

INSPECTION REPORT

CRUDGINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Telford

LEA area: Telford and Wrekin

Unique reference number: 123362

Headteacher: Mrs B Simpson

Lead inspector: Mr M Thompson

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th April 2004

Inspection number: 255937

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	120 plus 9 part-time in the Nursery
School address:	Crudgington Telford Shropshire
Postcode:	TF6 6JF
Telephone number:	01952 541238
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Shepherd
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Crudgington Primary School is a rural school situated seven miles to the north of Telford. It is smaller than most primary schools, and almost all its pupils are of white British heritage. Its pupils are normally grouped into five mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is about the national average, as is the proportion with statements of special educational need. Pupils' special needs include both specific and multiple learning difficulties.

Children are admitted to the newly established Foundation Unit on a part-time basis as three year olds, and are eligible for full-time education in the Reception Year group. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school between Year 1 and Year 6 is about the national average.

The home circumstances of the pupils vary, but overall they are more favourable than the national average, and few pupils are entitled to free school meals. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is in line with the national average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25372	Mike Thompson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	English; Art and Design; Design and Technology; Physical Education.
19366	Bill Walker	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
30544	Gill Battarbee	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography; History; Music; Religious Education.
2785	John Bird	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special Educational Needs; Mathematics; Science; Information and Communication Technology; Personal, Social and Health Education.
26519	Margaret Hatfield	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage Curriculum.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Crudgington Primary School provides a **satisfactory standard of education** for its pupils. Children enter the Nursery with standards that are broadly average, although there is the full range of attainment. The school continually seeks ways of raising standards and has been successful in some subject areas; but overall, standards are average when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. Teaching is sound, and the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. A particular strength of the school is its development of pupils' personal and social skills. Overall, the school provides **satisfactory value for money**.

The school has made steady progress since its last inspection. Provision for the youngest children has improved, standards are better in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), and the small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching previously reported has been eliminated. However, some of the weaknesses relating to progression in pupils' learning remain in respect of the foundation subjects¹. Issues for improvement, set out in the previous inspection report, have been addressed satisfactorily.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics and ICT are above average. Pupils read well, and speak very well.
- Nursery and Reception children are given a good start to their education in the Foundation Unit.
- The school is very good at developing pupils' social skills. Pupils are very well behaved and relate very well to one another.
- The oldest pupils are particularly well taught.
- The curriculum in most of the foundation subjects fails to ensure that pupils' skills are developed progressively as they move through the school.
- All the staff know the pupils very well and take good care of them; pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are given good quality help and achieve well.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Owing to the small size of the school, only a relatively small number of pupils are tested each year. The grades reported, therefore, need to be treated with caution since variations in the performance of just one or two pupils can disproportionately affect the overall grading. In 2003, for example, the school's Year 6 results relate to the performance of 19 pupils.

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

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

Inspection findings show that, overall, **pupils achieve satisfactorily**. Children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception class and, by the end of Reception, standards are above average in relation to the goals expected for the early stages of children's development in language and mathematics. Standards of children's personal and social development are very high. Achievement is satisfactory

¹ The foundation subjects are those other than the 'core' subjects of English, mathematics and science.

in Years 1 and 2, and by the end of Year 2 standards are average in English, mathematics and science. These pupils speak and read well, but their standards of writing are only average. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve satisfactorily in English and science, and make steady progress in developing their skills in these subjects. In mathematics, pupils make better progress and achieve well because teaching in this subject is good. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in mathematics and average in English and science. Pupils speak very well and make good use of their skills in reading.

The school's success in improving many elements of its provision for pupils in ICT has resulted in good achievement and above average standards in Years 2 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory in history, physical education and religious education, and standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are average in these subjects. No judgements could be made about standards or achievement in other subjects.

Overall, pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good**. Their attitudes towards learning are very good. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good overall, and is excellent in respect of the oldest pupils. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Teachers plan their lessons carefully, manage their pupils' behaviour very well and make good use of the skilled teaching assistants who work alongside them in class. As a result, pupils' learning is satisfactory. Assessment is satisfactory. Good systems have recently been developed for assessing progress and setting targets for pupils in English and science, but more work is required to achieve the same quality of assessment in mathematics and other subjects. Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory. It has the required breadth and balance, and is enriched by a good range of additional activities. However, in the foundation subjects, the curriculum does not successfully accommodate year-on-year changes in the way in which pupils are grouped in classes because planning focuses on the activities to be taught rather than the skills to be developed. The school's relationships with parents are good, and links with local schools and the community are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the **leadership and management of the school are satisfactory**. The leadership provided by the headteacher is satisfactory. The leadership of key staff is good, with very good leadership in the Foundation Unit and good subject leadership in English and science. Governance is good. Governors show a strong commitment to the school and provide good support to the headteacher. Their good monitoring gives them a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and enables them to make well informed decisions. All legal requirements are properly met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' and pupils' views of the school are positive. Parents are appreciative of the work of all of the staff, but a significant minority feel that the school does not always consider their views. Not enough evidence was available for inspectors to come to a view about the reasons for this opinion.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Draw up an overview of the step-by-step development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding as they move from Year 1 to Year 6, so that teachers know precisely at what level they have to teach and assess pupils in each year group.
- Ensure that enough time is allocated for the foundation subjects to be taught in enough depth.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Boys and girls generally achieve equally well, and pupils with SEN achieve well in all age groups. Overall, standards in Reception are above average in relation to the goals expected of children of this age. By the end of Year 2, standards are average in the core subjects, while in Year 6 they are average in English and science, but above average in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Since the previous inspection, standards in Year 6 have risen in mathematics.
- Standards of reading are above average in Years 2 and 6.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress in developing personal and social skills and good progress in acquiring early skills in English and mathematics.
- In Years 2 and 6, standards are above average in ICT, and pupils achieve well.
- Curriculum planning is likely to adversely affect achievement in the foundation subjects.

Commentary

1. No great reliance can be placed on the national test data for a single year as an indicator of the school's effectiveness. The number of pupils taking the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 is small, and this can result in significant year-on-year fluctuations in performance. For example, the table below shows that in 2003 the school's performance in the national tests for Year 6 was above average in English and about average in mathematics and science. However, in 2002 results were below the national average in all three subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.6 (26.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.3 (25.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.9 (27.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. An alternative approach of looking at trends in the school's performance over the past three years provides a more reliable measure. This shows that, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been broadly average over this period. Similarly, at the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science have been in line with the three-year national average.

