technology imaginatively in other subjects.
20. The 'outdoor classroom', the internal courtyard, the well-developed playground and the newly created playing field all add to pupils' learning. At playtimes, pupils enjoy a very wide range of activities, joining in games or finding a relaxing area to sketch and read. Pupils feel 'this is a good place to have a school'. They appreciate the availability of computers and the interactive whiteboards that respond to their touch. These are used purposefully and imaginatively by teachers to extend learning.
21. The school applies innovative technology, harnessing wind and solar power to help provide electricity for lights and computers, and recycling water and other resources. This enriches pupils' knowledge in science and technology, and their environmental understanding. They are very aware of the need to look after the environment and the benefits of recycling. Pupils respond positively and respect and care for their school.
22. The school has a strong personal, social and health education programme, supported by a variety of visits and visitors. Pupils understand the need to consider others within a community, and they learn to be good citizens. They participate enthusiastically in class councils, confidently making their voice heard while learning about the processes of democratic decision making.

23. The school provides a rich and varied range of experiences for pupils. Pupils visit museums and a variety of places of interest and welcome many visitors to the school. Clubs at lunchtime and after school are very popular and cover a wide range of interests, including art, music, dance, sports and the environment. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a residential visit which provides opportunities to live with others in a different setting. The school participates enthusiastically and successfully in activities with other schools and in the local community. Pupils enjoy performing, and a musical play at the end of the school's first term gave them all an opportunity to do so, showing how much the school had achieved in a very short time.
24. High quality resources support teaching in all subjects. Teachers and learning support assistants are very well qualified and experienced. They are enthusiastic and eager to continue developing their expertise and improving their skills and knowledge. The school enjoys the wide benefits of its building and environment.

Care, guidance and support

The school offers its pupils excellent care and guidance in a safe and supportive environment. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The monitoring of personal development and achievement is very good. Pupils who are new to the school benefit from excellent induction information and arrangements. Pupils' relationships with teachers are excellent and the school is very good at taking pupils' views into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are extremely well cared for and receive a high level of individual support and guidance.
- Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with the staff.
- Pupils achieve well because their personal development and progress are monitored very effectively.
- The school listens to pupils' views and makes clear that their contribution matters.

Commentary

25. Care for pupils is excellent. Pupils know they are important and matter as individuals within the school community because of the school's clear emphasis on caring for each individual pupil's needs. A good example of this is the way that the school has responded to the needs of a new pupil with a peanut allergy. The school has been declared a peanut free zone, all pupils told why and all staff have been trained in using an epipen. The school works closely with parents from the outset. Parents' responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting confirm that they greatly appreciate and are very confident in the school's high levels of individual care and support for their children. Clear policies and guidelines ensure consistency across the school concerning matters such as child protection, discipline and first aid procedures. Health and safety are monitored rigorously.
26. Support for personal development and achievement is very good. This is because staff work together as a strong team with a common cause of encouraging pupils to develop confidence and high self-esteem, and to reach their potential. Teachers know their pupils very well as individuals, as can be seen in very perceptive comments on the annual reports. 'Circle time' is used effectively to discuss areas of personal development. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for younger ones and all pupils contribute to the community by taking on duties. In the pupils' questionnaire nearly every pupil confirmed that there is an adult they can go to if they are worried at school. Their relationships with staff are excellent. Academic achievement is supported well because each pupil has personal targets. Pupils know what these are and their achievement is monitored very effectively through detailed records of achievement.

27. Pupils know that their views are important and respected because they are encouraged to participate regularly in discussions about aspects of school development. Class councils are held each week, and these are being extended into a whole school council. In a class council for Years 5 and 6, held during the inspection, the level of discussion was very impressive. The chair and secretary, both pupils, conducted the meeting in exemplary fashion ensuring all the pupils had an opportunity to put forward their views. Pupils are currently involved in the planning of the school grounds, and they are rising to the challenge with some high quality suggestions.
28. Induction arrangements for new pupils are excellent, with a strong focus on the child's welfare and ease of settling in. Great care is taken to help pupils who speak English as an additional language, or who are new to the country, to feel at home, as seen when kitchen staff talked with parents about food choices at lunchtime. Parents praised the home visits prior to starting and the open days. Younger siblings are welcomed when meeting older brothers or sisters, so they become very familiar with the school before starting.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Overall links with parents and the local community are excellent. Parental involvement, both with work at home and in supporting the school, is also excellent. The quality of information for parents and links with other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with parents contribute extremely well to pupils' learning at home and at school.
- Parental involvement, through the Friends' Association and help in school, is excellent.
- The school plays a vital role in the community, and in turn is very well supported within the community.