3. Most of the children start school with average skills for their age, and firmly consolidate and broaden these in the newly-established Foundation Unit. This is because the good quality of teaching and the very good curriculum give them a very good start. A further significant factor is the good ratio of adults to children, which means that children receive much individual attention. Staff, for example, converse regularly with each child and, by doing so, help to broaden children's vocabulary. Counting skills are similarly developed through frequent opportunities given for children to work alongside adults. The children's social development is enhanced by the very good individual care given to them. The very high standards of personal development achieved provide the foundation for the very good behaviour and relationships between pupils evident throughout the school.

4. There are a number of reasons why pupils in the class for Years 5 to 6 achieve well. The most significant of these is the high quality of teaching provided for them. Lessons are very well planned so that pupils of both ages and levels of attainment are suitably challenged. In addition, pupils' mature response to their teachers' very high expectations of behaviour, and the very good relationships that have been nurtured in this class, result in a very good climate for learning. Most noteworthy is the initiative introduced by the class teacher to promote pupils' skills in assessing their own work. This gives them a very clear idea of what they need to do to improve further.

5. The achievement of pupils in other classes is satisfactory because teaching is satisfactory. In the core subjects, lessons are generally planned well enough to meet the needs of the different age and attainment groups within each class.

6. Standards in mathematics have risen in Year 6 and are now above average as a result of a combination of factors, the most significant of which is that mathematics is generally taught better than the other subjects. Pupils do well in ICT throughout the school because of the improvements made in the school's resources and the regular opportunities provided for pupils to use skills learned. Pupils' good skills in reading help them to become independent learners and they use these skills to good effect when conducting research.

7. Owing to the lack of evidence, no secure judgements can be made about achievement in most of the foundation subjects. However, there are strong indications that, from time to time, curriculum planning for the foundation subjects adversely affects the learning of some groups of pupils within the mixed-age classes. As a result, pupils' curriculum entitlement sometimes depends on the class that they are placed in and not on their year group. The school has recognised this as an issue.

8. Pupils with SEN achieve well and make good progress. Their individual education plans give clear targets for them to meet, and they receive good quality help in meeting these targets from their class teachers and skilled teaching assistants.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

This is a happy school. The great majority of pupils attend regularly and on time, keen to start the day and become involved in their work. Pupils behave very well, reflecting the good quality of their personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school has worked effectively with parents to improve the rate of attendance.
- Pupils are well motivated, interested in school life and enterprising in their activities.
- Very good standards of behaviour help to create a good learning environment in the classroom.
- During their time at school pupils grow in confidence and self esteem. Their moral and social development is very good.

Commentary

9. Crudgington Primary School is a secure and orderly place. Pupils feel safe. They arrive in good time, generally with a smile on their face, ready for a prompt start to the day. Parents have cooperated well with the school in avoiding holidays in term time, and the improving rate of attendance is now in line with that for other schools nationally.

10. Pupils are proud of their school and are keen to work. From an early age they learn to take responsibility for their own needs and make choices about their activities. As they move up through the school they develop a sense of community, anticipating problems, supporting younger pupils and assisting members of staff with supervision and with routine tasks. In the classroom their behaviour, which is generally very good, helps to create an environment conducive to learning. The behaviour of the oldest pupils is excellent. Pupils listen well and collaborate very effectively. Older pupils are

often seen explaining to their less able classmates the work in hand or assisting with a difficult task. In their response to the questionnaire, all the pupils indicated that they were given help when they needed it, and found their teachers to be fair and sympathetic. In the words of one pupil, *'The adults are there for you when you are in trouble'*. Pupils learn from this good example. In their manner and their attitudes it is clear that they care for each other. There is a sense of fellowship, well illustrated at mealtimes and outdoors. Pupils of mixed age and gender socialise quietly, play happily and generally enjoy each other's company. There is some exuberance but no unpleasant behaviour. In discussions, pupils showed familiarity with the code of conduct and expressed no concerns about bullying. There have been no exclusions at the school in recent years.

11. Pupils' social and moral development is very good and has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils have a firm sense of right and wrong and soon become familiar with the school's code of behaviour. They recognise the obligations to each other that flow from living in a community. In daily routines, responsibilities are shared at different times by all the pupils. This encourages a sense of belonging. No-one is left out. The same commitment to inclusion is seen in the playground, where a 'Buddies Bench' is available for anyone who feels lonely, and is illustrated by the school's impressive fundraising for national and international charities. Increasing responsibility within the school community is taken by the older pupils. For example those in Years 5 and 6 who are elected to the school council describe their role as *'...to find out what the other children want and put forward their ideas'*. The spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils have a growing level of self-awareness, built up through assemblies and sometimes stimulated by imaginative teaching. For example, in an English lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were manifestly moved when they were led to reflect on the thoughts of a young child who had died prematurely. The curriculum, particularly in art and music, is used effectively to broaden the cultural awareness of pupils. They also gain a good understanding of cultural diversity within the wider community through planned topics such as that which focused recently on Indian lifestyle, cuisine and dance. By the time they leave, at the end of Year 6, the pupils are well prepared personally and socially for the next stage of their education.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good in the Foundation Unit and very good in Year 5 and 6.
- Assessment in the foundation subjects needs to be improved and, as a result, work set for pupils of different ages and abilities is sometimes the same.
- Homework is not used consistently to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

12. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The proportion of lessons seen that were good or better is broadly in line with the national norm.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	8	9	8	0	0	0

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

13. The quality of teaching for Nursery and Reception children is good and has improved since the last inspection. It is very good in the important area of children's personal, social and emotional development. Some very good teaching of communication, language and literacy was also seen. Adults' high expectations of what children can achieve, very good class management, and very effective planning enable Nursery and Reception children to learn well. Adults work very well together, constantly assessing the progress of children to guide their next steps in learning.

14. Teaching is most effective in the class for pupils in Year 5 and 6, where five of the seven lessons seen were very good or better. In this class, teaching is stimulating and lively. Pupils of all levels of attainment are challenged by the tasks set for them, and very good use is made of the interactive white board² to help pupils to learn.

15. The majority of lessons seen in other classes were satisfactory. Teachers structure lessons well and make the learning intentions clear. They use good strategies to interest and motivate the pupils, such as the use of a 'washing line' of photographs to help Year 2 pupils sequence their story writing, and role play to bring the story of the Fire of London alive for pupils in Year 1. Teachers manage their pupils very well and relate well to them. As a result, pupils behave very well during lessons and have very good attitudes towards their work.