Commentary

29. Parents at the meeting were highly positive about the school, and the responses to the questionnaires were very positive overall. Parents and children love this school and have a very strong sense of ownership. This was reflected in very high attendance at the parents' meeting and response to the questionnaire. Parental links are excellent because of the eminently strong partnership established even before the school opened. Pupils and their families were invited to a family fun day, in the local country park, to meet their teachers and to learn more about the school. This created social links and a strong sense of belonging from the very start.
30. The school places great importance on the partnership between home and school and encourages parental participation in a variety of ways. Parents are consulted about the school's development through questionnaires, and there are daily opportunities to meet the headteacher and staff. As a result parents' support is very strong because they know their views are valued. The school's response to any concerns is rapid and very effective. For example, the school has acted promptly to strengthen communication about homework, introducing a home-school book which parents sign regularly. Several parents help regularly in school and on visits. The Friends' Association is very actively supported. It seeks ideas for fundraising from all parents and has raised substantial sums to enhance the outdoor play areas, as well as organising social events, which are much enjoyed by the whole community.
31. Information for parents is very good. They are given a wide range of information in the school brochure, which is very comprehensive. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date, well in advance, with events and changes in school. Parents are invited to share in their children's achievements and to socialise through many opportunities to attend school events. During the inspection, parents, grandparents and younger siblings were invited to lunch with children in Years 3 and 4. The children were generous and courteous hosts. They clearly took pride in

showing their families around and were mines of information about the school. Parents are provided with guidance on expectations regarding homework and how they might help. Consequently, parental support for pupils' work at home is very good. Parents are very well informed about their children's progress through the informative school reports, which are very personal to each child and show that teachers know pupils extremely well. Parents praised these reports highly for their personalised comments and details of how pupils can improve.

32. Community links are excellent because the school takes its role in the community very seriously and tries to involve local people as much as possible. Both governors and parents are very clear that the school has created a sense of community in an area that has little infrastructure. The school is now an important focus within the local area, although it has only been open for one year. The support from local people for events such as the musical play at Christmas and the summer fête has been very high. The community room is used each day by the 'Muntjaks' after-school club and by a playgroup. A parents and toddler group, which has educational as well as social aims, uses the school hall each week and has already established very good links with the school. Parents and children like the idea that many of them can walk to school and this has helped to cement new friendships. The school is currently awaiting clearance for a 'walking bus'.
33. The governors and headteacher generated several business partnerships even before the school opened. These have been instrumental in securing new technology to support the school's environmental initiatives. Anglia Water has sponsored and created the outdoor classroom and there are strong links with Nottingham University on renewable resources.
34. Links with local schools are very good. In a short time strong links have been established with the local secondary school. These include some master classes for higher-attaining pupils and very good transition arrangements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good overall. Governance is excellent and the school is very well led and managed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is exceptionally well served by its governing body.
- The headteacher's vision and values permeate the whole school.
- Many people are contributing to leading the school forward.
- The school, though still young, is very thorough in reviewing its performance, intent on improving further.

Commentary

35. Governors, led by the current chair and recruited for their wide range of expertise, were actively involved from the start in setting up the school and shaping its character. The governing body has worked with commitment and vision to bring the school into being and to provide strategic guidance, appointing the school's leaders and developing its policies. It has researched and secured leading edge technology for renewable resources, so that the school is efficient and environmentally friendly in its use of energy. It has set a high standard in the use of information and communication technology. Governors are well informed about pupils' achievement, thoroughly reviewing targets and results. The governing body is now instigating a programme of evaluation by governors in each of the school's main areas of work.
36. The headteacher sets the tone of the school, creating a climate where pupils are valued and understood so that they grow in confidence and have a strong sense of belonging. He sets the school's sights high and fosters enjoyment in learning. He knows pupils and their parents very

well and enjoys their trust, confidence and respect. The deputy headteacher, phase and subject leaders are energetic and effective, and the headteacher guides and enables the team so that leadership is broadly based. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic in planning the development of their subjects and providing guidance for others.