16. Learning is satisfactory overall, and is good or very good where teaching is most effective. Both boys and girls take pride in their work. Their books are usually very neat, well organised and attractive. In the majority of lessons the pupils enjoy their learning, are confident to ask questions and contribute to what is going on, and are keen to talk about what they are doing. However, although pupils work well in lessons, they are not always challenged sufficiently to stretch them, particularly the higher attainers.

² These are large boards on which the screen display from a computer is projected. The technology enables the user to control the images on screen by touching it.

17. Teachers generally mark their pupils' work well. The most effective marking gives pupils clear information about why they are doing well and ideas about how to improve their work. In the class for Years 5 and 6, pupils are developing skills in evaluating their own work. This provides good opportunities for them to develop their skills as independent learners. However, marking in science is generally not as good as in the other core subjects.

18. The school recognises that homework needs to be improved, and its policy is currently being reviewed. Expectations about homework vary significantly from class to class. Where homework is used well it forms an integral part of the pupils' learning in lessons.

19. The teaching provided for pupils with SEN is good. Teachers are aware of the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and make good provision for them during lessons. Key features of this provision are:

- * activities that are effectively matched to the needs of individuals, and provide achievable challenges;
- * resources which are often specifically constructed to meet individual needs;
- * an inclusive approach to teaching and learning where all pupils work on tasks linked to the lesson objectives and all pupils are encouraged to contribute in discussion and shared problem-solving.

20. Teaching assistants are skilled and are deployed well; they clearly understand what they are expected to do, and make a significant contribution to the good progress made by these pupils.

21. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is very good. It is detailed and thorough and covers all aspects of children's development. It is used very well to guide the planning of the next steps in learning, to track children's attainment and progress and to identify any weaknesses in learning. Nursery and Reception children are assessed on entry and these assessments are used very effectively to plan suitable programmes of work.

22. In Years 1 to 6, assessment is good in English and Science. It provides a detailed framework against which individual pupils' progress can be mapped each year, and in English there are clear individual targets for pupils. However, in other subjects, assessment is less detailed. In the foundation subjects, assessment is satisfactory in that the requirement for teachers to make an annual 'best fit' judgement about pupils' attainment is met. However, assessment in these subjects focuses too much on coverage of topics rather than on how well pupils acquire skills. The weaknesses in assessment in the foundation subjects, which stem from weaknesses in the curriculum, make it difficult for teachers to provide different levels of challenge for pupils of different ages and abilities within their mixed-age classes. A scrutiny of pupils' work showed that this is generally the case.

The Curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory overall, though there are weaknesses with regard to some of the foundation subjects. The school is well staffed and resources are generally good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Planning is unsatisfactory in some of the foundation subjects.
- Provision for children with SEN is good.
- Good opportunities are provided for enriching the curriculum.

Commentary

23. The Foundation Stage curriculum has improved considerably since the last inspection and is now very good. It is based on the recommended Early Learning Goals, the small steps leading to the achievement of these goals, and the six areas of learning. It links smoothly with the early stages of the National Curriculum programmes of study, and prepares children well for transition to Year 1. It is very effectively planned to provide a wealth of imaginative and interesting activities, very well matched to both Nursery and Reception children's needs. Children with SEN are identified early and provision for them is very good. Areas of learning are often inter-linked, providing meaningful experiences for children. The excellent accommodation includes an inside and an outdoor classroom, significantly improved since the last inspection. These areas are spacious and imaginatively organised, to provide stimulating and interesting experiences in all areas of learning.

24. In Years 1 to 6, pupils need to be organised into mixed-age classes because there are not enough pupils for single-age class groups to be financially viable. This situation is further complicated by year-on-year fluctuations in the sizes of year groups. For example, the current Year 4 group is less than half the size of Year 3 or Year 5. The school has worked hard to adjust its curriculum planning to reflect annual changes in the composition of classes and has rightly given priority to the core subjects.

25. Overall, the curriculum is broad and meets statutory requirements. It is well planned in English, mathematics and science and includes satisfactory provision in religious education, physical education and ICT.

26. However, in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music, curricular provision needs to be improved. In these subjects there is a lack of planned progression in the acquisition of skills and in subject knowledge, and unequal opportunity for pupils. There are currently instances where groups of pupils in the same year group have different curricular experiences.

27. The curriculum provided for pupils with SEN is good. Procedures for the early identification of pupils with SEN are well established, sound and effective. Individual education plans for these pupils are clear and detailed. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively to address pupils' specific needs.

28. Key elements of children's personal, social and health education (PSHE) are satisfactorily addressed in timetabled lessons and integrated into the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to develop confidence and responsibility. They are provided with regular opportunities to express their feelings and opinions. For example, in the class for pupils in Years 2 and 3, pupils were challenged to identify the kinds of decisions they made in their lives and the most difficult decision that they had made. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and to understand the difference between co-operation and competition. Clear reference is made to rules, and the need for them. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take on responsibilities, reflect on spiritual matters, make good choices and develop a healthy lifestyle.

29. Good opportunities are provided for curriculum enrichment through activities outside lessons. There is a good range of clubs linked to many subjects of the curriculum, from mathematics to rounders. Activities are well attended. The school takes part in sporting and cultural events and organises visits to support the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Crudgington is a caring school, characterised by warm and trusting relationships. The arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. Pupils' academic and personal development are carefully monitored so that guidance and support are well focused and effective. In recent months the school has involved pupils well by seeking their views and acting upon them.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The very good relationships throughout the school are reflected in the very caring environment.
- The induction arrangements for pupils new to the school are very effective.
- Health and safety procedures are good.
- The school provides good support, advice and guidance for pupils.
- There is a well-structured system for taking account of pupils' views.

Commentary

30. From their early day at school pupils enjoy an environment in which they can feel secure and valued whilst having the freedom to develop their independence and grow in confidence. Teachers show great concern for the welfare of those in their charge. Throughout the school relationships are very good. There is a strong sense of a community with shared interests and values. Pupils speak warmly about adult members of staff and their peers. They refer to their school as '*...happy, a nice size, not too big, (where) we can socialise better because we know everyone. Staff are very supportive and friendly*'. Governors have a very responsible attitude towards health and safety. Policies are carefully monitored to ensure compliance. Proper arrangements are in place for child protection. The curriculum is used effectively to promote a healthy and safe lifestyle. The shortcomings that were identified in these areas at the time of the previous inspection have been resolved and there has been good improvement.

31. Even before children begin their formal education in the Foundation Stage, the good practice that has been established means that teachers are able to develop with parents a good understanding of their child's capabilities and needs. As pupils progress through the school, teachers and other classroom staff progressively compile clear records of each pupil's progress and personal development. The sharing of this information with parents at the consultation evenings, and in the very detailed annual reports about their children, helps to ensure its accuracy and increase its effectiveness in raising standards. A valuable feature of the reports is the involvement of pupils themselves in evaluating their own performance and reviewing their personal targets.

32. A recent survey of pupil opinion resulted in an unusually positive response. For example, all pupils felt that their teachers were fair at least most of the time, whilst all but one considered that teachers listened to their ideas. In order to involve pupils more fully in its work and development, the school is now developing a school council comprising senior pupils and adult members of the school community. In its few months of existence the council has gathered opinion from representatives in each class and, through sponsorship, has accumulated sufficient money to initiate some enhancement to the main playground, which was a priority identified by pupils. These arrangements encourage the involvement of all pupils and provide very good personal development for those directly involved.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a constructive partnership with parents. Very good procedures are in place to ensure that they are well informed about the work of the school and the standards and progress of their children. Many parents work hard to support the school, but a minority feel that proper weight is not given to their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Parents are very well informed about the school's work and the standards and progress of their children.
- Many parents work hard to raise funds on behalf of the school.
- A minority of parents feel that the school does not seek their views or take account of their suggestions or complaints.

Commentary

33. The school has continued to develop its partnership with parents. Its success in doing so is reflected in the increasing number who live outside the catchment area but choose to educate their children at Crudgington. The views expressed by parents are very largely positive and bear testimony to the good quality of information provided for them.

34. In the Foundation Unit, high priority is given to fostering very positive relationships between staff and parents. Children take home reading books to share with their parents, and this involves parents in their children's learning. Very good opportunities are provided for parents to liaise with staff at the start of the school day, as they bring their children into school and work with them for a short time before the formal start to lessons.

35. The procedural and curricular detail provided at the beginning of the school year is well presented and helpful to parents anxious to help with their children's education in the home. They are further assisted in learning about the curriculum through presentations and workshops organised by the school. Although relatively few parents take advantage of these opportunities, the great majority attend the consultation evenings held each term to discuss their child's attainment and progress. The end of year reports are of good quality, being well focused, and giving a clear idea of the child's learning, behaviour and effort through the year. Communication with parents of pupils with SEN is good. Pupils' individual education plans are regularly reviewed with pupils and their parents.

36. The school generates much goodwill amongst parents, many of whom devote much time and energy to organise social and fundraising activities in support of the school. Some also help in the classroom and with supervision on educational visits. However, a few parents have expressed concern about homework and rather more do not feel that the school seeks their views or takes account of their comments. The inspection evidence supports the concern about homework. In only one lesson during the inspection was homework given, and discussion with pupils and parents indicate a lack of consistency across the school. The issue of consultation with parents is an area for reflection by governors. Whilst parents are well represented on the governing body there is no recent evidence of formal consultation with the parent community as a whole, other than at the governors' annual meeting with parents. The current arrangements do not accommodate parents who are unable to attend meetings or who may be inhibited from speaking in a public arena.

37. Throughout the year the school makes appropriate use of resources in the community to enrich the curriculum for pupils. Particular success was enjoyed recently with the school's project about India, when visitors introduced pupils to a culture and cuisine very different to that with which they are familiar. The school links effectively with local primary schools to share curriculum information. However there is at present no curricular linkage with secondary schools, a shortcoming which the headteacher has already identified and is keen to rectify.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher's leadership is satisfactory. Leadership provided by key members of staff is good. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Governors and staff share the headteachers' strong commitment to inclusion.
- The governors have thorough understanding of the issues facing the school.
- Strategic planning needs to be improved with regard to the curriculum for foundation subjects.
- Staff work well as a team.

Commentary

38. The headteacher gives firm and competent leadership and shows a strong commitment to the school. She is well supported by her deputy, who provides a very good role model to staff through the quality of his teaching. The leadership team monitors the effectiveness of the school satisfactorily and works hard to address its weaknesses. Under the headteacher's leadership, the school's performance is generally as good as that of schools in similar circumstances.

39. Staff share the headteacher's strong commitment to the development of pupils' personal and social skills and the inclusion of all pupils; this contributes to the school's very good ethos. Subject leadership is good in key areas of the school's work, including the 'core' subjects of English and science. However, some improvement is needed in the long-term strategic planning of the curriculum for the foundation subjects. Over the past six years, several curriculum models have been used and weaknesses in the current model have become evident to the school. Short-term action has been taken to address these and a new plan is being developed to be used from the beginning of the next school year.

40. Foundation Stage leadership is very good. The Foundation Unit leader has been instrumental in developing the very good way in which the new unit functions. Much hard work has been put into developing the excellent accommodation and a stimulating curriculum for Nursery and Reception children. Children are very well supported and all staff work closely as a very good team.

41. Governance of the school is good. Governors visit regularly, and successfully fulfil their role as 'critical friend' to the school through their monitoring of its work, including observations of lessons. Many governors have children at the school, and know it well through their day-to-day contact and their participation in school events. Governors receive termly reports from the headteacher and meet regularly in committees, and as a full governing body, to oversee the work of the school and to evaluate progress made. Governors effectively use information gathered from their monitoring to inform their discussions, and apply principles of 'best value' satisfactorily when making decisions. All legal requirements are properly met.

42. The leadership and management of SEN are good. The governor with responsibility for SEN liaises closely with the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO), and governors are fully informed about the school's provision. The relatively high level of funding allocated to SEN demonstrates the governors' clear commitment to inclusion and care for pupils. Spending on SEN gives good value for money.

43. School administration is efficient. It ensures that teachers are able to focus on their professional duties and are not diverted from their work by administrative tasks. The secretary knows pupils and their families very well, deals competently with day-to-day queries and contributes strongly to the smooth running of the school.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	287,554.00
Total expenditure	298,105.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,484.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	5,200.00
Balance carried forward to the next	-10,552.00

44. Financial administration is sound. Governors are provided with regular statements of income and expenditure to help them to fulfil their responsibilities in monitoring the school's finances. The budget deficit for the financial year reported above is due to higher than anticipated staffing costs.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

45. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and has improved considerably since the last inspection. The recent, very effective establishment of a Foundation Stage Unit is already beginning to impact positively on the children's achievement.