37. The headteacher and deputy monitor the school's performance closely and are increasingly involving others in reviewing the quality of teaching and pupils' work. The headteacher spends time regularly in classrooms and is very aware of the impact of teaching and the progress of individual pupils. The triangle of communication between headteacher, staff and parents about pupils' needs and achievements is very strong. This is seen in very effective management of provision for pupils with special educational needs, and sensitive support, in consultation with parents, for pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The school's leadership ensures that the aim of being an inclusive school is translated into effective action on a daily basis. The school is now pursuing additional external support to strengthen provision for new pupils who are at an early stage in acquiring English.
38. Assessment information from the school's first year has been very carefully analysed in the light of information about pupils' attainment before they joined the school. The school's leadership is effectively monitoring the value added by the school, and working to pinpoint what could be done to help pupils achieve even better.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	259124	Balance from previous year	-
Total expenditure	213951	Balance carried forward to the next	45173
Expenditure per pupil	1528		

39. A large surplus was carried forward last year because of outstanding energy bills, and income received in the term before the school opened. The available surplus is being used to develop the outdoor play areas, and in particular to provide a covered area for children in reception to extend provision in the required areas of learning. The anticipated budget surplus for the current year is around five per cent. The school's financial planning is very strong and governors monitor expenditure closely. They are rigorous in applying the principles of best value in ensuring that expenditure serves the school's educational aims and is evaluated accordingly.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

The pupils in the reception class are given a good start to their education. Teaching is good in all the areas of learning, and good quality planning and assessment help children to make good progress. Children's skills on entry, in September when they are four, vary widely, but the school's assessment shows above average attainment overall in the two year groups which started in the school's own reception class. Almost all the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals for this age in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. A good percentage are on course to be working well within the early stages of the National Curriculum by the time they move into Year 1. Provision is good, but the learning environment in and out of the classroom needs further development to extend opportunities for learning through play.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have settled well and are developing independence in looking after themselves.
- Children co-operate and behave very well, beginning to work collaboratively.
- They do not have sufficient opportunities to investigate independently.

Commentary

40. The children quickly develop their confidence and have established good relationships with one another, the class teachers and the classroom assistants. They generally behave very well and are encouraged to be considerate of others. The teacher and the support staff capture children's interest and attention, ensuring that concentration is fostered and maintained well. Virtually all the children can change for physical education with minimal help. Children receive plenty of praise and encouragement and this is effective in building up their self-esteem and confidence. Children with special educational needs are very well supported, helping them to participate and to learn effectively.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's speaking and listening skills are fostered effectively.
- Early reading skills are encouraged well.
- Foundations are being well laid in the early stages of writing.

Commentary

41. Good opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills through all areas of learning. Adults intervene thoughtfully, encouraging children to talk about what they are doing. The children, when listening to stories, join in enthusiastically with the repetitive phrases. The teacher has very good methods of encouraging children to read with her, and many of the

children can follow the text well. A few have begun reading independently and others can read some simple words. This is promoted well by sending the children home with words to be learnt. Children listen to story tapes to enhance their enjoyment of stories, and some are developing the confidence to use the equipment without adult help. Writing is encouraged effectively. Many children are writing their names unaided and letter formation is often correct. Examples from last year show that most were able to write legible, coherent sentences by the end of their time in reception. This is laying good foundations for the future and contributing to the school's pursuit of higher standards in writing. Good use is made of classroom computers to support children's early reading and writing skills, though the provision of books for children to enjoy by themselves is rather limited.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children count with confidence.
- They can order numbers skilfully.
- Most can recognise numerals to 10, and many to 20.
- Their mathematical vocabulary is developing well.

Commentary

42. The children are making good progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure. Good use was made of the classroom interactive whiteboard, and children used it skilfully to order numbers. A good range of activities supports number and shape familiarity and these are supplemented by good quality interactive computer games. The children's use of mathematical vocabulary, such as 'more' or 'less' is developing well.

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

Provision in each of these areas of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have frequent access to computers and other technological equipment.
- They have a good programme of physical development including gymnastics, dance and outdoor activities.
- The environment is not richly developed to help children choose and experiment with resources, and to investigate further.

COMMENTARY

43. Children use a range of technological equipment, such as laptop computers and the interactive whiteboard, with confidence. They have the skills to click, drag and drop items on screen. They engage in a good range of activities to develop physical control of large and small movements. They use the large equipment in the school hall and have a range of equipment such as bikes, balls, bean-bags and hoops to use in their own dedicated outdoor area. They follow a well-balanced programme of exercise which includes gymnastics and dance. There are good opportunities for construction and for role-play, as when children made a 'den' for hibernation. They learn about the world around them, observing autumn colours on a local walk and painting and printing autumn pictures. Pupils enjoy all these activities, though resources are not always organised richly enough to stimulate enquiry and investigation within

independent play by children who are still very young. Plans are in hand for the further development of the outside play area for reception.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are achieving well and assessment is being used well to help them do even better.
- The school is developing effective new approaches to improve reading and writing.
- Writing is not developed enough through work across the curriculum.

Commentary

44. In 2003, results in national tests at the end of Year 6 were in line with the national average. Test results at the end of Year 2 were low in both reading and writing, but there was a significant number of pupils in this group who had low prior attainment or special educational needs.
45. The school is now working to raise standards in English and is doing this successfully. The current groups of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are working at levels slightly below, but close to, the national average in writing and in line with national averages in reading. Pupils in other year groups are doing better still in relation to their age. There is a relative weakness in boys' writing and reading, but the school is addressing this. Pupils with special educational needs, or who are learning English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well because of the imaginative teaching and support they receive.
46. Speaking and listening skills are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils develop confidence in asking and answering questions because teachers ask questions skilfully and give clues as necessary to help pupils respond appropriately. Very good support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to join in group sessions and to feel that their contribution is valued. Opportunities for discussion with a partner are used well. Pupils are encouraged to listen to others, to take turns in speaking and to think things through before expressing an opinion. Pupils have opportunities to give talks to the class. This helps to develop confidence in addressing an audience, and active listening in responding to others. Pupils gain skills by participating in class councils and discussing issues in personal, social and health education lessons.
47. Standards in reading are average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a very good understanding of a range of strategies to help them with their reading and they pass these on to pupils in Years 1 and 2 during shared reading sessions. Group reading times are purposeful and enable pupils to develop skills in predicting endings and comparing one book with another. Teachers and support assistants hear pupils read regularly, and books for younger children are now changed more frequently. There is a good range of books in the library which pupils use to seek out information for their topics. The use of reading journals is extending pupils' reading and their response to books. An accelerated reading scheme is now being introduced, to encourage pupils to read more. This includes the provision of computer-based quizzes about the books read to motivate pupils in monitoring their own progress.
48. Standards in writing are still slightly below average but improving. The range of opportunities to practise writing is being extended and staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. There are some good links with other subjects, such as religious education and history, though writing across the curriculum is not fully developed. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 acquire their 'ink licence' when their writing is good enough to permit them the use of a pen for their work. This

spurs pupils on and helps them to improve the quality of their written work. Pupils are very aware of their targets in writing and know what they have to do to improve their work. Many pupils have still to consolidate basic skills in writing and teachers, with very thoughtful use of information and communication technology, are presenting skills in new and exciting ways. 'Progress books' are being introduced this term to track pupils' progress in writing through the school, identifying the level being reached and the next steps to be taken.