46. The Foundation Stage Unit consists of one class, with nine Nursery children who attend on a part-time basis in the mornings, and 17 full-time Reception children. All the children are very well supported by one full-time teacher, a Nursery nurse and a teaching assistant during the morning sessions and by the teacher and a teaching assistant in the afternoons. Staff work together as a very good team.

47. Foundation Stage children receive a very good start to their education. Assessments made when children start school show that, at this point, standards are above average in personal, social and emotional development and average in communication, language, literacy, and mathematical development. Overall, children achieve well as a result of the school's good provision and, by the end of the Reception Year, attain very high standards of personal, social and emotional development, and above average standards in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical, and creative development, standards are average overall.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good** for Nursery and Reception children.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Nursery and Reception children are very well taught and learn very well.
- Support staff are very effectively deployed.
- Class management is very good.
- Very good strategies are used to help develop children's independence.

Commentary

48. Nursery and Reception children enjoy school and achieve very well in this area of learning because they are taught very well. By the end of the Foundation Stage, almost all of them are on course to exceed the goals expected at this stage. Staff value children's ideas and encourage them to feel confident about what they achieve. High expectations and very good class management contribute very positively to trusting relationships and children's very good attitudes, behaviour and understanding of right and wrong. Children in both age groups respond very positively to the excellent examples given by adults and to well-established daily routines, giving them confidence and security. Very well organised snack times develop children's social, personal, and speaking and listening skills.

49. The organisation of the start to each school day is very effective in helping to develop children's social skills. Parents and carers bring children into class before school starts and help to settle their children happily. They have the opportunity to share books with their children and speak to staff, if needed. As a result, Nursery children separate confidently from their parents and carers and Reception children select books happily and responsibly. Staff organise very good strategies to develop independence for both age groups. For example, they provide a very good balance between

activities children themselves initiate and those taught by adults; they also ensure equipment is easily accessible to children, to foster independence. The 'plan, do and review' system encourages both Nursery and Reception children to think for themselves and begin to take responsibility for their own learning. 'Self-registration' promotes independence, as well as name-recognition. Very good organisation of the excellent inside and outdoor accommodation contributes to developing decision-making skills.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good** in both age groups.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good, resulting in good achievement for both age groups.
- Lessons are very well led and managed, and teaching assistants are used well.
- Strategies for teaching reading and writing are very effective.

Commentary

50. This area is well taught, with some very good teaching seen. As a result, all children, including those with SEN, achieve well. By the end of Reception, most are set to exceed the goals expected in all aspects of this area of learning. Staff have a very secure command of what they teach and have high expectations of both groups of children. They give high priority to speaking and listening, and use every opportunity to develop them. This helps Nursery children listen to stories with enjoyment and increasing attention, extend their vocabulary and develop confidence in talking to people unfamiliar to them. Well-organised 'show and tell' sessions encourage Reception children to concentrate, listen, and talk confidently to the class.

51. Staff provide very well for Nursery children to enjoy 'reading' books with an adult, fostering an interest in pictures and print, and awareness of story structure and the sequence of events. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are used effectively for Reception children. For example, reading a book entitled '*In my garden*' with the teacher, helped them to understand simple punctuation. Staff successfully capture children's interest by the imaginative use of indoor and outside 'alphabet lines' to link sounds with letters. Very good class management and organisation contribute well to children's use of computers and listening centres³ to practise matching words and pictures. Children enjoy books and know that print carries meaning, while higher-attainers read familiar texts with growing skill.

52. Staff provide effectively for Nursery children to draw, paint and 'make marks' as children begin to understand that marks carry meaning. The teacher clearly models writing for Reception children, who practise correct letter formation, write their names and attempt to write for various purposes. They use their knowledge of sounds to write simple regular words, many making plausible attempts at more complex words and simple sentences. Very good support for language development permeates the life and work of the Foundation Stage Unit.

³ These are cassette or CD players with multiple sets of headphones so that children can independently share the same story.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good** for Nursery and Reception children.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching and learning are good for both age groups.
- Very good assessments track progress and guide the planning of new work.
- Well-briefed support staff are very effectively deployed.

Commentary

53. Teaching is good and children in both year groups achieve well, including those with special needs, who are given good quality help with their work. Most are on course to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of Reception. For all the children, work builds effectively on previous learning. It is well structured and well matched to differing levels of understanding. Support staff are well briefed about what children are expected to learn and provide very good quality support for both age groups. Staff constantly assess and record children's progress, checking what they know, to guide the planning of new work. All children are included in, and enjoy, challenging, yet achievable, activities. Adults' high expectations, combined with very good child-initiated and adult-directed activities, enable all children to make good progress in practising, consolidating and extending their mathematical skills. For example, the teacher encourages Nursery children's interest in numbers and in comparing sizes, using and understanding terms such as 'big' and 'bigger'. Reception children are challenged to understand basic number tables and patterns when they count in twos. By the end of Reception, most count reliably well beyond ten, and understand addition and subtraction. Effective, purposeful, practical activities help them to understand shape, space and measures.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development, is **good** for both age groups.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching and learning are good.
- The school and local environment are used very well as learning resources.
- Children are provided with imaginative learning opportunities.
- Purposeful, practical activities are well organised.

Commentary

54. In both areas, almost all children are set to attain, and a number to exceed, the goals expected by the end of Reception. Children achieve well because they are taught well. The good organisation of purposeful, practical activities enables both Nursery and Reception children to build on their knowledge to understand about the world and to develop creativity. Staff engage both age groups in using computers and many children develop appropriate computer skills for their ages. Good use of visitors and visits in the locality fosters a sense of culture, time and place.

55. The teacher stimulates Nursery children's curiosity and interest through good use of resources and well organised, purposeful, practical activities. For instance, the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' is used as a stimulus for learning about the growth of plants. Children grow beans in jars and compare the sizes of different plants. A walk around the school premises to investigate and collect flowers, leaves and twigs is used to challenge Reception children to observe similarities and

differences in plants. This activity is also used to promote children's creative development, as children use their collections to make a large collage, exploring texture and colour. Good opportunities for Nursery children to create pictures and paintings enable them to represent objects and experiment with mixing colours. Both age groups explore sounds using simple musical instruments, developing appropriate skills for their age. Good use is made of inside and outdoor role-play areas to develop children's imaginative play.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good** for Nursery and Reception children.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching and learning are good for children in both age groups.
- The excellent 'outdoor classroom' is a high quality resource.
- There is good provision to develop children's fine physical skills.