49. Teaching and learning are very good because teachers and support assistants make learning fun and stimulating. They work purposefully and effectively with pupils with special educational needs and with those who are learning English as an additional language. They plan together well and work well as a team in supporting different groups within the class. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace because of the energy and enthusiasm of the teachers. Teachers are extremely skilful and imaginative in their use of information and communication technology and other resources. This ensures that pupils maintain a strong focus on the lesson and settle to tasks well. Teachers tailor tasks so that pupils can achieve and build on their strengths. Pupils acquire an enthusiasm for reading because teachers transmit their own enjoyment of literacy and language.
50. The subject is led and managed very well by the co-ordinator who has a clear vision of ways in which reading and writing can be improved, and practised and applied in other subjects.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. There are good examples of thoughtful planning to develop pupils' skills in language and literacy in other subjects. Good discussions are encouraged in personal, social, health and citizenship education lessons and in history. Drama is an important part of history and religious education. However, writing is not developed consistently across the curriculum to give a range of purposes for writing, and to extend opportunities for the practice of skills. Staff and pupils use information and communication technology confidently, and very competently, in literacy. This complements the learning in lessons very effectively.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are taught very well so that basic skills in numeracy are well established.
- Pupils learn to reason mathematically and to apply their skills in solving problems.
- Teachers use resources very effectively in helping pupils learn.
- Higher-attaining pupils in mixed-age classes are not always challenged enough.

Commentary

52. Pupils throughout the school are achieving well in mathematics. Standards in the work seen are above average overall in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6, though stronger in some year groups than in others, reflecting the prior attainment of different cohorts.
53. Work is planned very well so that teaching builds steadily on what has gone before. Skills are regularly practised and reinforced, as in counting on and back and in twos, fives and tens, in Years 1 and 2. Pupils strive to learn number facts, for example seizing the opportunity to be tested 'in the hot seat' when they have mastered multiplication tables in Years 3 and 4.
54. Pupils' knowledge of number helps them in solving more complex problems and in investigating patterns. Pupils are challenged to apply mathematical reasoning, and to think for themselves, estimating before they measure or calculate in order to check their accuracy.

55. Teaching is very skilful. Teachers set a good pace, switching activities when concentration falters. They involve pupils actively, looking for answers on pupils' whiteboards to check their understanding. They provide more practice or explanation when it is needed. The interactive whiteboard in each class is used well to make points visually, for example when plotting missing numbers in a hundred square or comparing measurements using different metric units. Teachers use mathematical language very well, listing vocabulary for later reference and using it in context so that pupils become familiar with technical terms.
56. In some lessons, for example in Years 5 and 6, extension work challenges higher-attaining pupils to think more deeply and to apply what they have learned. In Years 1 and 2, younger pupils are achieving very well for their age, benefiting from the challenge in the mixed-age classes, but the work is not always demanding enough for higher-attaining pupils in Year 2. In Years 3 and 4, the range of attainment is very wide and this poses some problems in helping pupils in Year 3 to catch up while building on what pupils in Year 4 can already do. Learning support assistants are deployed very effectively to work with different groups during parts of lessons, and this work is matched well to pupils' needs. The use of assessment and target-setting is also helping to ensure that work is pitched appropriately for different groups of pupils.
57. The leadership and management of the subject is good. The use of assessment and the monitoring of teaching and work are being developed to provide a very clear overview of strengths and weaknesses in learning, and directions for improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. The school is very alert to the links between subjects and this is reflected in planning. Opportunities to apply mathematical skills in data handling, and to practise basic skills in number, are extended through the use of information and communication technology. Mathematical skills are applied across the curriculum, as seen in the recording of surveys in history and in using scale and plotting places on maps in geography. In science, pupils apply mathematical skills in measuring accurately and in recording data collected in the course of investigations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Science is one of the key strengths of the school.
- Standards are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6.
- Investigative work extends scientific thinking very effectively in the older years.
- The eco-friendly ethos of the school has a significant impact on pupils' broad scientific knowledge.

Commentary

59. Attainment is above the national average by Year 2 and well above by Year 6. Pupils achieve very well because they are very well taught. Teachers have a focused and questioning approach to investigative work, interweaving this with other aspects of the subject. The teaching in science encourages thinking and a sense of enquiry.
60. Younger pupils understand that predictions need to be made before an experiment is conducted. Older pupils understand what should be done to make a test fair and to control the variables. Pupils carry out investigations well and older pupils draw thoughtful conclusions from their results. Pupils in all year groups have a good level of scientific knowledge, in relation to their age. They have a good grasp of scientific language.
61. Pupils really enjoy science. They co-operate well with each other, share resources and collaborate in completing tasks. Work is well presented and marking helps pupils to improve. The school's environment and local investigations are used well to support learning in science, and pupils are knowledgeable about renewable resources.
62. Pupils use their literacy skills well in science, although the school is looking to develop this further in ensuring that pupils learn to write in different ways for different purposes. Mathematical skills are applied well. The use of information and communication technology permeates work in science, promoting effective learning.
63. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The scheme of work ensures consistency in planning as well as appropriate progression. Assessment outcomes from the end of each unit of work are tracked by the school to guide future teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards across the school are well above average.
- Cross-curricular links are a strength of the school.
- Pupils and staff use the equipment and programs with confidence.
- Pupils' achievement is very good.

Commentary

64. Pupils' achievement throughout the school is very good and standards are high. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English as an additional language, also make very good progress.
65. Work is very well planned so that pupils make progress in using computers to find things out, to develop ideas and to make things happen. Pupils use computers as a tool to aid their learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 thoughtfully evaluated the relative merits of board games and computer games, showing good understanding of how computers represent reality. Pupils gain a very wide range of skills as they move through the school, and apply them for worthwhile purposes. They carry out research in many subjects. They produce well-designed leaflets and news-sheets. They collect and interpret data using charts. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are very confident in using their skills, handling spreadsheets with ease and making extensive use of the internet for research within topics.

66. Leadership and management are very good. Teachers are enthusiastic and well trained, and have become very confident in their use of technology to support learning. Interactive whiteboards are used in every classroom and even the youngest pupils know how to move things around on them. Resources are very good and include four laptops in each classroom. Each afternoon these are re-located to a different classroom to enable a whole class to take part in a focused lesson. The learning support assistants are competent in setting up laptops and supporting classroom work. The use of technology by staff extends to planning, report writing, and the recording and retrieval of assessment data. In the older years, pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to use the computer to produce and present their own individual education plans.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is a strength of the school. Its use permeates all lessons, where appropriate, and extends pupils' learning very effectively. Pupils become very confident in using technology as a tool to achieve a purpose.

HUMANITIES

Geography, history and religious education

Only one geography, one history and one religious education lesson were observed. It is therefore not possible to make a firm judgement about the overall provision. Work was seen from the current and previous years, and on display around the school. There were discussions with pupils and with subject leaders. In all these subjects, the work which pupils do is lively and interesting, and expands their horizons and understanding of the world around them. Literacy skills are developed in finding out about topics, and information and communication technology is used to very good effect to enrich learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attractive displays around the school encourage interest and invite pupils to answer questions.
- Pupils have good skills in searching for information in books and on the internet.
- Pupils' learning is extended well by visits and visitors, enriching pupils' personal development.

COMMENTARY

68. In **geography** pupils develop a good understanding of different types of maps. In Years 1 and 2 they learn good skills in basic map making. In Years 3 and 4, pupils used their knowledge in an exciting, challenging lesson eagerly matching photographs to places on a plan of the school and its grounds. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are skilled in using keys and grid references to interpret maps. Pupils carry out surveys and represent their results clearly. Pupils have a strong interest in the wider world, and in different countries.
69. In **history** pupils gain a good understanding of timelines and have wide knowledge about the periods of history they have studied. Teachers have a good knowledge of history and transmit their own enthusiasm to the pupils in well-prepared lessons. There are good resources in school to support each topic, including a range of artefacts which stimulate interest and curiosity. Purposeful visits to museums are followed up in school, with the help of the digital camera which is widely used to very good effect. Pupils are encouraged to work as detectives, using all the sources available to find out about the past. They talk with older people to find how life has changed, for example when comparing their toys with those of previous generations.
70. In religious education pupils learn about features of different religions. They were very interested in work about religious rites for welcoming new babies. Younger pupils talked excitedly about a forthcoming visit to a Methodist church for a baptismal service, showing a

good understanding of the symbols and purpose of baptism. The school draws on the diversity of pupils' religious experience in work about different faiths. Assembly themes complement work in religious education, encouraging reflection and thoughtfulness about meanings.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