Commentary

56. Good teaching enables all the children to achieve well. Most are set to attain, and many to exceed, the goals expected by the end of the Reception Year. The exceptionally spacious, secure outside accommodation is used very effectively as a high quality 'outdoor classroom' for all areas of learning and is a significant improvement since the last inspection. It has been developed imaginatively and is a major factor in Nursery and Reception children's good progress. All the children use large apparatus and wheeled toys well, encouraging development of their co-ordination and independence, and their skills in making decisions. Adults' high expectations of what children can achieve result in children's very good attitudes and behaviour. Nursery children move freely, with enjoyment and increasing confidence, although many lack imagination. Staff constantly assess and record children's progress and build on what children know and can do. Consequently, Reception children move more imaginatively and safely, with improving co-ordination and control. Both age groups receive good opportunities to develop their fine physical skills. Staff teach skills, such as handling writing implements and small tools, and threading, to help children gain control of their finer movements. Although some find this difficult, they are given good quality help. Safety issues are very well addressed.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**. Overall, it is good in Years 5 and 6, but is satisfactory elsewhere.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils listen, speak and read well.
- Although standards in writing are average overall, a high proportion of pupils in Year 6 produce good quality work.
- The oldest pupils are particularly well taught. Their performance is very carefully assessed and they are given very clear guidance about how they can improve their work.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

57. Overall, achievement is satisfactory and standards in English are average in Years 2 and 6. This situation is similar to that reported at the time of the last inspection.

58. Standards of speaking and listening are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in developing their skills of speaking and listening. In the top class, pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieve very well because of the high quality teaching they receive. In this class, teaching is characterised by high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response, and excellent management of the pupils. As a result, an excellent climate for learning is created in which pupils learn to listen well and are given many opportunities to put forward their views and develop their vocabulary. The impact of this quality of provision was evident during a group discussion, when an average-attaining pupil suggested that a character being discussed might be described as *'boastful but shallow'*. A discussion with members of the school council, drawn from this class, showed that pupils express themselves thoughtfully and very clearly.

59. Pupils achieve well in developing their skills in reading, and standards are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. All of the pupils heard reading achieved the nationally expected level for their year group and most exceeded this minimum standard. Pupils enjoy reading and are encouraged to read regularly at home. The development of pupils' reading is planned well, and pupils progress through increasingly more demanding texts as they acquire a greater degree of competence. Pupils in Year 2 use a good range of strategies to decipher unfamiliar words, and those of average and higher attainment read fluently. Pupils in Year 6 are confident readers who use their skills well to help them with their work in other subjects. For example, they explained and demonstrated skills of 'skimming' text to locate information, and used the contents, glossary and index pages of reference books quickly and effectively.

60. Standards in writing are average in both Year 2 and Year 6, and achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils steadily develop skills in writing for different purposes, and in a wide range of different forms, because they are competently taught and the thorough marking of their work helps them to improve. By the end of Year 2, pupils of average attainment use their secure knowledge of letter sounds to good effect in their spelling, and use basic punctuation, such as capital letters and full stops, correctly. Higher-attaining pupils make their work more interesting by using a wider range of punctuation and better quality descriptions. The best performance in writing is to be found in the Year 5 and 6 class, where pupils achieve very well and make rapid progress. In this class, pupils are given particularly clear guidance as to how they can improve, and every opportunity is taken to ensure that they apply the skills learned in literacy lessons when producing written work in other subjects.

61. The good assessments carried out in English, particularly in Year 5 and 6, enable the school to target the pupils most likely to achieve higher levels in the national tests and to identify those in need of extra help. The impact of this targeting is seen in Year 6, where the writing produced by about half of the pupils contains the more complex sentence structure and adventurous choice of vocabulary required for pupils to exceed nationally expected levels. However, about a third of the pupils in Year 6 are unlikely to achieve the nationally expected level and, for this reason, standards are average overall.

62. Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, teaching of the highest quality was seen in a Year 5 and 6 lesson which focused on the development of characters within a story. The teacher's introduction, in which he took on the role of the main character in a text being studied, had a powerful effect on pupils and gave them a deep insight into the individual's feelings. The teacher then skilfully developed the theme by making very good use of the interactive whiteboard, which enabled him to manipulate text on screen and highlight key words. This technique helped to focus the class on the effect of well-chosen adjectives and, as a result, pupils were highly motivated and understood very clearly what they needed to do as they applied themselves to the task of developing a 'character profile'.

63. Teaching assistants work in close partnership with teachers to provide good quality help for pupils, particularly those with SEN. For example, in the Year 5 and 6 class lesson observed, the teaching assistant skilfully guided the efforts of a group of four lower-attaining pupils. Through her prompting, these pupils played a full part in the introduction, worked on similar tasks to those given to their classmates, and learned very well.

64. The subject is led and managed well. The co-ordinator sets a very good example to staff through his teaching, his high quality assessments of pupils, and his strong commitment to continuous improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well in terms of the delivery of lessons. However, in Years 1 to 4, opportunities to develop pupils' skills in literacy need to be given a greater profile in planning for other subjects. Where opportunities are taken, they make a good contribution to pupils' learning. For example, in a religious education lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 used their note-taking skills effectively when studying Sikh beliefs and values.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** and has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are above average in Year 6.
- Overall, teaching and learning are good.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning.
- Classroom assistants make a good contribution to the learning of children with SEN.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good.

Commentary

66. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily, and standards in mathematics are average by the end of Year 2. Overall, pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, with the older pupils achieving best. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average.

67. Teaching was very good in three of the six lessons observed, good in two lessons and satisfactory in the other. The best teaching is to be found in the classes for the oldest pupils. Overall, teachers have very good knowledge of mathematics. They have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and provide them with challenging work and good quality help. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher's questioning clearly focused pupils on making and then justifying their choice of calculation methods. Tasks are accurately set according to the learning needs of individuals and groups. Teachers use a good range of strategies to maintain pace and motivation in lessons.

68. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very effectively to support and enhance learning, and interactive whiteboards are an integral part of teaching and learning. Their capabilities are well used by both teachers and children to manipulate text and numbers in problem-solving, share work on the calculator and access information on the Internet.

69. Pupils with SEN achieve well and make good progress in mathematics. They are well supported through tasks aimed at specific individual and group needs, as well as through the good work of teaching assistants, who are well prepared by teachers for their role in each lesson and are given a clear focus for their group. They help pupils to break tasks down into smaller challenges and to be successful learners. Lesson introductions, class discussions and lesson endings include all pupils.

70. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They behave well and work effectively together in groups. Pupils are well motivated through challenging lessons and the good quality of help provided for them.

71. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The system for tracking the progress of individual children is well established and effective in its contribution to teachers' planning. Target-setting for individual pupils is not yet in place, but its development is planned. Some monitoring and evaluation of children's work and of lessons has taken place but this needs to be established as a regular part of a school review system.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Pupils apply their mathematical skills satisfactorily in other subjects. For example, they use graphs and charts to record their findings in science and they use their skills in measuring when planning and making their assignments in design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Scientific investigation forms a key and effective part of the curriculum for all pupils.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Pupils' presentation of their work varies in quality.
- Overall, the marking of work does not help pupils to improve as much as it should.

Commentary

73. Overall, standards in Years 2 and 6 are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This situation is the same as that reported at the time of the previous inspection. Higher-attaining pupils achieve standards which are above average.

74. Evidence from a detailed scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work shows that teaching is satisfactory. However, during the course of the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning seen was good overall. In these lessons, teachers' subject knowledge was good. Questioning was used effectively to develop pupils' thinking, both in whole class discussion and in group work, and the beginnings and endings of lessons were used well by teachers to help the children to recall what they had learned previously and to draw together new learning. Pupils were well motivated and concentrated well throughout tasks, and behaviour was consistently managed well.

75. Overall, the curriculum is good. All required elements are covered, and throughout the school pupils carry out scientific investigations as a frequent and regular part of their work. A good emphasis is placed upon predicting the outcome of experiments, ensuring that tests are fair, using a range of methods to record findings and evaluating and explaining the outcomes. The pupils make good and consistent use of whole-school strategies for planning their investigations.

76. Good quality help is provided for individuals and groups of children with specific learning needs through the work of teaching assistants and tasks tailored to pupils' specific learning needs. Whole-class discussions are well managed and inclusive.

77. However, the standard of presentation of work is too variable across the school. There are examples of both good and poor quality presentation from pupils of all abilities. This occurs because the school has not established clear enough standards of presentation in this subject.

78. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is also inconsistent. Marking frequently consists of ticks, which are sometimes accompanied by positive comments. Overall, there is too little written feedback to enable pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do next in order to improve.

79. The subject is well led and managed. Although the quality of day-to-day assessment, through the marking of pupils' work, needs to be improved, the assessments which summarise pupils' attainment are good and include target-setting for individual pupils. The subject co-ordinator monitors provision through scrutiny of pupils' work, observing lessons and examining lesson planning. Valuable work is in progress to develop aspects of science and to include the use of ICT. Resources for the subject are adequate.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Little direct teaching was observed in ICT and therefore no firm judgement can be made about all aspects of provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are above average in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning in other subjects.
- Good improvements have been made in the resources available for staff and pupils, and the school makes good use of limited space available for computers.
- Assessment procedures need to be developed.

Commentary

80. Standards are above average in both Year 2 and Year 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average.

81. Achievement is good because pupils are taught specific skills systematically and have a wide range of opportunities to practise and apply the skills learned across the curriculum. Conversations with pupils demonstrate that they are very capable of accessing the Internet to use programs and to research and record information. They competently gather information, text and pictures, and re-organise it for presentation; they use email for homework and other communications. Pupils are confident and enthusiastic in their use of their rapidly developing skills.

82. Not enough teaching was seen for a judgement to be made about its quality. In the single lesson seen, in Year 6, the very good teaching motivated the pupils well. They were keen to explore ways in which they could use equipment to make things happen in sequence. The lesson moved learning forward at a good, challenging pace. Tasks were very appropriately aimed at the needs of groups and individuals. Resources were very well used. A number of shorter sessions were observed, mostly taken by teaching assistants, in which individual pupils or groups of pupils showed confidence and competence in manipulating images on screen.

83. Resources have been improved. Space is very limited but the school has made very effective use of a corridor to establish a suite of computers so that all pupils can be systematically and regularly taught the necessary skills.

84. The subject is well led and managed. This has been an important contributory factor to the improvements made in many aspects of provision. The school has a policy and a curriculum plan for ICT, resources have recently been reviewed, and plans are in hand for the next stage in the development of the subject. Training has been provided for staff. Overall, assessment is satisfactory in that the school fulfils the requirement to record and report a 'best fit' judgement for each pupil each year. However, there is little systematic, on-going recording of pupils' progress, except in Years 5 and 6.

The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 1 used a computer program to 'age' portraits of their classmates, while pupils in Year 6 used the Internet to research a design and technology project. Individual pupils, helped by teaching assistants, regularly use computer programs to practise basic skills, such as spelling. Interactive whiteboards are used very effectively by teachers and children to enhance learning in all subjects.

HUMANITIES

86. No overall judgement can be made about provision in either geography or history. Only two lessons were observed in history and none were seen in geography.

87. No judgement can be made about standards in **geography** because of the limited evidence available. Year 6 pupils' comprehensive work about the water cycle shows an appropriate knowledge of the curriculum, and their books are neat and well presented. The few pieces of work recorded in pupils' books in Years 1 and 2 show a basic understanding of the use of maps.

88. Standards in **history** are average in Years 2 and 6. The work produced by the oldest pupils demonstrates their factual knowledge of the history of Britain and their understanding that there are consequences resulting from certain changes and events. The pupils' work is careful and well presented. It is marked regularly, but shows limited evidence of the higher-attainers being challenged with higher-order skills such as the understanding of empathy or the critical use of historical evidence.

89. One of the two lessons seen was very good, and the other was satisfactory. The better lesson, in a Year 1 and 2 class, brought to life the impact of the Fire of London on the lives of the people at the time. The pupils were enthralled by the effective use of story telling, questioning and role-play, and these strategies motivated pupils to think carefully and ask thoughtful questions.

90. The organisation of the curriculum content is unsatisfactory in both history and geography. Although the school has reviewed the way in which the content of the history and geography programmes of study are taught in the mixed-age classes, planning does not provide for the satisfactory development of pupils' skills or equal access to the topics taught. In history, for example, the school has recently found it necessary to teach Year 3 pupils about life in Stuart times. The study of this period is no longer included in the National Curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6, but the school deemed it necessary in order to avoid repetition of a topic about Tudor England.

91. The assessments of pupils which are recorded, and which are based on the school's schemes of work, tend to reflect coverage of the curriculum rather than focusing more clearly on the quality of the skills developed by individuals.