It was not possible to inspect any subjects in this area in depth, but all were sampled. Two lessons were seen in art and design, one in design and technology and two in physical education. No lessons were seen in music because they were all timetabled for another day of the week. The teaching and learning seen in these subjects was very good overall and pupils achieved very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school places a strong emphasis on practical and creative learning.
- Pupils apply themselves very well and have excellent attitudes to their work.
- Learning in all these subjects is enriched by activities outside lessons.

Commentary

71. Staff, governors and parents are keen that the school should have a well-rounded curriculum which develops creative, practical and physical skills. These subjects are developed well and much enjoyed by pupils, contributing to the breadth and balance of opportunities for pupils. Beyond lessons, pupils participate in music, dance, art and sports, under the enthusiastic guidance of teachers.
72. In **art**, pupils develop skills systematically, for example in learning about colour, and apply these skills creatively and expressively. Work is developed imaginatively, as seen in the use of a variety of techniques for creating portraits in Years 5 and 6. Pupils become absorbed in their work and think carefully about how to create the effect they want. The attractiveness of the school environment, and the high quality of displays around the school, help to foster visual and aesthetic awareness. Pupils enjoy drawing, and are often seen working on elaborate drawings in the playground at lunchtime. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and gives valuable guidance and practical support to other staff.
73. In **design and technology** pupils develop a good range of practical skills. They learn patience and forethought in planning their designs and investigating how best to execute them. In the process, they become knowledgeable about the properties of materials and how to join them, and about the making of moving parts. They use information and communication technology to very good effect, for example in scanning and manipulating their designs. Pupils work with enthusiasm and individuality, co-operating with others and applying themselves with sustained interest. They take pride in their end product and in the overcoming of problems along the way. The subject leader is leading the subject well, providing support for staff and for pupils.
74. No **music** lessons were seen but pupils sang tunefully and with enthusiasm during assemblies. The subject is well managed and resourced and music is clearly valued within the school. Pupils are able to receive instrumental tuition in piano, violin and clarinet and to sing in the school choir. Pupils in Year 2 learn the recorder. Pupils enjoy performing and listening to others. Music is used in the classrooms to inspire pupils and to create a tranquil working atmosphere. The subject leader is planning further development in the subject very well, including the application of information and communication technology so that pupils can make their own CDs.
75. In the few lessons observed in **physical education**, teaching was very purposeful and well paced. Pupils worked hard, co-operating sensibly, and thoughtfully evaluating each other's work. The scheme of work includes a wide range of opportunities for pupils, in gymnastics, dance and indoor and outdoor games. Cross-curricular links are good and pupils were

observed taking part in an orienteering exercise closely linked to work in geography. The subject is managed well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator and pupils are able to take part in a variety of extra-curricular activities such as dance and football clubs. The football team has recently played its first matches and were delighted by their success. Boys and girls have equal access to all sports activities. Swimming, taught by qualified coaches, takes place at the local secondary school. Resources are very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The scheme of work is carefully planned to reflect the school's aims.
- Learning is enriched by the provision for personal development and learning through class councils.
- Teaching is good and well planned.

Commentary

76. The school places a high priority on pupils' personal development and social learning. The curriculum includes a wide range of relevant topics that are planned to build pupils' skills and knowledge as they move through the school.
77. Pupils acquire a growing understanding of their own and other's feelings. Older pupils show their growing maturity in discussions about the function and organisation of class councils. Teaching is very skilled and sensitive so that pupils learn in a warm, but challenging atmosphere.
78. Pupils agree class rules and discuss the school's expectations of behaviour. There is also a strong emphasis on learning to make decisions based on good information. The recent visit of the Life Bus gave pupils insights into ways of leading a healthy life. The Recycling Bus visits regularly and the school is currently working towards being a health promoting school. All of these visitors and extra activities make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	-
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	1
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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