92. Subject co-ordinators provide support for colleagues, plan for improvements through their annual action plans and monitor some aspects of their subject. However assessment and monitoring of standards in the subjects are not yet sufficiently rigorous to influence the quality of provision and the standards achieved.

Religious Education

No judgement can be made about the quality of the provision in this subject.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils study a wide range of religious beliefs that contribute to their good attitudes towards others.
- There is insufficient focus on raising standards.

Commentary

93. In the single lesson observed, in Year 6, teaching was good and resulted in pupils learning well. The lesson content was carefully planned and care was taken to match work to the needs of pupils of different age and prior attainment. Evidence from this lesson, together with a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work, shows that standards are average. This situation is the same as that reported at the time of the last inspection.

94. In class, Year 6 pupils showed clearly that they had understood their previous work. They received good quality help from the teacher, and this encouraged them to discuss the meaning of 'goodness' and to relate this to the teachings of the Sikh religion. The work completed by pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrated their understanding of elements of the Christian religion. They showed how religion relates to their own lives by making their own carefully considered additions to the Ten Commandments. Lower-attaining pupils are well provided for, and are enabled to contribute sensitive and thoughtful work. However, there is little evidence to show that teachers consistently challenge the higher-attainers. All the pupils show respect for the beliefs of others and this attitude is well modelled by all adults.

95. The leadership of the subject co-ordinator is good. She has a clear vision for the future development of the religious education curriculum. She has incorporated the introduction of the newly revised Agreed Syllabus into her annual action plan and has trialled its use with pupils. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors planning and ensures that pupils' progress is systematically recorded. However, the information gained is not rigorously used to drive up standards of attainment. Not enough use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

96. No judgements can be made about standards or the quality of provision in art and design, design and technology, or music because of the way in which the timetable was arranged. As a result, no teaching was seen in either art and design or design and technology, and only one music lesson was observed.

97. A good feature of the school's provision in **art and design** is the enrichment of the curriculum and the stimulus for learning provided by a recent whole-school visit to the New Art Gallery in Walsall. This visit provided the opportunity for pupils to look at different ways of developing a single theme, which in this case was '*Take One Picture*', and focused on portraits of television personalities by new, and relatively unknown, artists. Pupils are also given regular opportunities to study work produced in very different styles by a range of famous artists, such as Vincent Van Gogh, Andy Warhol and Piet Mondrian. However, work produced by non-western artists is not much in evidence. A scrutiny of pupils' sketchbooks and work on display showed that, as they

move from Year 1 to Year 6, pupils are given opportunities to experience working with a reasonable range of media. Some of the samples of work seen, such as the pencil drawings produced by pupils in Year 6, are of good quality and show that higher-attaining pupils have a very good sense of perspective and proportion, and a good eye for detail.

98. In **design and technology** there is very little work recorded in pupils' books. For example, pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 have covered just two topics since the start of the school year. However, evidence from books and displays shows that pupils experience all the key elements of the subject within the topics taught, and some of the work produced is of good quality. For instance, a project in which pupils in Years 5 and 6 were challenged to design and make slippers showed that they first looked closely at the types of materials used for the component parts and applied their ICT skills when conducting their research. Accurate templates were produced and various methods of joining different materials were tried out. As with art and design, the school makes good use of additional activities to enrich the curriculum. For the past two years, pupils have taken part in a design challenge. This resulted last year in success for a group of pupils from Year 3, whose musical instruments won a prize.

99. Enrichment of the curriculum in **music** is achieved through the good range of opportunities provided for pupils to learn to play musical instruments. In addition to the single satisfactory lesson seen, peripatetic tuition for older pupils in violin and flute, a lunchtime recorder session for pupils in Year 3, and a school hymn practice were observed. Those playing the recorder at lunchtime were learning to read simple notation and maintain rhythm. The small number of older pupils who were observed in flute and violin sessions achieved well, particularly the Year 5 pupils working towards Grade 4 in playing the violin. In a whole-school hymn practice pupils sang quietly and maintained the correct timing, but were not encouraged or expected to practise or develop higher-order skills.

100. Curriculum planning in all of these subjects is unsatisfactory. It ensures that the required breadth of the curriculum is covered, but the amount of time allocated to each subject means that it is unlikely that the curriculum can be covered in enough depth. In art and design and design and technology, planning tends to focus on the activities to be taught within a topic rather than the skills to be developed. This approach to the curriculum, combined with the mixed-age groupings in all classes, means that the school is unable to provide for the seamless development of pupils' skills.

101. The pupils' progress is identified through 'best fit' assessments at the end of each year. However, there is no evidence to show that these assessments help the pupils to know how they can improve or feed into the teachers' future planning.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in swimming are above average.
- The school provides pupils with a good range of extra-curricular activities.

Commentary

102. Pupils achieve satisfactorily, and standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6.

103. Owing to the way in which the timetables were arranged, only two physical education lessons were observed. Further evidence was obtained from a scrutiny of teachers' planning and assessment records. These records show that all pupils in Year 6 can swim. About nine out of ten have achieved the standards expected nationally for this age group and a large number have gone on to achieve awards for water skills and personal survival.

104. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are planned well and run smoothly because of the very good relationships between teachers and their pupils, and the pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. In these lessons, pupils in Years 2 and 6 showed levels of skill in movement, balance and control appropriate to their age. Their satisfactory levels of co-ordination between hand and eye enabled them to control the movements of large and small balls with reasonable accuracy.

105. Provision for extra-curricular sporting activities is good. Pupils of both genders and all ages have the opportunity to develop their football skills in weekly sessions organised by a parent and by the local authority sports development team. In addition, there are after-school sessions for netball and cross-country running. The strong commitment of staff and the school's good partnership with parents are further illustrated by the opportunities provided for pupils to take part in competitive sport. For example, in cross-country running, pupils have competed in the Telford and Wrekin league and the Shropshire Schools' Championships.

106. Curriculum planning, which is based on national guidance for the subject, ensures that there is enough time for all of the required elements to be covered in sufficient depth. Overall, the school's accommodation is satisfactory. There is a good-sized school field, but the hall is rather cramped.

107. Provision for the subject and the standards achieved by pupils are at similar levels to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

108. Pupils are successfully learning to play a role as members of their school community, and have a good understanding of the needs of some sections of the wider community through their fundraising activities. They are well informed about the need for rules and have a good grasp of the consequences of anti-social behaviour. They are learning to make decisions, for instance through the school council, and discuss their ideas on issues relevant to their own lives.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).